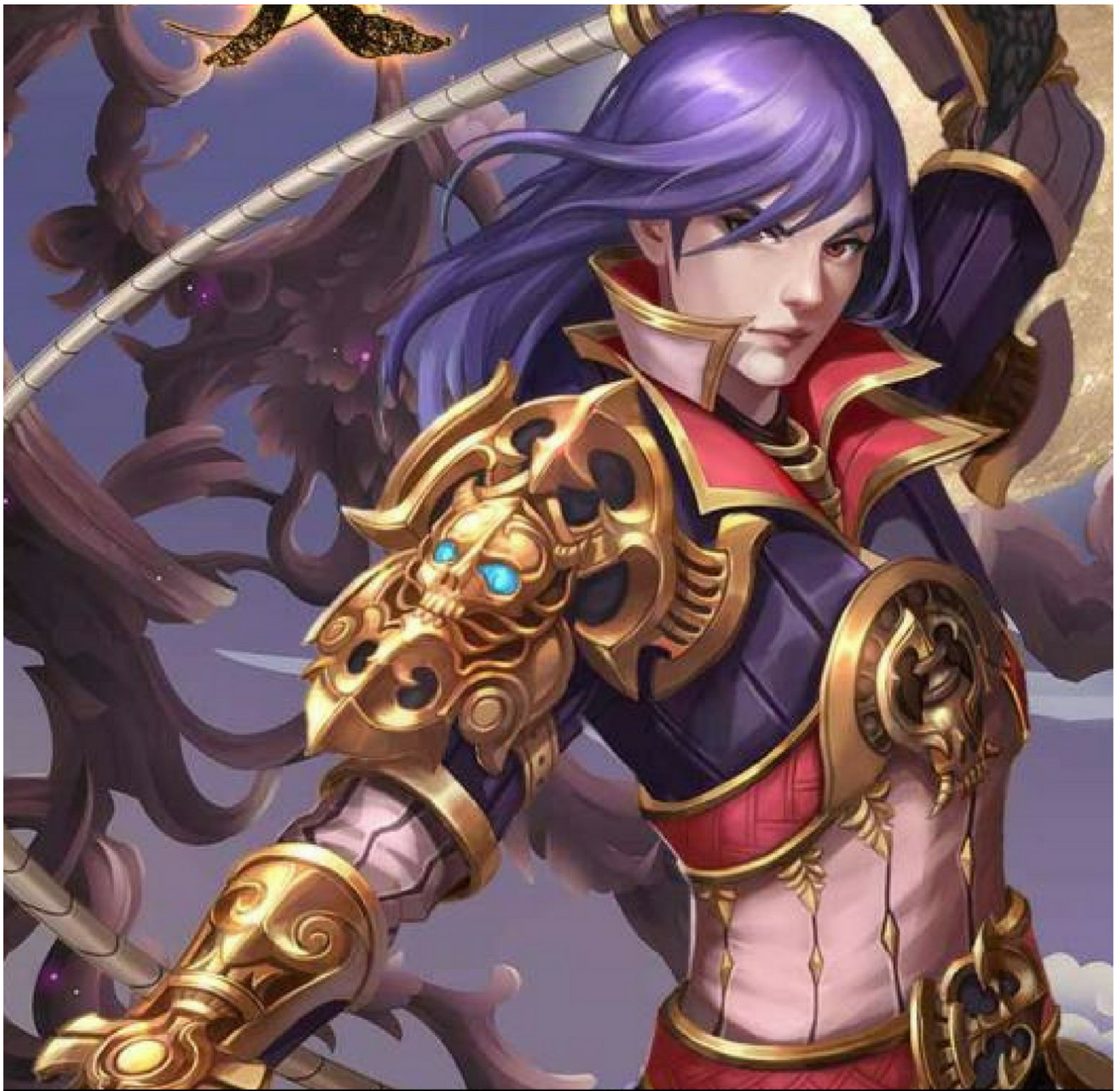

THE AVALON OF 5 ELEMENTS

BOOK 06

Fang Xiang

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The Avalon of Five Elements

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by

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Synopsis

The tens of thousands of universes have merged. The disintegration of spiritual force led to the momentous collapse of the great Cultivation World, a mighty era that had endured through millions of years of history. In the wake of the large-scale invasion of the Wilderness, the Avalon of Five Elements has become the practitioners' last stand.

After a thousand years, a lowly youth, who hailed from the Old Territory, toiled as a laborer for three years in the depths of the Wilderness. He then became an exception and obtained the opportunity to enter the Avalon Of Five Elements for further studies.

Bearing beast-like fighting capabilities and driven by the desire to take control of his life, the youth strived for greater strength and power. Little did he know that he would set off a majestic upheaval.

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Chapter 501: Sword Cloud

During training breaks, all Ai Hui could hear was Lou Lan’s grumblings.

"Xueman has really left. Will she encounter formidable experts? Will she get hurt? Ye Baiyi is so powerful and the Spear of Heavy Cloud was only formed just recently. Aren’t you worried, Ai Hui? Lou Lan is very worried..."

Reaching the end of his patience, Ai Hui chided Lou Lan, "Lou Lan, are you very free? If you are very free, go and supervise Fatty..."

Ai Hui suddenly stopped in mid-sentence. Fatty was in Spear of Heavy Cloud too. He was gone, along with Iron Lady.

After staying silent for a moment, Ai Hui stood up and patted Lou Lan’s shoulder, "Lou Lan, don’t be so anxious."

After Ai Hui finished his sentence, he walked to the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda. His hand was holding a grey-colored sword. The blade of the sword was wide and thick, plain and unadorned. It looked like it was made of neither wood nor metal.

Two ancient words were engraved on the body of the sword, "Edgeless Sword".

It was as light as a feather. It was the most suitable sword for Ai

Hui now, since his body was frail and delicate.

Edgeless sword was one of the presents that the Gong residence had sent over. Out of all the weapons that the Gong residence gifted Ai Hui, it was also the most outstanding one. Gong residence had spent a lot of effort and energy thanking Ai Hui.

Edgeless Sword's background was unknown. No one knew who'd forged it. It had been kept in the Gong residence's collection of treasures for over three hundred years.

Using Edgeless Sword to pat Metal Basket Sword Pagoda, Ai Hui yelled, "Prepare for the next round of training!"

Ai Hui's original name for Metal Basket Sword Pagoda was "Big Sword". However, it had been forgotten by everyone. Instead, the name, "Metal Basket Sword Pagoda", which was casually suggested by Gu Xuan, was approved by everyone. Even Ai Hui himself began to call it Metal Basket Sword Pagoda.

Members of Sword of Lightning stood up and took up their positions.

Everyone was used to the long training hours. Even though all of them were doubtful about whether or not Metal Basket Sword Pagoda could fly, they were still very serious and meticulous in their training.

The fact that Spear of Heavy Cloud had headed towards the front

line had a huge impact on Sword of Lightning. Fishback City, which used to be bustling with noise and excitement, was empty and unusually cold and cheerless now. Everyone had put away their playful attitudes and focused on the training sessions.

No one was complaining about the high intensity of the training sessions anymore.

Tinkle!

A sword chime was emitted from Ai Hui's Edgeless Sword.

The members had been bracing themselves and unleashed their swords at the same time. A snow-white sword gleam, that resembled surging spindrift under the sun, suddenly engulfed the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda. It did not contain any elemental energy, but only a concentrated, biting-cold aura.

The aura did not dissipate as time passed. The air in the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda stood still.

The look on Ai Hui's face was solemn. Once again, his Edgeless Sword emitted a sword chime.

Swoosh, swoosh, swoosh. More than three hundred streaks of sword gleams flashed through the air. The aura they exuded was more concentrated than before.

Ai Hui came up with the idea of using the sword chime as a word

of command by fluke. However, it still worked exceptionally well.

Ai Hi's entire body was drenched in sweat, giving off hot steam. The two hundred and fifty-two streaks of sword aura in the seven metal-basket-like sword pagodas gathered where he was standing and he had to endure an immense amount of pressure.

The bones in his body were cracking while beads of perspiration were meandering down his cheeks. His eyes, however, were unusually bright.

The concentrated, bone-piercing aura of the sword was incorporeal and formless, yet it could be found everywhere. The streaks of sword aura were gathering towards Ai Hui from all directions, creating an immense amount of pressure on him.

The sword cloud in his earth palace was stimulated, rolling and tossing non-stop.

Nowadays, the sword aura within Ai Hui's body was ten times stronger than it was before.

Ai Hui initially thought that he could no longer control the seven pagodas, as he had lost all of his elemental energy. Gu Xuan, whose strength was second only to him, was not able to take up his position. As such, Ai Hui had to force himself to do it. However, he didn't expect that the sword aura gathered together could be such a powerful stimulation to his sword cloud.

The sword cloud was like the sword embryo he'd had in the past. It was extremely sensitive to any sword-related thing.

After the sword cloud was stimulated, it gradually became stronger.

Ai Hui seemed to have a revelation. He thought of the term, sword consciousness, which was often mentioned in those ancient swordplay manuals. Swordsmen from the Cultivation Era had been extinct for a very long period of time. No one knew what sword consciousness was or what it looked like anymore. Even Ai Hui could not fathom it.

Ai Hui suddenly thought of the term "sword consciousness" when the immense sword aura surged towards him from all directions. But he also did not know whether or not his revelation was actually the so-called "sword consciousness".

Ai Hui felt as if he had returned to the times he'd spent in Suspending Golden Pagoda, where his body was tempered by metal winds that came from all directions.

The sword cloud kept strengthening itself while its metallic luster became increasingly intense.

Ai Hui knew it was his essence-breath-spirit that was being tempered.

Sword embryos were formed by essence-breath-spirit.

In the past, he'd racked his brains trying to find a method that could temper his sword embryo, but failed.

Now, he suddenly saw the light.

So the sword embryo could be tempered like this!

So the essence-breath-spirit could be tempered like this!

His physical body was very weak and he was still depleted of elemental energy. However, his essence-breath-spirit was being tempered continuously, becoming more powerful than before. He could feel that his sensory perception had become stronger. It was an indescribable feeling.

His hearing had become sharper. He could clearly hear incredibly soft sounds from a distance. It was as if a string was being plucked right beside his ears. His perceptive range had increased greatly as well. He could sense the presence of someone from a long distance away.

However, the biggest change was that he could now "see" elemental energies.

The entire world around him had changed completely. He could "see" the elemental energies in his surroundings.

He could "see" the long and unbroken traces of metal elemental energy in the wind, the mist-like wood elemental energy that was released from trees and plants, as well as the fire elemental energy emitted by the sun and the raging sea of lava beneath the ground. He knew the diffusibility of earth elemental energy was very poor, as only a very small amount of earth elemental energy could be sensed in the air. And the clouds in the sky were really like immobile water, while the water beneath the ground was like surging clouds.

When the different types of elemental energy came together, they turned into a gorgeous, colorful whirlpool. There were also some areas where the boundaries between different types of elemental energy were well-defined. In these areas, the elemental energies stayed well within their boundaries.

Their variations were rich, exquisite and unpredictable.

This was the first time that the world of elemental energies had appeared before Ai Hui in such a vivid manner. He was very impressed as he came up with countless revelations. If his five residences and eight palaces were undamaged and he'd still had his elemental energy, he could have imitated many of these variations.

Unfortunately, he had lost his elemental energy completely.

It was as if an enormous treasure trove had suddenly appeared before him, but he couldn't take anything from it.

Fate had played a cruel joke on him. The affairs of life were often

unpredictable.

Ai Hui could only laugh bitterly. He wasn’t depressed or discouraged. Having such an experience was already a pleasant surprise to him.

Furthermore, Ai Hui’s mind was on the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda.

It was as if the sword cloud in his body was born for the sake of the sword pagoda.

Ai Hui was situated at the core within the seven sword pagodas. All the sword gleams would gather at his position. In other words, his position was the most important among all the positions in the seven pagodas. It was also the position that endured the most pressure.

Even though he had no elemental energy, he could use his sensory perception to control the seven sword pagodas. Any small change that took place within the seven sword pagodas could not escape his discerning eyes. He was very surprised that he could use this "loophole" to control the sword pagodas.

This reminded him of embroidery. The only different thing was that he could control more than two hundred invisible "strings" at the same time now.

However, the number of things he could do with them was very

little. This implied that every "string" was easily broken.

However, this was enough for him.

In the past, Ai Hui had relied on a massive amount of elemental energy to gather these sword gleams through a sword formation. The difference now was that Ai Hui could sort out these sword gleams before he gathered and merged them in an orderly manner.

This was not going to be easy. In fact, this was harder to execute than the method he used in the past.

He used very little elemental energy to sort them out. This meant that each member could not make too many mistakes and all of them had to be well-trained.

The time taken from when the sword gleams were released by the members to the point where they gathered was very short. One could imagine the difficulty of sorting them out in such a short period of time. This was a huge challenge for Ai Hui.

However, as long as he had a plan, he had enough time.

His eyes were illuminated by the dazzling streaks of sword gleams, pure and flawless.

.....

Silver Soldier saw the layers of fortifications and heaved a sigh of relief.

They had finally reached the Rear of Wall.

The fortifications were empty and there were many areas that had yet to be completed. All the blacksmiths had abandoned the fortifications. Infantry Division and Sky Edge Division were purely combat divisions. They did not have many blacksmiths with them.

A figure descended from the sky hurriedly. A premonition arose in Silver Soldier's mind.

"Sir! We have encountered enemy scouts ahead! We are currently engaging them!"

Silver Soldier felt slightly shocked. However, he soon regained his composure and said, "Bring a few more men with you, don’t let a single one of them off."

"I will go," Karakorum Polaris said.

Silver Soldier did not stop her and nodded his head, "Alright."

Usually, a division leader wouldn’t personally interfere in such a low level battle. However, Silver Soldier remembered that Karakorum Polaris had not entered a battlefield before and he felt it was necessary for her to get used to it.

Karakorum Polaris brought a small team of Sky Edge elites and set off at top speed to provide reinforcement.

When Silver Soldier saw the back view of Karakorum Polaris disappear, he began to calm down. He himself wasn't a rookie and he had rich combat experience.

Encountering enemy scouts wasn't a good sign. It implied that even though the enemy forces did not occupy Rear of Wall, for whatever reason they still maintained a high level of vigilance around this area. This meant that Infantry Division and Sky Edge Division could not occupy an advantageous position without alerting the enemy forces.

Furthermore, when he reached the Rear of Wall, he realized that the number of fortifications was much lesser than he'd expected. Their designs were crude and simple as well.

However, after he thought about it again, he understood what had happened. Shi Beihai did not expect the Wall of North Sea to collapse in such a short period of time. How was it possible for him to build so many fortifications in such a short period of time then?

Crude fortifications, rookies with no real combat experience. The upcoming battles would be much more devastating than he'd expected.

Very soon, Silver Soldier's conjecture was verified.

His scouts had encountered Blood of God’s scouts and engaged them in battle several times. Even though the battles were small-scale, they were still extremely intense. He could tell the battles were intense when less than half of his scouts returned.

Karakorum Polaris returned very soon and she did not look good. The enemy scouts put up a strong resistance despite the fact that they were losing. No one was willing to surrender and all of them fought to their deaths.

The intensity level of a battle in the battlefield was completely different from the intensity level of a contest in a training hall.

Silver Soldier stepped forward, but he did not console her. With a deep voice, he said, "The enemy’s main forces will arrive soon. We need to make good use of the time to push forward and occupy terrains that are advantageous to us."

"Okay!" Karakorum Polaris nodded her head.

She knew that the battlefield was a completely different world.

Silver Infantry Division and Sky Edge Division did not care about how tired they were from the long journey. They pushed forward at top speed as they wanted to obtain a deeper position. After advancing for around twenty-five kilometers, Silver Soldier suddenly ordered the two combat divisions to stop and set up defenses.

He also requested everyone to make good use of the time to rest as the enemy forces would arrive very soon.

Silver Soldier clearly knew that the enemy had rested well while waiting for them. He also knew that Infantry Division and Sky Edge Division were extremely exhausted. If they did not regain some of their elemental energy now, they would not be able to withstand the Blood of God's first wave of attacks, even with the help of the fortifications.

To Silver Soldier, the first battle was extremely important. If they won the first battle, they would gain confidence easily. If they lost the first battle, they would collapse on the spot.

Very soon, reality had proven that Silver Soldier's arrangements were very accurate.

Four hours later, the enemy's main forces had arrived.

Chapter 502: Decision

"Sir, we didn’t see Uncle She among them."

"That bastard is indeed treacherous."

"Sir, what do we do now?"

"The only plan is to go the whole hog now."

…

"Night Moth Fruit?"

Mingxiu’s face turned deathly white. Her body involuntarily trembled while her eyes were filled with fear and despair. All she had wanted was to prepare some equipment and items for her junior. She had not expected that this would cause a disaster for her junior instead.

She had heard of the Night Moth Fruit’s notoriety from her eldest brother before. Her eldest brother had mentioned before that even he, himself, would have difficulty detoxifying the Night Moth Fruit.

Uncle She sighed. When he saw the fearful look on Mingxiu’s face, he felt even more guilty. "It’s my fault for not carrying out the task properly. However, Miss, don’t be so worried, Master Ai’s

life is not in danger."

Uncle She recounted the process of how Ai Hui used the lightning bolts to counter the Night Moth Fruit.

When Mingxiu heard that Ai Hui had been struck by lightning for several hours, a worried and distressed look appeared on her face. Subsequently, when she heard that Ai Hui's entire body was charred and covered with bandages, the image of Ai Hui's appearance flashed across her mind, and she could not help but chuckle.

She felt slightly at ease.

Her junior had an extremely tenacious character. Even if no clues were found, he would still figure something out. As long as he was still alive, he would definitely come up with a plan.

Uncle She also relayed what Ai Hui had told him before he had departed to return to Mingxiu. It was because of Ai Hui's words that he met Mingxiu and not the family head first. Even though Ai Hui was weak now, Uncle She did not dare to sit idly and do nothing. He was worried about the family head getting angry as well. After pondering for quite some time, he decided to talk to Mingxiu first.

Upon hearing Uncle She's report, Mingxiu's facial expression remained calm. Her eyes flickered, looking as if she was pondering over something.

At this moment, a middle-aged man ran over hurriedly. He was Uncle She’s trusted aide and had worked under Uncle She for over 20 years. On the return trip, Uncle She secretly left first without them. The rest of the people returned according to the original schedule.

When he saw Uncle She, he heaved a sigh of relief and said hurriedly, "Uncle She, the convoy was attacked yesterday. Thankfully, Master Mu was there, so we didn’t have many casualties!"

Mingxiu was exceptionally intelligent. Upon hearing these words, she said, "It seems like there really is a spy among us."

After staying silent for a while, she continued, "Uncle She, go back and report this incident to Father first. I will go and have a discussion with First Brother."

Uncle She agreed that this was the only plan for now. He nodded his head and replied, "All right, I will report to Master first. Miss, please look out for your safety!"

"I will bring along some guards." A smile appeared on Mingxiu’s face.

Following which, Uncle She left with his aide. After pondering over the incident for a while, Mingxiu stood up and changed her clothes. Then, she told her servant girl, Tao Su, "I will be out for a while."

After Mingxiu left her embroidery workshop, she flew straight out of the city.

Her eldest brother, Lu Chen, resided in an area that was 100 kilometers to the west of Jadeite City. Lu Chen's teacher, Dai Gang, who was the Jadeite Forest's ruler, did not live in Jadeite City either. He lived in area that was 100 kilometers to the east of the city.

The teacher and his disciple lived at the east and the west of Jadeite City, respectively. The two of them were separated by a distance of 200 kilometers.

It was no secret that Lu Chen had defied Dai Gang, but this did not affect Lu Chen's position in Dai Gang's heart. Among Dai Gang's disciples, Lu Chen was his favorite. Lu Chen was also known as a divine physician of this era. His attainments in the art of healing surpassed even Dai Gang. Dai Gang was extremely proud of this fact.

Lu Chen was a kind individual who had a vast network of friends. As he had healed countless experts, he enjoyed an extremely high prestige. Whether it was from the Jadeite Forest, Beyond Avalon, or Blood of God, there were many people that owed their lives to him.

As Mingxiu traveled further away from the Jadeite Forest, the number of people she encountered along the way gradually decreased.

Suddenly, Mingxiu stopped.

A group of masked men blocked her path. With a deep voice, the leader of the group said, "Miss Mingxiu, my master would like invite you to his residence to stay for a few days!"

Mingxiu did not panic at all. She replied with a composed voice, "Who is your master?"

"Miss Mingxiu will know by then."

The group of masked men chuckled as they spread out and surrounded Mingxiu.

A glint flashed across Mingxiu’s eyes as she turned around and raised her voice, "You’re still not revealing yourself?"

A helpless sigh rang across the air. "How did you know it was me?"

A shadow flashed across the air as a tall individual suddenly appeared before Mingxiu.

He carried a huge bow that was around his height on his back. His long hair was tied up using a red string. His small and slanted eyes looked drowsy. There was now a stubbly beard on his familiar-looking face, making him look as if he had been through a lot.

When Mingxiu took a closer look at the familiar figure, she was pleasantly surprised. She widened her eyes and said, "Brother Qiu."

The familiar voice ripped through the man’s thick wall of memory while a ray of sunshine pierced through his heart like a sword. The beautiful image of the girl that had haunted him like a ghost for countless nights in the past now walked out of his cold and pitch-black dream, appearing right before him. Lit up by the sunshine, her bright and beautiful face smiled alluringly at him.

Yu Mingqiu gasped.

.....

"After we reached ‘Behind the Wall’, everyone was extremely tired. That was the first time the division had traveled such a long distance after it was replenished. The situation was much worse than I thought. Damn it! We only had two hours of rest! Luckily, I never slacked off during the daily training sessions. Even though I only regained 60 percent of my elemental energy, I didn’t turn into a weak chicken that was waiting to be killed on a chopping board. Honestly speaking, when I saw the armies of the Blood of God, I thought I was not going to survive. At that time, my mind was in a blank. Forgive me for being so timid. The enemy’s first wave of attacks almost caused our defensive line to break down. Wei died in front of me when a bone spear embedded with blood crystals pierced through his skull. Subsequently, his body was sucked dry by the bone spear. At that point in time, I think I cried. Yes, I cried. Wei was a good man, but he died in the end. I didn’t die. I killed two enemy soldiers and don’t know how I did it. Back then, I was

very scared and my body was trembling. However, I very quickly regained my composure. That was because the enemy attacked us again..."

<The Battle Behind the Wall>

The battle lasted for three days and three nights and was extremely intense.

The simple and crude fortifications were not really useful to the Infantry and Sky Edge Divisions, and they still had a lot of casualties. However, the divisions had not collapsed like they had been worried about. They had endured through the intense fighting. Other than the heavy losses they suffered on the first day, their situation over the next two days was much better.

"This cannot go on." Silver Soldier was panting heavily as he talked to Karakorum Polaris, "The enemy forces outnumbered us greatly. We can’t get involved in a war of attrition with them."

Karakorum Polaris’s body was sparkling clean. However, the glint in her eyes had dimmed significantly. She listened to Silver Soldier quietly without saying anything. She knew Silver Soldier had to have a plan.

Silver Soldier’s metallic index finger swept across the map as he said, "We will retreat."

"Retreat?"

"But higher-ups want us to defend ‘Behind the Wall’."

"That’s right, Sir. You have to think twice about this decision."

Karakorum Polaris was slightly surprised as well. She knew how much Silver Soldier wanted to battle the Blood of God.

Why would he want to retreat at this point in time?

A cold glint flashed across his silver mask. The eyes revealed by the mask flickered. On the mask, in between where his eyebrows were, the word "Infantry" was deeply marked.

Silver Soldier ignored them and continued, "From the current situation, we can see that Ye Baiyi hasn’t woken up yet. This is evident from the enemy forces that have attacked us. Even though the intensity of the fighting has been very high, the Blood of God have not deployed many of their soldiers. This shows that they are still trying to feel us out. If Ye Baiyi was awake, the enemy forces that attacked us would not be so few.

The others quieted down.

"The enemy forces that attacked our divisions these few days are made up of different divisions. They lacked coordination. This also indirectly proves that Ye Baiyi hasn’t woken up yet, and that they are divided. This is our chance. What’s going to happen next is that we will retreat slowly. Take note, we can’t retreat too quickly.

We will try to lure the enemy forces into a deeper position. The conscription order has been issued, and the conscripted divisions will arrive soon. We try to contact these divisions and have them set up ambushes behind us. We will form a pocket and lure the enemy forces into it. Once they are deep in the pocket, we will annihilate them. We can also flank them from both sides and surround them," Silver Soldier explained with a deep voice.

"What if the other party doesn’t take the bait?’

"We will retreat and build a new defensive line," Silver Soldier replied.

.....

Lemon Camping Ground was filled with corpses. There were two people standing amid the corpses.

"Is there still anyone alive?"

"No."

Their tones sounded very casual, their facial expressions indifferent. It was as if they couldn’t see the corpses around them. Both of them were tall and huge. They also looked very similar to each other. Clearly, they were brothers.

If someone saw these two, he or she would definitely recognize them. They were the Xiahou brothers.

The older brother was Xiahou Jun, the younger brother was Xiahou Jie, and they were twins. They were already very talented from a young age. Both of them became Masters at the same time. If they were born in aristocratic families, their tales of their achievements would be widely spread. In reality, they were new citizens who had led a tough life since childhood. This caused them to become cynical and temperamental.

"Have you clarified with them?"

"I have clarified with them."

"Then what about here? Should we set fire and burn them?"

"That will give us away easily. Let’s catch some dire beasts and throw them here."

The conversation between the two men was short and sweet. They did not waste any time talking nonsense.

After a while, both of them caught several dire beasts and threw them into the campground.

The two of them hovered in the air, chatting casually as they watched the dire beasts chomping on the corpses.

Xiahou Jun said coldly, "Shi Xueman has left and Ai Hui has yet

to recover. The only one that is capable of fighting is Blind Dou. This is a rare chance."

Xiahou Jie stretched his back and replied with an indifferent tone, "Let’s complete this mission as soon as possible. Newlight City is still more comfortable to stay in. The reward this time around is enough for us to lead a carefree life for quite a long time."

The two of them came here because they accepted a mission concerning the snow lava.

It was no longer a secret that Shi Xueman had requested the envoy to take the Sword of Lightning off the conscription order. Because of this, many people lamented. Shi Xueman indeed had feelings for Ai Hui.

However, covetous individuals were able to also extract a lot of information from this incident. Ai Hui was injured, the Sword of Lightning only had 300 men, etc.

Ai Hui’s refinement method for the snow lava was truly a money-making tool.

Excluding Skyheart City, there were a lot of cities that were very poor. At this point, Central Pine Valley was at its weakest. It was like a child that possessed a precious treasure, attracting all sorts of greedy folks.

"Have you thought about how to obtain the snow lava refinement

method?"

"We can get it as long as we capture Ai Hui."

"We have to be fast. There are a lot of people who want the snow lava. If other people get it first, our trip will be wasted."

"Men die in the pursuit of wealth, while birds die in the pursuit of food. These people better not encounter us. Otherwise, they will be dead for sure. Let’s go."

Chapter 503: Enemy is Coming

Lou Lan carefully carried the unconscious Ai Hui down from the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda and poured the long since prepared medicine into Ai Hui's mouth.

The dark, inky medicine emitted a thick, choking smell.

Each time the members witnessed Lou Lan feeding Ai Hui medicine, they would have a sympathetic look. Compared to Ai Hui's medicine, their elemental soup was practically a delicacy.

Gu Xuan sipped on his soup, occasionally glanced over at Ai Hui, and prostrated himself in admiration.

Training until unconscious... what kind of realm was this?

Whatever it was, he couldn't do it.

Not only him, but everyone in the Sword of Lightning was unable to do it. Everyone was utterly convinced of Ai Hui's capability. There had been some who were concerned that he would injure himself and that their future would fall into uncertainty. No one was worried any longer.

Even if Ai Hui hadn't recovered. Even if he did not have the least bit of elemental energy.

To be honest, Gu Xuan was unable to imagine how a person without elemental energy could possibly fight. It went against his common sense. He was so absorbed in his thoughts that the fragrant soup almost seemed less alluring. He continued sipping on it subconsciously.

It was true that Ai Hui had no elemental energy, but over these past few days of training they had yet to bump into issues.

The seven sword pagodas operated very smoothly. No, even smoother than before!

This was something Gu Xuan simply couldn’t understand and something he felt was the most illogical.

Could it be that elemental energy was unnecessary for swordsmen?

He found it hard to belief since it violated conventional knowledge. Yet, a live example had been placed before him. What method was Boss using to operate the sword pagodas?

"Do you need my help with your soup, Old Gu? It seems like you’re having a little trouble!"

A coarse voice interrupted Gu Xuan’s train of thought.

Gu Xian regained his senses and noticed a bright bald head approaching. He scolded jokingly, "What do you want, Old Xu!

Trying to get a free bowl of soup from me? No way!"

Exposed, Old Yu responded without getting angry, "It’s because you’re drinking without tasting it!"

Gu Xuan rolled his eyes. "Even then, you’re not gonna get it!"

Old Yu was somewhat curious. "What have you been thinking about these two days, Old Gu? So preoccupied."

Apart from the fact that everybody was impressed by Ai Hui’s promotion into the Master realm, within the Sword of Lightning, Gu Xuan’s abilities were second only to Ai Hui. However, they had seen Gu Xuan’s recent abnormal behavior and were rather worried.

While Gu Xuan wasn’t well versed in worldly affairs, he was able to tell good from bad and could feel the concern of Old Yu and the rest. He explained, "I don’t quite understand something. It’s a fact that Boss doesn’t have elemental energy, so why is he still able to control our sword rays?"

Old Yu paused for a moment, but quickly found it funny. "That’s all?"

"Yes, just this!" Gu Xuan looked at Old Yu, adding, "You’ve thought about it too? Any idea?"

Old Yu answered matter-of-factly, "How is he able to control our

sword rays despite not having elemental energy? Very simple eh, it’s because he’s the boss. If he can’t then who can?"

Gu Xuan was speechless and unable to refute.

Old Yu continued, "You’re overthinking, Old Gu. Let’s talk about swordsmen. They existed in the past when there wasn’t any elemental energy, so why must they have it now?"

Gu Xuan was stunned. That was right! Swordsmen had a longer history than the Avalon of Five Elements and there wasn’t any elemental energy back then, so why must they have it?

He fell into a daze.

Just then, Ai Hui’s voice could be heard. "Everyone gather!"

Unknowingly, Ai Hui had woken up from his coma.

People raised their heads, somewhat flabbergasted. They had just been resting for a short while and had yet to recover their elemental energy.

The sword moves everybody practiced weren’t complicated, but as long as someone wasn’t following the tempo, the moves would usually fail. This was also why they had to maintain extreme focus at all times. Waving their swords around during such high focus required astonishing physical strength.

After each round of training, everybody had to rest in order to recover their elemental energy and physical strength before starting the next round.

The Sword of Lightning's training was very dull, much drier than their individual training.

All kinds of complaints emerged. For example, they found the sword moves limited and even boring. As such, a popular phrase surfaced within the Sword of Lightning.

"Are we really swordsmen? I don't think so. Which swordsmen have such few moves? If we were to use them individually, not even a chicken can be killed. A swordsman unable to kill a chicken shouldn't go out there and claim to be a swordsman!"

If not for the fact that Ai Hui had personally released the power of the sword pagodas in Lemon Camping Ground, there probably wouldn't be anyone willing to press on.

Ample rest was extremely crucial, as learned by everybody during this period of harsh training. Without rest, they wouldn't even be able to engage in high intensity training and would commit errors more frequently, hence hindering their practice.

So when Ai Hui ordered everybody to gather, they were extremely surprised.

"Something’s up."

These words alerted everyone. Elementalists who were still alive weren’t rookies. They had rich experience. In this chaotic world, not only did they have to face dire beasts, they had to face all kinds of danger, greed, riches, and disputes.

Everybody threw the bowl in their hands on the ground and stood up.

With his full body wrapped in bandages, Ai Hui’s eyes were bright enough to light up the night sky.

Earlier, his spirit and mind had entered a very unique state where he could "see" very far away. He’d never seen such a faraway place before and could detect its dangerous aura.

It was as if the danger was close by. He then "saw" some shadows concealed amid the night.

About 60 miles away from Fishback City, Xia Houjun stopped in his tracks.

A vigilant look flashed across his face. "What’s going on?"

While they were both fickle, the fact that they could remain alive until this point and live so comfortably was enough to show that they were capable individuals.

Xia Houjun asked in a low voice, "Seems like someone is spying on us. Do you feel it?"

"No." Xia Houjie shook his head, the alertness on his face remaining. He scanned his surroundings. "A strong expert?"

"Not sure." Xia Houjun continued hesitantly, "Only in that instant, but it disappeared very quickly, so I can’t be sure."

"It’s good to be more cautious," Xia Houjie said in a low voice, his eyes flickering. " We’re not the only ones eyeing the snow lava. There might be powerful experts, so we can’t be complacent."

"Mhmm."

The duo raised their guard and slowed down.

Any mistake on the battlefield would only lead to one ending– death. They’d seen too many powerful experts die from a small oversight. Failing to obtain the snow lava simply meant that their mission had failed. They weren’t ready to gamble their lives away for it.

In Fishback City, Gu Xuan led a group of people back and forth within the city.

Boss’s orders were very strange. He’d asked for all lights within

the city to be lit. Bonfires had to be started wherever possible.

He couldn't quite understand the meaning behind this. A strategy to mislead the enemy? But the opponent would immediately notice something fishy they moment they arrived.

Nevertheless, he carried out Boss's orders to the letter.

It was strange. It was only natural that everybody followed Boss's orders when he was a Master.

Yet, now that he was severely injured and had yet to recover, it was strange how everybody still complied subconsciously.

Gu Xuan had traveled extensively and been to many cities. All along, he spoke with his fist. Anything a Master possessed would go up in smoke the moment his base level crumbled.

No one would listen to his orders anymore and all respect would be gone.

Yet, this did not happen to Ai Hui.

Gu Xuan also tried thinking from his own perspective. Why was he still listening to Ai Hui? Could he control the sword pagodas? No. He didn't even know how to train, so needless to say he wouldn't be able to lift the pagoda. Could he replace Boss? No.

Gu Xuan believed that in everyone's eyes, there were inconceivable things going on in Ai Hui's mind.

There was something about Ai Hui that gave people faith.

As for the fact that Ai Hui was no longer a Master, Gu Xuan realized that he did not really mind. In his eyes, Ai Hui would definitely return to his status as a Master, just like Senior Le Buleng had. Ai Hui was merely facing a low point in life.

Gu Xuan was highly confident about this, even more so than the possibility of him becoming a Master.

So damn strange!

Gu Xuan shook his head. He could only console himself. People who could become leaders usually had special traits.

The lights in Fishback City shone brightly, and everybody took the chance to go to the top of Blackfish Mouth Volcano. Right by their side was the sword pagoda that Lou Lan had brought up.

The mountain wasn't as magnificent at night. The red glow from its volcanic crater was blocked by thick rolling smoke.

The night breeze brushed across Ai Hui's face. He was like a mummy who had just crawled out from his sarcophagus. He looked into the distance, his eyes sparkling like stars.

Gu Xuan and the rest followed Ai Hui’s line of sight, but saw nothing.

"Everybody take this time to rest. The enemy is coming soon."

Ai Hui’s voice made everybody nervous. They quickly meditated and recuperated.

The volcanic crater quietened down and only Lou Lan was left by Ai Hui’s side. He gazed into the horizon.

It was extremely quiet around them.

At this point, Ai Hui felt something he hadn’t before. He felt as if he’d melted into the night. He could see the metal wind blowing from afar. The almost undetectable rippling layers. The ground beneath his feet and the blue dome of heaven above his head seemed to be one with him. His gaze spanned across the mountains and the blue dome of heaven, as if overlooking the field and bearing the weight of all living things.

No one noticed that the moment the wind came close to Blackfish Mouth Volcano, it would become abnormally docile. Only Lou Lan sensed it. He turned around, the red glow in his eyes flickering for a short while before calming down.

Behind them, the bubbling snow lava appeared to be flattened into folded layers by an invisible hand. Its was smooth and glossy

like a heated metal mirror.

An obsessed look appeared on Ai Hui’s face. This was beyond a wonderful experience.

In his eyes, the world wasn’t just elemental energy.

Some time passed, then he sensed something. Immediately, he separated himself from that marvelous state of mind. He felt somewhat regretful and felt it would be good if he could experience this state once more.

With a murderous spirit surging within his bright eyes, he threw away all distracting thoughts.

"Enemy is coming."

Chapter 504: Villa of Conscience

Lu Chen’s residence outside Jadeite Forest City had a very unique name – Villa of Conscience. Its door, made of firewood, was half open and trees were planted all around the fences. A mild fragrance pervaded the air. The whole place was like a Xanadu.

To the left of the door were the words "Bridge Between Life And Death", and to its right were the words "Ceaseless Yin and Yang". Above was a big bolded word: "Conscience".

Villa of Conscience seldom received visitors, except for those who came specially to seek medical treatment. Lu Chen was very reputable, but had been in seclusion in recent years and practically never accepted patients.

The clear moonlight sprinkled over the courtyard. The three of them sat facing one another, sipping on their wine.

Lu Chen’s features were similar to Mingxiu’s, save for the more robust lines on his face. He had a more scholarly aura, his black long hair grazing his shoulders. He wore a loose white robe and wooden clogs, an uninhibited scholarly vibe surrounding him.

Lu Chen and Yu Mingqiu had many things to tell each other, but neither knew where to start. Yu Mingqiu had even more words for Mingxiu, but was similarly unable to start. The words turned to wine when they reached the corner of his mouth.

The brother and sister started speaking first.

Lu Chen spoke to Mingxiu in a somewhat reproachful manner. "You were too rash, sister. Fortunately nothing cropped up this time, or else it would've been dangerous. They were all fearless soldiers. I'll go investigate properly."

Mingxiu stuck out her tongue mischievously. "Other than Brother Mingqiu, I have other preparations."

Her childlike attitude only came out before her older brother. He'd been taking care of and pampering her since young, so they were very close. Compared to their scheming and astute parents, Mingxiu trusted her brother more.

Lu Chen said what he did out of habit. He knew his sister wasn't an impulsive person and that she had back up. With a loving smile, he continued, "Say it. You never come for nothing. You're definitely not here to visit me."

Mingxiu told Lu Chen about Ai Hui and his face turned serious. Even Yu Mingqiu, who had been drowning his sorrows in wine, couldn't help but put his cup down.

"Night Moth Fruit is very troublesome." Lu Chen sighed. "Borrowing the force of lightning to deal with it is a bold move that I've not thought of or tried. Judging from the result, he probably has suppressed it, but because the Nature's lightning is too aggressive, I'm afraid his injuries are not light, even if he practices lightning. Even if he doesn't lose his life, his five residences and eight palaces won't be able to endure it."

Mingxiu instantly became anxious. "Then what should we do?"

"If his five residences and eight palaces are severely injured, I can’t do anything." Lu Chen shook his head and continued regretfully, "The five residences and eight palaces are like the skeleton of a human. If not many areas have been injured then there might still be cures, but if the damage is critical, they’re basically untreatable. The residences and palaces are linked and subtly related. Rebuilding the connection is not something that can be done."

Yu Mingqiu, who’d been quiet since he’d entered, spoke suddenly. "I don’t see it that way."

The siblings looked toward him simultaneously.

Yu Mingxiu added, "Do not forget that Senior Le Buleng had also been severely injured before. Ai Hui is tough and durable, not someone who would easily concede defeat."

Ai Hui had left a deep impression on him.

"I hope so." Lu Chen nodded. He hadn’t interacted with Ai Hui and so knew little about him. He turned to Mingxiu and said, "Take three Vitality Branches when you leave. The rest is up to him."

Mingxiu responded cheerily, "Thank you Brother!"

The Vitality Branches were Lu Chen’s treasured lucky charms. Giving Mingxiu three at once was really an expensive gesture. Vitality Branches were even more famous than Night Moth Fruits. They were known to revive patients with only one breath. Each branch contained a wisp of original life force. It was the source of life of all living things.

Lu Chen had invented these Vitality Branches upon mastering the art of healing.

Even Grandmaster Dai was full of praises for them, believing that they were the mark of a new era.

Seeing his sister’s joyful look, Lu Chen shook his head and turned to the rather foreign Yu Mingqiu. "You’re finally back. Where have you been all these years?"

"Deep within the Wilderness." Yu Mingqiu picked up a wine cup with both hands before draining it in one gulp. His faint stubble made him look quite different. "I was very curious to see what’s further inside and so I went to explore."

Lu Chen sized him up before breaking into a smile. "Not easy eh, coming back alive."

Yu Mingqiu burst into laughter and replied ruefully, "Yeah, I came back alive."

The siblings could hear the sorrow in his voice. He must have

been through a lot of tribulations in there. The words "deep within the Wilderness" seemed to have a magical power that captured everybody's attention. Even Lu Chen, who stayed out of worldly affairs, appeared interested.

Yu Mingqiu wasn't a habitually silent person to begin with, so as he started speaking, he became more lively too.

He talked about some of his experiences living deep within the Wilderness. Out of the corner of his eye he caught a glimpse of Mingxiu looking engrossed, and so he spoke more energetically and expressively. He was naturally a comical person, so he quickly got everybody laughing.

Yu Mingqiu was rather distracted, as if he'd gone back to when he was young.

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Faraway in Fishback City, the lights were brightly lit within the night. It was an exceptionally striking sight.

The duo was still worried about finding the wrong place, so they heaved a sigh of relief upon seeing the city.

The Xiahou brothers slowed down. Ever since Xiahou Jun noticed something amiss, the two paid extra attention to their surroundings and quickly found many rivals.

Xiahou Jie asked eagerly, "Quite a number of small ants, should we evacuate?"

Xiahou Jun shook his head. "There must be some strong players lying in ambush, so don’t be careless. Plus, this is too big of an offense so do not expose your identity, or else we won’t have a life to live even if we do survive."

"Mhmm", Xiahou Jie acknowledged, his eyes recovering their calm.

Snow lava brought a lot of benefits, so many were lusting over it and becoming restless. No one dared to openly seize the snow lava, however, since Shi Beihai had passed away not long ago and Shi Xueman had stepped into the battlefield. Those who tried robbing snow lava now would certainly be criticized by the masses.

The Xiahou brothers knew the pros and cons very well. If the world knew that they had mounted a sneak attack on Central Pine Valley, no one would publicly accept or provide asylum for them.

Before they came, they had already been told this repeatedly.

Xiahou Jun said in a low voice, "We don’t have to rush. Let’s wait for others to make a move. When the situation turns chaotic, that’s when we act."

Xiahou Jie nodded in understanding.

While he had an irritable temperament, he was like a totally different person in combat. He became extremely calm and tolerant.

They carefully avoided their rivals and approached Fishback City, only concealing themselves upon reaching the foot of the mountain. They were experts at ambushing, so no one was alarmed by their movements.

They hid behind a rock, becoming one with the darkness. They were only a few hundred meters away from Fishback City. This distance, to them, could be closed within the blink of an eye.

They were like seasoned hunters, waiting for the others to take action first.

Time passed, but there were still no movements.

The Xiahou brothers weren't the least bit impatient. Instead, they became increasingly alert, evidence that they weren't forces to be reckoned with. They made eye contact and saw the seriousness in each other's eyes.

The prey was very delicate and harmless. The other hunters were the dangerous ones.

It wasn't just the two of them; the rest also had the same judgment, which explained why there hadn't been any action yet.

Xiahou Jie said suddenly, "Brother, something’s not quite right."

Xiahou Jun jolted and asked hurriedly, "Someone made a move?"

"No." With a doubtful look on his face, he continued, "This city... seems too quiet."

Xiahou Jun paused for a moment before looking around with rapt attention. The lights were still brightly lit but there was no sound at all, only dead silence.

Not right!

At this distance, they should be able to hear the voices of the citizens, but no matter how he pricked up his ears there were none.

A chill rose up Xiahou Jun’s back. An ambush!

He had a premonition at this point.

Could it be that Central Pine Valley still had some kind of force left?

He did some calculations in his mind. There was only one Master, Mister Dou, left in Central Pine Valley. Needless to say, Master Dou’s abilities were great and on par to the brothers’, but it would be difficult for a pair of fists to deal with two. Plus, there were so many people lying in ambush. If they made use of this advantage,

Master Dou simply wouldn’t be able to raise any waves.

Or was it that their information was wrong?

They were worried about Le Buleng returning unexpectedly. No one wanted to bump into that freak. If not for the fact that the higher ups had guaranteed them over and over again that Le Buleng was waiting to go all out with Dai Gang, they absolutely wouldn’t have accepted this task.

Suddenly, Xiahou Jun’s heart quivered. He looked toward the mountain ridge up front.

A ball of black shadow squirmed soundlessly. They wouldn’t have noticed it if they weren’t experts in ambushes and if they weren’t highly focused.

They jolted, their eyes wide open.

Someone had made a move!

It was just in time for them to get an idea of the situation in the city.

It wasn’t only the Xiahou brothers; there were many pairs of eyes watching within the darkness. They were looking at the brightly lit city as they, too, realized that something was amiss.

On the mountain top.

Above the spot where Iron Lady had bid farewell to Ai Hui, the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda rested horizontally.

Ai Hui had not expected Great Sword's first battle to happen at this time and place, or that he would face such strong rivals.

The snow covered mountains and the image of a beautiful woman fading faraway into the snow flashed across his eyes.

His bright-as-stars eyes gazed into the distance, toward the direction of the Wall of North Sea.

He patted the metal basket below him.

The members who'd long been prepared stood up at once, their elemental energy and physical strength a hundred percent recovered. While they couldn't yet see their enemy, they knew it was coming.

Gu Xuan included, everyone was rolling up their sleeves and rubbing their fists, eager for action.

Sword of Lightning's first battle!

Looking down from the mountain top, their field of vision was optimal. Those with good eyesight, like Gu Xuan, caught sight of a

shadow under the lights. The enemy is here indeed!

Ai Hui waved the Edgeless Sword in his hands, an imposing aura instantly pervading the air. Everybody became alert and grabbed the swords in their hands tightly. They were highly focused; that was the signal to get ready for battle.

A melodious sword chime sounded from the Blackfish Mouth Volcano’s volcanic crater, breaking the silence of the night.

Chapter 505: A Strike in the Frosted Dawn

Cheng Ningfeng carefully felt his way toward Fishback City.

He had already sensed something amiss. Despite the city being too quiet, the lights were charming. Could this be an empty city? He was confident about his excellent ambushing skills, so even as he was guarded, he advanced to investigate nevertheless.

It really was a small city, obviously built in a rush. Its defense was also poor.

Cheng Ningfeng inwardly shook his head. Central Pine Valley's abilities were indeed as rumored, mostly propped up by Shi Xueman. The moment she left, the city fell apart and was no longer able to even protect its snow lava.

Now that Ai Hui was injured, he only needed to beware of Master Dou.

Cheng Ningfeng still didn't dare to be careless. With a tensed state of mind he carefully crossed over the wall, ready to counter any sneak attack from within the city at all times.

But there was nothing.

The city streets were empty and all the lights were lit.

Unknowingly, a wisp of cold air rose within his heart. The empty city was like the bottomless and ferocious mouth of a beast, waiting for its prey to drop in.

Cheng Ningfeng composed himself by exhaling a deep breath. These people were just trying to scare him. How was this empty city stratagem going to frighten anybody? Ultimately it all boiled down to the size of their fists and speed of their swords.

Just then, he heard an indistinct sword chime.

It sounded from a faraway place.

Above... a mountain top?

Cheng Ningfeng subconsciously raised his head and looked in the direction of the noise. All he saw was a sword ray.

A bright snow-like silver sword ray descended, and in that instant lit up the blue dome of heaven. Even the city lights were suppressed and dimmed in comparison.

What was that!

Cheng Ningfeng’s pupils shrank and reflected a faint silver ray.

The silver light flashed and the sword ray was right in front of him, effectively illuminating the fearful look of despair on his face.

What… what is this?

Cheng Ningfeng's mind went black. He was even unable to associate this silver light, which was as thick as a bowl, with the sword ray!

His body was motionless. The thick and solid sword ray had pierced through his body effortlessly.

He stared blankly in that position like a clay puppet. The bowl sized hole in his chest made it possible for one to see the ground behind him and the bottomless pit that was in the ground.

The blood in his body hadn't had time to splash out from his wound.

The sharp whistling sound came late and was accompanied by a wild airflow, exploding into Cheng Ningfeng's body. Cheng Ningfeng's body was like a frail cloth puppet, instantly ripped apart into countless pieces. Bloodrain sprayed and splattered onto the wall.

The night resumed its deathly stillness.

Fishback City's lights were still brightly lit.

The Xiahou brothers, still lying in ambush behind the rock, were

thoroughly shaken up.

"Mountain top. The sword ray came from up there!"

"Must be a kind of sword formation!"

The two exchanged gazes and saw the fear in each other's eyes. They did not manage to get a clear look at that sword strike, which was exceptionally rare for Masters.

Richly experienced players most feared the unknown. No matter how powerful an enemy was, he must have a vulnerable point so it was possible to find a solution. On the other hand, the unknown meant that the enemy was unpredictable.

On the mountain top, the night breeze was slightly cooling.

The Metal Basket Sword Pagoda was like an ugly steel monster, entrenching itself on a big rock and coldly looking down on the preys beneath.

The Sword of Lightning members cheered and were heartened. That black shadow was their first victory, so everybody was feeling excited. Before, they were worried about the uncertain future of Sword of Lightning, but now they were finally able to set aside their worries.

The Metal Basket Sword Pagoda was a little ugly, but also very practical and provided effective defense.

While it wasn’t as ferocious and changeable as God-subduing Peak when it came to attack and defense, its attacking power was decent.

Everyone’s faces were filled with joy. Combat strength was the key to surviving in this chaotic world. Even Gu Xuan couldn’t contain his happiness. If they knew that the black shadow they’d just killed was Black Fog Wolf, Cheng Ningfeng, they would be even more shocked.

Seeing that everyone was getting overly excited Ai Hui coughed softly. "Get ready for the next wave of attack."

The crowd gradually calmed down.

A sword chime rang again.

Fail!

Ai Hui shook his head inwardly. More training was needed. Everyone was too agitated and had yet to recompose themselves. Over thirty people had slipped.

Such a high rate of error hadn’t appeared in a long time.

But Ai Hui did not blame the members, as he could understand their excitement. Elites weren’t trained and created overnight.

Members who made a mistake looked ashamed and somewhat embarrassed.

Again!

A sword chime rang.

Another failure. Although everybody was trying hard to calm themselves down, there were still five who made a mistake.

Training and actual battle were simply too different. A ninety percent success rate could be achieved in training, but in actual combat, having a sixty to seventy percent success rate was already not bad.

The Xiahou brothers exchanged looks, their eyes flickering.

"Sword formation indeed! Powerful, but not always successful."

"Three failures, one success."

Both were seasoned battlers and understood what methods would be more suitable when dealing with such attacks. They remained still, however. If they could understand this fact, the rest could too.

Indeed, a few shadows rose and shot toward the mountain top like lightning.

They had already realized that Fishback City was a bait used to attract their attention, and that Ai Hui's sword formation was placed above the mountain since it provided them with an optimal view.

But no matter how powerful, what was the use of a sword formation that succeeded only once out of four tries?

Seeing the shadows dashing along the mountain range, the members in the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda on the mountain top immediately became restless.

Just then, Ai Hui's calm voice fell into their ears. "Everybody shut your eyes."

The members were stunned, but immediately shut their eyes and soon quietened down. Their breaths became more stable and calm.

Ai Hui's unclosed eyes shone brightly, like the stars in the sky.

Another sword chime rang.

Brush! The swords moved as one, a sword ray appeared with a rippling effect.

The bright sword ray lit up the sky once again, illuminating the faraway range of mountains.

The sword ray slashed across the sky, leaving a dazzling light scar in the darkness.

An approaching shadow seemed to have detected it and hurriedly morphed its body. The audience only felt blinded for a second before a few more shadows appeared by its side.

Xiahou Jie couldn’t help but shout, "Good!"

He’d already recognized that shadow. Thousand Shadow Blade, Yue Chongyang!

Yue Chongyang was a Master and his Path of Master was [Doppelganger]. He could transform into many difficult to distinguish bodies. Yue Chongyang combined his body splitting techniques perfectly with blade techniques to form the unique [Thousand Shadow Blade]. The moment it was fully put to use, the blade rays would be like waves, stacked layer upon layer, making it difficult for people to recognize and making them fall deep into them.

Seeing Yue Chongyang displaying [Thousand Shadow Blade] at such a crucial moment, Xiahou Jie couldn’t control his cheer.

The sky-breaking sword ray was like lightning, but difficult for the naked eye to catch.

It pierced through a shadow.

Everybody held their breaths unknowingly. They were full of anticipation. It must be a fail! There were over ten shadows in the sky so there was no way for them to identify the real one.

It must be a miss...

The next moment, the shadows in the sky simultaneously popped and disappeared like bubbles.

All that was left was the stupefied shadow of a man staring at the bowl sized wound on his chest, face full of disbelief. He hadn't had time to figure out how the enemy was able to identify his real body as the delayed sharp sword whistle, accompanied by the surging airflow, had already struck his body like a heavy hammer.

Boom!

In midair, Yue Chongyang's body instantly ripped apart, triggering a bloodrain. It was a bloody sight.

The other shadows that had moved together with him became sluggish as their minds temporarily went blank. Compared to Cheng Ningfeng, Thousand Shadow Blade Yue Chongyang had been much stronger. He'd been a Master.

Furthermore, Yue Chongyang was killed while executing [Thousand Shadow Blade]. It was much more shocking and impactful compared to what had happened to Cheng Ningfeng.

Ai Hui stood tall above the sword pagoda on the mountain top. He looked down, grief and joy absent from his eyes.

The sword cloud within his body flowed slowly. Everything that was happening around him surfaced from within his heart in an inverted manner. Ai Hui hadn’t heard of Thousand Shadow Blade, Yue Chongyang, but that split body elemental energy transformation left him astonished nevertheless.

It was an extremely imaginative Path of Master!

If it had been the past him, he wouldn’t have been able to identify the real body.

But today he could do it because he was able to "see" not just elemental energy.

There was no elemental energy in Ai Hui’s body, but he was exposed to a different sky. At this point his heart was exceptionally calm and free. He raised Edgeless Sword and instructed, "Get ready for the next wave."

Ai Hui’s calm was contagious. Everybody threw aside distracting thoughts and shut their eyes, gathering all their focus.

A sword chime rang once again.

The people below snapped out of their dazed state.

A sky-breaking sword ray!

Yet another shadow had been struck by the sword ray. A sword whistle and airflow followed immediately, causing the body to rip apart. Blood sprinkled all over the night sky.

Fear appeared on the face of the remaining shadow. He suddenly turned around to flee.

Only fear was left in his heart. He'd never seen such a powerful sword formation. It reminded him of God-subduing Peak! Yes, the sword formation on the mountain top reminded him of the irrepressible God-subduing Peak.

He'd only covered a few hundred meters when a sword ray tore across the sky.

It penetrated his body and shot into the darkness in front.

Clap! His body shattered.

The Xiahou brothers were ashen-faced as they realized that they had bumped into a tough situation.

Central Pine Valley actually had such a powerful sword formation!

They, too, had been reminded of God-subduing Peak, as only it could match a terrifying force like this. Thus far, only Skyheart City, which was under Elders Guild's control, could refine God-subduing Peaks. Other cities weren't able to do so.

God-subduing Peak was the strongest weapon in Beyond Avalon.

Yet, another comparable rival had appeared: this unknown sword formation.

What exactly was Central Pine Valley's background? How could it possibly have such a powerful weapon? Finally they understood that the powerful figures outside had all underestimated the Central Pine Faction.

No one dared to think about snow lava anymore. As compared to this nameless sword formation, snow lava was simply insignificant.

Their biggest problem now was to figure out a safe way to escape!

Chapter 506: Blazing Shooting Star

Compared to the frightened people at the foot of the mountain, those in the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda were much calmer. Closing their eyes and listening carefully to the sword chime, they sensed the aura Ai Hui gave out.

This faint aura was a new change that emerged after Ai Hui was severely injured.

The aura was very weak, like a gentle wind revolving around the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda. If he were to walk out of the pagoda, it would become undetectable. Gu Xuan was the first to sense Ai Hui's aura. Everyone else only realized it after they were told.

Later on, everyone also realized that the special wave motion that Ai Hui emitted could help them with their rhythm and synchronization.

They had not expected to have already acclimated themselves to the countless bizarre conditions that Ai Hui's body had been going through. Only Gu Xuan was aware that this unusual undulation wasn't an elemental energy wave motion.

Could this be the reason why Ai Hui was able to control numerous sword gleams?

Gu Xuan started paying more attention to this mystical wave motion. Gradually, he realized that this wisp of weak aura could more easily resonate with a sword. In reality, it was not the

swordsmen who felt the aura, but the swords in their hands that responded to it.

How amazing!

Gu Xuan was astonished that such magical swordplay actually existed. It was to the extent that he was uncertain if this aura could be categorized as a type of swordplay.

At this moment, Gu Xuan was even more in tune with his perception. Many details that were usually difficult to detect during actual combat were now like cobblestones exposed on a dried riverbed.

Yet another sword chime sounded.

Everyone almost instinctively waved their swords.

Those who were watching from the foot of the mountain witnessed this bizarre sight. Layers of sword gleams were lit and piled up like shiny toothpicks, forming a small hill. Seven sword-gleam-made hills at different heights illuminated the mountain peak.

The next moment, all the sword gleams converged.

They gathered so quickly that it was difficult for the naked eye to detect. Even with their eyes wide open, they couldn’t figure how the sword gleams came together. Like silver lightning, a dazzling

gleam tore across the night sky and was reflected in their eyes.

A blood-curdling screech echoed!

A sharp sword hiss followed that almost ruptured their eardrums. 300 meters away, east of where the Xiahou brothers stood, a rock exploded together with some flesh.

The brothers' faces were ashen, their palms wet with sweat.

If the targets of that sword gleam had been them, would they have been able to dodge it?

Unlikely...

Trembling in fear, Xiahou Jie asked in a low voice, "How does he know?"

They hadn't sensed the presence of those who had been hiding behind the rocks so close to them, yet Ai Hui, who was at the mountain summit, had actually located them. Xiahou Jie was dumbfounded, as if he'd seen a ghost.

Xiahou Jun was terrified as well. He'd thought that this would be a battle between hunters. Who would've known that the real enemy was actually the prey whom they'd thought was harmless.

Another terrifying sword gleam struck, ripping through the air

and darkness.

Almost simultaneously, a loud scream sounded, but was drowned by the sharp sword chime. The sound of exploding bodies destroyed the Xiahou brothers' last wisp of fighting spirit.

"Withdraw!" Xiahou Jun ordered without the least bit of hesitation, not placing their faith on luck.

Like a flash of lightning, both leapt off their feet.

Not only the two of them, but all the other ambushers couldn't care less, fleeing away in disarray. Everyone was very experienced, so their escape routes were meticulously chosen and the distance between them had increased. Some of them directly soared into the sky, while others stayed close to the ground, taking cover and frantically escaping in a zigzag pattern.

Ai Hui, who was in the sword pagoda, had bandages covering his face, so one wouldn't be able to determine his expression. However, it could be seen from his exposed eyes that he was looking coldly at those furiously fleeing figures at the foot of the mountain.

The Edgeless Sword in his hand was as before, its rhythm unaffected. Methodically arranged, a sword chime sounded.

Under the stimulation of victory, the others were in an exceptional state and practically made no mistakes. Wave after

wave of sword gleams repeatedly lit up like a tide.

The steel monster situated atop the big rock on the mountain peak spat fatal sword gleams, ceaselessly claiming lives like a machine.

Gu Xuan was one of the few who managed to stay clear-headed. He was the strongest, so he felt the impact the deepest. His sword moves were regular and thorough, still without any elegance. The sword moves remained simple and crude, but everybody increased their speed. Their rhythm became increasingly coordinated, and the sword gleams' resonance also strengthened.

The sword gleams were much finer than before, but their light was more condensed and substantial. They had become much more powerful and mighty.

Ai Hui's rhythm was calm and unruffled in the midst of chaos, as if he had no regard for those escaping enemies.

Gu Xuan knew that wasn't the case, but rather, Ai Hui had already gained complete control over the situation. The intervals between each wave of attack were brief and negligible.

Perfect sword gleam!

Executing the perfect sword gleam was something they found difficult to achieve in daily training. Yet, it was so effortless during battle.

Gu Xuan knew that this was because Ai Hui wasn't holding anything back at this point!

Ai Hui never used his full strength during daily trainings. Gu Xuan's impression of Ai Hui had become more enigmatic. He was still unaware of how Ai Hui could've possibly noticed the enemies.

Looking at the desperate escapees being eliminated by Ai Hui, Gu Xuan suddenly realized the reason Ai Hui ordered them to light up the whole of Fishback City.

Fishback City was the bait.

This bait's purpose wasn't to expose the hidden enemies, but to lure and gather them into the vicinity. In other words, Ai Hui had long since noticed and locked onto these targets.

He also used the city as bait in order to bring the enemies closer to them while increasing their escaping distance.

Ai Hui had planned to get rid of every single one of them right from the start!

Gu Xuan was frightened by his realization. Goosebumps appeared all over his body. This... was too scary. Among the many infiltrators, there wasn't a lack of Masters, so where did Ai Hui get all that confidence from?

"Gu Xuan."

Ai Hui's voice wasn't loud, but Gu Xuan was startled nevertheless. He quivered and quickly looked toward Ai Hui. There weren't any walls to obstruct the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda, so he could see him immediately.

Ai Hui looked at him and only saw a head wrapped up in bandages and a pair of inquiring eyes.

Gu Xuan immediately squeezed a slight smile out to express an apology and to indicate he was all right. He, himself, was probably unaware that he now had more respect toward Ai Hui.

These few waves of attacks had been perfect.

In terms of effectiveness, they were also perfect and not one sword missed. Nine sword gleams claimed more than nine lives, including Masters and pseudo Masters.

Ai Hui was also very pleased. The might of the sword pagodas was much better than he'd expected. It also proved that Masters could be eliminated through cooperation as long as suitable methods were employed.

Of course, if someone else was in his position, the result would not have been as ideal. After all, locking onto a Master was an extremely challenging task.

Ai Hui wasn’t affected by changes in elemental energy, so he could easily lock onto a Master. It wouldn’t be so easy for other elementalists. Nevertheless, the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda’s formidable power had been validated.

Gu Xuan’s guess was accurate. Ai Hui’s plan, all along, was to wipe the enemies out.

So far, the battle tempo was completely under his control and moving according to his plan.

The enemies had no chance.

If they had been brave enough to close in on the mountain peak from different directions and sacrifice some lives, Ai Hui and the others would’ve been the ones being massacred.

However, fundamental trust was lacking between enemies. The first thought upon meeting with danger was to wait for others to make a move first while they fled. Joining forces was impossible.

If they had all moved as a team, Ai Hui wouldn’t have been this reckless.

But this time, he won the bet.

Only three enemies were left, and the furthest one was already six miles away. Ai Hui wasn’t anxious, however. Instead, he instructed, "Take 10 breaths and get ready for the second form."

Everybody shuddered and quickly recalibrated their state of mind.

Earlier, they had executed the first form, which Ai Hui had given a name that they simply didn't know how to evaluate. It was called the [Great Sword Gleam].

Had he come up with that name just because the converged gleams appeared very big?

Even this perfunctory name was in line with Ai Hui's style.

The second form had a much better name: [Blazing Shooting Star].

All right, it was equally perfunctory.

The second form was pretty complicated as the long swords in their hands had to undergo three changes. Other than that, the pace was similar. They had to complete a swing of the sword as they turned their bodies while standing in their own positions.

This was exactly why the training for the second move was much more challenging.

The slight increase in difficulty of the second move would make it a few times harder for more than 200 swordsmen to move in

sync.

The chance of success for the [Blazing Shooting Star] sword gleam was currently only about 60 percent, despite their diligent daily training.

On the other hand, their chance of success for the first form, [Great Sword Gleam],

was more than 90 percent. They rarely failed.

Everyone shuddered upon being told to get ready for the second form. Even Gu Xuan threw away all distracting thoughts, composed himself, and focused wholeheartedly.

He knew that inattention would easily lead to failure.

10 breaths passed in the blink of an eye.

Everybody maintained rapt attention as another sword chime sounded, this one completely different from before. Each sword form produced different sword chimes. The second form of the sword gleam was shorter, but more intense.

Hula. A ring of sword light appeared and curled around everybody.

Failure.

Ai Hui’s eyes remained still. With a light tremble of his Edgeless Sword, another sword chime echoed.

A sword gleam shot up into the sky like fireworks.

The fireworks kept soaring, but the gleam gradually dimmed and eventually disappeared.

At almost the same time, a grain-sized speck of light appeared over Xiahou Jie’s head. It fell rapidly and grew increasingly brighter. In the blink of an eye, it illuminated the sky like a meteor.

Xiahou Jun eyes were about to pop out. "Dodge it!"

Xiahou Jie did not hear his brother’s voice. He only noticed that there seemed to be a sun rising overhead, casting his shadow onto the snow-white ground before him.

What is this...

Chapter 507: Brewing Storm

A whistle sounded from overhead.

This sword whistle was of a different kind of sharpness. It rumbled, heavy as thunder, causing even the sky to tremble.

The illuminated ground before him swayed continuously. Xiahou Jie's shadow extended amid the constant shaking.

Xiahou Jie subconsciously tilted his head toward the sky. His body turned rigid.

An eye-piercing light ray rapidly magnified in his eyes. The light ray was so intense that he shut his eyes automatically, his mind blanking out.

What... swordplay is this?

The light ray descended so quickly that he was unable to react and could only watch it approach him at an alarming speed.

He was not even able to make out its shape since there was only light in his field of view. Bright, white light.

Xiahou Jie's final impression of the world was just a sheet of white. Endless bright light, like an ocean of light that he was unable to break free from.

Lost amid the boundless white light, his world gradually turned into complete darkness and emptiness.

Seeing his brother being struck and killed by the sword ray with his own eyes, Xiahou Jun's tears overflowed. They were twin brothers and had a telepathic connection from a young age. Since they hadn't been separated before, the pain he felt right now was as if his body and heart had been ripped apart.

In order to escape, they had deliberately distanced themselves, resulting in him being unable to provide support in time.

He simply hadn't thought about how he could save his brother.

Once again, fireworks started rising from the faraway mountain top.

Xiahou Jun felt emotional. He stopped in his tracks, turned around, and looked toward the sky.

Out of nowhere, a spot of silver light like an unremarkable looking star appeared overhead, but in the blink of an eye, it suddenly and rapidly increased in size.

From darkness to glaring brightness, it only took an instant.

The dazzling white light ray was so piercing that it blinded him

like a silver ocean would.

He grinned, hysteria evident in his face. He roared wildly, "Bring it on!"

The surrounding elemental energy gathered toward him like a tide. His body was like a balloon, frantically expanding.

Not only did his eyes reflect the piercing silver light, the reflection of a crazy, angry sea of fire could be seen as well.

Before, there would have been another surge of elemental energy that echoed with his, but now, he was all alone. The space around him, within a 10 meter radius, became bright red.

The devilish red flames were like the tongues of many monsters, sticking out from the emptiness and licking his body.

Xiahou Jun stood in mid air, his legs spread out in a slight squat, as if there was an invisible floor beneath his feet. He clenched his right hand into a fist and turned his body slightly to one side. His entire figure was like a drawn bow.

The devilish red fire traces swifty appeared on his cheeks, causing his sinister grin to look even more terrifying and demonic.

The flames circled around his clenched fist.

He released a punch toward the sky!

The red fist beam shot skyward like a fire pillar. The deafening whizz was about to burn through the blue dome of heaven.

[Yin Flaming Earth Fist]!

This was his Path of Master, originating from hollow Yin fire. Xiahou Jie's path was the exact opposite–[Yang Flaming Heaven Fist]!

A pity…

The devilish red fist beam collided with the sharp silver sword ray without the least bit of pretense.

Boom!

A blazing light ball blossomed abruptly, illuminating the whole Blackfish Mouth mountain range as if it was daytime.

On the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda, the swordsmen shook. There was a rising mist since they were all sweating profusely. Their heavy pants filled the air as their evaporated sweat formed a fog that enveloped the whole pagoda.

Not only was steam rising from Ai Hui's body, his mouth was filled with a salty bloody taste as he stifled a groan.

His body was weaker than an average elementalist, but he had been dealt a more impactful blow, so he was immediately injured.

"Take three breaths and get ready. Once more."

Ai Hui’s voice was rather hoarse, but his tone remained the same. There was unwavering vigor in his eyes, as if the previous blow had had no impact on him.

The other members could feel Ai Hui’s determination. They spontaneously adjusted their breathing and the raging elemental energy within their bodies.

Three breaths passed in an instant.

The oscillations of the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda stopped as it returned to its original calm. A calm before the storm. Everyone was waiting to take action after having accumulated energy and power. They were like drawn bows waiting to release their arrows.

A brief, but intense, sword chime sounded again.

252 curling sword rays accompanied 252 pairs of hands as they turned and raised their swords, as if adorning a heavy black steel monster with a layer of fine bright silver chain mail.

Fireworks rose in the sky.

Xiahou Jun's body was covered with blood. He looked up at the mountain peak, which was silent for a brief moment before firework-like sword rays exploded. He grinned.

He knew he wasn't going to escape today.

He simply stayed where he was, motionless.

The weak were prey for the strong, and his life was about to come to an end. He thought about how he'd committed all sorts of evil deeds in his life. He killed people without feeling any emotions. Such a happy life—not at all bad!

Dying together with his brother and dying under such an exceptional weapon. What was there to be displeased about?

He thought about how shocking this would be for the world. Panicked and lost faces appeared before him.

He laughed out loud, like the hooting of owls, reckless and egotistical. His voice pervaded his surroundings.

The dazzling silver light blossomed overhead and became increasingly brighter, illuminating his malevolent, wild, and bloodstained face. Cast on the ground, his shadow trembled intensely like a candle flame in the wind.

The sword ray descended like a meteorite.

The silver light ray swallowed up that willful and brash shadow, leaving not the smallest trace.

The last remaining enemy had long lost his last trace of resistance and willpower. He shook like a sieve. He raised both arms in the direction of the faraway Blackfish Mouth Volcano. He plopped down on his knees and cried out incoherently with all the strength he had left, "Surrender! I surrender! I surrender!"

A few miles away, Blackfish Mouth Volcano was like an incomprehensible monster occupying its territory. The brightly lit Fishback City was like the monster’s mocking eyes.

He was filled with fear and had no courage left. He had seen with his own eyes how more reputable experts had fallen one after another in front of him. He was about to have a mental break down.

Xiahou Jun’s death was the final blow to his already tensed state of mind.

He broke down completely.

Another firework rose into the sky from that faraway mountain.

His body stiffened, his pale face full of despair. He cried frantically, "No, no, no, I surrender, I surrender. I’ve already

surrendered. What else do you want..."

The light ray above his head shone down on his lifeless face and shadow as well as on that helpless despair.

The light ray swallowed everything before the night sky resumed its darkness.

Ai Hui exhaled a deep breath atop the mountain. "Battle over."

His tensed mind loosened and an intense dizziness took over. He tottered and almost fell over, but managed to grab ahold of the pagoda railing before stabilizing himself.

"Boss, are you alright?"

"Are you okay, Boss?"

Members around quickly noticed Ai Hui's condition and gathered around, faces full of concern.

Lou Lan squeezed his way through with a transparent jade green bamboo pipe. "Medicine, Ai Hui."

Inside the bamboo pipe was an inky black medicinal syrup. Ai Hui removed the cork and gulped it down in one shot. As the syrup entered his throat, he felt a rush of painful heat, as if it was about to burn up. Immediately after, a slight chill gushed to his brain.

Ai Hui felt a burst of energy. "Thank you, Lou Lan."

Lou Lan replied happily, "It’s what I should do."

With a slight cheer in his tone, Ai Hui instructed, "Go clean up the battlefield, the enemies have been crushed."

After a short pause came earth-shattering cheers.

Many of them were completely exhausted, depleted of both elemental energy and physical strength. They plopped down onto the ground with a silly smile on their faces. Members who still had some strength left dove down the mountain like a nest of bees.

Ai Hui stood on the highest point of the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda, fixing his gaze far away.

It had been a close call. The final enemy had almost left his perceptive region. If not for the fact that he had been too scared and chose to surrender, Ai Hui would’ve only been able to watch him as he fled.

Wiping out all the enemies hadn’t been Ai Hui’s plan, but a choice he’d made since he realized he had such a large range of perception.

There were many advantages to wiping out all of the enemies.

One could imagine how the outside world would reevaluate their judgment of the Central Pine Valley's combat power. More importantly, they had no information about the valley, so they would refrain from acting rashly.

Thus, Ai Hui had killed that last surrendering elementalist without any hesitation.

Ai Hui was different from Master Dou and Yang Xiaodong. He had yet to recover and was no longer a Master. He could bring out the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda's power, but once he left it, he became a weakling unable to even truss a chicken.

Accommodating a foreign Master at this point was risky since any moment of disloyalty would put Ai Hui into an extremely dangerous situation.

Ai Hui knew just how frail he was.

They would finally have time in future to lead a more peaceful life, so this period was extremely crucial.

This battle had shocked and impacted Ai Hui greatly as well. He was aware that the warfare level of the world had gone up a notch.

Although the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda was his own design, even he, himself, had not expected it to be this mighty!

He could imagine how this battle would trigger all new warfare innovations if the outside world knew about it.

The position of Masters would weaken significantly since ordinary elementalists would be able to increase their combat power intrinsically through accumulation and practice, just like the pagoda.

The God-subduing Peak required a Master to control, but the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda was a step more advanced. It was cheap to construct and did not require a Master to control it. Ai Hui also firmly believed that there were many other ways to verify this fact.

He even wondered if a Metal Basket Sword Pagoda full of Masters would be able to contend against a Grandmaster.

He did not know, but felt it wasn't impossible. It was difficult for him to imagine what kind of scene would unfold when a sword pagoda formed by a group of Masters completed its attack.

If it was successful, the current idea that Grandmasters were supreme would be subverted. The reason why Grandmasters were at the top was because their strength had reached another realm. A realm that human strength and accumulation could not defeat.

Ai Hui felt a storm brewing.

What would future battles become? He did not know, but what

he knew was that future battles would undergo major changes.

It was this vague premonition that made Ai Hui determined to not let off any enemies. He had to protect the secret of the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda.

He wasn’t ready. The Sword of Lightning wasn’t ready.

Chapter 508: Spirits of the Deceased

Mo Wu felt rather anxious. According to the plan, the Xiahou brothers should have returned that day, but there was still no trace of them so far.

Mo Wu was in charge of receiving the brothers. He was An Chouchou's trusted aide. Boss had given him such an important mission, displaying that he was highly regarded. He was also trying hard to maximize his contribution and merit. Among Boss's subordinates, there were quite a few rivals, so Mo Wu needed to be dauntless and active at all times.

Success or failure?

Regardless, he wanted to at least see them.

Not seeing them was Mo Wu's biggest fear.

Could it be that the brothers became greedy after obtaining the Snow Lava? Or were they spies? Or were they thinking about starting a bidding war?

Or perhaps they came into conflict with others and got injured?

Mo Wu thought it possible that the brothers were injured, but highly unlikely that they were both killed. Their individual abilities were considered decent among Masters, but when they fought together, their telepathic connection increased their power

significantly. At least three or four Masters had to join hands in order to take the two of them down.

Mo Wu was of the opinion that no competitor would send three or four Masters out at this time.

Even Skyheart City was unable to do so since it was preparing for the appearance of Dai Gang.

After some thought, Mo Wu decided that betrayal was the most probable result, which made him fidgety.

He waited yet another day, but the brothers did not show up. Unable to wait any longer, Mo Wu decided to go investigate for himself.

He bumped into a few passersby who looked to be in a hurry. They sized one another up before lowering their heads and continuing on their journeys. Mo Wu remained expressionless, but was inwardly shocked. He was very familiar with the aura of these people. They were all in the same line of work.

Could it be that these people were like him...

This conjecture made him shiver. He dared not overthink. Instead, he hastened on with his journey with his head lowered.

After two consecutive days of traveling, he finally arrived at Lemon Camping Ground. He'd been here before disguised as a

merchant, so he was very familiar with this place.

Lemon Camping Ground was empty. The houses were in ruins and there were no survivors.

Mo Wu kept a straight face. People in this trade were all trained to have a heart of stone. When he was discussing strategy with the Xiahou brothers, he'd suggested not sparing any lives. This matter was simply too sensitive and a storm would be generated if outsiders found out. Silencing everyone would reduce the risk of information being leaked.

He walked inside and a shadow suddenly dashed in front of him. It was a passerby from before.

His face was full of fear and panic as he practically staggered his way into the camping ground.

Mo Wu crinkled his brows. Did the Xiahou brothers turn this place into a bloody mess? They were hot-tempered and murderous, unable to stop once initiated.

He walked to the center of the camping ground, wondering if he should bury the corpses.

Reaching the center, he was stunned.

It was completely empty, save for a tall wooden board about the height of a man that was stuck into the ground. On it was a row of

words written in blood.

"Masters and elementalists, 20 dead. Here, in Lemon Camping Ground, lie the spirits of the deceased gentlemen!

The big bloody words were written recklessly and brashly. It was a sight that shocked the eyes and pierced the heart.

Before the board was a pile of offerings, which included some remnant clothing, melted chunks of weapons, broken limbs, and so on.

A chill ran down his spine, and his limbs were ice-cold, as if he'd entered an icehouse.

He suppressed his fear, bent down, and started rummaging through the offerings. He caught sight of a broken cloth that was of a unique quality. On it was an embroidered wolf and the words "Black Fog Wolf, Cheng Ningfeng."

There was also a broken section of a blade with a transparent crystal hilt that had a fine ribbing pattern.

Mo Wu was astonished. He recognized this blade.

It was... [Thousand Shadow Blade], Yue Chongyang's shadow blade!

Mo Wu was more than familiar about all news regarding reputable Masters, so he was certain he had not misidentified this object.

Yue Chongyang was a real Master.

Mo Wu, who continued sifting through the items, was dumbfounded. He saw two halves of a command token, which were the Xiahou brothers' keepsakes.

Mo Wu kept them, his face pale as sheet as he turned around and staggered away.

Exactly how many Masters died here?

Who did it?

The storm that blew over Lemon Camping Ground quickly swept across the whole of Beyond Avalon.

Initially, Mo Wu verified three Masters, but after some inquiries from all parties, the count went up to five. The other seven were reputable experts like the Black Fog Wolf Cheng Ningfeng, who was a pseudo Master.

One could well imagine the intense aftermath this triggered.

Everyone felt it most likely that Le Buleng had decided to wipe

them out with a sudden attack. They believed that no one else could possibly take down five Masters and seven pseudo Masters with no survivors.

Indeed, none were spared.

It had to be said that if a Master wanted to escape, he wouldn’t be easily killed unless his abilities were far inferior to his enemy. This was especially the case for a Master like the Thousand Shadow Blade Yue Chongyang, whose split body technique was his life saving skill.

But he, too, had perished.

The Central Pine Valley had become unfathomable overnight.

Everyone sent out huge groups of investigators in hopes of getting to the bottom of things, but gained little.

An Chouchou asked with a grave face, "Any results?"

Mo Wu brought the two pieces of the command token. Their melted surface served as a decent clue.

Mo Wu reported respectfully, "The preliminary report is out. It was some kind of high temperature swordsmanship. We found a concentrated sword aura on the tokens. This swordsmanship is shockingly powerful and the Xiahou brothers might have already been reduced to dust. The tokens were preserved only because of

their unique quality."

An Chouchou was rather surprised. "Swordsmanship?"

While swordsmanship had been flourishing over the past few years and there had been rising master swordsmen like Karakorum Polaris, such a powerful sword technique had been unheard of.

Perhaps a new master swordsman had emerged?

He sighed. "Isn’t Ai Hui a powerful swordsman too? I heard he was injured?"

Mo Wu hurriedly replied, "Do you remember the battle between Ai Hui and the Grass Bandits? They poisoned Ai Hui with Night Moth Fruit for revenge."

An Chouchou became excited. "Night Moth Fruit?"

"An accurate piece of news I bought from the guards of the Lu Residence’s caravan." Mo Wu added, "In order to withstand the toxin, Ai Hui flew into the cloud layer and borrowed the force of lightning. Although he managed to suppress the toxicity of the fruit, he sustained severe injuries and almost became a cripple. The sword aura left on the tokens contained no aura of lightning, so it can be concluded that Ai Hui wasn’t involved."

An Chouchou nodded in approval. "So it was someone else."

Mo Wu continued, "Boss is wise. Ai Hui is an expert in the sword, he invented Sword of Lightning, and his swordsmanship isn't completely without his teacher's art. We suspect that this mysterious powerful expert might be Ai Hui's teacher."

An Chouchou nodded. "There has been a lot of news focused on the Central Pine Valley. Do not act blindly."

"Yes!"

Mo Wu departed, and An Chouchou's expression turned ugly.

He felt the ache of losing the Xiahou brothers. Losing two Masters was a disastrous injury to suffer.

He couldn't help but sigh.

From the bottom of his heart, he had never wanted to touch the Central Pine Valley. Insead, he was impressed by Ai Hui and his gang. Now that he had power over Newlight City, he faced unimaginably extreme pressure. Newlight City had weak foundations and declining financial resources, leaving him with no choice but to seek other ways of making money.

If not for this desperation, he wouldn't have wanted to seize the snow lava since it was a heinous crime.

Not only was Newlight City facing fiscal problems, it was also very vulnerable in other aspects. Skyheart City had the three central divisions, Master's Glory, the Sky Edge and Infantry Divisions, and God-subduing Peaks.

Thus, Newlight City was much weaker in terms of prestige and power. This was an all around weakness. In time, the disparity between the two parties would only increase.

An Chouchou was worried sick.

Madam Ye was an extremely ambitious senior and was still cleaning out the central divisions. The situation would change after she was done. If she was able to obstruct Dai Gang this time, her influence would inevitably and sharply increase.

When that happened, the whole New Citizen Faction might collapse the moment she offered the new citizens slight benefits.

The situation right now seemed calm, but in actual fact, the water was starting to heat up and bubble.

An Chouchou couldn't contain his anxiety as he sighed once again. He walked into the sunlight and gazed at the faraway Windy Resonant Pagoda, praying inwardly.

Things would only change if Great Elder Yuchi became a Grandmaster.

.....

Skyheart City, the Dread Division's camp.

Madam Ye looked at Le Buleng and Wan Shenwei from afar. Their friendly match had attracted the attention of the whole camp.

Skyheart City had prepared a luxurious resting place for Le Buleng, but he never stayed over. Instead, he was always hanging out in the Dread Division's camp, looking for people to swap pointers with.

The three central divisions were very mysterious to him. As someone who was obsessed with training, Le Buleng wasn't willing to waste any time at all.

All distinguished experts in the division had been challenged by him. He was stronger than them, but it didn't matter. He would restrict his abilities when fighting.

To him, this kind of challenge was fun and interesting.

Not wanting to destroy Skyheart City, both contenders dared not engage with too much elemental energy. Even so, their unimaginable utilization of elemental energy was still an eye-opener.

The whole clash went on for two hours before Le Buleng felt

contented and ended it.

Madam Ye went forward and greeted warmly, "Uncle Le."

Seeing Madam Ye, a complicated look flashed across Le Buleng's eyes. In regard to Madam Ye's ways, he felt extremely conflicted. He admired the way she handled certain things, but was also disgusted by some of her actions.

His mixed emotions were made apparent as he spoke somewhat impatiently, "Get straight to the point."

Madam Ye smiled lightly without getting angry. "Does Uncle Le know what just happened in the Central Pine Valley?"

Le Buleng stopped what he was doing and turned around. "Central Pine Valley?"

Madam Ye continued solemnly, "Five Masters and seven powerful experts headed over to the Central Pine Valley a few days back, but none came out alive."

Le Buleng was stunned.

She added, "It's very shocking that the Central Pine Valley has such a powerful expert. In this matter of life and death, it would be good for Beyond Avalon to have extra force and vitality. I wonder if you're able to invite this senior over to join in on the plan to resist Dai Gang?"

As if he’d thought of something, Le Buleng’s expression became strange.

Madam Ye was unable to read him, but she continued sincerely, "If this senior has any conditions, please do let me know and I’ll do what I can, even if it means giving up my seat."

Le Buleng could no longer contain himself. Raising his head, he broke into hearty laughter.

Chapter 509: Sounding Out, Footprint

Lemon Camping Ground.

Qiao Meiqi looked at the desolate camp before him and sighed. He'd been to Lemon Camping Ground before and although it was tattered and small at that time, it was full of vitality. Now, not a soul was in sight.

Only the influential higher-ups were concerned about Lemon Camping Ground. Nevertheless, they were only paying attention to that wooden board and the remnant objects.

Yet, not many were interested in the massacre of Lemon Camping Ground.

To those powerful figures, Lemon Camping Ground was just a small territory with a small population. Dead or alive, it didn't matter to them.

This was times of chaos.

Qiao Meiqi asked himself how many people would care if he died. His eyes regained their coldness. In this chaotic world, there was nothing more important than surviving. Sympathy was worthless.

He was waiting for Ai Hui.

They agreed on Lemon Camping Ground for their transaction location.

Gaining Ai Hui’s trust wasn’t an easy feat. They had a friendly cooperation, but Ai Hui still had reservations.

Qiao Meiqi praised Ai Hui inwardly. He was young, but handled things in a very mature and experienced manner. It was difficult to believe that such a capable fellow had been a laborer.

Still deep in thought, he caught sight of Ai Hui and cried out in alarm, "Your injuries are this bad? I heard you were injured, but did not expect it to be this serious!"

Ai Hui was completely wrapped in bandages except for his eyes, and even then, he looked frail. In the past, Ai Hui’s breaths were long and deep like those of powerful dire beasts. People could feel the force contained within.

Now, his breaths were brief and delicate, a clear sign of his feebleness.

What kind of injuries would have led to this?

It was beyond a Master’s level...

Qiao Meiqi’s heart thumped. He forced a smile. "You look pretty good."

Ai Hui’s clear and tranquil eyes had the ability to attract gazes, as if possessing a strange force.

Although he tried his best to disguise it, Qiao Meiqi’s change in expression did not escape Ai Hui’s notice. Ai Hui did not get angry. Instead, he said frankly, "Yes, I’m back to the same old me overnight."

Qiao Meiqi was a wealthy merchant after all, so his expression quickly returned to normal. He said, smiling, "As the saying goes, a thin camel is still bigger than a horse. You’re still able to cause such a scene despite being severely injured."

He pointed to the wooden board with his mouth.

Among the influential higher ups, this wooden board was even more well known than Ai Hui. The big bloody words did not have the intensity of drawn swords and drawn bows, but it did not conceal its intention to threaten and intimidate.

This was precisely Ai Hui’s style of doing things.

Ai Hui shook his head and spoke, not in an unhappy tone, "It’s already our mistake that they got involved. This is all we could do."

Qiao Meiqi said half seriously, "You’ve outdone yourself. Five Masters. I was shocked stupid and thought that the news was being spread and distorted. Who knew it was actually true. Knowing that

I was coming, many have requested news about you."

Beneath the bandages came Ai Hui's soft laughter. "What news would I have?"

Ai Hui did not spend any more time on this topic. He asked, "Did you bring the stuff?"

The playful look on Qiao Meiqi's face disappeared as he turned serious. "I've gotten most of the goods except for a few materials that are harder to purchase. I'll need more time for those. This is the list of items I've yet to obtain. Take a look. I'll continue thinking of solutions."

Ai Hui retrieved the list and looked through it carefully.

Qiao Meiqi watched him attentively in attempt to obtain clues from his face. However, it was to no avail since Ai Hui's face was covered in bandages. His eyes were expressionless and indifferent.

Ai Hui's list included many types of ingredients. Qiao Meiqi had specially hired somebody to analyze this list, but was still unable to get a clear idea of what these ingredients were for.

Having looked through the list, Ai Hui nodded and kept it. "I'll trust you to get hold of the remaining items."

QIao Meiqi hurriedly replied, "Definitely, definitely."

Ai Hui added, "The snow lava is ready and in a larger quantity this time. I'll trouble you to get these listed items as soon as possible since it's more urgent."

Qiao Meiqi took the list and scanned through it. Seeing that the ingredients were all medicinal he immediately understood. "No problem, I'll get them as quickly as possible."

Seems like Ai Hui's injuries are pretty serious.

Ai Hui expressed his gratitude. "Thank you, Mayor."

Qiao Meiqi laughed, "We're old friends, so it's what I should do! When are you going to take me on a tour around the Central Pine Valley?"

Ai Hui looked at him, half smilingly.

Qiao Meiqi did not know why, but seeing Ai Hui's eyes jolted him. He burst into laughter, saying, "Just a joke, just a joke. I, too, lead a tiring life since I'm short on money."

Ai Hui laughed. "If you're short on money, everyone else is a beggar."

Whatever awkwardness dissolved in this instant.

Qiao Meiqi understood that from a business point of view, working with Ai Hui brought many benefits. He hoped for this to carry on. It was not his place to get involved in other matters.

He couldn’t afford to provoke the others, but neither could he afford to provoke Ai Hui.

If Ai Hui could chop up five Masters, who was he?

This thought soothed his heart and relaxed his posture.

Qiao Meiqi did not stay long. After checking the inventory, he bade farewell and left.

Looking at the disappearing caravan, Gu Xuan spoke up. "This guy seems problematic, Boss."

Ai Hui nodded in agreement. Of course he could tell that something was not right with Qiao Meiqi today. Instead of exposing it, he sighed meaningfully. "Mayor is an intelligent man."

Gu Xuan asked, somewhat puzzled, "Why have you come personally this time, Boss? Your injuries..."

Ai Hui smiled. "How can they feel assured if they don’t see me in this state? How else can we gain more time?"

Gu Xuan pondered over his words.

.....

Along the way, Zu Yan had been observing the Spear of Heavy Cloud.

Having lost his family and struggling to survive in the cold, Zu Yan was no longer a willful and arrogant hedonist. He was much more mature now. He had managed to survive and become a Master all because he had a good teacher.

He knew not how to repay his teacher, but knew that his teacher wasn't in need of his reciprocation.

Teacher had helped him choose this path, so he would continue walking down this path.

In terms of allocation, the Spear of Heavy Cloud was still quite behind the elite battle divisions he'd seen. The member's abilities weren't too great and they were inexperienced, probably their biggest weakness.

Other than these, they had more merits than he'd imagined.

Although the members weren't of a high level, they were willing to work hard without complaining. The fire elementalists were especially hardy, never once complaining about the hardship and weariness they faced.

Having a sturdy and capable backbone served as the basic guarantee of the team's combat power. He could already imagine how these key experts would step out and make the right choice when met with a predicament during battle.

In terms of powerful experts, however, Spear of Heavy Cloud wasn't lacking. Shi Xueman as an individual had strong combat power and, with Yang Xiaodong and Zu Yan, there was a total of three Masters keeping watch. Jiang Wei, Sang Zijun, Qian Dai, and the others were all at the pseudo Master level.

Other than them, there was Wang Xiaoshan, a earth elemental master proficient in construction, who could greatly expand the battle tactics of the Spear of Heavy Cloud.

The most praiseworthy person was Shi Xueman.

The former goddess of the Induction Ground had grown beyond his imagination. Shi Xueman was steady, calm, and spoke eloquently like a general. People in the division had only respect and adoration toward her.

"Down below is the designated region."

Sang Zijun's words captured everybody's attention.

Two days ago, they had met scouts from the Infantry Division and received Silver Soldier's plan. After some discussion and consideration, Shi Xueman had agreed to his battle plan.

They traveled day and night at double speed toward the designated district. According to Silver Soldier’s plan, they were going to lie in ambush together with the Infantry and Sky Edge divisions to surround their enemies.

The lush mountains ahead carried a certain desolation and loneliness. Man had only left the Silver Mist Sea for a few years, yet Nature had already eagerly claimed and expanded its territory. The wild grass and trees had already started to take root in the old cities.

Trekking along the wild made everybody’s heart feel heavy. All of them had at one point lived in the bustling cities of the Avalon of Five Elements. Those splendid lights, endless streams of people, and vehicles like bamboo carts had yet to be forgotten.

Suddenly, Jiang Wei pointed to the valley before them. "Look, there!"

Everybody followed his fingers and saw a huge footprint that was over a mile long. Amid the mountains it formed a low-lying valley.

Everyone became solemn.

Zu Yan mumbled to himself, "Glorious footprints..."

When An Muda died, Zu Yan had been unconscious and wasn’t able to witness it for himself. Now that he’d finally seen it, he

couldn’t help but fall into a daze.

Shi Xueman stared absent-mindedly at the big footprint, her eyes turning red.

Teacher had drawn out the Silver Mist Sea’s elemental energy, causing it to become increasingly tattered. Even those who came over from the Old Territory had no interest in it.

It was said that citizens of the Old Territory had already constructed a bridge over the Lava River and that many of them came pouring in like the tide. Now that the elemental energy in the Silver Mist Sea and Cloud Palette Village had withered, they gradually returned to the Old Territory.

Without elemental energy, the Silver Mist Sea and Cloud Palette Village were no longer appealing.

Furthermore, dire beasts would occasionally make their way into the Silver Mist Sea and Cloud Palette Village, resulting in major casualties. This was another factor that spurred citizens to return to the Old Territory.

There was no elemental energy in the Old Territory, but there weren’t any powerful dire beasts either.

The Silver Mist Sea was now completely empty and in ruins. Would the city remnants still be around in the times to come?

She recalled what her teacher had said about leaving the Pearblossom Pavilion to her. She decided to tidy up the place after this battle.

Until then...

Shi Xueman clasped her Cirrus tightly as she looked at the footprint between the hills with a steady gaze.

The first battle was about to unfold beneath Teacher’s footprints. Perhaps it was fate. Teacher must be watching over her in heaven.

In that case, she was going to claim her first victory in memory of him.

She shifted her gaze toward Wang Xiaoshan. "I’ll leave the rest to you, Xiaoshan."

Wang Xiaoshan nodded sincerely, "I’ll do my best."

Today, Wang Xiaoshan was a mason who played with mud. His unremarkable looking clothes were still covered in dust, but between his brows lay an indescribable vigor and confidence.

Chapter 510: Pointers

"So he’s really injured?" Gong Chengxiu asked as he fiddled with his wine cup.

Behind him were Han Li and Gong Peiyao.

Ever since Han Li left Clearwater City after having a match with Ai Hui, he’d fallen into an obsession. He became deranged and got lost in the Wilderness. At that time, he was in a semi-conscious state, his body filled with wounds left by dire beasts. Fortunately, he bumped into Gong Peiyao and Venerable Volcano, who were on the way out, and was saved.

Unexpectedly, in the process of looking after Han Li, Gong Peiyao developed feelings for him.

Han Li, who’d just woken up, was no different from a cripple. Even his mind was in an abnormal state, sometimes clear-headed and sometimes crazy. Nevertheless, Gong Peiyao continued taking care of him without wavering, deliberately took her own sweet time on the road, and refused to return home.

Under Gong Peiyao’s meticulous care, Han Li’s injuries fully recovered and so did his state of mind. When his vision regained clarity he had become a master swordsman.

Newly promoted, Han Li’s status naturally rose, and his relationship with Gong Peiyao received Gong Chengxiu’s tacit acceptance.

Qiao Meiqi picked up his cup, gulping the wine down before placing it back on the table. "He’s no longer a Master."

Han Li was astonished. "His base level crumbled?"

The match with Ai Hui had been his turning point. Ai Hui’s sword formation had influenced him greatly. As such, he’d been paying close attention to Ai Hui. To him, rival swordsmen whom he was able to exchange pointers with were few.

Ai Hui was one of those very few.

Qiao Meiqi looked at Han Li. "Worse. His residences and palaces are mostly destroyed. His breaths are brief and weak. His injuries are more serious than rumored. If not for the fact that he’s mentally all right, I would be slightly worried. If I lose this snow lava business, I’ll be earning much less."

Han Li looked disappointed, his heart empty.

Gong Chengxiu sighed and said somewhat regretfully, "What a pity. So it’s not a sword pagoda?"

Qiao Meiqi spread his hands. "That I’m not sure."

Han Li shook his head. "Theoretically speaking, it is possible. A sword pagoda is a kind of sword formation, and there’s no intrinsic

difference. Any sword formation would have an eye, and it must be commanded by a capable and strong expert. It is possible for a sword pagoda to have such might, but only if a master swordsman was commanding it. Ai Hui was poisoned by Night Moth Fruit so even if he survived by luck, he definitely wouldn't be able to endure the pressure of the sword formation."

Gong Peiyao looked dreamily at Han Li. She adored his confidence and frankness.

Gong Chengxiu wrinkled his brows. "Could it be that Ai Hui really has backing?"

Qiao Meiqi reminded, "Isn't that a good thing? At least we are all friends and not enemies."

Gong Chengxiu relaxed his brows and smiled. "That's right! At least we're all friends and not enemies."

The relationship between the Gong Residence and the Central Pine Valley was virtually inseparable. They knew what kind of sword formation Ai Hui was drumming up. Many had already forgotten that Ai Hui was Wang Shouchuan's only student.

The God-subduing Peak originated from Teacher Wang's theories, so how was it inconceivable for Ai Hui to create something similar to the God-subduing Peak?

Others believed there was a powerful and mysterious expert, but

Gong Chengxiu first thought of Ai Hui's sword pagoda.

According to Han Li, this type of weapon would not be operable without a Master. The God-subduing Peak also required a Master to control.

It was not a sword pagoda. Gong Chengxiu was disappointed, but mostly relieved. If there really was a lethal weapon comparable to the God-subduing Peak, would the Gong Residence be able to withstand it? Not only was he after its power, he greatly feared its influence.

A strongly destructive weapon was like an irritable and powerful dire beast. Toward which direction would it toss the Gong Residence?

To glory or to ruins.

.....

Volcanic Crater, Blackfish Mouth Volcano.

Mister Dou was here to check on the Northern Underworld King Tree as usual. Ever since it had been implanted into the volcanic crater, he would come regularly to examine it. He felt a lot of affection for it since it was something that had followed him for a long time after all.

His days in the Central Pine Valley had been very satisfying and

leisurely. He didn’t have to fight and kill or worry about gratitude and grudges. He was just a teacher, conducting lessons for the kids. It was extremely relaxing.

He stopped suddenly. "You’re here."

"Yeah."

Ai Hui raised his head and looked at the Northern Underworld King Tree beside the magma.

The red light beams were like a converging luminous muslin, shooting into the darkness than enveloped the tree. The Northern Underworld King Tree was like a monster that came out of nowhere, opening its mouth and greedily swallowing the light.

Because of the tree’s existence, the volcanic crater was dusky and dim.

As compared to when it was first planted, the tree was much stronger now. It had also started to sprout and grow leaves.

Ai Hui maintained his posture for a long time and found his body aching the moment he was roused by Mister Dou. He laughed bitterly to himself. He hadn’t expected his body to be this weak.

Mister Dou, being extra observant, crinkled his brows. "Have your injuries worsened?"

He’d been satisfied with his life here so far and did not wish for it to be disrupted. In this chaotic world, the key to maintaining such a dreamy lifestyle was to maintain the might of the Central Pine Valley.

Fishback City wasn’t far from the valley. The sword rays from that night had shaken him greatly, but also made him feel at ease.

However, he had not expected that Ai Hui’s injuries would aggravate!

Having stayed in the valley for some time, Mister Dou understood how important Ai Hui was to the Central Pine Faction. His value was beyond what was visible.

Ai Hui smiled bitterly. His injuries had indeed worsened.

Commanding the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda took a toll on his body. Xiahou Jun’s counterattack inflicted great damage. However, the root cause wasn’t this, but the sword cloud.

The sword cloud within his body was a similar existence to that of the sword embryo. If Ai Hui’s body was wood, the sword cloud would be a burning flame. The flame was currently very vigorous, but the wood was inadequate. This was the fundamental cause of his poor health.

Ai Hui had tried many ways to strengthen his body, but to no

avail. It was as if his past tempering methods had all lost their effectiveness overnight. With regard to this, Lou Lan had no ideal solution. At least for now, there were no better methods.

Ai Hui was exceptionally energetic, but his body was declining by the day. Commanding the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda during battle had worsened his condition.

Mister Dou sighed. "Too much lightning has permeated your body, causing it to repel elemental energy. WIthout elemental energy replenishment, your body will only continue to deteriorate."

Ai Hui jolted. "Any ideas, Mister Dou?"

He had to admit that Mister Dou was indeed a seasoned Master, able to locate the problem at first glance.

Mister Dou continued, "You'll have to find another source. In the past, elementalists had falsely believed that the existence of the five elemental energies were involved in all living things. This was merely their opinion. For example, this Northern Underworld King Tree isn't within the five elements.

Ai Hui agreed wholeheartedly. He'd felt this way since a long time ago. From the start, his sword embryo had been strange and outside of the five elements. Later on, his lightning also wasn't within the five elements. Otherwise, why had elementalists not unraveled the secret of lightning throughout the millennia after the construction of the elemental energy system?

Mister Dou sighed again. "Perhaps the Northern Underworld King Tree could help, but its actual effectiveness will only be known after trying."

Ai Hui hurriedly said, "Thank you for your trouble, Mister Dou."

Mister Dou walked to the tree and added, "The tree is able to absorb all light, which becomes its nutrients and eventually its leaves."

The Northern Underworld King Tree had a total of 13 leaves.

Mister Dou plucked one off and gave it to Ai Hui. "Try it. It doesn’t taste too bad. I’ve eaten it in the past when I was injured."

An ash gray color emerged on the leaf, and there was a black veined pattern that criss-crossed on it. Holding it in his hand, Ai Hui realized that the leaf was oddly heavy. If not for the fact that he’d seen Mister Dou pluck it from the tree with his own eyes, he would’ve thought that he was holding a big chunk of metal.

A big metal chunk fresh out of the oven. It was rather warm.

Mister Dou reminded, "Eat it quickly. The leaf can’t be preserved unless you can find [Northern Underworld Fog]. Otherwise, upon picking it, it will start emitting light and get destroyed.

Ai Hui popped it into his mouth without further ado.

The leaf melted rapidly in his mouth like a block of ice as wisps of warm flows seeped into his body.

Ai Hui felt his withered flesh immediately becoming plump as he felt instantly refreshed.

Effective!

When the last wisp of the warm flows entered his flesh, Ai Hui felt that his whole body was full of strength.

It had been a long time since Ai Hui felt this relaxed. He was beyond happy and quickly removed his face bandages. There was only joy on his face.

"Don’t be happy too soon." Mister Dou poured cold water on Ai Hui’s joy. "The Northern Underworld King Tree is only nourishing your body temporarily. If you do not find a way to continuously nourish your body, it will certainly collapse due to the immense energy. If you’re able to find a way, your vitality will increase a notch. Perhaps you might walk a different path then."

Mister Dou’s words hit the nail on the head.

The cheer in Ai Hui’s heart dimmed. Mister Dou was right. The leaves of the Northern Underworld King Tree were remarkably effective, but could only be used for emergencies and not for daily

training.

Yet, the notable effects of the leaves of the Northern Underworld King Tree gave Ai Hui considerable inspiration.

It was no wonder that while Lou Lan's medicine helped him to regain energy, it wasn't as effective in nourishing his body. The ingredients Lou Lan used had to be refined according to the elemental energy system, and the medicinal syrup was essentially a product of this system. His body had been tempered by lightning, so it was strongly repelled by elemental energy. Past methods he had used to temper his body no longer worked.

It seemed like he would need to look for something outside of the elemental energy system.

But where should he look for something beyond elemental energy?

Eh? Ai Hui suddenly recalled that his body possessed something outside of the elemental energy system.

Chapter 511: A Story

Ai Hui looked at the black-colored armor, the golden blood, the blood bandage, and the piece of an unknown beast's bone in front of him.

These were the only items he had that might not belong to the elemental energy system.

The black-colored armor resembled a skeleton. It was formed by an unknown type of black bone. Ai Hui suspected that it might be the bones of the demonic god in his dream. The intertwining spurs on the black bones that were of various sizes looked like beast fangs, appearing unusually sinister. On its skull, there was a spur that was as sharp as a sword pointing directly towards the sky. On its back, there was a pair of boney, black wings that resembled the wings of the devil.

The gold-colored blood was sealed within a crystal, flickering with an alluring luster.

The blood bandage was the item that Ai Hui was most familiar with. It had saved his life countless times. Without the blood bandage, he would have been disintegrated into ashes by the lightning bolts in the clouds that time. Even after it had been struck by lightning for a long period of time, the blood bandage remained intact.

The piece of unknown beast bone had been found in the cavern of scarlet flying foxes. Until now, Ai Hui had yet to determine

which dire beast it came from. Other than being unusually hard, it did not seem to release any elemental energy undulations.

Now that he looked at these items again, he had a completely different perspective on them.

In the past, when he'd looked at an item, he would subconsciously observe its elemental energy undulations. Now that he'd lost all his elemental energy, he was able to see a lot of new phenomena outside of the elemental energy system.

The demonic god armor was surrounded by a thin layer of distorted air.

The piece of unknown beast bone must have come from an extremely powerful dire beast in the past. It did not release any elemental energy undulations. Furthermore, it also looked like some kind of crystal, reminding Ai Hui of the firmament iron at the tip of Cirrus.

The golden blood looked as if it was surrounded by countless, shape-shifting, mysterious symbols that were moving constantly.

Meanwhile, the blood bandage gave off weak, yet strange energy waves.

In the past, he would not have observed these phenomena. As such, when they appeared in front of him now, he felt very amazed.

Standing beside Ai Hui, Lou Lan’s eyes were flickering with a red glow. "Ai Hui, these items are very weird."

"Yes, Lou Lan," Ai Hui replied casually, "They are items that do not belong to the elemental energy system."

"Like artifact remnants?" Lou Lan asked.

"That’s right," Ai Hui nodded his head and replied.

Items that did not belong to the elemental energy system were not rare at all. Among these items, artifact remnants were the most commonly seen. They were remnants of ancient artifacts that had been corroded by Silver Mist Sea and time.

How long has mankind been cultivating? Ai Hui did not know the answer. The ancient Cultivation Era seemed long and boundless. The elemental energy system, which had merely existed for around one thousand years, was like a drop of water in the vast sea of the history of mankind.

Suddenly, Lou Lan let out a yelp.

Ai Hui was shocked and he asked, "Lou Lan, what happened?"

Lou Lan pointed at the golden blood, "Ai Hui, Lou Lan finds it somewhat familiar."

Ai Hui was startled. He widened his eyes and asked, "Lou Lan finds it somewhat familiar?"

The golden blood was an ancient treasure. From his dream, it seemed to be the blood and seed of the demonic god. The demonic god had released a total of ten seeds in the hope of being resurrected.

A puzzled look appeared in Lou Lan's eyes as he replied, "Yes, Ai Hui. Lou Lan does not know the reason behind it as well. I just find it familiar. The weird thing is Lou Lan hasn't seen it before."

Ai Hui immediately thought of Master Shao.

Lou Lan had not seen Blood of Demonic God before and yet he found it familiar. There was only one possibility. It was because of his previous owner and creator, Master Shao. Master Shao's background was very mysterious. Was it possible that he had seen the Blood of Demonic God before?

Ai Hui felt that there might be such a possibility.

Ai Hui still remembered there were many people who had coveted the ancient treasure last time around. Not only was Blood of God interested in it, but Dai Gang as well. Now that he thought about it, Dai Gang and the rest could have already known what the golden blood really was.

It was something that could make a Grandmaster go crazy over it...

However, Ai Hui felt somewhat worried and fearful after having that dream. Because of the demonic god's evilness, strangeness and formidability, Ai Hui did not dare to try using the golden blood. At that point of time, Ai Hui's training path had been smooth and straightforward. He was improving at a very high speed. Hence, it was natural that he did not want to take any risks at that time.

Fundamentally, Ai Hui was an extremely conservative individual. He would definitely not take a risk if there was no need for it.

However, when it came to a moment in which he needed to make changes, he would be filled with courage.

Lou Lan hesitated for a while and asked, "Ai Hui, can you give Lou Lan the golden blood?"

Without any hesitation, Ai Hui passed the golden blood to Lou Lan, "Here, Lou Lan."

Even if the golden blood was the blood of a demonic god, something that even a Grandmaster had racked his brain to obtain, Ai Hui would still give it to Lou Lan without any hesitation if he needed it.

Lou Lan was very happy as his eyes curled into two crescent moons, "Thank you, Ai Hui!"

"Lou Lan, you must be careful, this thing is somewhat evil. It’s the blood of an ancient demonic god. It’s also the seed that allows the demonic god to resurrect from the dead," Ai Hui reminded Lou Lan.

Ai Hui told Lou Lan about his dream in detail.

Lou Lan listened to Ai Hui attentively. After listening to Ai Hui, Lou Lan realized what was going on and said, "So it’s Blood of Demonic God. There are ten seeds in total. One has been used on the armor and one is with Lou Lan. There are still eight seeds left. Ai Hui, Lou Lan just thought of something."

"What has Lou Lan thought of?" Ai Hui was stunned.

Lou Lan widened his eyes and replied, "Ai Hui, do you think Blood of God has anything to do with it? Blood of God and Blood of Demonic God differ only by one word."

Ai Hui froze, looking as if he was struck by lightning.

How could he not have seen this obvious link!

Blood of God, Blood of Demonic God...

Was it possible that the creation of Blood of God was related to Blood of Demonic God?

Ai Hui suddenly understood why Blood of God and Dai Gang had racked their brains to seek the Blood of Demonic God.

Previously, he was still speculating about Master Shao's background. At this moment, he slightly understood what was going on. If Master Shao wasn't from Blood of God, then he was related to Dai Gang. However, when Ai Hui thought of Master Shao's age, he realized this conjecture was very unlikely. It was more likely that Master Shao was from Blood of God.

Ai Hui also thought of Madam Ye, as the stone statue was found in the Ye Residence's treasury. It might be possible that the Ye family's ancestors were also looking for Blood of Demonic God and came across the stone statue by chance. However, they did not find the Blood of Demonic God and was unable to activate the stone statue. This in turn benefitted Ai Hui.

Countless thoughts flashed across Ai Hui's mind, but he did not say them out loud, especially the conjectures that were related to Master Shao.

If Master Shao was really from Blood of God, why would he want to leave Blood of God in the first place? There must be a reason that no one was supposed to know. If Ai Hui told Lou Lan about these random thoughts, Lou Lan would be very worried.

Ai Hui's gaze landed upon the demonic god armor. It was good that Lou Lan wanted the Blood of Demonic God. He did not need to fuss about which item to choose now.

He walked towards the demonic god armor.

.....

The last bit of debris from Wall of North Sea had disappeared. The area was lined with unending stretches of tents, resembling a black-colored sea.

At this point of time, the camp was bustling with activity.

Ye Baiyi was still in a deep sleep in the ice coffin, but the sound of his heartbeat was deep and heavy. He was like a huge dragon that was in a deep slumber.

A few generals walked into the tent and asked, "When will Sir wake up?"

"It will have to depend on his luck." Nangong Wulian’s eyes were bloodshot and his face was filled with a morbid fascination. He furrowed his eyebrows and continued, "His body is too weak and it needs to be replenished with essence blood.

"How do we do it?"

After thinking for a while, Nangong Wulian replied, "We will use blood fiends and they must be of high base level. Low-level blood fiends are useless. Kill all the high-level blood fiends."

The generals did not leave immediately upon hearing Nangong Wulian’s answer. One of them said, "Palace Master, Sir hasn’t woken up yet. What should we do next then? Should we send some men as vanguards? We have been pursuing Sky Edge Division and Infantry Division. Should we send some reinforcements..."

Suddenly, Nangong Wulian broke into a rage and shrieked, "All of you get out! Don’t come and bother me! If you want to talk about anything that has to do with warfare, wait for this fellow to wake up!"

The generals fled the tent in a panic.

.....

The Cold Palace.

Bei Shuisheng, who was sunbathing behind the entrance, opened his eyes. The image of a graceful figure expanded rapidly in his line of sight.

"Such a rare visitor."

Bei Shuisheng poured a cup of tea for She Yu and passed it to her.

She Yu did not bother to be courteous and took the cup of tea. After she rose from her chair and thanked Bei Shuisheng, she

continued, "There’s something I’d like to ask Sir about."

A smile appeared on Bei Shuisheng’s haggard, pale-white face. He replied, "It sounds like it’s something serious."

She Yu did not beat around the bush. She nodded her head in agreement and asked, "Yes, I want to know what Heart of God is."

"Heart of God?" Bei Shuisheng’s hand froze momentarily.

He stared at She Yu and sighed softly, "Why are you so anxious?"

She Yu forced a smile. She couldn’t tell anyone about the [Life and Death Flower Sacrificial Art] and the swapping of positions between the flower slave and flower master. However, she needed to come up with a solution fast. Otherwise, the longer the problem dragged, the more dangerous it would become for her.

When she heard that Beast Venom Temple had developed Heart of God, and the Holy Emperor bestowed it on Ye Baiyi, she felt like a drowning person who had seen a lifebuoy.

Bei Shuisheng placed his cup down and replied with a gentle voice, "There’s nothing about it that I can’t tell you. It’s just that it involves some old affairs. You’re definitely qualified to know about it. This story, however, will be slightly long."

She Yu sat upright and smiled, "She Yu has the time and patience to hear it."

"Do you know how the name ‘Blood of God’ came about?" Bei Shuisheng asked casually.

She Yu was stunned as she did not expect the story to start from this question. She shook her head and replied, "It’s not because we are blood elementalists?"

Bei Shuisheng shook his head and replied, "Back in the day, someone found a drop of God’s blood by luck. Subsequently, that person founded Blood of God."

She Yu was dumbstruck. She then stammered, "A drop of God’s blood? God’s blood? Is there really God’s blood in this world?"

"That’s because the secret to God’s blood can’t be decoded by one person alone. Therefore, that person gathered a group of capable individuals who had the same mentality as him and formed an organization called Blood of God. The secret of God’s blood is boundless. As such, the organization has lasted for generations. Once they understood the secret of God’s blood, they disapproved of the elemental energy system.

"They obtained many experimental results and accumulated generations of important knowledge. Blood poison and blood refinement are some of their later achievements. At that time, they developed a humanoid puppet. This humanoid puppet is somewhat similar to a sand puppet, but it is more intelligent and flexible. They called this type of humanoid puppet a god puppet. The creation of the god puppet helped them significantly. Therefore,

they purposely created a department that could produce more god puppets. That department is called God Puppet Palace.

"God Puppet Palace continued to last for many generations until the last palace master suddenly came up with a bold idea."

Chapter 512: Heavenly God

She Yu could not help but sit upright. She felt that what she was listening to was an astonishing insider story.

The relaxed look on Bei Shuisheng's face had disappeared as he sat upright from his half-lying position. With a solemn tone, he said, "He had a few questions in mind. Why do we have to keep trying to decode the God's blood? Why can't we create it?"

"He wanted to create God's blood?" She Yu could not help but cry out in alarm.

"Yes, he wanted to create God's blood," Bei Shuisheng replied as a hopeful look appeared on his face. "He is really bold for coming up with the idea of creating God's blood. You can well imagine that this idea raised a lot of objections at that time. Even though the research on God's blood has never stopped and we have obtained a substantial amount of knowledge, there are still a lot of things about the secret of God's blood that we have yet to unravel. Perhaps this is the difference between men and God."

She Yu, who was enthralled by the story, quickly asked, "What happened next? Was he able to create God's blood?"

"No." Bei Shuisheng shook his head. "The difference between God and man was far larger than he expected. He went through almost all the research on God's blood and tried to find a method to create it. Eventually, he failed. However, even though he failed, he still managed to make some gains. He discovered that being able to

create God’s blood was highly unlikely. However, he also knew that if he lowered his expectations and combined what he’d learnt from his specialization in making god puppets, he could create a god puppet that was far more powerful than the ordinary god puppets. Hence, he initiated an ambitious project."

"Heavenly God."

"The Skyheart City’s so-called Master’s Glory pales in comparison to the project of Heavenly God..." Bei Shuisheng’s mind seemed to wander off.

"So has he created a God?" She Yu blurted out.

"I don’t know," said Bei Shuisheng spreading out his hands.

She Yu widened her eyes, looking as if she was going to kill someone.

‘I don’t know? How could he say "I don’t know" after the story finally came to an end?’

Bei Shuisheng chuckled, "Subsequently, he left Blood of God and disappeared without a trace. Even though he destroyed lots of information, there are still some remnants left. His student then tried to use the remnant information to replicate his teacher’s work. This student of his was Palace Master Nangong Wulian."

She Yu was stunned. After a while, she said. "But Sir Nangong

was the palace master of Beast Venom Temple."

Bei Shuisheng raised his eyebrows and replied, "At that time, Nangong Wulian did not partake in the project of god puppets. He was in charge of managing the blood fiends. As such, he eventually renamed God Puppet Palace to Beast Venom Temple."

Bei Shuisheng did not think too highly of Nangong Wulian. Nangong Wulian's Beast Venom Temple paled in comparison to the once terrifying God Puppet Palace.

"What does all this have to do with Heart of God?"

"Reportedly, the most important part of the Heavenly God Project was the heart. That is because, according to the previous palace master's theory, the heart of the God must be able to withstand immense pressure. It's the most important part of the whole project. This is what's called the Heart of God. As to whether Nangong Wulian's Heart of God or the previous palace master's Heart of God is stronger, we still don't know yet."

"I see," She Yu muttered.

Bei Shuisheng continued, "Why are you so anxious then? You can talk about it again after Ye Baiyi has tried it."

"Thank you, Sir." She Yu gave Bei Shuisheng a bow.

Bei Shuisheng waved his hand and replied, "These are just some

old affairs. I am not the one that created Heart of God, you don't have to thank me. However, you're still young, there's no need for you to be so anxious."

She Yu knew Bei Shuisheng had good intentions and she gave him a respectful bow once more.

.....

The battle was extremely intense.

Silver Soldier wasn't flying in the sky. He was walking on the ground with long, swinging strides. Like an unreasonable beast, everywhere he walked past, men would fall and blood fiends would collapse. His metal-made arms were flickering with a cold glint at this moment. His attacks were unusually violent. If one was to get hit by him, that blood elementalist or blood fiend would explode into a bloody mess. Furthermore, he did not try to dodge the enemies' attacks at all and let them land upon his body. It was as if he was invulnerable.

Karakorum Polaris was hovering above his head. Thirteen swords were floating behind her in a fan-shaped formation, making her look like a peacock that had spread its feathers. Whenever she pointed her finger at an enemy, a sword gleam would streak across the air and a bloody hole would appear in her target's body. She was spiralling through the air nimbly and quickly. Because of her gorgeous figure and her magnificent sword gleams, she became the most dazzling entity on the battlefield.

Silver Soldier wiped the blood off of his face. The enemy forces were much harder to defeat than he'd expected.

Under such hopeless circumstances, the enemy forces had yet to give up and collapse.

Luckily, Silver Soldier's ally forces were rather powerful. Otherwise, even with his plan being executed smoothly, they might not be able to secure a victory.

Spear of Heavy Cloud was guarding their position firmly like a nail being nailed tightly to the ground. They were able to withstand the charging enemy forces and entangled them, not giving them a chance to make a retreat.

She was truly the daughter of Shi Beihai!

Silver Soldier's eyes were filled with admiration.

Spear of Heavy Cloud's guard formation looked chaotic, but in reality, it was carefully designed. They had an exceptionally formidable earth elementalist. Those pagoda cannons had been built last-minute and those long tubes were the snouts of lava-spitting beasts. The most impressive member of Spear of Heavy Cloud was a fatty who was one hundred percent accurate with his shots. He would roar every time he shot the pagoda cannon.

The white beam of light which shot out from the pagoda cannon was extremely powerful.

When Silver Soldier took a closer look, he almost tripped and fell. The simple and crude pagoda cannon was actually shooting out snow lava.

The Spear of Heavy Cloud was indeed rich and imposing!

In comparison, Infantry Division and Sky Edge Division were like beggars.

When Shi Xueman was choosing the fire elementalists for her division, she thought of how to make use of these fire elementalists' fighting capabilities. Subsequently, she thought of the Hellfire Pagoda Cannons. Even though they were simple and crude, they were extremely powerful. She did not need to worry about the snow lava as there was plenty back in Central Pine Valley. Ai Hui had been worrying about how to sell all the snow lava without crashing the market and causing their price to drop drastically.

Initially, the members were in chaos. Luckily, Shi Xueman ordered Wang Xiaoshan to set up specific arrangements on the battlefield.

These arrangements provided rather good protection for the members and allowed them to gain experience rapidly.

If a position could no longer withstand the enemy forces, Shi Xueman, Zu Yan or Yang Xiaodong would lead an attack and stabilize the situation there. They would take turns doing this.

There was once an enemy general who merely showed his face, but he was instantly pierced to death by Shi Xueman.

This dealt a huge blow to the Blood of God's morale. If not for this strategy, Shi Xueman and her counterparts would suffer heavy casualties.

Even so, the brutality of the battles continued to intensify.

People continued to die one by one.

.....

Ai Hui felt weird upon putting on the demonic god armor.

His surroundings quieted down instantly. Thump, thump, thump. He could vaguely hear the sound of a heartbeat. Ai Hui listened carefully so he could hear the sound of the heartbeat clearly. The heartbeat was not his.

It was coming from within the demonic god armor.

An armor had a heartbeat too?

Ai Hui swallowed his saliva with difficulty. Anything that was related with the demonic god armor was strange.

Very soon, Ai Hui discovered that the rate of the demonic god armor's heartbeat was synchronizing with his own heartbeat. He became to feel slightly panicked. Following which, when the rate of the demonic god armor's heartbeat successfully synchronized with his heartbeat, a mysterious power imbued his body.

At that instant, he felt like his body was going to explode from the abundance of the mysterious power. He felt as if he could shatter the sky.

Fortunately, there was still a tinge of calmness and rationality in his mind. He knew this was an illusion. His body was like a dilapidated house, weak and broken.

He heaved a long breath of air. Items from a demonic god were indeed evil.

The helmet covered his head completely, while the two openings for its wearer's eyes were level with his eyes. Looking at the helmet from outside, the openings for the eyes were like two whirlpools that were of an unfathomable depth. Looking out from within the helmet, however, the outside world become entirely different.

He could see everything in high definition.

Ai Hui never expected that his sense of vision could extend so far someday. He could even see every nook and cranny of the clouds in the sky effortlessly.

The sharp spur on the top of his helmet doubled his range of sensory perception.

He could sense every movement that took place within fifty kilometers of him.

The seemingly heavy armor weighed almost nothing when he put it on. It was unusually light. Furthermore, it fitted Ai Hui's body very well, looking as if it was tailor-made for him.

"Ai Hui looks very formidable!" Lou Lan said cheerfully.

Ai Hui tried to spread the wings on his back.

The black, bone-made wings started to vibrate and spread open. Suddenly, Ai Hui disappeared and became a small black dot in the sky.

"Ai Hui is so formidable!" Lou Lan was dumbstruck.

Ai Hui looked extremely joyful, as if he had gotten a brand-new toy. The demonic god armor was far more powerful than he imagined. Furthermore, he could feel that he had only activated a very miniscule portion of the armor's actual powers.

When he took off the armor, his legs went soft and he collapsed to the ground.

Sweat was released from his body like a gushing fountain. In the blink of an eye, he was drenched in sweat. Ai Hui was panting heavily like a dying fish. He was so tired that he could not even move his finger.

Lou Lan was shocked by this scene. He hurriedly fed Ai Hui a few bottles of medicine.

Even though his physical body did not seem to have recovered, his face looked slightly better now.

Ai Hui looked fearfully at the demonic god armor. It was dangerous!

When he was wearing it, he did not feel tired at all. However, when he took it off, he felt like he was going to collapse from exhaustion at any moment. It was not that the demonic god armor would not exhaust its wearer's energy, but it prevented the wearer from knowing that his energy was being depleted and stopped him from feeling tired.

This would be advantageous for its wearer during battles. However, if the wearer was careless, he or she might die from exhaustion in a battle that lasted very long.

It was indeed demonic!

Every part of the demonic god armor was strange. It required its

wearer to have an extremely strong willpower. If one lacked willpower, he would be immersed in the pleasure of having unlimited powers and would die unwittingly.

Ai Hui warned himself repeatedly.

After resting for a long while, Ai Hui regained much of his energy. He struggled to stand up and walked towards the demonic god armor.

After he put on the armor, his fatigue disappeared without a trace. The mysterious power filled his body once more.

Ai Hui tried to restrain his urge to fly into the sky. He was not wearing this demonic armor for the sake of immersing himself in the pleasure of having unlimited powers.

He wore it because he wanted to search for a new source of power.

He wanted to find a power that did not belong to the elemental energy system and could heal his frail and broken body.

How could he enter the battlefield with such a body?

A beautiful image of a woman appeared in his mind. Ai Hui subconsciously reached out his hand and touched his own lips. He felt as if the warmth of Shi Xueman’s lips was still there.

He thought that his action was somewhat laughable as his lips curled into a smile.

A determined looked appeared in his limpid eyes.

Chapter 513: Train of Thought

Human activity had ceased, roars and screams had disappeared, and the sparse and spacious battlefield was now filled with smoke. Hot steam was rising from the charred craters on the ground. Everywhere was covered with such craters. If one looked down from the sky, they could see the gigantic footprints of An Muda were covered with thousands of craters at this point of time.

However, at this point of time, no one cared about these things anymore.

Everyone was sitting on the ground paralyzed, gasping for air desperately. Even the smoky scent in the air smelled as if it was the best fragrance in the entire world now.

Severed limbs and grounded pieces of flesh were all around them.

It felt so good to be able to survive.

With a dazed look on their faces, all they could think of was this line.

Silver Soldier walked around the battlefield and patted the survivors on their shoulders to boost their morales.

The battles were far more intense they they'd expected. Even though they were able to successfully ambush the enemy forces, the enemy forces were much more stubborn than anticipated. This

was somewhat ironic. In the past, these enemy soldiers were just ordinary soldiers in the Avalon of Five Elements. They could not even be considered veterans. They were weak and weak-willed then. However, all of them had become elites now.

Even Silver Soldier, who was their enemy, was filled with admiration towards them.

He was at a loss.

He simply could not understand, why would a bunch of weaklings from Avalon of Five Elements become such an elite unit that refused to give up, and retaliated with all their might even in dire straits after they had joined Blood of God?

Why?

Was Avalon of Five Elements really that bad? So bad that no one was willing to sacrifice his or her life for it?

Instead of feeling happy about obtaining a victory, Silver Soldier was feeling gloomy. When he thought of Madam Ye and the open strife and veiled struggles among the cities, he felt vexed all of a sudden.

Alright, actually what do all these things have to do with him?

He was just a division leader of the Infantry Division and he did not have much power. Even if he had power, would he be able to

overturn the situation? No.

Silver Soldier raised his head and looked at the sky. His silvery mask gave off the reflection of the smoke-covered sky.

"Silver."

Karakorum Polaris's voice woke Silver Soldier up. He withdrew his gaze and saw Shi Xueman and her counterparts walking towards him.

He readjusted his emotions and threw those distracting thoughts to the back of his head. Then, he cupped his metallic hands and said solemnly, "I am Silver Soldier. If it wasn't for all of you, we would've been in danger."

These were not words of courtesy, but rather, fact.

Spear of Heavy Cloud had played a very important role in this victory.

If it was not for the fact that Spear of Heavy Cloud's defensive formations withstood waves of attacks from the enemy forces and entangled them, Sky Edge Division and Infantry Division would not have had the chance to flank the enemy forces.

When the enemy forces were making their last-ditch effort to retaliate, Shi Xueman was the one who led the charge to clamp down on the retaliation, completely crushing their morales.

Without her, Sky Edge Division and Infantry Division would have had to suffer heavier casualties.

Even though Spear of Heavy Cloud was just a regional combat division, it still undertook the most dangerous and difficult task. Silver Soldier held them in high esteem. The strength of Spear of Heavy Cloud clearly surpassed Infantry Division and Sky Edge Division. Shi Xueman deserved to be praised for her effort. Like father, like daughter.

Shi Xueman held up her Cirrus and greeted Silver Soldier and Karakorum Polaris, "Hello, I am Shi Xueman. Sir, you're being too courteous. Your strategy and everyone's concerted effort were the keys to this victory."

Karakorum Polaris looked curiously at Shi Xueman and raised her sword to return the greeting, "I'm Heng Kunlun."

The two division leaders had a good impression of each other at first sight. Kunlun was the first master swordsman. She was invincible and matchless on the battlefield.

Shi Xueman was from a prestigious aristocratic family. Her strength far surpassed an ordinary Master's.

Nowadays, there were plenty of combat divisions, but very few female division leaders. They were the only two female division leaders who were so young.

Both of them had different temperaments. Shi Xeman was fair and grave, while Heng Kunlun was cold and sharp.

"How’s Ai Hui?"

Silver Soldier’s question shocked Shi Xueman. Silver Soldier actually knew Ai Hui?

"He’s injured. He had yet to recover at the time we left," Shi Xueman replied.

Silver Soldier was startled. He quickly asked with great concern, "He’s injured? Is his injury severe or not?"

Shi Xueman cast a glance at Silver Soldier. From his tone, she could tell that he wasn’t faking his concern. Following which, she bluntly asked him, "Sir, are you very close with Ai Hui?"

"I stayed in Central Pine City for a period of time," Silver Soldier replied.

Upon hearing these words, Shi Xueman suddenly understood why Silver Soldier was so concerned. She explained, "He was struck by the poison of Night Moth Fruit. Even though the poison has been removed, his body is still gravely injured."

Upon hearing the term "Night Moth Fruit", fear flashed across

Silver Soldier’s eyes. He only felt at ease when he heard that the poison had been removed. He shook his head and said, "He was always injured in the past. His body was always covered with cuts and bruises. Even when he trained, he would not care about injuring himself."

When he thought of the day where he’d rescued Ai Hui and Duanmu Huanghun outside of Suspending Golden Pagoda, a smile unwittingly appeared on his face behind the silvery mask.

The image of a beautiful and sweet-looking figure emerged from his memory at the same time.

The smile behind the ice-cold mask froze. An indescribable grief filled his heart, causing him to forget to breathe for a moment. His smile disappeared bitterly. After so many years, he still could not forget her, despite trying so hard to do so.

No oath of eternal love was made, no magnificent love story was created. There was only warm sunshine and a gentle smile, beautiful like a dream. Even though it lasted only for a short period of time, it was real, and it was cruel. Like the deadliest poison in the world, it hid in the innermost part of his heart.

He must bear the responsibility for everything.

He told himself in his heart.

"Silver."

He was startled by Kunlun’s voice. When he saw the worried look on Kunlun’s face, he returned to his senses. The grief he felt earlier withdrew like a receding tide into the innermost part of his heart.

How could an ignoble person, such as he, be so emotional?

He was fortunate to have once had such a beautiful dream in his lifetime.

A solemn look reappeared in his eyes, resembling a river that flowed calmly and silently. He said, "I just thought of Central Pine City."

Shi Xueman thought that Silver Soldier had recalled the bloody battles in Central Pine City. The gazes of Jiang Wei, Sang Zhijun and the rest softened.

Without any hesitation, Shi Xueman asked bluntly, "What’s our next move?"

The rest looked at Silver Soldier. Because of this victory, Silver Soldier had gained everyone’s approval as leader.

Silver Soldier did not say anything as his gaze swept across the battlefield. When he saw those dazed and fatigued faces, he sighed softly. At this point of time, the most important thing for him to do was to give the soldiers rest and reorganize them. Most of the soldiers in the three combat divisions were rookies. It was not easy

for them to fight such a tough battle without collapsing. Even if they obtained a victory, their energies were spent.

At this point of time, time was crucial to their survival.

In a direct confrontation, Blood of God would definitely be in an advantageous position. The troops from Avalon of Five Elements had to depend on their defensive formations to withstand Blood of God's offense.

The loss of this battle would leave a huge impression on Blood of God.

Blood of God would definitely carry out a counter-attack. They were stationed at the Wall of North Sea. This little bit of damage was not enough to deal a huge blow to Blood of God military-wise. It would only enrage them.

An enraged beast might be more dangerous, but it would reveal more of its weaknesses as well.

Sometimes, a chance came only once. Once it was lost, it wouldn't come back again.

A lot of things in life followed the same logic.

At this point of time, it was meaningless for him to feel pity for his life. He was marble-hearted and his gaze was stone-cold.

"I have an idea."

.....

Central Pine Valley.

Wearing the demonic god armor, Ai Hui did not dare to waste any time. He was observing his body with great attention. In Ai Hui's eyes, the demonic god armor was still extremely mysterious. When it came to combat or training, Ai Hui's observation skills were extraordinary.

There was no such thing as a free lunch in this world. Power couldn't be created out of thin air. The ancient artifacts consumed spiritual force, while the current Heaven-grade weapons consumed elemental energy.

What did the demonic god armor consume then?

Ai Hui suspected that the demonic god armor consumed life force.

The fatigue caused by the demonic god armor made Ai Hui feel as if he was breathing his last. This was coupled with the fact that he was already using the blood bandage. If it were not for the blood bandage, Ai Hui suspected that he might be sucked dry by the demonic god armor. In order to replenish his energy, he had to eat a leaf from the Northern Underworld King Tree every time he took

off the armor.

Of course, this was just Ai Hui's speculation. He had yet to reach the level where he could comprehend the meaning of life force.

However, Ai Hui was absolutely certain with regards to his theory. How could a demonic god who sought to resurrect himself be a friendly entity? If that was the case, he wouldn't be called a demonic god.

When Ai Hui thought about this, he felt pessimistic.

As long as the demonic god had a chance to overturn the situation, he would definitely grab it. After all, why would a prideful demonic god allow a human to control his body?

All of these were Ai Hui's conjectures. However, even if they were facts, Ai Hui could only brace himself to accept them at this moment. He simply did not have any solutions.

The leaves from the Northern Underworld King Tree, that could relieve and stabilize his condition, were limited in number. This meant he couldn't use the demonic god armor indefinitely.

Therefore, once he started using it, he had to commit to it.

He had tried a few plans. Until now, he still had not found the solution. Ai Hui realized there might be some problems with his current train of thought.

Perhap he should change his tactics?

Encountering setbacks during training sessions was nothing out of the ordinary for Ai Hui. After encountering countless setbacks, he gradually found some tricks to resolving his problems. Sometimes, the trick of changing his train of thought and looking at a problem from a different perspective would produce a better result.

He did not put on the demonic god armor immediately. He pondered over it, came up with an idea of what he was going to do and determined his goals.

After thinking it through, he put on the demonic god armor once again.

In his eyes, the world became different once more.

Ai Hui was already very familiar with this kind of feeling. This time around, he did not try using any other powers. He placed all his attention on his body.

His flesh was dried up and his life force was diminishing. Streaks of lightning were travelling through his flesh.

These fine lightning streaks were the remnants of the lightning bolts that had struck him last time. They were the ones that destroyed the life force in his body. His flesh could not grow in an

environment that was filled with streaks of lightning. This logic was easily understandable.

Lightning was the bane for almost all living things.

Wait!

Logically speaking, with so many streaks of lightning travelling through his body, his flesh would dry up gradually until he disintegrated into ashes. However, this did not happen to him. He was severely injured, but his life would not be in danger as long as he did not use any powers.

Ai Hui noticed that his flesh was quite different from before.

A bold idea appeared in Ai Hui’s mind.

Was it possible that his flesh had already become a brand-new, extraordinary type of flesh?

Chapter 514: Sick And Extraordinary

"....At that time, our family had obtained two of them in total. We did not know what they were used for. It just so happened that you were coming of age and we needed to find a good teacher for you. We gave one of them to Grandmaster Dai in the hope of getting him to accept you as his disciple. Grandmaster Dai gave his consent cheerfully. If this item can be so coveted by a Grandmaster, it's definitely an extraordinary artifact. We hid the other one in our secret chamber and we didn't dare to tell anyone about it. Subsequently, Grandmaster Dai asked us about it and we acted as if we knew nothing and told him there was only one. This item is of great importance, you must keep it by your side at all times. Before you find out what it is, don't show it to anyone. Follow the path of [Viridescent Flower] and you will have no trouble becoming a Master. Of course, becoming a Grandmaster is an extremely arduous feat. If this artifact can assist you in doing so...."

Duanmu Huanghun had already destroyed the secret letter from his home. He had memorized every single word in the letter. His family had taken great pains to send the wooden box to him. They actually used Lu Mingxiu as a cover to send it. Rather than the Duanmu family, the Lu family was actually the family that Grandmaster Dai truly trusted.

After reading the secret letter, Duanmu Huanghun understood a lot of things.

It turned out that Grandmaster Dai had accepted him as a disciple to fulfil a transaction.

No wonder why his teacher practically did not care about him at all. His teacher always treated him differently from First Senior and Second Senior.

However, Duanmu Huanghun discovered that he wasn’t too disappointed. He understood what was going on. His teacher was unconcerned with him. Likewise, he was unconcerned with his teacher.

Duanmu Huanghun was a proud and arrogant individual. He felt that he could still progress, even if he did not have a teacher. At the end of the day, he had to find his own path for himself.

Now, he was glad that he had been "kidnapped" by Shi Xueman. It was at Central Pine Valley where he could truly relax himself. He could finally keep himself away from the internal strife in Jadeite Forest.

Now, he could spend all his energy and talents on his training.

This was the best moment of his life.

He had found his path, the path that belonged to him, the path of [Viridescent Flower].

In the bamboo forest, Duanmu Huanghun was sitting cross-legged on the ground with both his eyes tightly closed. His palms held the archaic wooden box, looking as if he was asleep.

A beautiful pattern of a viridescent flower was revolving beneath his body.

The wind was rustling and bamboo leaves were drifting through the air. However, any leaf that drifted within ten meters of Duanmu Huanghun's body would be repelled by an invisible force.

The revolving pattern of the viridescent flower beneath Duanmu Huang's body changed its shape every one hour.

Everyday, there would be twenty-four changes to the pattern of the viridescent flower. Every new pattern was completely different from the previous one.

After twenty days had passed, Duanmu Huanghun had created four hundred and eighty different types of [Viridescent Flower].

Duanmu family's [Viridescent Flower] had a long history. It could be traced back to the distant Cultivation Era. The Duanmu family had a collection of more than two thousand types of [Viridescent Flower], but most of them had lost their uses by now.

Every time the pattern of the viridescent flower changed, the elemental energy around Duanmu Huanghun's body became more concentrated.

It was as if there was an enormous archive in Duanmu Huanghun's head. Right now, he was breaking it apart, destroying

it, and rebuilding it over and over again.

This was only the beginning. This was destined to be a very long process.

Duanmu Huanghun was filled with expectation.

.....

Lou Lan was doing his best to prepare elemental soup for everyone. Right now, the members of Sword of Lightning were in the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda that they were embarrassed of in the past. They were going through the simple sword moves that they used to mock and complain about, over and over again.

‘Nothing is more convincing than an actual battle.’

These bloody words on the wooden slab in Lemon Camping Ground were the first declaration they made to the world using swords, and it had shocked every city. They were shocked by their own powers as well. They had a new understanding of the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda and themselves.

When they had completed this process, a transformation would take place.

They did not understand what was going on. All they understood was that they could become stronger.

Because Ai Hui was injured, Gu Xuan occupied his Megrez position for the time being. It was the first time he experienced the immense pressure that Ai Hui always faced in the past. Gu Xuan wasn't a weak individual. He did not give up easily. Like a whetstone, the pressure he faced forced him to improve every day.

Nowadays, Fishback City had sufficient resources. Every day, they would be provided with sufficient elemental soup. Everyone knew that such an environment was hard to come by in times of chaos.

Without needing to be prompted, everyone was training frantically.

There was a person beside the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda. It was Blind He.

He bore a heavy responsibility.

By building Metal Basket Sword Pagoda, he had merely completed the first phase of his task. Right now, he was trying to complete the second phase of his task.

This time around, rather than forging a gigantic sword, he was supposed to forge a sword for every member of Sword of Lightning.

Right now, everyone was using a different sword. Most of their

swords had been used for a very long time. It was alright for them to use their current swords for training. However, for an actual battle, their swords would pose a problem.

Taking this issue into consideration, Ai Hui gave Blind He the task of forging a sword for everyone.

There was a total of three hundred men in Sword of Lightning. As such, three hundred swords would have to be forged for them. To prepare for the scenario where a sword might be damaged and had to be replaced, Blind He had to forge at least five hundred swords to keep some as spares.

Quantity wasn't the main issue. The biggest problem that perplexed Blind He was to figure out what kind of sword suited the members of Sword of Lightning the best. As a weaponsmith, he had high expectations for the weapons he forged. Every weapon he made had to be top-quality.

Even though he had made the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda, he was still baffled by it. It was only until he witnessed its might during the last battle that he understood how it could be used.

These few days, he had been staying around the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda to get a feel of how it operate and how the members trained.

After observing quietly for a few days straight, a rough idea began to form in his mind.

He returned to the furnace and started the forging process.

He sprayed the White Cluster Flames over a piece of metal. Like an ice cube, the piece of metal melted into a puddle of molten metallic liquid easily. He then started to add various materials into it. His movements were fluid like water, graceful and beautiful. Every time he added in a material, an elemental energy ripple of a different color would streak across the surface of the molten liquid. Colorful elemental energy ripples began to gather and intertwine on the surface of the molten liquid. Eventually, gorgeous and dazzling elemental energy ripples were formed.

Blind He was very focused. The faint glow from the eyes on his palms engulfed the molten metal. Every change taking place in the molten metal was under his control.

The elemental energy ripples on the surface of the molten metal continuously undulated.

The glow released by the eyes on his palms suddenly turned cold as a layer of frost appeared on the surface of the molten metal. The molten metal had solidified into an ingot. The gorgeous and dazzling elemental energy ripples looked as if they were frozen on the surface of the ingot, creating extremely beautiful patterns.

Blind He did not stop. He picked up the snow lava that he had prepared earlier and poured it over the metal ingot.

Sizzle.

A loud and clear sizzle resounded through the air when wisps of white-colored, scorching flames rose from the metal ingot. Densely-packed cracks began to appear on the surface of the metal ingot.

Blind He picked up a iron hammer and hammered the metal ingot. The surface of the metal ingot was as crispy as a biscuit. Very soon, its surface broke down and revealed a silvery white metal within it.

It was a silvery-white, half-transparent metal ingot that resembled a silvery-white crystal. Soft and thin flower petals were frozen within the metal ingot. They were formed layer upon layer, looking extremely beautiful.

The petal-shaped patterns contained glittering silver powder, which made the metal ingot dazzle when it was placed under the sun.

A satisfied look appeared on Blind He's face as he muttered, "Pearblossom Dazzling Silver. From today onwards, you are called Pearblossom Dazzling Silver. I have no regrets in my life anymore, I have no regrets in my life anymore!"

The snow-white petals in the metal ingot resembled pear blossoms.

Luckily Ai Hui did not have the time to care about him, otherwise he would have come up with another ugly name for it again, like "White Cluster Flames". If that were to happen, Blind He would

vomit blood.

Blind He was very emotional. Up to now, this metal ingot had the highest grade among all the metal ingots he had ever created. It was every weaponsmith's dream to be able to create his own material, name it, and leave his mark on history.

He had no choice but to admit that, even though Ai Hui was lacking in his ability to name things, his White Cluster Flames and snow lava were remarkable inventions.

Without these two powerful tools, he would not have been able to create Pearblossom Dazzling Silver.

Due to his excitement from creating Pearblossom Dazzling Silver, Blind He no longer felt tired and began to forge the swords. He already had a rough idea of the sword's design in his mind. The success in creating the Pearblossom Dazzling Silver implied that the most difficult problem had already been solved.

Very soon, he forged the first sword. He furrowed his eyebrows and destroyed it.

He destroyed the second one as well.

It was as if he wasn't getting tired at all. He continued to forge the swords one by one. However, he was satisfied with none of them.

The rush of excitement he'd felt earlier had disappeared. The consecutive failures added on to his fatigue.

He stopped and sat beside the furnace in a daze.

Without Blind He noticing it, night had descended. The stars in the night sky gave off a bright glow while the night breeze blew silently.

"He Wei, here is your elemental soup," Lou Lan said as he sent a bowl of elemental soup to He Wei.

Blind He returned to his senses and took over the bowl of elemental soup. A smile appeared on his cold face. "Thank you, Lou Lan."

"There's no need to thank me, He Wei. In the future, Lou Lan wants to learn weapon forging from He Wei," Lou Lan said.

"No problem," Blind He agreed immediately. As he was drinking the elemental soup, he asked casually, "Lou Lan, why do you want to learn weapon forging?"

Lou Lan tilted his head and thought for a while before he answered, "So I can make money. In the past, Lou Lan and Ai Hui used to forge weapons to make money."

Blind He burst into laughter. He did not remind Lou Lan that Ai Hui was so poor now that he was only left with money. The snow

lava that Central Pine Valley had accumulated was like a mountain of gold now. Even when the prices of various resources had soared, Central Pine Valley was able to maintain an abundance of resources. Central Pine Valley was no longer that poor valley in the past.

"Lou Lan has to work hard then," Blind He smiled and said.

Lou Lan nodded his head forcefully and replied, "Lou Lan will definitely learn from He Wei seriously."

After drinking the delicious elemental soup and hearing Lou Lan's cheerful voice, Blind He felt that the fatigue in his body had disappeared without a trace.

When Lou Lan saw Blind He had gone into deep thought again, he did not disturb him and left silently.

Before Blind He had concluded his thought process, he discovered where his problem was: He did not abandon the usual weaponsmiths' train of thought.

Whenever one wanted to forge a weapon, he or she would first consider the issues of how to stimulate elemental energy and how to channel them. However, this train of thought was not suitable for Sword of Lightning.

The sword moves that the members of Sword of Lightning executed were very simple. These moves did not need to take into

consideration elemental energy. What did the members need the most? After observing them for several days, Blind He clearly knew the answer to this question. It was synchronization!

Synchronization was the key factor to Sword of Lightning's might.

This was the biggest difference between Sword of Lightning and other combat divisions. Never before had he seen a combat division that downplayed individual capabilities and emphasized teamwork to such an extreme extent.

It was a sick and extraordinary concept!

It was only right for such a sick and extraordinary combat division to have a sick and extraordinary weapon!

Blind He was overwhelmed with emotions.

Chapter 515: The Glory of A Master Comes With Blood

A gloomy cloud hung over Skyheart City.

The destruction of Wall of North Sea rang across everyone's ears like a knell. The delusion of having the capability to make their last struggle had been ruthlessly popped like bubbles under the sun.

The path from Avalon of Five Elements to Beyond Avalon was filled with blood and corpses. Before the survivors could rejoice, dangers befell them once again.

Meanwhile, from the fall of Wall of North Sea to the arrival of Blood of God in Beyond Avalon, their path was smooth and level. Who could stop Blood of God's armies as they advanced like a tsunami?

The only thing that was worth rejoicing over was probably Ye Baiyi's injury.

North Sea Division's final retaliation made it clear to everyone in the world that North Sea was raging with anger. However, there was only one North Sea Division. Everyone had witnessed the tragic sacrifice of North Sea Division. The performance of the rest of the divisions was simply pathetic.

During the rise of Blood of God, the Thirteen Divisions were like

decayed, dead trees, unable to put up a decent fight. Some surrendered, some had their division leaders killed and some were completely wiped out. Meanwhile, those who survived were trembling with fear and trepidation. They were no longer brave and fervent, but instead resembled elderly men that had passed their primes.

The Thirteen Divisions' thousand years of glory and prestige were completely lost.

North Sea Division was the last gleam of hope. Even though they did not secure a victory, they had not let everyone down, and they did not betray the glory and prestige of North Sea Division.

An Muda's footprint of glory stayed silently amid the mountains, growing old day by day.

The sunset's afterglow was sprinkled over Skyheart City.

Skyheart City used to be an ambitious city as well. It was the core of Beyond Avalon, the city where Elders Guild resided, and the place where the three central divisions were stationed. However, nowadays its lofty ambitions were shattered and everyone in the city was having sleepless nights.

When would the armies from Blood of God arrive? Would Grandmaster Dai come and annex Beyond Avalon in the next few days?

Where could one live a peaceful life?

The streets were unusually desolate, so much so that not a single soul could be spotted. Most of the shops were closed. There were only a few shops that were still open for business. The light from the sun had turned gloomy. After such a harsh and freezing winter, Skyheart City's economy was in a slump. After the Wall of North Sea had fallen, the situation in Skyheart City worsened significantly. Even heartless individuals did not have the mood to play around now.

Various rich and powerful aristocratic families were packing up their valuables and seeking a way out. Should they go to Jadeite Forest? Or should they join Blood of God? They'd heard that Holy Emperor was tyrannical and cruel. If he was enraged, a river of blood could be created at any moment. What if...

Suddenly, the light screen in the sky lit up.

The people who were on the lookout for invaders bolted upright immediately. That light screen was formed by [Five Peaks]. The [Five Peaks], which were formed by five God-subduing Peaks, guarded Skyheart City from all four directions and overhead. Together, they formed an impregnable defensive light screen.

Usually, only a small component of [Five Peaks] needed to be activated to ensure the safety of the city. But recently, due to the tense situation, every component of [Five Peaks] had been activated.

The glow in the sky disappeared within a short period of time.

The only time a Master would deliver a message personally was when he was delivering a report from the front line!

After a short while, Nian Tingfeng appeared in the mayor's residence, his face filled with joy. "Where's the mayor? I have important information for her! Please help me notify her!"

"The mayor is not in the residence. She went to the Lake of Masters one hour ago," the guard standing at the door replied with an apologetic tone.

Nian Tingfeng did not stay there and left the place.

Lake of Masters was the most heavily guarded place in Skyheart City. It was where the Master's Glory was held. There were more than three Masters guarding that place. Lake of Masters was also the five God-subduing Peaks' primary focus of protection.

Every month, Madam Ye would make two to three trips to Lake of Masters.

Master's Glory had been proposed by her. After she gained power, she kept on promoting Master's Glory and placed all her hope in it. If Master's Glory failed, it implied a complete failure for her. She would have no chance of overturning the situation if that ever happened.

Lake of Masters was heavily guarded. Even Nian Tingfeng had to give early notice of his arrival and was checked before he could enter the place.

After he was checked by the guards, he entered. Lake of Masters was a natural lake. It contained extremely pure water elemental energy. Reportedly, this lake was the defining factor for why Skyheart City was built in its current location in the first place.

One had to know that Skyheart City was mainly populated by metal elementalists.

Lake of Masters was not really huge. It was three kilometers long and two kilometers wide. Its shape was long and narrow like a crescent moon. When they first discovered it, it was called Crescent Moon Lake. They only changed its name to Lake of Masters after it was selected as the venue for Master’s Glory.

Madam Ye had placed high hopes on Master’s Glory, hoping that it could cultivate more and more masters for Skyheart City.

Nian Tingfeng saw Madam Ye surrounded by many people at the lakeside. She was listening to a report from an ordinary-looking, middle-aged man. Nian Tingfeng walked over silently, not intending to disturb them.

When the middle-aged man saw Nian Tingfeng, he stopped talking and smiled at Nian Tingfeng as a form of greeting, "Division Leader Nian is here."

He had a goatee, his face was meager, and his hair was worn in a bun using a wooden hairpin, making him look somewhat like a sage.

Nian Tingfeng did not dare to hesitate and quickly returned the greeting, "Nice to meet you, Mr Ma."

Ma Shiji was Madam Ye's most important tactician. He was a pedant that had learned Wang Shouchuan's theories. He was Madam Ye's right-hand man. [Five Peaks] had been devised by him. Master's Glory was also managed by him. As such, Madam Ye trusted him deeply.

Even though Ma Shiji did not hold any official position, Nian Tingfeng knew he was an important figure and did not dare to offend him.

Madam Ye nodded her head at Nian Tingfeng and told Ma Shiji, "Continue."

Nian Tingfeng lowered his head and stood on one side.

Ma Shiji continued, "The training method for fusion elemental energy that Madam obtained from Assembly of Patriarchs is extremely ingenious. I'm enlightened by it. From the look of it, the only way to counter blood spiritual force is to possess all five elements at the same time. The traditional method for obtaining all five elements is to become a Grandmaster. However, fusion elemental energy allows one to skip this step. The creation of fusion elemental energy proves that Assembly of Patriarchs has

truly been the arch-enemy of Blood of God for the past hundreds of years."

"I have taken some ideas from God-subduing Peak to create the Circle of Five Elements. I combined the earth elemental energy beneath the lake, the water elemental energy from the lake itself, the fire elemental energy from the sun, and the wood elemental energy from the gigantic lotus seed heads. Then, I fed the lotus seed heads with ores that contained an abundance of metal elemental energy. Initially, no matter how hard I tried, I couldn't create a five elemental lotus seed head. It was only until I obtained the training method for fusion elemental energy that I could finally create twenty-five five elemental lotus seed heads. On each five elemental lotus seed head, there are eighteen five elemental lotus pods. That means there are a total of three hundred and sixty elementalists in them now."

A cold shiver went down Nian Tingfeng's spine. He could not help but take a glance at the lake.

Huge lotus seed heads were gushing with brilliant lights and floated silently on the surface of the lake. Every lotus seed head contained the vague figures of curled up humans.

He knew there was a total of five hundred elementalists who had entered the first round of Master's Glory. Most of them were talented young men and women from various families.

Subsequently, more and more people joined the program, especially when it was opened to new citizens. They lowered the requirements for Master's Glory and increased Madam Ye's

prestige significantly.

In total, there were more than one thousand five hundred elementalists who participated in Master's Glory.

However, there were only three hundred and sixty people left now.

Where had the other one thousand two hundred people gone?

Nian Tingfeng trembled in fear.

Surveillance Division's selection of new members was already very strict. However, not being selected and dying after being selected were two completely different concepts. Even Nian Tingfeng, who was used to seeing death occur, was terrified when he knew of the astonishing death rate.

Even Ma Shiji's enthusiastic and excited voice caused his hair to stand on end.

"Right now, there is a total of three hundred and sixty people who have completed Five Elemental Lotus Seedcoat. There are at least two hundred people who are expected to become Masters. As long as they awaken, the current situation will be overturned. These two hundred Masters will possess all five elements. Hahaha, even if Holy Emperor and Dai Gang come here personally, they will not be able to gain anything from us. Furthermore, with a flick of these Masters' fingers, Ye Baiyi will be reduced to ashes in an

instant. This is only the first batch. Now that we have experience, the time taken to cultivate the second batch can be reduced significantly."

Ma Shiji's eyes were filled with excitement as he continued, "I have made some calculations. As long as we can cultivate more than five hundred Masters, we can take over the world!"

A smile appeared on Madam Ye's face as she said, "Mr Ma, thank you for your trouble. The day Master's Glory is completed will be the day that you are honored."

"Madam has devoted yourself wholeheartedly to Beyond Avalon and spared no effort in making it a better place. As compared to your contributions, mine is not worth mentioning. Without Madam's support, I wouldn't have fulfilled my dreams," Ma Shiji replied respectfully.

The smile on Madam Ye's face widened. The world before everyone's eyes seemed to light up at this moment. Age did not leave any traces on Madam Ye's face. She was still as beautiful as before.

She withdrew her smile and said with a solemn tone, "Sir, you're being too humble. You're a peerless tactician. Who else in this world can match up against you? It's my fortune, the Elders Guild's fortune, and the world's fortune to have your assistance!"

Ma Shiji gasped for air as his mind surged with emotions.

He had had a rough life since he was born. He used to be homeless and miserable. He was often viewed by many as an unorthodox individual. He’d possessed many talents but no one appreciated him. It wasn’t until he met Madam Ye that he could have a chance to display his talents.

He was not good at bootlicking. The words he had just said were his limit. At this moment, he was restraining his emotions. Following which, he continued, "Oh, I have yet to congratulate Madam. Among everyone, Xiaobao is the most outstanding one. No one can match up to him. His achievements in the future will be limitless."

Madam Ye sighed as a complicated look appeared in her eyes. After staying silent for a long while she muttered, "Xiaobao, I hope you can understand what Mama has done."

Ma Shiji and Nian Tingfeng looked at each other and remained speechless.

Madam Ye raised her head as clarity returned to her eyes. She shifted her gaze to Nian Tingfeng and asked, "Is there news from the front line?"

"Yes."

Nian Tingfeng did not dare to look at Madam Ye in the eyes. He lowered his head and passed her the report.

When Madam Ye took over the report and read it, her eyes lit up. She exclaimed with joy, "Good, good, good! The drought has finally ended! This great victory has arrived at the right time! Silver Soldier and Heng Kunlun did not let me down! Shi Xueman has done a good job as well. She truly deserves to be Shi Beihai's daughter. Like father, like daughter!"

A joyful look appeared on everyone's faces involuntarily.

It was a great victory, a great victory indeed!

"Disseminate this piece of good news, every message village must receive it! Let everyone know that as long as we unite together, even if we don't have a Grandmaster anymore, we still can emerge victorious! Blood elementalists are like humans, they die as well!"

Madam Ye was so emotional that her voice became slightly shrill. However, no one cared about it as everyone was wild with joy at this moment.

"Yes!" Nian Tingfeng replied loudly.

Without any hesitation, he turned around and left in a hurry.

After a while, the silent and desolate Skyheart City appeared as if it had awakened from a deep slumber. Thunderous cheers erupted throughout the entire city.

When Madam Ye heard the increasingly loud waves of cheers,

she became high-spirited.

With terrifying speed, the news spread throughout Beyond Avalon like a hurricane.

Beyond Avalon had been waiting for a victory for too long.

The names of Shi Xueman, Silver Soldier and Heng Kunlun had spread throughout Beyond Avalon like fire.

Whenever a new era arrived like a tsunami, all of a sudden some people would be crushed to smithereens, while some would become legends.

Chapter 516: Lou Lan Is Formidable Now, Unity Sword

The five residences were in ruins and the eight palaces were covered with thousands of holes.

Every time Ai Hui examined his body, he would be shocked and terrified. He was extremely lucky not to have died.

He composed himself. The Northern Underworld King Tree did not have many leaves left. This implied that he did not have many chances left to use the demonic god armor. Fortunately, even though he had yet to find a solution, he'd still managed to make some gains.

For example, he knew that it wasn't his physical body that was injured, but rather the sword cloud within his body.

He also identified some of the characteristics of the sword cloud.

When he'd used the lightning bolts in the clouds to counter the venom of the Night Moth Fruit, the lightning bolts almost destroyed everything in his body. Even the sword embryo that he had just formed was shattered. However, the shattered sword embryo did not disappear completely. Instead, it absorbed a huge amount of lightning and transformed into a unique sword cloud.

As compared to the sword embryo, the shattered sword cloud had a more outstanding sensory perception.

Right now, the range of Ai Hui's sensory perception exceeded twenty-five kilometers. He never thought he would achieve such a feat in the past.

However, the sword cloud was much more unstable than the sword embryo. This observation had a direct link to Ai Hui's injury.

His severely damaged body had a mysterious relationship with his sword cloud. If his sword cloud was stable, the condition of his flesh would be stable as well. If his sword cloud was unstable, the condition of his flesh would be unstable too. If his sword cloud was totally out of control, his flesh would completely disintegrate into ashes.

Ai Hui's conjecture for this relationship was that both his flesh and sword cloud may have been tempered with lightning. As such, both of them contained lightning.

According to this conjecture, as long as Ai Hui could stabilize the sword cloud, his injury would gradually recover.

Today was the day he was going to verify his conjecture.

Ai Hui was hovering in the sky above the lake in Central Pine Valley. There was a small cloud in front of him. The cloud was only half the size of a house. It was dense and sparkling white, resembling a soft cotton ball.

Ai Hui was half-naked. He stared at the bit of cloud and said, without turning his head, "Lou Lan, help me record the process."

The painful lesson he'd learnt from channelling lightning from a whole sea of clouds last time made him realize that he was still a mortal after all. It was safer for him to channel lightning from a single cloud. Ai Hui had racked his brain to find a suitable clump of cloud. Subsequently, he thought of the bit of cloud floating above the lake in Central Pine Valley.

Not only was the cloud smaller in size, it could be controlled as well. This way, it would be much safer for him.

He had paid a painful price for this lesson the last time around.

On the lakeside, Lou Lan's glowing eyes were flickering. He replied with a solemn tone, "Ai Hui, Lou Lan is ready."

Ai Hui inserted his arms into the cloud in front of him and carefully initialized the unstable sword cloud within his body.

Buzz.

A slight numbness started spreading along his arms. Ai Hui increased his focus and observed the changes taking place in his body.

The lightning from the cloud was very weak, but it was still able to cause Ai Hui's hair to stand on end, making him look like a porcupine.

The lightning flowed through Ai Hui's body and entered his flesh.

Like a slithering, silvery snake, the lightning travelled through Ai Hui's flesh. His flesh was dyed with a thin layer of silver-white color, resembling fine silver threads which vibrated every now and then.

Ai Hui held his breath and observed every single detail. He clearly knew that many valuable discoveries could be made from observing those insignificant details.

A small portion of the lightning was absorbed by his flesh while the rest was absorbed by his sword cloud.

The loose sword cloud began to contract and thicken.

As the sword cloud absorbed more and more lightning, it became thicker and thicker.

Ai Hui's eyes lit up. He could sense that as the sword cloud thickened, his vibrating flesh began to stabilize.

The fatigue that had engulfed his body for the past few days reduced significantly.

Ai Hui’s mind jolted. It seemed his train of thought was correct.

At this moment, the numbness throughout his body disappeared and the sword cloud stopped thickening.

Ai Hui realized that the soft and sparkling white cloud in front of him had disappeared. All that was left was a wisp of white mist that was dissipating gradually within his fingers.

"Ai Hui, your conjecture was right." Lou Lan’s tone was filled with a pleasant surprise.

The red glow in Lou Lan’s eyes was flickering non-stop. With a serious tone, he continued, "The sword cloud is indeed resonating with your flesh. This kind of resonance uses lightning as a medium. Right now, I have come up with five conclusions."

"Five?" Ai Hui was stunned.

He felt that he had come up with two or three conclusions. He certainly did not expect Lou Lan to come up with five conclusions.

Lou Lan continued with a solemn tone, "First, lightning is the source of energy for the sword cloud. It consumes the lightning and we will have to replenish lightning for it frequently. Second, when the sword cloud revolves, it will become more stable. This conclusion can be verified by the stability of your flesh. Third, Ai Hui’s body did not have any elemental energy. The lightning in

your flesh is strongly repellent to elemental energy. Fourth, the resonance between the sword cloud and your flesh can only stabilize your flesh, not make it stronger. Since your body can't hold elemental energy, it will lack the nourishment of elemental energy and your flesh will have difficulty becoming stronger. Fifth, Ai Hui's body will become weaker and weaker. If you want to stabilize your injured condition, you will have to strengthen the sword cloud. You will have to replenish it with lightning. Lightning is strongly repellent to elemental energy, hence, replenishing the sword cloud with lightning will cause your flesh to degenerate. There will be a limit to how much your flesh will degenerate. When that happens, Ai Hui's body will be weak, yet stable. This is caused by the resonating relationship between the sword cloud and your flesh."

Ai Hui was dumbstruck.

Why did he feel like Lou Lan had now become much more formidable than before?

In the past, Lou Lan had helped him carry out analysis as well. However, he could never analyze things to such an extent. He roughly knew three of the conclusions Lou Lan had just come up with. As for the remaining two, he had no idea at all.

He would know whether or not Lou Lan's conclusions were correct once he tried them out.

After obtaining a rough idea about what to do next, Ai Hui was filled with zest.

.....

Gu Xuan and the members of Sword of Lightning, who had just finished their training session, looked as if they had just been pulled out from water, completely drenched in sweat. They were lying on the ground all over the place.

Blind He carried a bundle of swords and walked over to them.

Thump. He threw the bundle of swords on the ground and said, "Come and try the new swords."

His voice was hoarse and he looked extremely tired.

Gu Xuan’s gaze was immediately captivated by the new swords on the ground. As an elementalist who had taken on the path of swordsmanship, his love for swords came from within his heart. With a single glance, he could tell whether or not the quality of the sword was good.

When he saw the new swords, the first thought that came to his mind was... Beautiful swords!

A mysterious power gushed through his fatigued body. Gu Xuan stood up and picked up a sword from the heap on the ground. Then, he placed it before his eyes and observed it carefully.

Such a good sword!

The body of the sword was much wider than an ordinary sword’s. At the same time, it was much thinner than most swords as well. It was made of an unknown material. The sword was transparent and dazzling, resembling a crystal that gave off a metallic luster. Sparkling white flower petals could be seen within the sword, looking as if they were frozen in ice.

"What type of material is this?" Gu Xuan could not help but ask.

"Pearblossom Dazzling Silver!"

"Never heard of it," Gu Xuan shook his head.

"Of course you haven’t heard of it before," Blind He retorted bluntly with a tone that was filled with a strong sense of pride, "I just created it a few days ago."

"So it was created by Master He!" Gu Xuan was in awe.

For any weaponsmith, it was extremely difficult to create an excellent type of material.

Gu Xuan became increasingly interested in it. Upon taking a closer look, he saw an extremely fine slit in the middle of the blade of the sword, splitting it into half. This slit was extremely fine. If he hadn’t looked at it closely, he would not have noticed it.

Double-stranded sword? No!

The slit extended from the sword tip to the sword hilt.

Gu Xuan was a connoisseur of swords and yet this was the first time he had seen such an oddly shaped sword. A pondering look appeared in his eyes. Could it be...

He gently brandished the new sword in his hand.

Buzz!

An obvious vibration was given off by the new sword. In the next moment, Gu Xuan’s eyes widened as he looked at the other new swords on the ground in shock.

They were vibrating too!

Feeling lost, Gu Xuan blurted out, "This is..."

A smile appeared on Blind He’s face. As a weaponsmith, what made him prouder than seeing that his works shocked other people?

"The swordsmanship of Sword of Lightning is very strange. It does not focus on moves or elemental energy. It focuses on synchronization. Several hundreds of people move together as one.

Generally speaking, this kind of swordsmanship has never been seen before by many. Pardon me for being ignorant, but I had never heard of it as well. The biggest problem of forging these new swords was to figure out, what kind of sword is suitable for all of you and your weird swordsmanship? What kind of sword allows all of you to move together as one? An inspiration hit upon me and I thought of a tuning fork. Isn't the resonance produced by a tuning fork suitable?"

As Gu Xuan kept on brandishing the new sword in his hand, the rest of the new swords on the ground were vibrating as well. The other members of Sword of Lightning were attracted by the commotion. All of them lit up their eyes as they realized the new swords would be a great upgrade for them.

Everyone was filled with eagerness as they hopped into Metal Basket Sword Pagoda and began to try their new swords.

Blind He had been observing their training sessions. He made a total of six swords for the first batch.

The six new swords were for the pagoda masters of the six sword pagodas. Everyone took up their positions, looking forward to try their new swords. The new swords felt extremely comfortable in their hands, as if they were part of their bodies.

"Ready!" Gu Xuan roared with a deep voice.

Everyone's faces turned solemn. The relentless training sessions over the past few days had caused their sword moves to become

instinctive. They could enter the mental zone of combat and became highly focused in an instant.

Gu Xuan brandished the sword in his hand.

At the same time, the swords in the other five pagoda masters' hands vibrated too. Due to the relentless training sessions they had been through, they immediately brandished the swords in their hands.

The six streaks of sword gleams converged into one.

Like a comet, a cold and sharp sword gleam flew into the sky and shot through the layer of clouds.

Gu Xuan and the rest were overjoyed. It was as if these swords were specially made for them. They were extremely suitable for Metal Basket Sword Pagoda. With the new swords, the difficulty of synchronizing their movements was greatly reduced.

Why were their sword moves made to be so simple? That was because the difficulty of synchronizing their movements was too high. Only by reducing the complexity of their sword moves could they then synchronize their movements

With this new sword, however, they could try more complicated sword moves.

If the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda was an enormous tiger, then

the new swords would be like wings that were attached to it.

"Such an ingenious idea, this has never been done before!" Gu Xuan praised Blind He to the high heavens.

Such a fine sword!

The new swords were not only good at helping them to synchronize their movements. They also had an excellent texture and they allowed Gu Xuan and the rest to channel their elemental energies easily.

Blind He was smiling non-stop. He was feeling extremely pleased with himself.

"What’s the name of this sword?"

Blind He heaved a sigh of relief as he could finally name the swords before Ai Hui did it.

With a resolute and decisive tone, he replied.

"Unity Sword!"

Chapter 517: It's A Disgrace To Associate Myself With All Of You

Another piece of cloud had been sucked dry.

A bitter smile appeared on Ai Hui's face when he looked at his arms. The size of his arms thinned again.

The sword cloud within his body strengthened again.

His muscles were degenerating at a rapid speed. His clearly defined muscles had completely disappeared. The strength of his arms had reduced significantly and his body was much more skinnier than before.

With his body fully covered with bandages, he looked like an air-dried mummy.

Ai Hui's body was lacking in life force, resembling a person who was about to die. Even though he had stabilized his injured condition, his body had become significantly weaker. Other than this, there was nothing wrong with him.

Ai Hui, himself, was the one who couldn't get used to it the most.

In the past, his strong and agile body was one of his most trustworthy weapons during combat. He was very proficient in using his body to obtain an advantageous position during a fight.

However, he had completely lost this advantage now.

He suddenly became extremely delicate, unable to even truss a chicken. He would be lying to himself if he said he didn't find it a problem at all.

On the contrary, the sword cloud had become several times stronger. It slowly revolved and gave off a boundless aura of might.

Mysteriously, his eyes had become unusually bright. Nowadays, his gaze varied irregularly.

Sometimes, his gaze would be empty and unpredictable. Sometimes, his gaze would be limpid and lofty like the sky. Occasionally, it would be boundlessly deep like the vast starry sky. There were also times where his gaze looked as if it was densely covered with lightning bolts, giving off an aura of destruction. At times, his gaze would look as sharp as a sword, piercing through the heart of whoever he looked at.

However, no matter what, his gaze would always dazzle with brilliance, making it impossible for one to look him in the eyes.

When he touched the hilt of the sword hanging on his waist, the sword cloud within his body trembled and the feeling of weakness instantly disappeared without a trace. The glint in his eyes became more glaring as well.

Ai Hui gently shook the sword hilt and abruptly disappeared from the sky.

The next moment, he appeared one meter above the ground. He let go of the sword hilt and the power in his body disappeared immediately. He fell to the ground and staggered before stabilizing himself.

These past few days, he had made a lot of new discoveries.

The sword cloud would only react under two circumstances. The first circumstance was when it was absorbing lightning. The second was when Ai Hui held his sword hilt.

As long as Ai Hui held his sword, the sword cloud would be initialized. It would engulf Ai Hui's body with energy and power, resonating with his flesh.

Ai Hui called this [Imbuement of Sword Cloud].

However, the moment he let go of the sword hilt, he would revert back to the frail and weak loser who couldn't even truss a chicken.

The thing that left him helpless was that the [Imbuement of Sword Cloud] would deplete the lightning in his sword cloud. As such, he had no choice but to reduce the amount of time that he held his sword.

At this moment, he suddenly noticed a familiar figure approaching him. It was Yang Xiaodong.

Yang Xiaodong was travel-worn. When he saw Ai Hui, he heaved a sigh of relief. Initially, he did not have a good impression of Ai Hui. However, after he returned from the battlefield, he found Ai Hui to be cordial. He took out a letter and passed it to Ai Hui, "This is from Division Leader Shi."

Iron Lady’s letter!

Ai Hui became energized and quickly took the letter.

.....

"Great victory! Great victory!"

A wave of cheers swept across the camp of the Dread Division.

Even Wan Shenwei’s cold-looking face contained a tinge of joy at this moment. He looked in the direction of the front line with a complicated look on his face.

"What great victory?"

Le Buleng’s voice came from behind him.

Wan Shenwei quickly turned around and passed the report in his hand to Le Buleng. "It's a report of victory from the front line. The Sky Edge Division, Infantry Division and Spear of Heavy Cloud Division joined hands and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy forces. The enemy forces have lost more than 3,000 men and all of them were elites..."

After taking a glance at the report, Le Buleng's shrivelled face turned red in an instant. He rudely threw the report at Wan Shenwei's face.

Even though the report was just a thin piece of paper, it felt like a heavy hammer when it hit Wan Shenwei's face. Wan Shenwei groaned, but he didn't care about the pain on his face and hurriedly asked, "Why is Senior so angry?"

Le Buleng ignored him completely and walked toward his room.

Wan Shenwei quickly chased after him. "Senior... Senior..."

Le Buleng continued to turn a deaf ear to him. When he reached his room, he began to pack his things.

Wan Shenwei forced a smile and asked, "Senior, what are you doing?"

Usually, Wan Shenwei did not like to smile. At this point in time, his smile looked extremely unnatural and awkward.

Without raising his head, Le Buleng replied, "I am not waiting anymore. I am going to challenge Dai Gang now."

Wan Shenwei was startled. He did not know what had provoked Le Buleng and quickly persuaded him, "Senior, didn't we come to an agreement that we will join hands and take on Dai Gang? Why have you suddenly changed your mind?"

"It's about self-respect," Le Buleng replied as he continued to pack his things.

"Senior, what are you implying?" Wan Shenwei's face turned gloomy.

When everyone in the camp saw the two of them arguing, they stopped celebrating and shifted their gazes toward them.

"What am I implying?" Le Buleng sneered as he stopped what he was doing and squinted his eyes. An ominous glint flashed across his eyes as he continued, "You still dare to argue with me? If I was a few years younger, I would have killed you by now."

Wan Shenwei tried to restrain the anger within him. His body was surging with a murderous aura while his fists were tightly clenched. "Senior, can you clarify your words? At least let me know what you are unsatisfied with."

Le Buleng's face was filled with disdain as he smirked. "After

spending a few days with you, I still thought you were a real man. A tiger that has rested for too long will lose all its might. A dragon that is locked up for too long will lose its fearsome gaze. My life was full of ups and downs. I have been through countless life-and-death situations. The only thing I have is courage, so I don't cower from difficulties. A moth that flies into the flame will die, but at least it dies gloriously. Look at all of you, you're a bunch of dogs and flies that think you can outsmart everyone. In reality, you're just a bunch of lethargic cowards and weaklings."

Every word that came out from the skinny old man was powerful and resonating.

Everyone in the camp was speechless.

Wan Shenwei's face flushed with anger and embarrassment.

Le Buleng raised his voice as he continued angrily, "The three central divisions are useless! Does the armor you wear, the inheritances you have learned, and the elemental food and beans you eat come from the Ye family?"

Everyone's gaze gathered at Wan Shenwei involuntarily.

At this point in time, Wan Shenwei's face was red with embarrassment, shame, and anger. He did not know how to explain this to his soldiers.

Le Buleng did not care about him at all and continued to chide

him, "The Wall of the North Sea has collapsed, while the North Sea Division has been annihilated. Your fellow comrades have died for the country with their corpses left in the wilderness. They are unable to rest in peace since they were humiliated. The enemy forces have arrived and the world is about to be plunged into an abyss of misery and suffering. Let me ask all of you: Who are the ones who are going to die?"

Le Buleng's surroundings became even more quiet. Many people felt uneasy.

Le Buleng's words were like a knife that plunged into the hearts of every soldier. "The citizens who provide for all of you!"

Everyone's face was bright-red as their heavy breathing became erratic.

"Great victory? Haha!" Le Buleng's tone became even more sarcastic.

Anger erupted from his chest. With a seething look on his face, he yelled, "From the glorious footprints, an old man had died in the enemy country. From the North Sea's Shi family, a lone girl is fighting at the front line. From the Infantry and Sky Edge, new soldiers are defending our territory. The so-called elites are hiding at the rear and celebrating the so-called great victory at the front line. Hahahaha!"

Le Buleng let off laughter aimed at the sky. His laughter was ear-piercing. Unable to restrain his anger, he blasted a punch toward

an arena in the center of the camp

Boom!

It sounded as if a drum had been heavily struck in Skyheart City. The arena in the center of the camp was shattered into smithereens.

A fist-shaped hole that was 60 meters deep was created.

The [Five Peaks] of Skyheart City was alarmed and its light screen was activated. A boundless aura of might engulfed the city. The light screen was as thick and solid as a wall, extending slowly to the defensive line formed by the camp.

"It’s a disgrace to associate myself with all of you!"

A firm and disdainful voice rang resounded throughout the sky. It could be heard throughout the whole city, causing everyone’s ears to buzz. It was so loud that the soldiers of the Dread Division went into a daze. By the time they regained their senses, shame and anger engulfed them.

A skinny, yet lofty, figure calmly flew toward the light screen of the [Five Peaks] without any fear.

Golden flames began to rise from his back, giving off a dazzling radiance.

"A dead thing dares to stop me?"

Le Buleng sneered. The golden flames engulfed his fist as he blasted a punch onto the light screen.

A dazzling burst of light erupted, looking as if the sun had exploded. A vast expanse of whiteness descended upon Skyheart City.

By the time everyone regained their vision, they could only see a web-like light screen in the sky that had a hole in the middle. Le Buleng had disappeared.

Everyone was overwhelmed with shock.

The five God-subduing Peaks looked as if they were stunned by Le Buleng's terrifying punch. They only regained operations after 10 seconds. The hole in the web-like light screen in the sky was rapidly repaired and disappeared gradually.

Skyheart City, mayor's residence.

Everyone held their breath as they listened to Madam Ye attentively.

"The enemy forces will definitely retaliate. We have to replenish resources and manpower to send to the three combat divisions as

soon as possible. This must be done at any cost. This issue is of the highest importance now," Madam Ye instructed with a calm and firm tone.

"Should we adjust the sizes of the three combat divisions?" Nian Tingfeng asked carefully.

"Keep them the same," Madam Ye said as she glanced at him.

"Subordinate understands." Nian Tingfeng nodded his head with a pensive look on his face.

Madam Ye continued, "By the way, don't we have three God-subduing Peaks that have just been completed? Send them to the three combat divisions as well. One for each combat division."

A commotion broke out among Madam Ye's subjects.

"Madam, you must not do this. If the God-subduing Peaks fall in the hands of the Blood of God, we will be in danger."

"Yes, yes. Such a precious weapon cannot be given to them just like that."

...

Madam Ye raised her hand and all the voices disappeared.

A look of disdain flashed across Madam Ye’s eyes. Soon after, she regained her composure and replied, "Such a precious weapon should be used on the battlefield. Don’t tell me we are supposed to leave it in a warehouse and let it rot? Get it done!"

A look of admiration appeared upon Nian Tingfeng’s face. Respectfully, he replied, "Yes."

Madam Ye had a look of satisfaction. She looked at her subjects and said, "Not only should we publicize this great victory, we have to publicize the rewards for it as well. I want everyone to know that as long as a person is willing to fight on the battlefield, he or she will be rewarded greatly. The Elders Guild will not mistreat anyone. Any combat division that accumulates enough meritorious service will be given a God-subduing Peak."

It was at this moment that everyone realized what Madam Ye’s intentions were. All of them clicked their tongues in admiration.

At this moment, the ground suddenly shook and everyone was stunned.

"It’s a disgrace to associate myself with all of you!"

The piercing voice was loud and clear.

"It’s Le Buleng." A frightened look appeared upon Nian Tingfeng’s face.

Following which, a white light flashed across the sky. Soon after, everything returned to normal.

Madam Ye’s face turned ashen. She instructed Nian Tingfeng, "Go out and see what’s going on."

Nian Tingfeng disappeared instantly. After a while, he came back with a shocked look on his face. "Senior Le Buleng has gone to challenge Dai Gang."

Madam Ye and the rest were astonished. Le Buleng had yet to become a Grandmaster. Was he trying to seek death by taking on Dai Gang single-handedly?

At this moment, a person hurriedly ran into the hall and made a report.

"Reporting to Mayor, the Dread Division is striking their camp and preparing to leave the city!

Madam Ye stood up quickly.

Chapter 518: Creditor And Boss

"... It has been proven that setting up fortifications on the battlefield beforehand and having an earth elemental master who specializes in construction are very advantageous for our defense. A battlefield that has been fortified beforehand provides a favorable position for our side during an intense battle. Furthermore, we can clearly identify the paths to take for counter-attacks. We can also foresee that Construction Master will become a new progression path for earth elementalists in the future. It might become a brand-new profession..."

"... The Hellfire Pagoda Cannon is extremely powerful. It played an important role during the battle. However, it has also become the main target for enemy forces. As such, it is necessary to deploy layers of defense around a Hellfire Pagoda Cannon. Fatty's bombardment skills are admirable. He also has a suggestion regarding the Hellfire Pagoda Cannon. After discussing it, we feel that there is high chance for it to work. We will only know if it truly works when we return and ask Master He to try it out..."

"... I am shocked by the Hellfire Pagoda Cannon's utility in battle. I have a feeling that it will greatly change the style of warfare in the future. I imagine that if we can equip a God-subduing Peak with Hellfire Pagoda Cannons, it will greatly increase the offensive power of the God-subduing Peak in theory. I have even come up with a few tactics for it. It's a pity I don't have a God-subduing Peak..."

"... The enemy forces have very high adaptability. In the late stage of the battle, they were able to identify our weaknesses. Luckily, they didn't have many men left and couldn't break

through our defensive line. At that point in time, the situation was extremely dangerous. Now that I think about it, I still feel scared. Currently, we are discussing how to resolve this issue. We have a few ideas so far, but we will only know whether or not they will work when we try them out in an actual battle..."

Ai Hui read Iron Lady's letter very carefully.

The letter was like a battle summary report. In the letter, she did not reminisce about their old times or write anything about missing him.

Ai Hui was slightly in daze. He could imagine the battlefield scene in his mind.

The beams of red light that erupted from the Hellfire Pagoda Cannons engulfed the enemy forces like floodwater. Ear-piercing screams, explosions, rising smoke, splattered mud that rained down from the sky, soldiers who were struck in the sky and resembled kites with broken strings...

Looking down from the sky, the defensive line was like a tidal wave that was being compressed. A blue and white armored girl was fighting at the forward position of the tidal wave with Cirrus in her hands.

Without even asking, Ai Hui already knew where Iron Lady would be on the battlefield.

She would always take the lead and appear at the most dangerous place. This was something about her that Ai Hui admired a lot.

To his surprise, the name she signed at the end of the letter was "Creditor."

Ai Hui chuckled.

He re-read the letter a few more times. After furrowing his eyebrows and pondering for a long while, he took out a piece of paper and wrote a letter of reply to Iron Lady.

"... Like what you have said, weapons like pagoda cannons will play an important role in future warfare. As long as we have enough snow lava, the Hellfire Pagoda Cannons will inflict heavy losses on the enemy forces. If we can equip God-subduing Peaks with Hellfire Pagoda Cannons, then these God-subduing Peaks will certainly become fortresses that fly in the sky. We will have to provide them with elementalists who specialize in aerial warfare and prevent the enemy forces from getting close to them. Like what you have said, warfare in this era is undergoing huge changes..."

"... The idea of a Construction Master sounds great. You can consider involving wood elementalists as well. Wood elementalists specialize in creating disturbances such as poison attacks and illusions over a large area. If a wood elementalist could collaborate with a Construction Master, they would produce outstanding results. By the way, Bangwan has gone into secluded training..."

"... My condition has stabilized. The Sword of Lightning is gradually forming its offensive capabilities now..."

After writing a lengthy letter, Ai Hui realized that if Iron Lady's letter was a battle summary report, then his reply letter would be a battle planning report.

All right, replying to a report with a report.

They certainly matched each other.

At the end of the letter, Ai Hui solemnly penned "Boss."

He felt pleased with himself. Didn't the Iron Lady know that the debtor is the boss of the creditor? What was so special about being a creditor?

Yang Xiaodong looked on as Ai Hui rapidly finished writing the letter, solemnly folded it up, put it in an envelope, and passed it to him. At that moment, his facial expression became solemn as well. It appeared that the letter was very important.

"When are you leaving?" Ai Hui asked.

"Immediately," Yang Xiaodong replied.

The great victory they had just achieved was a truly meaningful victory for the Avalon of Five Elements against the Blood of God.

The enemy forces had a strong and solid foundation. The defeat of their vanguard division was not enough to fundamentally damage them. It would only enrage them instead.

Their upcoming counter-attack would definitely be insane.

Yang Xiaodong didn’t like Ai Hui very much, but he respected Shi Xueman very deeply.

"Bring more snow lava with you before you leave," Ai Hui reminded Yang Xiaodong.

"Okay." Yang Xiaodong nodded his head.

He had witnessed the might of the Hellfire Pagoda Cannons with his own eyes and knew the importance of snow lava. The upcoming battles would not be easy. Replenishment of snow lava on the battlefield was a problem, so this was the best time to restock their supply.

Things weren’t like what they used to be in the past. Otherwise, a sand compass would solve all of their problems.

Whether it was the sand compass or the message tree, both of them were built at the peak of the Avalon of Five Elements and nourished by generations of experts. The earth elemental energy in the ground blended together well without any barriers. The stable and powerful Avalon of Five Elements was like a plot of rich and fertile soil, while the sand compasses, message trees, and azure

wings were the delicious fruits that grew on it.

Nowadays, the plot of soil had become infertile and dry, and the trees and plants growing on it were withering. The glory of the past was lost.

Many things that they were accustomed to had disappeared. These things included sand compasses, message trees, Three Leaves Bamboo Carts, etc.

The journey was a long one. As such, Yang Xiaodong did not waste time, taking the snow lava and departing immediately.

When Ai Hui saw Yang Xiaodong's figure disappear into the horizon, a strong sense of urgency arose in Ai Hui's heart.

.....

Skyheart City.

Everyone left their houses and stepped into the streets.

The incident just now had alarmed everyone. All of them were startled when they saw two groups of people standing across from each other on the street.

The group with more people was the Surveillance Division while the group with fewer people was the Dread Division. Was there

internal strife among the three central divisions? Or were they plotting a rebellion? Why was there suddenly internal strife when they had just announced a great victory?

Nian Tingfeng blocked Wan Shenwei's path. He was persuading Wan Shenwei patiently, "Le Buleng is crazy, don't tell me Boss Wan is crazy too? Acting rashly like this won't bring you any chance of victory. So what if all of the three central divisions enter the battlefield? Can we obtain victory? No, we can't..."

"I know." Wan Shenwei nodded his head calmly.

"If you know, why are you still doing this?" Nian Tingfeng asked angrily.

Wan Shenwei replied plainly, "Senior Le Buleng is right. It is everyone's responsibility to defend our country. However, we must be the first ones to do so. This is because the world has been providing for us for all these years and the others don't have such a luxury. If someone has to die, then it must be us first. We should be the ones who bleed first, before the rest can do so."

Nian Tingfeng was speechless. After a while, he replied, "Do you think death will solve everything? The most important thing for us to do now is to win."

"Who will win?" Wan Shenwei asked him back.

"Everyone, the Avalon of Five Elements," Nian Tingfeng replied

solemnly.

"There is no more Avalon of Five Elements," Wan Shenwei sneered. "We can’t represent everyone. The current Elders Guild can no longer represent everyone."

"Then who will represent everyone? Dai Gang? So we should act like a sheet of loose sand, fight among ourselves, and become blood elementalists when we fail?" Nian Tingfeng mocked Wan Shenwei.

"You’re underestimating the heroes in the world. Heroes emerge in times of chaos," Wan Shenwei shook his head and replied.

"You would rather place your hope in those so-called heroes than the successor who the Great Elder appointed?" Nian Tingfeng retorted disdainfully.

"Yes. I don’t agree with Ye Lin’s conduct and deeds."

Nian Tingfeng’s facial expression turned ugly as he replied, "It’s fine by me if someone else does not understand what she’s doing. You don’t know how rotten the current situation is. Madam has spent an immense amount of time and effort to reach the current stage. Do you know how stressed and tired she is..."

"Precisely! The current situation is rotten!" Wan Shenwei interrupted him as a blaze lit up in his eyes. "We need courage, not transactions or plots. If you and I don’t want to die and everyone puts their own safety before everything else, then who will fight

and defend our country? Even ordinary combat divisions should die before the citizens do, let alone the three central divisions. This is not about glory, but rather, fulfilling our duty."

"Well said!"

A piercing voice echoed through the air from the end of the street.

Nian Tingfeng's eye pupils dilated. It was Ximen Caijue!

Wan Shenwei turned and saw Ximen Caijue, who looked like a small girl.

"I didn't expect Boss Wan to be able to talk so eloquently," Ximen Caijue joked.

"Now that I speak of it, I truly feel ashamed." Wan Shenwei's weathered face looked slightly flushed with shame.

"We should be ashamed. The Judgement Division will be heading toward the battlefield with you as well." Ximen Caijue snorted, "Nian Tingfeng, the Ye family is evil. You better be careful to not be betrayed by Ye Lin."

Nian Tingfeng's face turned extremely ugly. He had not expected the Judgement Division to butt in as well.

"Let them go."

Madam Ye’s voice came from a distance. She was surrounded and protected by many guards. She looked imposing and dignified.

Her gaze swept across the scene. With a deep voice, she said, "If you want to go, then go ahead. I will not stop you. However, there’s something I want to clarify. It’s easy to die and difficult to live. If you stay alive, you will be wronged, your name will be tarnished, and you will be blamed. However, only by staying alive can you obtain a chance at victory. The three central divisions are the world’s best combat divisions. If the three central divisions are lost, we will no longer have the ability to make another one.

Everyone remained speechless. Madam Ye’s words made sense. A worried look appeared on many people’s faces.

"Excuses," Ximen Caijue sneered.

With a dignified look on his face, Wan Shenwei looked directly at Madam Ye and said, "Madam can stay alive and pursue the victory you seek. The three central divisions might be able to protect Skyheart City, but what about Beyond Avalon? We can’t. What about other cities? Should we not care about their lives? Madam’s heart only cares about this small Skyheart City. The three central divisions belong to the entire Avalon of Five Elements, not just Skyheart City alone."

When Wan Shenwei finished his sentence, he became disinterested in talking anymore. He then gave the order, "Set off."

Everyone in the Dread Division echoed in unison, "Set off!"

"Set off!" Ximen Caijue yelled at the top of her lungs.

"Set off!" Everyone in the Judgement Division yelled in unison.

Chapter 519: Grandmaster Dai's Decree

The Lu family was the leading illustrious family in the Jadeite Forest. However, compared to other extravagant, high-profile, and prominent families, the Lu family was so low-profile that no one seemed to notice their existence. Whether it was Lu Chen or Lu Mingxiu, neither of them had done anything that was preposterous. Their strict and prudent family culture was praised by many people.

The study room of the Lu family's patriarch was unusually simple and crude.

The wooden planks that made up the floor were filled with traces of aging. They would produce creaks whenever someone walked on them. There were also a few wooden planks which had a different color from the rest. Clearly, these few wooden planks had been repaired before. Every wooden plank gave off a dark luster. One could clearly tell that they were often used and cleaned with utmost care.

The four walls of the study room were filled with various books, looking extremely messy.

Sunlight shone through the wooden fretwork window, leaving a slanted, flower-shaped shadow on the wooden floor. The wooden fretwork window had a seven-leaf flower design. That was a Seven-leaf Flower. This kind of design used to be very popular when the Avalon of Five Elements was first established. It symbolized family harmony and prosperity.

After about 100 years, this kind of design was gradually replaced by newer and more beautiful designs. One could hardly see this kind of design in modern times.

An elegant-looking man who was around 50 to 60 years old was fiddling with a loom in the corner of the room. It appeared that he had finished building the loom halfway through. The floor around him was filled with various components.

Thud, thud, thud. Someone was knocking on the door.

The man, whose forehead was dripping with perspiration, answered without raising his head, "Come in."

The person who entered the room was Uncle She. He looked at the floor attentively. Uncle She was very familiar with the room itself. He knew which area of the floor had just been repaired and which area was broken. As such, he was very careful with where he placed his feet.

Master repaired the floor of the study room by himself. He did not want anyone to interfere with it.

As a servant, Uncle She was always mindful not to create any trouble for his master. This was part of his experience from being a servant for so many years.

He quietly walked behind the man. When he saw the half-completed loom, he smiled. "Master, you have said that you will

complete it by tomorrow. It seems like things aren’t going your way."

"I guess I can’t complete it!"

The middle-aged man stood up from the ground. His body was covered in wood shavings, making him look like he was in a sorry state. He brushed off the dust and wood shavings from his body and took the wet towel Uncle She passed him. Then, he continued, "This Ai Hui is rather capable. The [Needle-subduing Peak] is very weird. There are a lot of areas which I don’t understand. It’s a pity that Mingxiu is such a stubborn girl. She just doesn’t want to bring back the [Needle-subduing Peak] and let me study it."

This middle-aged man was the patriarch of Lu family. He was also the father of Lu Mingxiu, Lu Zhian.

No one had expected that the Lu family patriarch was trying to make a copy of the [Needle-subduing Peak].

"It’s not like you don’t know Miss’s temperament." Uncle She smiled.

"That’s true." Lu Zhian chuckled. "Usually, she might appear very smart. In reality, she is a very stubborn individual."

After cleaning his hands, Lu Zhian threw the towel back to Uncle She and strode to his desk.

He picked up the cup of cold tea on the desk and downed it. After feeling much cooler, he spoke again, "Yesterday, Lu Chen sent me a letter and requested for me to investigate the incident thoroughly. He is such an anxious boy. Tell me, how is the investigation?"

"From the looks of it, there is a very high chance that it was Young Master Feng," Uncle She replied with a prudent voice.

"Tell me everything that you have found."

"Yes."

"We caught a remaining member of the Grass Bandits. He was the archer who tried to assassinate Miss when she was ascending to the Master level. This fellow was very tight-lipped. No matter how we tortured him, he refused to say anything. However, Young Master Qiu eventually came up with a solution. He used a few herbs that were gathered from the depths of the Wilderness and made a [Soul-grabbing Pill]. With the help of the [Soul-grabbing Pill], we finally made that fellow talk."

"Mingqiu, this boy... He doesn't even come to our house when he returns! I have doted on him in vain!" Lu Zhian was unhappy.

"In Young Master Qiu's eyes, Master's house pales in comparison to Miss's embroidery workshop." Uncle She laughed.

"That's true!" Lu Zhian burst into a laughter.

Suddenly, he stopped laughing and asked, "Mingqiu didn’t visit his teacher?"

"No, he did not." Uncle She looked at his master and shook his head.

Lu Zhian furrowed his eyebrows and sighed, "Forget it, I don’t want to interfere in their business. Continue."

Uncle She glanced at his master and said an earth-shattering sentence, "Young Master Feng is interested in Miss."

"Continue," Lu Zhian’s facial expression did not change.

"From the mouth of that Grass Bandit member, the Grass Bandits had received a huge business deal. The other party offered them a huge sum of money to attack Asakusa City and kidnap Miss. According to the original plan, the other party would even pay an extra sum of money to buy Miss. The Grass Bandits greatly valued this business deal. Furthermore, they have always hated the Lu family, so they set their hearts on this mission. Because they were worried that news of their plan might be leaked, they sent a batch of vanguards to kill everyone along their path. Unexpectedly, they encountered Master Ai and were killed by him instead."

Lu Zhian’s facial expression was as calm as water. One could not tell what he was feeling.

Uncle She kept his tone calm and tried not to add any emotions

to it. "At that time, Young Master Feng's Fiery Floating Cloud was heading toward Asakusa City. Looking at the time frame of the events, if the Grass Bandits really attacked Asakusa City according to their plan, Young Master Feng's Fiery Floating Cloud would have reached Asakusa City in the heat of the battle. I have intentionally sent some people to ask a few members of the Grass Bandits to understand the situation. They have verified that Young Master Feng arranged a huge number of training sessions on sieging a city, attacking a city, and saving a hostage. Some of the training sessions also included familiarizing themselves with the city plan of Asakusa City. He also taught them some special battle tactics. After we showed these battle tactics to that remaining member from the Grass Bandits, he was extremely shocked. However, from the contents of the training sessions, I can see that Young Master Feng did not have any intention of hurting Miss."

Lu Zhian nodded his head and exclaimed in admiration, "Lu Feng has done a rather good job for coming up with such a meticulous plan. If it was not for Ai Hui's accidental interference, his plan had a high chance of succeeding. Mingxiu had been away from home for many years, and her relationship with Lu Feng had become estranged. Even though the method of playing hero to save the beauty is old-fashioned, it's still very effective. At that point in time, Yu Mingqiu was nowhere to be found, so he managed to find an excuse to get close to Mingxiu."

Uncle She did not dare to make any judgemental comments. He continued, "As for Zheng Xiaoman, she was offered a chance to seek revenge when a mysterious fellow approached her one day. The internal department of the Grass Bandits strongly objected to this matter. However, Zheng Xiaoman insisted on seeking revenge. No one could stop her. Her subordinates did not understand why Young Master Feng wanted to deal with Master Ai."

"Jealousy is a toxic poison. Have you ever seen Mingxiu treating someone so good? Lu Feng was raised as an adopted son. He might look very strong and determined, but in reality, he has an inferiority complex and is a very sensitive individual. He is nothing like Mingxiu. Meanwhile, Lu Chen is a carefree and simple man. As for Mingxiu, she is an iron fist in a velvet glove. She handles things logically and reasonably. How I wish she was a man!" Lu Zhian said calmly.

"She's just like you," Uncle She replied.

"Your flattery comes just at the right time!" Lu Zhian burst out laughing.

Uncle She grinned.

Lu Zhian withdrew his smile and sighed. "How would I not know Lu Feng's shortcomings? However, who else is more ambitious than him in this residence? Lu Chen is a carefree and simple man who doesn't care about fame. Mingxiu put her heart and soul into embroidery. She treats her junior better than her father. Lu Feng is too anxious. If he did things step-by-step and let nature take its course, wouldn't the Lu residence be in his hands sooner or later? Anyway, no matter how strong Mingxiu's future husband is, he can't be someone who has the surname Lu!"

Uncle She did not dare to say anything. He listened to Lu Zhian respectfully.

"As for Ai Hui's message that he asked you to pass to me, even though I know he cares for Mingxiu and it's reasonable for him to say those words, he is still somewhat arrogant. However, I now know that I was wrong. The bloody words on the wooden board in Lemon Camping Ground have yet to dry. Who in this world dares to underestimate? The Central Pine Valley has a hidden tiger."

"I have just received news of the great victory for Beyond Avalon at the front line. Even though Skyheart City commended the three combat divisions as a whole, Shi Xueman's Spear of Heavy Cloud was really the key to that victory. The Central Pine Faction is well-established and has a huge number of talents. I am more than happy that Mingxiu is from the Central Pine Faction. Therefore, why would I want to risk having a conflict with the Central Pine Faction?" Lu Zhian muttered.

"Mingqiu is back. No matter how estranged his relationship with Grandmaster Dai is, he is still Grandmaster Dai's disciple. How would it be possible for Mingqiu to put up with the fact that someone is targeting Mingxiu?"

Lu Zhian sighed with sorrow as a tinge of sadness appeared in his eyes. "Being too anxious is hurting Lu Feng. Everyone who is involved in this incident is not someone he can provoke!"

Uncle She sighed in his heart as well. No one understood more than him about how much hope Master had placed in Lu Feng. Master had spent a lot of time and effort nurturing Lu Feng.

Lu Zhian's facial expression returned to normal as he continued, "Hand Lu Feng over to Lu Chen. After all, Lu Feng is Grandmaster

Dai’s disciple-in-name. We can’t handle him anyhow. Let them resolve their matter by themselves.

"Yes," Uncl

She replied respectfully.

Just as he was about to leave, someone knocked on the door.

"Master, Sir Hai Qing wants to seek an audi ence with you," a guard outside the door reported.

A glint flashed across Lu Zhian’s eyes as he opened the door and walked out of the room.

There was a middle-aged man standing by himself at the bottom of the flight of stairs. When that middle-aged man heard the sound of the door being opened, he turned around.

As Lu Zhian walked down the stairs, his face beamed with smiles. "Rare guest, rare guest... It has been a very long time since Sir Hai Qing visited my humble abode. Come in, come in. This time around, we have to reminisce about the good old times."

As usual, Hai Qing did not smile. He bowed and replied, "Nice to see you, Patriarch! I am afraid we can only reminisce about the old times next time around. I am here to pass you a message from Grandmaster Dai."

Lu Zhian respectfully bowed in return and replied, "Feel free to tell me the message, Sir."

"Grandmaster Dai said that even though Lu Feng has done something wrong, brothers should not argue with each other, let alone injure each other. Lu Feng will be stripped of his position as the division leader of the Deathgrass Division. He will be punished by entering the Grass Hollow for the three years. Whether he lives or dies, it will have to depend on his luck," Hai Qing said with a deep voice.

"I will obey as Grandmaster Dai has decreed!" Lu Zhian replied respectfully.

.....

Mingxiu Embroidery Workshop.

Yu Mingqiu looked at the man in the mirror. The stubble that had covered his face was now completely shaved, and his long hair was tied up using a red string once more. He looked invigorated now.

The traces of aging on his face had disappeared. He seemed to be looking at a reflection of himself from the past. A self who had existed five to six years ago.

What would have become of him if the blood catastrophe and

everything else after had not happened?

He laughed at himself and shook his head, throwing these distracting thoughts out of his head. When he thought of the fact that he could live in the embroidery workshop, he became extremely excited, and his entire body was filled with vigor even though he was staying under the pretense of protecting Mingxiu.

The enchanting image of a beautiful girl was so close to him. The absolutely empty room in his heart was sprinkled with sunshine at this point in time.

After straightening his collar, Yu Mingqiu walked out of his room with a radiant smile on his face.

What should he say when he saw Mingxiu later?

...

His skills were slightly rusty...

.....

Hai Qing set foot upon the street after leaving the Lu residence.

No one on the street took notice of him. No one knew that this grumpy-looking man who had no guards around him was actually the butler of the entire Jadeite Forest.

After he walked through the street and made a turn, he arrived at the doorstep of an embroidery workshop. He raised his head and looked at the signboard. On the signboard, there were three words written in ink: "Mingxiu Embroidery Workshop." The handwriting was unusually graceful.

Hai Qing, who seldomly smiled, had a subtle smile on his face. Soon after, the smile disappeared.

He was all too familiar with Lu Chen’s handwriting.

Just as he opened the door and was about to enter the workshop, a familiar voice resounded through the air.

"The whole year must be planned for in the spring. The whole day must be planned for in the morning. The early bird catches the worm... Hehe... Mingxiu, good morning!"

Hai Qing thought he saw a witty-looking young man with a pair of beady eyes and his hair tied up by a red string who was swaying his head while reciting a poem.

He could not help but smile. However, why was he sighing in his heart?

As Hai Qing set foot inside the workshop, a familiar view of a back appeared in his eyes. He was still the same...

Hai Qing set his gaze on Yu Mingqiu’s back for a few seconds before withdrawing it.

A lot of things had changed.

When Yu Mingqiu saw who the visitor was, the smile on his face disappeared.

Hai Qing said emotionlessly, "Xiao Qiu, long time no see. Grandmaster Dai has invited you to his residence."

Chapter 520: Panda Mummy

Duanmu Huanghun’s eyes were tightly closed like a door. Behind the door, there was a world that had a great, ongoing snowstorm. Green snowflakes danced and fluttered in the air. Every snowflake was a viridescent flower. All of them were shaped differently, possessing a myriad of forms.

He was immersed in this pure, yet richly colorful, world.

The glowing pattern beneath his body changed its shape silently once more.

The nine hundred and sixtieth type of [Viridescent Flower].

.....

A breathless roar resounded through the air from the other side of the valley.

"Unity? Why not call it Transcendence?"

"It has been so many years, no one will care if it’s called Transcendence."

"Can’t he use his brain? With the name of "Transcendence" alone, we can increase the selling price of each sword by three times!"

...

No one cared about the air-dried mummy who was jumping up and down in rage. Everyone cared about their reputation. Stealing the name of an ancient sword wasn't something that an ordinary individual would do.

"Boss, are you going to train with us?" Gu Xuan asked bluntly.

Ai Hui shut his mouth.

Nowadays, his body was becoming weaker and weaker. Whenever he walked, he felt as if he was floating. In the beginning, he was still able to use the [Imbuement of Sword Cloud] to suppress Gu Xuan and the rest. However, very soon, everyone saw through Ai Hui. They knew he was strong on the outside, but weak on the inside. Every training session consumed the lightning in the sword cloud. Right now, the sword cloud within Ai Hui's body allowed him to execute only 10 sword moves.

For Gu Xuan and the rest, unleashing 10 sword moves in a row was no longer an issue for them.

An old fox like Gu Xuan naturally would not go head-to-head with Ai Hui. A simple sentence like that was enough to put him down in one shot. Of course, he also did not dare to really provoke Ai Hui. A few days ago, Ai Hui had just taught them a lesson. Even though Ai Hui might appear weak and delicate, he became a completely different person the moment he touched his sword hilt. Within 15 seconds, he brought them to their knees.

15 seconds!

He flattened everyone!

The sword Ai Hui used was [Edgeless Sword], which usually didn't give off any sword rays. However, at that moment, it released an earth-shattering sword ray that flooded all of them like an angry tidal wave collapsing against a reef.

No one could see Ai Hui's sword ray clearly.

The sword ray sent Gu Xuan flying for more than 40 meters and caused him to lie on the ground for nearly half a day. He only regained his senses when Lou Lan fed him some elemental soup.

After that incident, everyone became obedient once more. However, an old fox like Gu Xuan naturally would not lose his courage just because of a single failure. Very soon, he tried to test the waters again.

Ai Hui gave a humph. He looked as if he could not be bothered with them, but in reality he was mentally noting down their names. He would teach them a lesson one by one in the future.

Suddenly, Ai Hui raised his head and looked in another direction.

Someone was flying toward them.

Everyone, who was laughing and joking previously, became silent immediately. A vigilant look appeared on all of their faces.

"Nevermind, it’s a friend." Ai Hui waved his hand.

Upon hearing Ai Hui’s words, everyone loosened up. However, they did not have the mood to fool around anymore and continued their training.

Very soon, a familiar figure descended from the sky. It was Mu Lei, who had left not too long ago.

When Ai Hui saw that it was Mu Lei, he was very surprised. However, his facial expression had already returned to normal by this point in time. He smiled and asked, "What wind blows our Master Mu here?"

When Mu Lei saw Ai Hui’s appearance, he was startled.

Ai Hui’s entire body was wrapped up with white bandages. Initially, his eyes could still be seen. Now, his eyes were covered with two black circular crystal chips, making him look extremely weird.

Not much time had passed since he last left this place. However, Ai Hui appeared to be a few times skinnier than before, resembling an air-dried mummy. Wearing the two black crystal chips made him like a panda mummy.

Mu Lei could not help but ask curiously, "Are you eyes injured?"

Ai Hui blinked his eyes and a red glint flashed across the black crystal chips. "Somewhat."

Mu Lei felt as if he had come across this scene somewhere before...

The black crystal chips were made by Lou Lan using a fire elemental crystal. They could protect Ai Hui's eyes from the glaring sunlight. After Ai Hui tried wearing them and realized that they were quite effective and comfortable, he had not taken them off since. Lou Lan's workmanship was exceptional. As for the fact that he had transformed into a panda mummy from a regular mummy, a pragmatic fellow like him did not care about it at all.

Mu Lei was a very sharp individual. When he saw that Ai Hui did not want elaborate, he did not ask him any more questions.

Mu Lei carefully removed a metal box from his back. The metal box was exquisitely made with countless fine decorative designs engraved on it.

"These are the Vitality Branches that Mingxiu requested for me to deliver to you."

As Mu Lei spoke, he meticulously opened the metal box. Three metallic branches were placed within it.

Upon successfully making the delivery, Mu Lei heaved a sigh of relief. Actually, he was the one who volunteered to make the delivery this time around. He felt extremely guilty for the previous incident with the Night Moth Fruit. He felt that he had not handled the situation well.

Without being encumbered by a convoy, Mu Lei, who was a Master, was able to travel day and night to deliver the Vitality Branches within a short period of time.

"Vitality Branches?" Ai Hui's tone was filled with curiosity and surprise.

He walked over to the metallic branches and squatted down. He could sense a faintly discernible aura coming from the three metallic branches. This aura was very unique, calm, and profound. It appeared as if it had drifted over from a very far place.

"Vitality Branches are Master Lu's most famous work! They contain a trace of the most primordial life force. As long as you're not dead, it will pull you back from the gates of hell." Mu Lei's voice had a tinge of sincere respect for them.

"Really?" Ai Hui's tone was filled with doubt.

Mu Lei's neck thickened and flushed as he widened his eyes. With an unfriendly tone, he replied, "Of course! Humph, if it weren't for the fact that Master Lu dotes on Miss Mingxiu, he wouldn't have taken out these Vitality Branches for you.

Moreover, he gave you three!"

Back in the day, Mu Lei's life was saved by Lu Chen, so he was very grateful to him. Therefore, when he heard Ai Hui's doubt, Mu Lei was very unhappy.

"So they are very expensive?"

Mu Lei regained his composure. Still feeling slightly unhappy, he could not help but sneer, "Expensive? Since when can Vitality Branches be bought with money? They are priceless. Even Grandmaster Dai acclaimed them as priceless treasures."

Upon hearing these words, Ai Hui beamed with happiness. "Senior Mingxiu is the best!"

After a while, Ai Hui asked again, "How do I use them?"

Mu Lei was momentarily stunned before answering Ai Hui, "I'm not sure, I have never used them before."

Ai Hui felt vexed. Suddenly, an idea hit him,and he yelled at the top of his lungs, "Lou Lan! Lou Lan!"

A shadowy streak sped toward Ai Hui and stopped in front of him. Cheerfully, Lou Lan said, "Lou Lan is here! Ai Hui, how can I help you?"

Ai Hui pointed at the metal chest and instructed Lou Lan, "Lou Lan, study the uses of these Vitality Branches."

Lou Lan’s eyes flickered with a red glow. He was very surprised. "Vitality Branches?"

Mu Lei finally understood why he found this scene with Ai Hui so familiar just now.

"Has Lou Lan heard of it before?" Ai Hui asked.

"Yes, Ai Hui. Vitality Branches are the most impressive creation of the White-robed Divine Physician, Lu Chen. He created Vitality Branches by treating the wood element as the spirit and the metal, water, fire, and earth elements as the soul. Every Vitality Branch contains a trace of the most primordial life force," Lou Lan explained.

"I shall hand them over to you then." Ai Hui felt greatly relieved when he heard Lou Lan’s words.

"No problem, Ai Hui!" Lou Lan replied cheerfully.

Mu Lei stared blankly at Ai Hui and Lou Lan. He could not believe that Ai Hui would leave a priceless treasure like the Vitality Branches for a sand puppet to study.

Didn’t Ai Hui know how many people were willing to pay any price to obtain a single Vitality Branch? Didn’t Ai Hui know how

hard he had restrained himself from the temptation of the Vitality Branches on the way here?

"When is Master Mu leaving?" A red glint flashed across Ai Hui's black crystal chips.

Mu Lei almost choked on his saliva. He had just arrived, hadn't drunk a sip of water, and Ai Hui was already chasing him away?

Initially, he also wanted to leave right after he had delivered the Vitality Branches. At this moment, he changed his mind. "I will leave after you have used the Vitality Branches. Vitality Branches have a well-known reputation and I haven't seen how magical they are before. It won't be troublesome for you, right?"

"It's not troublesome at all, Master Mu. You can help yourself then. I have something to tend to."

Ai Hui hurriedly left after he finished his sentence.

Mu Lei was bewildered. Was Ai Hui really that busy? As a Master, Mu Lei was treated with respect in every city. This was the first time he was being ignored.

Ai Hui was busy with what?

Feeling slightly curious, Mu Lei followed him. Lou Lan, Gu Xuan, and the rest did not try to stop him.

Ai Hui was indeed very busy. He was engulfed by an air of urgency.

Stabilizing the condition of his injury was a good start. He was slowly tapping into the power of the sword cloud. From the look of it, there were still many side effects. The growth of the sword cloud was neither fast nor slow. However, in such a desperate situation, Ai Hui felt extremely anxious. There was nothing he could do to speed up the process. Right now, the area of the clouds he could absorb could not exceed 600 square .meters.

Otherwise, the lightning he triggered would exceed the limit that his body could endure.

His body could not withstand another injury.

He could only restrain the anxiousness within him and do everything step-by-step.

Surprisingly, the training level of the Sword of Lightning's members exceeded his expectations. Blind He's Unity Swords had doubled everyone's strength.

Other than strengthening the sword cloud, there was another problem that urgently needed to be resolved by Ai Hui.

How could he make the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda fly?

Initially, Ai Hui wanted to use the Northern Underworld King Tree to power it. However, he had used the tree to heal his injuries and almost all of its leaves had been plucked off. It no longer possessed the ability to power the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda.

Certainly, if he wanted the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda to fly, he would have to fill it with a surging power.

Power, not elemental energy.

Nowadays, the price of obtaining elemental energy was surging higher and higher. Due to the characteristics of the Northern Underworld King Tree, Ai Hui felt that it had the potential of being a power source for the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda.

Unlike the rich and imposing Elders Guild, Ai Hui could not build God-subduing Peaks.

Every God-subduing Peak possessed all five elements and formed a five elemental cycle. Each God-subduing Peak was made up of countless precious materials and its production cost was extremely expensive. In other people's eyes, a God-subduing Peak was unusually mysterious. In Ai Hui's eyes, however, there was nothing mysterious about it. A God-subduing Peak did not consume just one type of elemental energy. Instead, it consumed a power that was formed by the five elemental cycle.

This was the greatest secret of the God-subduing Peak.

Wang Shouchuan had mentioned it in his theories, but it had not been explained. Actually, Ai Hui was very impressed that the Elders Guild could study his teacher's theories to such an extent.

When the five types of elemental energy formed a complete cycle and the cycle attained a level of equilibrium, it would automatically operate perpetually.

The power released by the five elemental cycle was called the Cyclical Force of Five Elements.

However, it was not easy for the cycle to attain equilibrium. No one had any idea on how to use the Cyclical Force of Five Elements either. Most people found that using just one type of elemental energy was more than enough. There wasn't an urgent demand for people to find a higher form of power yet.

It was only when the terrifying blood poison swept across the Avalon of Five Elements that people realized how weak and delicate a particular type of elemental energy was when used on its own against blood spiritual force.

The prominent rise of Wang Shouchuan's theories and the discovery of elemental traces changed everything.

This gave birth to a superweapon like the God-subduing Peaks.

Ai Hui did not have the money or resources to build a God-subduing Peak, but he had come up with other ideas.

This was because his teacher was named Wang Shouchuan.

Chapter 521: Blank Wooden Tablet

The lofty palace in front was surrounded by thriving vegetation, full of vitality. Green radishes cascaded down the palace walls like a waterfall. Only through cracks could one see the exquisite white jade patterns and the auspicious motif on the wall, carefully carved by a master craftsman. An unusual fragrance pervaded the air. It was complicated, yet mild and difficult to deliberately detect, but heart-piercing when unintentionally discovered. Even brilliant wood elementalists weren't able to identify the types of fresh flowers found in this fragrance in a short period of time.

Standing before the palace, Yu Mingqiu was slightly absentminded.

The dense wood elemental energy surged like the sea, and it was as if Yu Mingqiu was standing opposite from and facing an oceanic sheet of a wood elemental energy.

Looking at it surge and overflow soundlessly. Looking at the calm waves and its stillness.

He extended his gaze toward the sky and the surging wood elemental energy gathered, approaching from all directions like worshipping believers.

Yu Mingqiu's heart leapt. Exactly how much wood elemental energy is needed to form this oceanic sheet of wood elemental energy?

Suddenly, he wondered if that small courtyard in which his teacher had become a Grandmaster had been reduced to dust.

Hai Qing did not disturb Yu Mingqiu. He stood before the palace gate and waited quietly.

Grandmasters did not need guards. Usually, other than Dai Gang and Hai Qing, there were only a few accompanying servants, so it was very quiet.

Yu Mingqiu regained his senses. "Sorry, Hai Qing. My wind wandered."

Hai Qing responded faintly, "No matter."

Yu Mingqiu followed behind Hai Qing and walked toward the palace, receiving bows from female servants along the way. They looked curiously at Yu Mingqiu. This face was very foreign to them.

"What's the name of the palace?"

"Palace of Origin."

Yu Mingqiu's footsteps became slightly sluggish, his heart indescribably shaken up.

Power of Origin, beyond elemental energy!

Grandmasters were still unable to break away from the elemental energy framework. Was Teacher trying to detach himself from his Grandmaster level?

Indeed, there were none above Grandmasters. Under the current elemental energy system, Grandmasters were the limit. To surpass Grandmasters, one would have to break free from these shackles.

What would be the realm beyond elemental energy like?

Yu Mingqiu pondered absentmindedly.

Hai Qing, who was leading the way, explained, "This palace was jointly built by a few families, the Lu Residence included, as a gift to Grandmaster Dai."

Yu Mingqiu commented casually, "Quite beautiful."

The winding pavilion corridor, rockery, and moon gate were beautifully arranged. Koi fish were frolicking in the pond, and there were all kinds of vegetation, many of which Yu Mingqiu couldn’t recognize. He’d also seen some of them in the Wilderness.

The enormous palace was like a myriad plant garden.

His field of view suddenly opened up on a small, undulating hill. The grass was like a blanket, clean and simple. There was also a

small, lone courtyard located on the hill.

Unknowingly, Yu Mingqiu’s eyes turned moist.

"Grandmaster Dai feels more comfortable living in his own little courtyard, so it’s been moved over."

Hai Qing’s voice sounded, as if from the high and faraway clouds.

Upon seeing Dai Gang, Yu Mingqiu observed that time hadn’t taken its toll on the middle aged man. He sat before the tea table, looking at Yu Mingqiu with a slight smile.

"Welcome back, Xiao Qiu."

Yu Mingqiu felt calm at this point. He greeted expressionlessly, "Teacher."

"Sit. I haven’t heard anything about you for a few years and have been very worried."

Dai Gang’s words warmed Yu Mingqiu’s heart. He kept silent, loosened the big bow on his back, and sat opposite his teacher.

Hai Qing had already left quietly.

Dai Gang poured a cup of tea for Yu Mingqiu and smiled. "It

seems like you haven’t been suffering for nothing. So much more robust. I’ve been to the deeper parts of the Wilderness and suffered quite a lot too. That’s a good place to toughen somebody up."

Yu Mingqiu did not respond as he knew not what to say.

Dai Gang eyed the bow beside Yu Mingqiu and said, "Let Teacher have a look."

Yu Mingqiu grabbed it and handed it over to his teacher.

Dai Gang held it and stood up, pulling it in a relaxed manner. He praised, "Good bow! Is it made from divine cypress? I’ve seen a divine cypress tree in the Wilderness. Its crown was lush, and its core sturdy and resistant to sword slashes. I’d thought of plucking a few branches to bring back for refining weapons, but encountered a strong enemy and was fully occupied."

The bow’s body was plain and simple. It looked like it was made by carving a stick that was as thick as a wrist with a knife. The bowstring was a white beast tendon that was stretched taut.

Dai Gang was considered a tall man, but this bow was a head taller than him.

Yu Mingqiu replied, "Divine cypress."

Dai Gang commented, "The bowstring is a little weak. The silver-ringed glue is unable to bring out the might of the divine cypress.

Good bow. While it’s not on par with Blue Dome of Heaven, it has a lot of room for growth. Plus, you refined it yourself, so it’s linked to your life force and can surpass Blue Dome of Heaven in future. Where’s Blue Dome of Heaven?"

Yu Mingqiu answered, "Damaged in battle."

Blue Dome of Heaven, personally forged by Dai Gang, was a weapon gifted to Yu Mingqiu. The material he’d used were extraordinary; the three branches and green vines were objects that had been while he was undergoing the breakthrough to become a Grandmaster.

Blue Dome of Heaven rose to fame immediately upon completion.

Dai Gong put the bow aside and sat down before saying, "Look, with destruction comes construction. The world is mostly like that."

Yu Mingqiu clasped the teacup, not saying a word.

Dai Gang looked at him. "When the blood catastrophe first erupted, I was convinced that the Elders Guild would not be able to reverse the situation. It’s the Avalon of Five Elements’s fate."

Yu Mingqiu put his teacup down and responded expressionlessly, "Fate is determined by the heavens and not man."

Dai Gang chuckled. He wasn’t angry. "Xiao Qiu, do you think An

Muda would’ve agreed if I proposed for him and I to take over the Elders Guild?"

Yu Mingqiu was stunned. This was a question he hadn’t thought about. After some serious thought, he felt that An Muda would’ve most likely agreed.

Dai Gang continued faintly, "Outsiders aren’t aware that I ever paid An Muda a visit. They’re clueless about the fact that An Muda had asked if I was willing to take over."

Yu Mingqiu was thoroughly shocked.

"And I rejected him."

Yu Mingqiu jerked his head up. "Why?"

Dai Gang replied calmly, "I asked myself if I was able to save the Avalon of Five Elements and the answer was no."

"No?"

"Correct, I can’t. Can I eliminate the conflict between the new citizens and aristocratic families? No. The Elders Guild was already rotten. It was no longer a matter of killing one or two people, so was I going to kill all of them? An Muda wouldn’t have agreed either. Can this bunch of fellows, each with their own ulterior motive, take the Holy Emperor down? I don’t think so. The Elders Guild was doomed to fail. An Muda wouldn’t have been able to

save it. I wouldn’t have been able to save it."

Yu Mingqiu’s eyes were bright and shiny as he looked straight into Dai Gang’s eyes. "Then why make the Jadeite Forest independent?"

"Because I can save it." Dai Gang smiled. "An Muda regarded the Avalon as home, so naturally he was willing to sacrifice everything for it. I’m different. What has the Avalon got to do with me? Chen’er, you, and Huanghun are all in the Jadeite Forest. I can protect it, protect everyone, and that’s enough for me. What do other people have to do with me? Plus, I didn’t want to fail and worry about failing."

"But..."

Yu Mingqiu opened his mouth, but knew not what to say.

"I know you want to say that the common people are innocent. You’re different from your senior. He’s benevolent, yearns for a simple life, and works hard for it. You, on the other hand, are stubborn and obstreperous. You attach great importance on camaraderie and being chivalrous and heroic, but you must understand where you come from, where you’re heading to, and who your relatives, friends, and enemies are. You must be clear that you, your senior’s Lu residence, and your junior’s Duanmu household are all from the Jadeite Forest."

"There are so many things in this world to feel helpless about. Are you able to deal with all of them? Even if you’re a

Grandmaster, your ability is limited when faced with the powerful influences. The pain you've suffered is negligible." Dai Gang gave Yu Mingqiu a meaningful look. "If you want to do more, focus on getting stronger. The stronger you are, the better the world will understand your pain and suffering."

Yu Mingqiu kept quiet. He had something different in mind, but did not know how to refute.

"Your senior is here."

A knock on the door sounded immediately after. Lu Chen's voice came from outside. "Teacher."

"Come in."

Yu Mingqiu was very surprised by his senior's appearance. He felt the trace of a distinct aura when Lu Chen walked in. He didn't look too well and was also very surprised to see Yu Mingqiu. "Xiao Qiu's here too."

Yu Mingqiu hurriedly greeted, "Senior!"

Lu Chen sat down and got right to the point, "Why are you protecting Lu Feng, Teacher?"

Hearing this name, Yu Mingqiu turned serious, while the word "protecting" turned his expression ugly.

He’d been involved in investigating who was plotting against Ai Hui and Mingxiu.

Seeing his disciples’ expressions, Dai Gang sighed. "Follow me in."

After that, he walked toward the study room.

Lu Chen and Yu Mingqiu made eye contact and saw the surprise in each other’s faces. Teacher had never allowed anyone into his study room. Not them and not Qing Hai.

They’d been following Teacher for so many years, but hadn’t been allowed to enter.

They were rather curious. Lu Feng was merely a disciple in name, so why was he worth making a fuss over?

It couldn’t be said that Teacher was unfeeling, but he definitely wasn’t someone to place an importance on relationships.

The study room was solemn and dim. Candles were lit in all four corners, with some high up and some below. The candle flames swayed gently. There weren’t shelves full of books or luxurious objects. There was a mat woven from reeds and a faintly green, long-necked vase with a budding plum blossom in it. Overall, it was a simple and unadorned study room.

Nonetheless, Lu Chen and Yu Mingqiu’s gaze were fixed on the wall.

Seven sandalwood tablets hung on the wall in a row.

The second wooden tablet had two words on it: "Lu Chen."

The third wooden tablet had two words on it: "Yu Mingqiu."

At the end of the row, in order, were the words "Duanmu Huanghun,""Quan Minglong," and "Lu Feng."

The duo’s gaze converged on the first wooden tablet. There were no words on it.

"You two have a senior."

Although they somewhat had a vague feeling about this, Lu Chen and Yu Mingqiu were still greatly shaken upon hearing it with their own ears!

They’d been following their teacher around since they were young and had never been aware that they actually had a senior.

This was especially the case for Lu Chen. All along, he’d believed himself to be the eldest. Who knew he actually had a senior.

Dai Gang’s gaze fell upon that blank wooden tablet.

Still processing this sudden news, Yu Mingqiu glanced at his teacher out of the corner of his eyes and was startled.

He actually saw grief in his teacher’s eyes.

In his mind, Teacher was like a god, always smiling.

He’d never seen sorrow or the like on his teacher’s face before today.

"I don’t care about the hostility between you guys. I will absolutely not allow my disciples and students to attack one another.

Dai Gang’s tone was calm, but unyielding. Disobedience was intolerable.

Like a god’s decree.

Chapter 522: Pinwheel Sword

Seeing the word "Boss" at the end, Ai Hui's rascally face emerged in Shi Xueman's mind. A smile blossomed on her face, but vanished almost instantly.

She quickly diverted her attention and pondered over the words in Ai Hui's letter. Although there were certain parts she couldn't quite understand, she believed in Ai Hui's talent and foresight when it came to combat. She had complete confidence in him.

To her, Ai Hui was simply a genius born to battle. He had a beast-like instinct, extraordinary perception, and was extremely brave and firm.

Silver Solder and Karakorum Polaris walked over.

Silver Soldier handed a battle report over to her and said in a rather complicated toned, "There's been some changes. This is a news report sent over by the Surveillance Division."

Shi Xueman took the report and read it carefully.

"... an old man is dead in the enemy country, a lone girl is fighting at the front line, new soldiers are defending our territory..."

Senior Le Buleng really wasn't afraid to rebuke. How satisfying. Shi Xueman felt herself letting out a long held breath. It was very

liberating.

She returned the report to Silver Soldier, looking straight at him. "What do you mean?"

Silver Soldier said honestly, "We're here to discuss this matter. If it turns out to be true, do we still need to take this risk? We only have to wait for a while and we will have three God-subduing Peaks. We can also fight alongside the Judgment and Dread divisions. Capabilities on both sides will undergo fundamental changes."

Ai Hui's words floated into her mind unknowingly.

"... do not listen to others' commands..."

"... do not get involved in fights, maintain flexibility..."

She responded straightforwardly, "I disagree. It is true that our power will increase, but there won't be a fundamental reversal. The enemy, too, is vigilant and on guard, so we won't catch them by surprise. Now that Ye Baiyi is still comatose, we must use this time to eliminate all of their forces. Otherwise, the retreating army will confront us and we will be dragged into a deadlocked battle. Our army isn't as strong as the enemy's, so the moment we get dragged into a deadlocked battle, we will sink into a disadvantageous situation."

Silver Soldier was now clear-headed. He inhaled a deep breath.

"You’re right."

He was alarmed by the good news in the battle report. Not only was there a strong combat weapon like the God-subduing Peak, but there were also two strong allied divisions, which explained the joy he felt.

Shi Xueman’s words brought him back to reality.

Karakorum Polaris nodded her head slightly in agreement.

Silver Soldier wasn’t a timid person. He responded firmly, "Then we’ll go according to the plan."

Sword, spear, and iron fist collided in the air.

The three made eye contact, their gazes steady. All three shouted in unison.

"Victory!"

.....

Central Pine Valley.

Ai Hui was in trouble. Previously, he had been fully confident of dealing with the Ring of Life, but during the later tests he kept

running into problems.

Theoretically speaking, the Ring of Life wasn't complicated, but in order to produce Ring of Life force, there had to be a very subtle balance between the five types of elemental energy. This unique Ring of Life was known as the Shouchuan Ring, named in commemoration of Wang Shouchuan and his theory.

Today, more and more people were starting to see the major impacts of his theory.

The Shouchun Ring wasn't very challenging for Ai Hui.

The difficult part was maintaining the ring force.

Sustaining the force meant maintaining its balance.

The Shouchuan Ring was a kind of Ring of Life, so it naturally had similar characteristics. A special characteristic of the Ring of Life was that it was always in a state of mobility and fluctuation. It changed unpredictably, making it difficult to control.

The God-subduing Peak's enormous bulk contained abundant elemental energy. In the energy circulation process, other than the ring force, it could also mobilize elemental energy to use and consume. Having ring force and elemental energy at the same time meant that a God-subduing Peak could be in a consistently stable state.

The price to pay for a surplus of force was an alarming quantity of precious materials.

The Elders Guild was wealthy, so cost wasn't a problem.

Ai Hui, on the other hand, was poor. He would've long since been broke if he had followed the refinement process of the God-subduing Peak.

Ai Hui felt that the ring force had greater prospects because once the Shouchuan Ring was completed, elemental energy consumption would decrease drastically. In the past, it was easy to obtain elemental energy in the Avalon of Five Elements and cost was low. Today, it was much more difficult to obtain and afford elemental energy. Ring force produced by identical elemental energy could be more plentiful.

The most pressing question for Ai Hui was how he could maintain the Shouchuan Ring's stability.

Blind He had always been interested in the things Ai Hui made. The White Cluster Flames, Hellfire Pagoda Cannon, and Metal Basket Sword Pagoda were all embodiments of a super imaginative mind.

Blind He's familiarity with materials was always helpful to Ai Hui.

Mu Lei followed Ai Hui since he was also very interested in what

Ai Hui was refining. Coming here was wise and, although he wasn't sure what Ai Hui was making, he had a feeling that it was going to be something very powerful.

Five strangely shaped leaves were placed in a row. It was a rather magnificent sight.

These five leaves were the result of Ai Hui and Blind He's consecutive days of hard work.

Gu Xuan and others, who were training, were chased out of the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda. Everybody stood at the side, curiously watching what Ai Hui was coming up with. The Metal Basket Sword Pagoda had initially been ridiculed for its weird shape, but its might eventually shocked everyone.

The night battle on the peak of Blackfish Mouth Volcano had transformed their mindset thoroughly.

The fact that Ai Hui was always able to create unexpected things was now common knowledge.

Ai Hui and Blind He jumped into the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda, stood at the rear end Chalawan position, and started refining. Blind He stretched out his palm, and the eye on it opened, shooting out a beam of light.

The light beam shot onto the thick and solid metal frame, instantly turning it red and soft. It was like clay, constantly

changing shape. Next, an even brighter light beam shot out from the eye on the hollow of his palm and landed on the heated metal frame. Sparks flew everywhere as an exquisite elemental trace extended upward like moving clouds and flowing water.

Everyone knew that Blind He's refinement standard was very high, as evidenced by the Unity Swords, but none had actually seen him at work, so they felt overawed.

The materials piled up beside him flew toward the light beam from his palm like moths flying to a flame, melting amid the light and transforming into molten iron that permeated the red metal.

When the last ingredient was consumed, the light beam from Blind He's palm disappeared and the eye shut slowly. As Blind He stood up, his body swayed a little, almost causing him to fall over.

Lou Lan was quick enough to support him in time.

Seeing how Blind He was sweating from head to toe and how his breaths were messy and hurried, Ai Hui knew his elemental energy had been depleted. He said with all sincerity, "Thanks for the hard work, Master He!"

Blind He nodded his head laboriously without making any sound. With Lou Lan's help, he landed on the ground and meditated to recuperate.

Lou Lan then walked over to Ai Hui. "What next?"

Ai Hui observed the part that Blind He had refined. There was an additional drum kit on the Chalawan position. It was flat and looked like closed mussels and scallops. Behind it was a long and round stick.

Ai Hui pointed to the row of leaves and instructed, "Let’s start from the fire leaf."

Lou Lan shouted loudly, "Okay!"

With a poof, Lou Lan transformed into a giant sand palm and grabbed a red leaf from the row. It seemed to be rolled up from a thin layer of red crystal.

This was when everybody realized that there was a round hole at the tail of the red leaf.

Additionally, there was a yellow sand leaf, a transparent shiny silver leaf with petals, a cloud leaf that emitted white cloudy mists, and wooden leaf woven from green vines.

"Why do I find this familiar?"

Someone shouted and everyone else nodded in agreement. The object before them was oddly familiar.

The lightbulb in Gu Xian’s mind lit up. He cried out, "Pinwheel.

Isn’t this a paper pinwheel?"

Everyone gasped. It was no wonder it looked so familiar. It was a paper pinwheel they’d all played with when they were young, except that this pinwheel was made from multicolored leaves so it was pretty to look at.

Why install a "paper pinwheel" on the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda?

Everyone was puzzled.

Only Gu Xuan and a few wiser ones opened their eyes wide in surprise.

It had to be said that the originally simple and crude Metal Basket Sword Pagoda looked much better with this colorful pinwheel on it.

The installation process took longer than expected. Ai Hui adjusted the position of each leaf meticulously, which took a total of four hours.

Blind He had regained most of his energy by now. He stood at the side and watched.

He was also very curious to see how Ai Hui would be able to rely on this large paper pinwheel to make the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda fly.

He found it difficult to believe. As a master weaponsmith, he was extremely familiar with flight equipment and hadn’t heard anything about paper pinwheels.

The installation was complete and everyone looked on in anticipation.

Ai Hui felt very emotional as well. He shouted, "Open the shell cover, Lou Lan."

Lou Lan answered loudly, "All right!"

Then, he walked to the shell-shaped cover and opened it. It was empty inside.

Ai Hui added, "Pour the snow lava in, Lou Lan!"

"All right!"

Lou Lan took out the snow lava he’d already prepared and poured it in.

The onlookers finally realized what was going on, especially Blind He. He was involved in the refining process, so he had more knowledge and immediately connected the dots. He started to feel emotional.

Snow lava filled up the cover.

Lou Lan closed the lid.

Hoo. The red fire leaf sprayed a ball of flame onto the sand leaf. The sand leaf quickly became heated, as if it was melting into snow lava. Following that, the petals on the shiny silver leaf became brighter. The silver light blinked and a strong metal wind gusted from the rolled up leaf. The metal wind blew onto the cloud leaf, instantly turning it into curling mist. The wood leaf woven from green vines absorbed the mist continuously and sprouted. Strands of green light rays shot out from the soft stem and into the fire leaf.

The five colored paper pinwheel started to spin.

Vroom, vroom, vroom.

The paper pinwheel spun increasingly fast, to the point where people could no longer distinguish between the leaves. All they saw was a ball of brightly colored, spinning streaks of light.

Ka, ka, ka.

The Metal Basket Sword Pagoda trembled violently and, just as people were getting worried that it wouldn’t hold up, it gradually lifted off the ground and hovered.

It was beyond overwhelming to witness such a colossal object

hovering in midair!

Everyone was dumbstruck.

Chapter 523: The Boundary of Ring

To everyone's surprise, Ai Hui, with the sword in his hand, jumped onto the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda that was slowly floating up.

At this moment, Ai Hui was giving off a piercingly cold aura like an unsheathed sword.

Standing on the pagoda, Ai Hui felt excited. He could feel the strong power contained in the pagoda under his feet. The idea of making a pinwheel came as a flash of ingenuity, but the result was far better than he expected.

His biggest problem had been figuring out how to control the Ring of Life to maintain its Shouchuan Ring status.

The pinwheel perfectly solved this problem.

The blades of the pinwheel were made from five different materials and could effectively control the amount of elemental energy participating in the Ring of Life. With its curly structure, the elemental energy would flow in a vortex. This not only increased the power greatly, but could also maintain a stable output of elemental energy.

Pinwheel Ring was an original creation by Ai Hui due to his flash of ingenuity as well as his profound accumulation of knowledge day by day.

An amazing power was transmitted via the multi-colored flowing light at the end of the sword, and the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda was quaking.

Ai Hui was well prepared. As he expected, the power of the pinwheel would gradually increase until it reached a new equilibrium.

Then the multi-colored flowing light began to diffuse. It was as if a ball of dough was being rolled out really thinly. It covered the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda like an eggshell and gradually spread to the tip of the sword.

Everyone was shocked by the miraculous scene. They stopped breathing and widened their eyes as they didn’t want to miss any details.

When the flowing light converged at the tip of the sword, the whole Metal Basket Sword Pagoda was shrouded by the flowing light. The light was in the shape of a shuttle which was pointed at both ends and wide in the middle. The light was brightest at the ends and pale in the middle.

"It’s so gorgeous!"

"Yes, it’s like the God-subduing Peak!"

"But more beautiful than the God-subduing Peak!"

The onlookers were excited, and praise could be heard everywhere.

The Metal Basket Sword Pagoda used to be incredibly hideous, but now it had become so gorgeous like an ugly duckling turned into a white swan. Everyone felt excited at the thought of fighting in such a glaring light shuttle.

Many people even wanted to jump onto the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda to give it a closer look.

Ai Hui was carefully observing the light shrouding the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda. The light was a combination of elemental energies of five attributes. When the pinwheel had just started to run, the light was multi-colored, but now it became transparent and colorless as the rotation of the pinwheel stabilized.

Ai Hui was lost in thought. The integration of five elements seemed like it would be an inevitable trend in the future.

It had to be admitted that the world was improving. Previously, the integration of five elements was something only achieved by grandmasters, but now it had become a common subject that was studied more often and more deeply by everyone, as elemental energy was not sufficient nowadays.

The reason was simple. The integration of five elements could produce more power while consuming less elemental energy.

This reminded Ai Hui of fusion elemental energy. Admittedly, fusion elemental energy, which possessed all the five attributes, was more in accordance with the current situation. Although at the very beginning the training process was slow, its effect grew more and more astonishing as one's elemental energy level went up. Therefore, its benefit was more obvious in the later stage of training.

Ai Hui was curious about what would happen if elementalists from Assembly of Patriarchs could become Grandmasters.

The light was thin and almost totally transparent, but could cut off the external sound.

Ai Hui felt complacent. He had created the pinwheel ring form of five-element integration. Compared with the God-subduing Peak, it was more elaborate and more elemental-energy efficient. But on the other hand, limited by materials, the comprehensive strength of Pinwheel Sword was undoubtedly inferior to the God-subduing Peak.

But making something that possessed subtlety like God-subduing Peak and which could even surpass it in some aspects, while using such cheap materials, was enough for Ai Hui to feel proud of himself.

Ai Hui held the hilt of the sword tightly in his hand and his eyes ran down each corner of the Pinwheel Sword again and again.

Pinwheel Sword, which was like a name in a fairy tale, would be the new name of the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda.

Nobody here had the experience of garrisoning the God-subduing Peak like Iron Lady and the rest. Although Ai Hui made this Pinwheel Sword according to his teacher’s theory, it was the first time that he had experienced it himself.

Standing inside the pinwheel, he could get a more direct and profound feeling.

The so-called ring force was actually a special type of fusion elemental energy.

But ring force was produced via elemental traces and pinwheel ring, and was more elaborate than Assembly of Patriarchs’ fusion elemental energy. The latter was balancing the five elements through training.

It was probably appropriate to describe ring force as the equilibrium within balance.

Therefore, there were many special features of ring force. For example, Ai Hui found that ring force was different from any other kind of elemental energy. Its shape was like a spindle or a shuttle.

This reminded Ai Hui of a special noun from the Cultivation Era, which was "boundary".

The ring force released by the pinwheel ring constituted a small boundary, and energy could flow freely within the shuttle-shaped boundary.

Amazing!

Now, elemental energy no longer needed to flow according to certain routes. In this shuttle-shaped "boundary", it could reach anywhere in no time.

He realized that this feature of ring force was likely to overturn the current elemental energy system.

He kept this feature firmly in mind, and decided to study it further later.

The boundary of the ring had great advantages, such as strong defensive powers. If it was under attack, the force would be shared by the whole boundary of ring. Therefore, unless the boundary broke, it would never be pierced.

But this also posed a big problem for Ai Hui, as he realized that his normally strong perception was totally cut off by the boundary.

This was not good!

With his strong perception, Ai Hui could always sense danger earlier than anyone else, which was necessary for him to survive on the battlefield.

Rubbing the spot between his eyebrows, he sighed that this problem was beyond his expectations. Although the light shrouding the boundary was thin and almost transparent, Ai Hui knew how hard and firm it was.

He decided to put this problem aside. With a quick flick of the Edgeless Sword in his hand, a ray of Sword of Lightning flew out from the tip.

The ray flew out of the light curtain with a roaring sound, and disappeared after gliding a long distance away.

Ai Hui sighed in relief. The boundary of ring could only cut off one's perception, but not sword rays.

But still, there seemed to be some nuance to this.

Trying to recall every detail when he'd waved the sword just now, Ai Hui thought for a moment and waved his sword again.

Once again, a sword ray flew out.

Ai Hui's eyes lit up as he realised what the nuance was. At first the lightning appeared at the point of the sword, but in the next instant it had already flashed outside of the light curtain.

It reminded him of the ring force's feature at once. Now it

seemed that not only ring force, but also sword rays could appear instantly at any corner within the boundary of ring.

What influence would this have in a battle?

The Pinwheel Sword was indeed designed and made by Ai Hui. But it was a brand new weapon, and many mysteries about it were unknown even to its creator.

The God-subduing Peak must be garrisoned by a Master. This was not only due to its preciousness, but also because only a Master could make the most of its power. The God-subduing Peak contained abundant elemental energy and only a Master could manage to control it.

The elemental energy of the Pinwheel Sword, on the other hand, was generated from snow lava. Therefore, it did not necessarily need to be commanded by a master.

Ai Hui jumped on the seashell cover. Apart from containing Snow Lava, it could also control the speed of infusion of the snow lava into the pinwheel. By increasing this speed, the pinwheel could generate stronger power.

Like a sword with a pinwheel on its tail, it flew very fast.

As to controlling the direction, Ai Hui's method was very simple. In front of the seashell cover there was a bearing, with which the cover could turn in any direction. If the Metal Basket Sword

Pagoda was compared to a fish, then the seashell cover and the pinwheel were its tail that could wiggle to control its direction.

Ai Hui tried to increase the speed.

The top of the light shuttle suddenly became very bright.

Ai Hui was dazzled.

Then, after a huge blare, Ai Hui felt like he was pushed by someone from behind, and then he was thrown forward. Fortunately, he had been holding the sword hilt all the time and was in the state of Imbuement of Sword Cloud.

He reacted very fast. Within an instant, he stabbed with Edgeless Sword several times.

Flap, flap, flap.

The sword continuously hit the steel bars in front of him and made intense sounds. Ai Hui was like a spring. He tried to stabilize himself with the force from the sword.

When he saw what had happened, he was astounded and took in a breath of chilly air.

The Pinwheel Sword plunged into the ridge of the Blackfish Mouth Volcano, leaving only less than half of it outside of the

ridge.

Embedded in the ridge, the front part was dark, while the rear part was hanging in the air. From there Ai Hui could see the crowd running towards him in panic.

Gu Xuan and the others were all dumbstruck.

They'd just seent the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda disappear after a flash of light. Then there was a huge blare from afar. When they flew into the sky, they were astonished to see the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda was embedded into the hillside.

Previously, they all thought that the Pinwheel Sword was powerful and glaring. However, having seen the scene where about two thirds of the sword was inserted into the hill, they began to feel chills at the back of their neck.

Ai Hui climbed out of the Pinwheel Sword and said embarrassedly, "I'm not yet proficient at controlling it, or else it would be very safe.

Everyone's faces looked pale.

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In the camp of God Nation.

Nangong Wulian was reproaching someone, "Don’t bother me with such trivial matters! Fighting in the battlefield is your business. Don’t ask me how! I’m busy and have no time to waste on this bullshit...."

Several generals retreated from the camp gloomily.

They were all furious about being defeated on the frontline, and about their enemy’s boasting of such a win.

One of them asked, "Then what do we do now? If we cannot save face, when they want to find somebody to blame later, none of us can escape."

One prudent general who was older in age said, "Sir hasn’t woken up. So we cannot act rashly..."

"Rash? Our enemy is slapping our face now and we still have to bear it?"

"We must win our glory back! His Majesty cannot bear the existence of any incapable person. Do you want your family to be involved and punished too?"

The others were silent.

"Sir hasn't woken up. We have no right to dispatch our troops."

Suddenly someone said in a forceful voice, "Troops? Don’t you hear them saying that an old man is dead in the enemy country, a lone girl is fighting at the front line, new soldiers are defending their territory? Our enemies are a girl and a group of new recruits. Don’t bother to dispatch out troops! I’ll go!"

Everyone looked towards where the voice was coming from, and saw a strong man with a fierce look walking towards them.

"General Xing!"

"If General Xing confronts our enemies in person, then we are sure to win!"

"We have nothing to worry about now!"

Feeling relaxed, people began to express their admiration ardently.

Chapter 524: Vitality Branches

Inside a tent.

Standing beside the ice coffin, Nangong Wulian stared at Ye Baiyi, who was still in a deep sleep, and murmured to himself, "Why is he still unconscious? He is supposed to be awake by now. Is it because the base level of the blood fiends was not high enough?"

In the ice coffin, Ye Baiyi looked as if he was really just sleeping. His long hair was like seagrass, and his eyes were closed.

A wicked smile appeared on Nangong Wulian's face, "Let me add some more tonics."

Then he walked out of the camp, and caught sight of a group of people in preparation to go to the battlefield. The leader looked familiar. Nangong Wulian remembered his background and murmured, "It turns out to be him."

That man was Xing Shan. He'd once received blood refinement at the Beast Venom Temple. He was the one who held the record in blood refinement before the Red Devil.

Nangong Wulian collected many useful pieces of information from Xing Shan, from which the Red Devil also benefited a lot. But Xing Shan was not as talented as the Red Devil, so he couldn't improve further after reaching his current level.

It was said that Xing Shan joined the army later on and had made a lot of contributions so far.

Nangong Wulian never associated himself with generals. He clearly knew his position. As long as the people of the Beast Venom Temple did a good job, his position would be stable enough. An association with generals would only incur his majesty's suspicion, which was very likely to lead to death.

Even though the Red Devil was from the Beast Venom Temple, they stayed away from each other and hardly had any interactions.

Xing Shan's fighting skills were good.

Well, that would be fine. Since Xing Shan had taken the mission, their victory was just around the corner. This could save him a lot of trouble, as those guys would stop buzzing around him like flies.

Now his main task was to find a solution to wake Ye Baiyi up.

There had to be more tonics!

An announcement was put up at the camp which astounded everyone.

A day later, twelve people stood in front of Nangong Wulian, who looked at them with complacency. He had just put up a post

yesterday, and surprisingly, more than one hundred people were willing to sacrifice their own lives to save Ye Baiyi. These twelve people were selected as the most outstanding and talented ones. Fastidious as Nangong Wulian was, he was very satisfied with the physical conditions of these people.

And he was shocked by how Ye Baiyi was adored by his people.

At first, Nangong Wulian had intended to take some guys by force, but since the process would be very miserable, and it was impossible for any involuntary participant to make it to the final stage, he finally gave up on the idea.

But it turned out that so many people were willing to save his life with their own life!

He glanced at Ye Baiyi, and wondered where this guy’s charm and charisma came from.

Nangong Wulian asked with interest, "I would like to know why you are willing to sacrifice yourselves for Ye Baiyi. What is more important than your life? Let me tell you in advance that during the process you will suffer a living death. Are you sure you want to do this? You are allowed to give up now."

Nobody moved.

Nangong Wulian said in surprise, "What favor did he do to you on earth that makes you all so loyal to him? I’m really curious. Tell

me your stories, one by one."

A strong man with a scar on his face said in a deep voice, "I was a former member of Icy Flames Division. He once saved my life."

The person beside him said, "I was a former member of Icy Flames Division too. I was once besieged for fifteen days, and was abandoned by the Elders Guild. It was him who led an army and fought for three days without sleep or rest to save me."

"I was a former member of Icy Flames Division too. I served him for ten years and never encountered any unfairness."

...

Some looked aloof, some excited. Some spoke in a deep voice, and some were impassioned.

Nangong Wulian’s eyes focused on the last one, who was a young man. He looked like a boy and was still shy. Nangong asked him curiously, "What’s your reason?"

Under Nangong’s gaze, the young man looked unprepared and embarrassed. Face flushing, he stammered, "Sir, Sir..."

Nangong Wulian laughed out, "You are free to pull back."

"No I won’t!" The young man’s face got even more flushed, and

he stammered, "During the blood disaster, he, he asked me to run, but I, I didn’t..."

Nangong Wulian was a bit surprised. He nodded and said, "You can have a good rest for the next few days to retain your energy. I can’t guarantee you that Ye Baiyi can wake up. But what I can guarantee is that you will die a worthy death, and your blood spiritual force will not be wasted."

The twelve people said in unison, "Thank you, Sir!"

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Just as Ai Hui jumped down from the Pinwheel Sword and let loose of the sword hilt, he felt tired and flopped down on the ground. Overwhelmed by tiredness, Ai Hui felt like he was totally soaked in his sweat, as if he was just picked up out of the water. The impact was short, but really consumed a lot of energy.

"Ai Hui!"

Lou Lan carried Ai Hui on his shoulders and ran fast into the valley.

Ai Hui said weakly, "I’m fine, Lou Lan."

"One more minute, Ai Hui," Lou Lan encouraged him loudly, "Lou Lan has found a use for Vitality Branches."

Ai Hui was surprised, "Really? Lou Lan you are great!"

Lou Lan’s eyes were like two crescent moons. He said earnestly while running, "The Vitality Branch’s spirit is wood elemental while its soul is metal elemental, water elemental, fire elemental and earth elemental. This is how it should be used."

Having finished his words, Lou Lan brought Ai Hui to a place in the valley where he had already prepared everything he needed.

A handful of sand, a basin of water, a bowl of snow lava and a piece of ingot were placed around Ai Hui. Then Lou Lan put an empty vase in front of Ai Hui, and put three Vitality Branches into it.

Ai Hui sat on the ground cross-legged.

Lou Lan shouted out loudly, "Ai Hui, get ready. I’m going to start!"

Then he threw a flash of flame into the snow lava, sending bursts of fire into the sky. The yellow sand suddenly floated into the air, as if held by an invisible hand. Then, the ingot iron melted into liquid, which, surprisingly, was not hot at all. Smog rose from the water in the basin and transformed into a cloud of mist.

Gu Xuan and the others were worried about Ai Hui too. They ran to him fast, and saw the peculiar scene.

Suddenly, the vase in front of Ai Hui produced a suction force that attracted all the raging fire, the floating sand, the cold, melted iron and the clean mist into the vase.

And to everyone’s surprise, the three Vitality Branches began to sprout!

Green, tender shoots appeared on the black and hard surface of the branches, giving rise to everyone’s exclamation.

The shoots were quivering and were growing larger at a speed that was visible. Then, in the blink of an eye, three branches were full of green leaves, constituting a beautiful scene.

When buds grew out, everybody was quiet, as they were afraid to startle the three branches.

Then, the buds burst into bloom. They could smell a peculiar fragrance from the pure flowers.

Everyone was fascinated by the fragrance.

When the flowers withered away, fruits grew. After a short period of time, three juicy fruits were hanging on the branches, which made everyone dumbstruck.

Lou Lan said hurriedly, "Ai Hui, catch the fruits. Don’t let them

fall on the ground!"

Just as Lou Lan had finished his words, the three fruits began to fall from the branches towards the ground.

Ai Hui had been very focused from the very beginning. When he heard Lou Lan’s voice, he stretched out his hand without hesitation and deftly caught the three heavy fruits in his hands.

他心中还在惊叹,木修的一些手段,真是匪夷所思,超乎想象.

He was marveling in his heart about how some methods of wood elementalists were unimaginably weird.

The whole process, from sprouting to fruit yielding, was silent, but was more shocking to Ai Hui than a massive killing move.

Lou Lan shouted loudly, "Ai Hui, eat the fruit!"

Ai Hui was dazed. When he heard Lou Lan’s shout, he sent the fruits to his mouth subconsciously.

He could feel coolness floating into his throat when the fruit touched his mouth.

Three streaks of weak, but highly pure, life force were flowing into his body.

The lightning in his body could destroy almost any life force except forthese. They were totally uninfluenced, and could flow freely in his body as if the lightning did not exist.

No wonder why the Vitality Branches was so famous!

But what happened next was beyond Ai Hui’s expectations.

The three streaks of life force flew around his body, and then wormed their way into the sword cloud!

When Ai Hui came to his senses, three jade-green leaves were flickering among the sword cloud.

Ai Hui was astonished.

He had thought that the life force could nourish his blood and flesh so that he would not be so frail and weak. But it was never expected that the three streaks of life force would dive into the sword cloud as if they were attracted to it.

Ai Hui couldn't understand what on earth in the sword cloud was attracting them.

And his body was still frail, which meant that his attempt to improve his physical condition with the Vitality Branches had failed.

Mu Lei looked at Ai Hui enviously when he was eating the fruits. Those were fruits from the Vitality Branches! How many people could get a Vitality Branch in this world? Few! And how many of them could use three Vitality Branches at a time? None, at least he'd never heard of any.

Ai Hui opened his eyes and looked a bit sluggish.

Lou Lan asked with concern, "Ai Hui, how is it?"

The others thought Ai Hui was shocked by the excellent effect when they saw him sitting there motionlessly. Mu Lei's eyes were red. He didn't even try to conceal his envy.

Ai Hui said weakly, "Seems that it didn't work."

Lou Lan was surprised, "Didn't work? Did I get anything wrong?"

"No, it's not Lou Lan's problem. They dived into the sword cloud."

"Into the sword cloud?" A red light kept flickering in Lou Lan's eyes as he was analyzing the phenomenon, "Lou Lan needs to think about it."

Ai Hui noticed that the three green leaves were tossing about in the sword cloud. But when he took a closer look, he found nothing weird. Actually it was not useless at all. Ai Hui could feel that he got tired much slower now, and even if he had used up his

strength, he could soon recover.

However!

That was all!

This was the only benefit he'd gotten.

But this was Vitality Branch, the thing that, in legends, could bring back anyone's life as long as he or she was still breathing.

The previous changes were amazing too. But why was its effect so ordinary?

Or was it because his body was too special?

Ai Hui tried a few more times, but nothing happened. The three leaves were still tossing about in the sword cloud leisurely. He was disappointed and didn't want to think about it anymore.

Since his strength had been renewed, he thought he'd better continue to explore the pinwheel sword.

He wished he could go to the battlefield right now. But he also knew that without strength, he would only encumber Iron Lady and put everyone's lives in danger.

This was not what he would do. But he was more than pleased to give everyone an exciting experience.

"Let’s start practicing on Pinwheel Sword from today!"

Chapter 525: Xing Shan's Target

Xing Shan's mount was an ardent flower night wolf which was as big as a hill and even taller than a horse. Its black hair was shiny like grease and the scarlet flower-pattern traces all over its body were beautiful and harmonious. Its ash-like eyes exuded a wolf's perseverance and ferocity. It curled back its lips to reveal its sharp teeth every now and then.

It was more than just a mount; even on its own, its fighting capacity was already amazing.

The mounts of the men behind Xing Shan were all doughty ardent flower night wolves.

Xing Shan had been a butcher before blood refinement, but after being infected with blood poison, he showed a surprising gift and was noticed by the god priest in his area. That priest had recommended Xing Shan to the Beast Venom Temple for blood refinement and he soon broke the previous record.

Twelve times.

His record went unbroken for a very long period of time, until the Red Devil appeared and created a record of receiving blood refinement twenty-one times with one hundred and eight kinds of beasts' blood. It had shocked everyone in Blood of God, including the Holy Emperor.

With such a record, the Red Devil, a poor wretch who'd had

nothing, soon rose up and set up his own palace.

Xing Shan could not reach such a level, but going through blood refinement twelve times was enough to get him a seat among the top fighters of Blood of God. He didn't continue further, as he felt he was close to collapse by the end of the twelfth blood refinement.

After the blood refinement at the Beast Venom Temple, he joined the combat divisions and was promoted due to his outstanding achievements.

At the beginning of God Nation's establishment, the most important task the Holy Emperor gave to Ye Baiyi was to set up their system of combat divisions.

Ye Baiyi lived up to expectations. He created the combat division system and designed tactics according to the features of god elementalists. The massive combat division system currently in use was completely created by him.

The combat division system of Blood of God consisted of three parts: the Sacred Heart Division directly controlled by the Holy Emperor, the subordinate combat divisions attached to each palace, and the god blood combat divisions. The god blood combat divisions were the most important and mainly consisted of six god divisions: God Dragon, God Tiger, God Wolf, God Shaman, God Demon, and God Spirit.

Each god division had two direct subordinate combat divisions, all of which were collectively called the twelve blood divisions.

The system made up of six god divisions and twelve blood divisions seemed similar to the Thirteen Divisions of the Avalon of Five Elements, but were totally different in essence. It was Ye Baiyi's understanding of war and the embodiment of his experience and wisdom.

The Thirteen Divisions of the Avalon of Five Elements were separate, but the blood divisions could be a strong supplement for the god divisions. Besides, each blood division had two beast camps as its reserves.

Due to this perfect layer system, the fighting capacity of the combat divisions were largely improved. Even if they encountered any loss, they could soon be supported and reinforced. The combat division system of the Avalon of Five Elements, however, lacked subordinate layers and reserves. Once the elite troops suffered severe losses, the division almost had to be rebuilt, as had been the case with the Sky Edge Division and the Infantry Division.

Each god division and blood division possessed five thousand people respectively, while a beast camp possessed ten thousand.

That was to say, a complete god division consisted of fifty thousand people.

The Holy Emperor placed great trust in Ye Baiyi. He not only dubbed him War God and built a War God Palace for him, but also granted him the power to lead the six god divisions.

Until the appearance of the Red Devil, when Ye Baiyi took the initiative to submit a request stating that he was overwhelmed with the responsibility and hoped to transfer three god divisions for the Red Devil to lead.

The Holy Emperor rejected his request.

Then Ye Baiyi submitted the same request again. Thinking it over again, the Holy Emperor finally decided to put the God Dragon Division and God Shaman Division under the Red Devil's command.

This was because the Holy Emperor knew that Ye Baiyi was the head of the Icy Flames Division when he'd been with the Avalon of Five Elements, and was thus the one who best understood military organization in God Nation at that time. Red Devil, on the other hand, was far braver and stronger than the others, but it would take time to prove his military astuteness.

Ye Baiyi didn't fail the Holy Emperor's trust.

He executed a rotation system in the frontline, which meant the six god divisions would fight against enemies one by one in the battle to improve their fighting capacity.

That was how the Blood of God could be equipped with such a strong military force today.

Xing Shan joined the combat division when Ye Baiyi just began to

set up the six combat divisions. He was strong and good at fighting, and soon won recognition from Ye Baiyi. With his accumulation of achievements in the battlefield, he became the division leader of the Ardent Flower Blood Division which was subordinate to God Wolf Division, and was regarded as a strong competitor for the next head of God Wolf Division.

Even though the ardent flower night wolf he was riding was running fast, Xing Shan’s body was steady and still. He was tall and strong, with a brutal-looking face. His eyes looked gloomy and frightening.

Zu Chun, the deputy head who was riding beside him, suddenly laughed and said, "Senior, you are so wise. I heard that Shi Xueman and Karakorum Polaris are both rare beauties..."

The obscene laughter gave rise to chaos among the others.

Xing Shan said indifferently, "You can do whatever you want to Karakorum Polaris, but I need Shi Xueman for my own use."

The others cheered, "Senior, you are so wise!"

As if hearing nothing, Xing Shan continued, "But let me make it clear first. If anyone hinders us, don't blame me for being merciless."

The others immediately became silent, as they knew that he really meant it.

Only a few including Zu Chun looked as if they were absorbed in thoughts. They were clearly aware that their division head was not just impulsive and violent as others thought. He was actually as cunning as a wolf.

Xing Shan did have his own intention, or he would not take the initiative to start the fight. His target was Shi Xueman.

Among all the targets, Shi Xueman was undoubtedly the most valuable one. The Judgment and Dread Divisions were too tough for him to deal with. He would never attempt a stupid thing like crushing a stone with an egg.

Neither the Infantry Division nor Sky Edge Division could be compared with Shi Xueman, the former successor of the Great Elder.

Moreover, her father just gave Sir Ye Baiyi a staggering blow. If he could capture Shi Xueman, he could gain not only fame, but also the admiration of the former members of the Icy Flames Division, who, Xing Shan clearly understood, had the closest ties to Lord Ye Baiyi. If he could build a connection with them, it would be helpful for his future promotions.

But he had to win the battle first.

Although he appeared to be scornful of Shi Xueman in the camp, he was only doing this to deceive the others. In fact, he did not underestimate Shi Xueman at all, but paid her great attention. He

had carefully studied the reports of the survivors without any negligence.

The cooperation between the Sky Edge, Infantry, and Spear of Heavy Cloud Divisions was ingenious. Besides, they had more people than him.

Nevertheless, Xing Shan was confident with his Ardent Flower Division. They had been through many battles and were experienced enough.

Moreover, he had one advantage; no one knew that his target was only Shi Xueman.

Not even his subordinates knew it.

He said coldly, "Order the soldiers to throw away their loads and march forward at the fastest speed!"

Zu Chun was surprised. "Are we starting our long-range raid so early?"

The long-range raid was a strategy that the Ardent Flower Blood Division was good at, as the ardent flower night wolves could run ten days and nights without stopping, but it was seldom used in actual combat because if they started too early, both the soldiers and wolves would become too tired. Plus, since no loads could be carried, they had to march forward without any burdens, which meant that once they encountered any accidents, they were likely

to fall into a difficult situation due to a lack of supplies.

Xing Shan simply said, "Speed is the most important in a war."

Zu Chun was alerted and replied, "Got it!"

After Xing Shan's orders were announced, the soldiers began to feed their wolves with blood crystals, and also loaded themselves with blood crystals. All the carriages were left aside and no one gave them a second glance. They were well-trained soldiers. Their faces looked indifferent, but their figures exuded a brave and agile aura.

Having completed preparations, the Ardent Flower Blood Division was silent. Even the wolves did not make a sound.

Xing Shan noticed the concerned look of Zu Chun, but he chose to ignore it.

This move was risky indeed, but Xing Shan knew that he must reach the battlefield and finish everything before the two horrifying combat divisions, Judgment and Dread, finally arrived. Otherwise, there would be no chance for him.

A ferocious look flickered in his eyes. He hit the wolf with his legs and said decisively, "Move!"

No one responded. Silence was flowing like a river.

.....

"Ahhhhhhh..."

The eardrum-piercing screams could be heard here and there in the Pinwheel Sword. Even those who tried their best to restrain themselves looked extremely pale. Their faces were twitching.

The ground was getting closer and closer at an amazing speed.

Closer and closer!

The screams suddenly became sharp and miserable as if there was a conductor commanding them.

Boom!

With a huge blare, everyone felt as if they were bumped by a running rhinoceros and their minds went totally blank. They plummeted down, but were fortunately suspended by strong and tough vines tied to their bodies. Unfortunately, the vines tied them so tightly that they almost cut into their flesh.

After some time, someone began to groan. Then, with incessant groans, people came to life one after another.

"Oh my god. Am I still alive?"

"I feel like I’m dying."

"I would have preferred to die."

...

It was all dark except the light above their heads. It was like they were standing inside a dry well.

The Pinwheel Sword hadn’t been properly controlled just now. It plunged into the ground and rushed over dozens of meters before it stopped.

The strong impact left them dizzy. Everyone sat there, weak, limp, and unwilling to move at all. To protect them from possible dangers during the horrifying Pinwheel Sword’s training session, Ai Hui had specially wrapped them with the old vines.

This was "due to safety reasons", Ai Hui had said .

Clang, clang, clang.

High above their heads came the sound of an iron spoon hitting an iron basin. It sounded far away from them.

The absent-minded crowd seemed to wake up all of a sudden. Those who had closed their eyes to refresh their spirit suddenly

opened them, as if they had been cheered up by some stimulant. The desperate look flickering in their eyes changed into the light of hope and desire. They untied the vines in a great hustle.

"Why is this so tight?"

"Oops! Who is stepping on me? Again!"

"Don’t even think that you can get ahead of me!"

...

Like agile apes, the crowd of people tried their best to climb up along the vertical Pinwheel Sword. Their faces looked savage and the scene was really spectacular.

In front of Lou Lan’s elemental soup, friendship and relationships meant nothing.

"You all worked very hard!"

Hearing Lou Lan’s vigorous voice, no one stopped their steps. They were like wolves with green light flickering in their eyes, rushing towards their dishes.

Ai Hui had already taken enough soup. He said slowly, "Take it easy. You can take your time."

He was totally ignored.

Gu Xuan was the last one who climbed up. He was in low spirits, as he'd been the sword operator just now.

Ai Hui called the person who flew the Pinwheel Sword the sword operator. A sword operator who failed to complete the whole flying process would be punished, and therefore, he didn't get any elemental soup.

Ai Hui walked to Gu Xuan who was dejected and downhearted, patted him on the shoulder, and encouraged him, "Old Gu, come one. Try again next time!"

Chapter 526: Sword Operator

As long as safety precautions were taken, the Pinwheel Sword was actually safe enough to operate.

The light curtain shrouding the Pinwheel Sword had a strong defensive power. In the durability tests, only the combined bombardment of seven or more sword pagodas could do damage to it.

With the protection of the light curtain, Ai Hui accelerated his pace.

There was only one sword operator? Of course not! Everyone should try it at least once. The sword operators who performed well would get double shares of elemental soup, while those who performed poorly would have no elemental soup.

Gu Xuan was today's sword operator. At first Ai Hui thought highly of his performance, but during the last stage, however, due to an operating error, the Pinwheel Sword plunged into the ground.

The Pinwheel Sword's comprehensive power was incredibly inferior to that of a God-subduing Peak in terms of defense and attack force, but it had one advantage. Its speed.

The Pinwheel Sword's speed astounded everyone who witnessed it.

Flying was nothing new, as nowadays everyone had their own azure wings, but compared to flying with the Pinwheel Sword, flying with azure wings was as slow as a snail. Many believed that the Pinwheel Sword's name was terrible. It should be named Lightning Sword!

When flying, the Pinwheel Sword was as fast as a bolt of lightning.

But as a result of its extreme speed, any inaccuracy when operating it might lead to accident.

This was too difficult for a new sword operator with no prior experience.

Ai Hui found that not everyone could do the job. Only those who were talented in perception of speed could adapt to the amazing speed of the Pinwheel Sword. He immediately realized the importance of sword operation, especially to future expansions.

As a result, Ai Hui specially bestowed a title to the person who was in charge of operating the Pinwheel Sword: sword operator. A sword operator held the same position as a pagoda master. This soon attracted the interest of the other team members. Now there were seven sword pagodas. Ai Hui himself was in charge of the Megrez Sword Pagoda, while the masters and probationary masters of the other six pagodas had already been assigned to different members.

Now there was one more position.

Ai Hui gave an inviolable order.

Everyone must try to operate the Pinwheel Sword at least once, and the others must be in it during the attempt.

Since there would be no danger at all as long as they were strapped in tightly enough.

Since then, the Pinwheel Sword had been inserted into both the mountain and ground in various directions and positions.

No one knew how many times the poor Blackfish Mouth Volcano had been pierced by the Pinwheel Sword these days. The surface of the mountain was full of bumps and hollows, which looked shocking upon being seen. Once, they had even pierced through the entire rock stratum, creating a magma jet that had rushed over three hundred meters into the sky.

Previously, there might have been some strong dire beasts in the dark eyeing them as prey, but now, there was not a single beast that dared to keep a foothold within three hundred miles.

At first, the members felt dizzy and vomited a lot, but they later got so used to it, they even thought it was no longer exciting enough.

Even so, only three were regarded as qualified sword operators.

To find these three sword operators, the price Ai Hui paid was three Pinwheel Swords.

The light curtain around the Pinwheel Sword had a strong defensive power, but the sword itself was not tough enough. Sturdy as it was, the materials it was made of were not of a high enough level. After repeatedly enduring such strong impacts, it could not be used for long.

But it didn't matter, as the cost to make a Pinwheel Sword was cheap!

Had he damaged one of the God-subduing Peaks, Ai Hui would be so heartbroken and unable to sleep, but he didn't really care if one Pinwheel Sword was destroyed. He could easily make a new one.

Blind He had taken a lot of time and effort to make the first Pinwheel Sword, but to a weapon master of his level, a weapon once produced could be reproduced with little difficulty. Besides, no high-level materials were used to make a Pinwheel Sword. Except for their large size, he encountered no problems when making new swords.

On top of all this, Master He would not be content with simply copying the original style.

Since tests were ongoing and materials were consistently provided, why not try more styles? It was almost instinctive for people like Blind He to aim for better quality and faster speed.

So every time, Blind He would make some changes and adjustments.

As a result, the current Pinwheel Sword was quite different from what it had been before.

Previously, the iron frames and fences had been crude, like seven metal baskets carried on a shoulder pole. That was where the name Metal Basket Sword Pagoda had come from. Now it was a wide sword made with lots of Pearblossom Dazzling Silver, and the sword itself had been toughened. The wide sword was like a long field used for martial arts practice. The seven sword pagodas had white walls and dark blue tiles. They were properly distributed according to the locations of the Big Dipper’s seven stars.

The Pnwheel Sword was located at the end of the tilt.

Master He also designed a space for the sword operator which could accommodate three sword operators at a time. In this way, even if an operator were to be injured, he or she could soon find a replacement. The operating device was designed as a sword inserted into a ball, so as to match the name of "sword operator". Holding the tilt of the sword in hand, a sword operator could easily control the flying direction of the Pinwheel Sword.

The broadened sword allowed for more space, and Master He added more seashell bags to store snow lava. In this way, the flying distance of the Pinwheel Sword could be largely increased.

Besides, the Pinwheel Sword was equipped with eight more sword altars, each of which could accommodate six people. Altogether, the sword altars could accommodate forty-eight team members in total. A sword altar could make some low-intensity attacks to support the people in the sword pagoda in case of any casualties.

To confuse enemies, Unity Swords were hung under the Pinwheel Sword in a circle as spare swords.

The Unity Swords could resonate, so when flying, the Pinwheel Sword made a clear and melodious chime, like that of a wind chime. Ai Hui and the others also noticed that as long as there were more than thirty-six Unity Swords on the Pinwheel Sword, the chime they could produce was able to influence the elemental energy flow of their enemies.

An inspiration occurred to Ai Hui. He thought of his [Sword Chime]

So he spent some time rearranging the Unity Swords, after which the clear sword chimes, when put together, became loud and resonant, like a bell from an old temple deep in the mountains.

The temple bell-like sword chime had a strong deterrent power towards elemental energy. Gu Xuan and the others had experienced themselves that when the Pinwheel Sword suddenly appeared above their heads and the loud bell rang like an explosion, their minds became totally blank and their elemental energy stopped flowing.

The cool debut of the Pinwheel Sword made Ai Hui very excited.

Unfortunately, he didn't know whether or not the sword chime could influence the blood spiritual force of blood elementalists. This had to be tested on the battlefield.

After Master He's improvements, the new Pinwheel Sword became more powerful and had the potential to be a trump card in the war.

As they adapted to flying on the Pinwheel Sword, the on-sword training finally began.

Shi Zhiguang was one of the new sword operators, and the one who operated the sword during the first maneuver. The other two operators looked at him with admiration, but since Shi Zhiguang was indeed the most outstanding one of the three, no one had any objections.

Shi Zhiguang looked excited.

He used to be an ordinary team member with no special talent. His remarkable performance was beyond even his own expectations. Until today, he still felt like he was in a dream.

He himself hadn't known his specialty before, as in a low-speed situation, he was no different from ordinary people. If the speed was increased to or above a certain level, however, he would enter

into a stimulated state and the flow of his elemental energy would accelerate uncontrollably. In contrast, the world would appear to slow down in his eyes.

Shi Zhiguang enjoyed this feeling very much.

Stepping on the sword, Ai Hui walked to Shi Zhiguang and encouraged him, "Just do as you are used to."

Shi Zhiguang was excited. "Yes, Boss!"

Previously, as a member of Sword of Lightning, he would kick up a fuss against senior together with everyone else, but this was the first time senior talked to him particularly and in person. He was greatly encouraged, as he could feel Ai Hui’s expectations of him.

Everyone got ready. They were very serious and cautious towards the first aerial trial.

Meticulous attention to detail could be seen on everyone’s faces. The Pinwheel Sword was solemn and soundless.

Ai Hui said in a deep voice, "Start!"

Shi Zhiguang tried to calm himself down. He gently pulled the sword operator and the Pinwheel Sword left the ground, rushing into the sky like a sword ray.

It made a circle high in the sky. Ai Hui glimpsed satisfiedly at Shi Zhiguang. He marveled in his heart that Shi Zhiguang, whom everyone had thought was average and untalented in every aspect, unexpectedly possessed an excellent gift in speed.

Ai Hui knew that even he himself could not do as well as Shi Zhiguang. The Pinwheel Sword glided as though on ice, without any jolts. Even the circle it made was perfect.

"Everyone, get ready."

Hearing Ai Hui's warning, the team members held their breath. Ai Hui didn't use the Edgeless Sword which was of better quality, but he chose a Unity Sword due to its resonant effect.

Then, hearing a Sword Chime, all of them waved the Unity Swords in their hands at the same time, rippling the air with their sword rays.

The sword rays were as bright as the snow and gathered at the sword. Ai Hui, who was fully concentrated, suddenly felt the Unity Sword in his hand become heavy.

He knew this was not because of a change in the sword's weight, but because of the load created by the two hundred sword rays converging on the sword. He was familiar with such a load, but this time he felt something different.

It was the resonance of the Unity Swords hanging on the other

side of the Pinwheel Sword under his feet.

But there was hardly any time for him to think more. Under the Imbuement of Sword Cloud status, Ai Hui pushed the Unity Sword in his hand forward gently, as if he was holding a glass full of water.

The glaring sword ray flew out of the Pinwheel Sword and effortlessly pierced into the mountains not far away, leaving a bottomless hole. Then, accompanied by a tremendous sound, something suddenly exploded and left a huge hole with a diameter of over thirty meters at the entrance.

A red glint flashed across the black crystal chips on Ai Hui's eyes.

It was an amazing surprise that the sword move could have the effect of a shock wave.

Previously, the sword move could only leave a bottomless hole, the diameter of which was similar to that of a bowl. Now, the large, deep hole at the entrance was the result of the sound explosion alone.

Ai Hui immediately realized that the sound explosion was actually a follow-up damage which would give them more advantages in actual combat. This also meant that the training done during these days had not been a waste of time. The move had been completed perfectly just now.

Regardless, Ai Hui knew that this was not enough.

In the battlefield, flying at a constant speed like this was courting death. The Pinwheel Sword was so conspicuous that once it appeared on the battlefield, it would immediately be targeted by all the enemies. Strong as it was, the defensive power of the light curtain would be of no use on the battlefield. Even the light curtain of the God-subduing Peaks had been broken through, let alone the Pinwheel Sword.

The only way to survive would be to keep changing their location beyond the predictions of the enemies.

This was a great challenge not only to Shi Zhiguang, but to all the members in the sword pagodas as well.

Chapter 527: Courage and Special Training

A skinny and aged figure shuttled through the woods. His face and hair were covered with dust. Wrinkles on this face were rigid and forceful, like layers of folds piled up by gradually solidifying molten iron. However, his eyes were extremely pure like a baby.

Le Buleng left Skyheart City. Instead of flying, he chose to walk through the wild and headed toward the Jadeite Forest.

He walked in the daytime and sat in meditation at night. Wild fruits and dire beasts satisfied his stomach. Water from streams moistened his throat. He measured the earth by his feet and felt its eternity. Compared to the earth, life was as insignificant as dust. Looking into the sky, he indulged in the enormous starry heavens that had witnessed countless geniuses as they wrote down their legends.

He recalled his childhood. He was not the most gifted or the worst, but it was without a doubt that his temper was the most troublesome. After all these years, he had become this old, but his temper had not changed much.

It was just like his endeavors to become a Master - he never succeeded.

He had experienced too much failure and mockery in his life.

There were too many memories, so he needed to go through them slowly. The courage left behind by him gradually became

alive.

His youth, faith, dream, pride, and persistence were totally mixed in all sorts of courage.

The courage to persist in his decision, the courage to give up in order to survive, and the courage to start again from scratch.

Also, the courage when he was in his teenage years, in his adulthood, and in his old age.

During his lifetime, he had always wondered about the future from his desk. He had the experience of practicing all year round, no matter the mind-numbing winter or the searing hot summer, and also the experience of standing high above the masses with the command of a combat division in his hand. He had been to the highest mountain and tried to touch the sky in drunkenness, traveled to the snowfields that harbored frozen rivers, and experienced the vast deserts where smoke rose directly into the sky. He had seen bandits running and begging for forgiveness while he sat on top of a city wall and had also vanquished heroes by simply letting them know his name.

The first half of his life was mocked by others. People thought he was a freak and laughed at his failures.

The latter half of his life was admired by others. People venerated his perseverance and revered him as a master.

He had experienced ups and downs as well as all kinds of emotions, but never had he felt regretful.

When he recalled his eventful life, the worries in Skyheart City, the ups and downs of the world, the destiny of humanity, and all the other distracting thoughts faded into the wind.

His heart was crystal clear.

In this manner, he made his final preparations for the battle. At this moment, Le Buleng was like an ascetic believer who was on a pilgrimage. In his mind, the final destination of his pilgrimage was the battle, which was also his whole life.

He had failed eight times, struggled eight times, and attained enlightenment eight times.

On the way to his final destination, he had been thinking and hesitating.

He was like a rusty sword that was dull, but had its sword ray. He climbed mountains like the old vines that clung to the cliffs that overlooked Jadeite City.

He had traveled throughout the world and challenged numerous heroes. He had pursued the Path of Master for his whole life.

He strode proudly ahead and sang confidently.

There was only one battle left for him to fight in his lifetime.

.....

In the bamboo forest of the Central Pine Valley, the patterns under Duanmu Huanghun were changing again.

This [Viridescent Flower] variation was number 1,200.

The Pinwheel Sword had been inserted obliquely into a ridge on the Blackfish Mouth Volcano. The colorful pinwheel on the end of the sword pointed to the sky and twirled against wind.

The pinwheel cast large pieces of shadow on the ground where people sat scattered and were taking a break to recover their elemental energy.

Shi Zhiguang looked sad. Cupping his chin with his hand, he stared at the ground silently with the ends of his eyebrows pointing downward.

His performance today had been awful because he couldn't find a proper rhythm for their striking pace and had failed several times. Each strike of the Pinwheel Sword had to match an attack from the sword pagodas. In addition, the controller had to deviate the Pinwheel Sword's direction if it had traveled 50 feet in one direction.

Due to the lightning speed of the Pinwheel Sword, Shi Zhiguang had to remain highly concentrated. A tiny distraction would lead him to failure.

Gu Xuan sat down beside him. He patted him on the shoulder and comforted him, "You are already the best!"

He meant it.

Although Shi Zhiguang was tall and looked simple and honest like a savage fighter, he was the most gifted among the three sword operators and performed the best.

Shi Zhiguang didn’t respond because Gu Xuan’s words didn’t work at all. He had just discovered what his gift was and was more than eager to earn achievements.

Would he have to go back to what he was before?

After he experienced being respected and admired, his life became bright, so he could no longer bear the dull and poor life from before.

Gu Xuan didn’t know how to comfort Shi Zhiguang, but he thought that he had to say something after seeing his depression.

"Shi Zhiguang!"

In another corner, Ai Hui put down his elemental energy soup and shouted at him.

Shi Zhiguang was startled. He hesitated for a while and walked toward Ai Hui.

Gu Xuan was worried that Shi Zhiguang would be rebuked, so he followed him immediately.

"Sit down," Ai Hui said indifferently.

His skinny body was wrapped in bandages with two pieces of black crystal over his eyes.

On normal days, Ai Hui’s appearance was privately mocked by everyone, but at this moment, Shi Zhiguang felt inwardly guilty, so he didn’t find this funny at all and thought that the person under the bandages must be enraged.

Shi Zhiguang murmured, "Standing is okay for me."

Ai Hui snorted, "Sit down. You want to go against my orders?"

Shi Zhiguang shivered a bit and sat down immediately. He sat properly with his legs held together and his hands on his legs.

Gu Xuan realized the situation was not good and decided that if Shi Zhiguang was reprimanded, he would beg for leniency for him.

Ai Hui cleared his throat and asked, "Why are you depressed? It’s not your fault. The Pinwheel Sword is a new weapon, and we are all groping our way forward. Therefore, it’s fine for you to fail. I can accept your failure, but I can’t tolerate you losing your will to fight. If you keep doing so, I will replace you!"

Hearing Ai Hui’s words, Shi Zhiguang instantly stood up straight, held his chin up, and puffed his chest out. His extreme chest muscles were as strong as a gorilla’s. He immediately said, "Master, I won’t lose the will to fight!"

Gu Xuan looked at Ai Hui in surprise.

In everybody’s mind, Ai Hui was strict because he would assign punitive practice that took on unimaginable forms to anyone who made a tiny mistake during training. These punitive practices would consume one’s energy excessively. Besides, Ai Hui was impartial and incorruptible, so everyone was awed by him.

Still, no one complained. Instead, they were sincerely convinced when Ai Hui joined their training and followed the same criteria as everyone else.

Last time, Ai Hui beat the whole Sword of Lightning by himself, which won everybody’s admiration.

It had to be admitted that Ai Hui was good at training people. The seemingly nonsense tests from before were later proven to be practical. Some members were average in personal strength, but

possessed talent in particular aspects. Thus, no one was arrogant in the division, and the atmosphere was quite harmonious.

Gu Xan’s mindset had been unknowingly changed He used to be a loner, but now he practiced and shouldered punishment together with the other division members, which contributed a lot to their relationship.

This was especially evident a few days ago when Ai Hui was injured, so Gu Xuan had to lead the division in training.

From then on, Gu Xuan had become used to taking care of others.

That was why he had decided to intercede for Shi Zhiguang this time.

Ai Hui coughed again. "Although you are not the one to be blamed for the mistakes, you still need to make progress. After all, our lives depend on you."

Shi Zhiguang felt excited immediately. Face flushing, he said loudly, "I won’t let you down!"

He had never been so highly valued like that.

Conscious of his responsibility, he was full of vigor. Thus, he couldn’t wait to operate the Pinwheel Sword again and start a new practice session.

Ai Hui nodded and seemed satisfied. "Good, but having guts is not enough to win a battle. We have to improve our overall strength. In order to raise sword operators' strength, I have designed a special training regimen for you all."

Shi Guangzhi straightened his neck and shouted, "I will complete the special training!"

He decided that he would finish it no matter how hard it was.

Ai Hui waved his hand. "Not only you, but all sword operators have to pass the special training. Gu Xuan, tell the other two to come here."

The other two sword operators came immediately and stood rigidly in front of Shi Zhiguang. Compared to Shi Zhiguang, they were not confident at all. Daily training was already difficult enough. They couldn't imagine how hard the special training would be.

They were prepared to undergo the most severe trial.

Other team members also gathered around since they wanted to know what the special training would be.

As everybody arrived, Ai Hui said, " Being highly concentrated for a long period of time is the top challenge for a sword operator. This special training focuses on that point. Hence, it tasks our

sword operators with learning to embroider."

After hearing what he said, everybody was silent at first. Then, they exploded with complaints.

"Embroidery! Oh my god!

"Boss must be insane!"

...

...

Shi Zhiguang, who had been excited a moment ago, was dumbstruck.

The other two sword operators also felt astounded.

Ai Hui asked, "Do you know anything about embroidery? Come on, Shi Zhiguang. Tell us what you know."

Shi Zhiguang stuttered, "Yes, women do embroidery."

A strong sense of déjà vu carried Ai Hui back into his memories, returning him to a small, familiar courtyard where an old man patiently taught a teenager.

Almost reflexively, Ai Hui said , "Superficial!"

"A seamstress needs to use elemental energy as a needle, which is not an easy job. The qualities of threads and materials are different, while the designs are complicated. A good seamstress can control 10 elemental energy needles simultaneously that work in different areas of her embroidery work. As for the best embroidery master, do you know how many elemental energy needles she could control at a time?

"How many?"

"The highest record was 949 needles..."

Nobody noticed the yearning and nostalgia in Ai Hui's hoarse voice. His mind lingered in the small courtyard where the sound of weaving looms hummed now and then.

Master, Mistress, your disciple can now teach others how to embroider.

Chapter 528: Ability of God

After several consecutive days and nights of forced marching, even the ardent flower night wolves displayed some signs of fatigue.

Xing Shan did not continue to move forward, but chose to rest and recuperate. As the distance between the two parties drew closer, the level of danger increased dramatically, and they might confront the enemy at anytime. The speed of advancing became unimportant, and the key factor was not to make any mistakes.

He bet that Shi Xueman and others would not retreat even with the imminent arrival of the Dread Division and Judgement Division. As the saying went, "newborn calves are not afraid of the tiger." Furthermore, they had just won a battle and morale was high. There was no reason for them to choose a conservative strategy.

The vengeful response from the Blood of God was as expected.

Due to their involvement in the previous war, Shi Xueman and Silver Soldier were all proficient in warfare. It was not surprising that Shi Xueman performed very well as she was from a distinguished family.

It was the performance of Silver Soldier which surprised everyone.

The sudden appearance of Silver Soldier, who wore the title of

Karakorum Polaris's senior, gave everyone the impression of him being just a skilful fighter without utilizing military strategy. Many people were waiting to see Madam Ye make a fool out of herself since being skilful in martial arts alone was not enough to qualify as a combat division leader.

In actual fact, even the status of Master was exaggerated. Combat divisions could be found everywhere and were already considered worthless. That's why in order to qualify as a division leader, military expertise was a requirement.

The performance of Silver Soldier on the battlefield revealed his vast experience and one could easily tell that he was a veteran warrior. Even though the amount of casualties was relatively large, it did not lower their evaluation of him. With a bunch of new rookies on the battlefield, a large number of casualties was unavoidable. Even the most powerful division leader would not be able to immediately get a group of new recruits to reach the level of battlefield veterans.

Silver Soldier had no problem with attacking or providing support whenever necessary. It was obvious that he had excellent tactical training.

In contrast, the more renowned first sword master Karakorum Polaris's performance was a far cry when compared to her senior. She was more like an assistant to Silver Soldier who firmly executed his advice. Of course, good execution was also beneficial in the battlefield.

Her strong personal strength was like a cold and flickering

unsheathed sword.

According to the accounts from the battlefield, almost no one could block Karakorum Polaris and the number of experts who died under her sword was at least 17.

Among them were three powerful men who had comprehended the Ability of God!

The strength of the blood elementalists originated from fresh blood which contained blood spiritual force. Through special mixing and refining, different types of beast blood would blend with the blood elementalist's blood. This process was called blood refinement.

Xing Shan experienced the blood refinement of the Beast Venom Temple. It was a major blood refinement where a variety of different types of beast blood were combined, enhancing the effect of the process. Correspondingly, the risk of major blood refinement was also very large and a slight mistake might inadvertently lead to death by explosion.

Xing Shan had undergone 12 major blood refinements which had been extremely difficult and was only second to Red Devil in number.

Apart from major blood refining, the typical cultivation for a blood elementalist was also equivalent to blood refinement. In intensity and effectiveness, it was far less powerful than major blood refining. Of course, the risk was almost negligible and hence

very safe.

Major blood refining was like a shortcut. If one was uncommonly gifted and extremely fortunate, he would succeed instantly. Just like Red Devil who had no record of merits from any battles, but became one of the giants of the Blood of God who built his own palace after surviving an unprecedented 21 major blood refinements.

Minor blood refinement was mild and harmless. With perseverance, there would also be similar results.

Whether it was a mild minor blood refinement or a radical major blood refinement, they were basically two different pathways, but their nature was still to enhance the blood in the blood elementalist to increase his or her power.

When blood in the body of a blood elementalist continued to grow stronger, the Ability of God would be activated. It was like a "key," capable of unlocking the mysterious power lurking in the bloodstream and discovering the unique skills of each person.

There were great differences between the ancestral mark of different people because of different blood types. Yet after becoming a blood elementalist, a variety of blood and especially the blood of various beasts was further absorbed into the bloodstream. These huge differences made the Ability of God extremely diverse

Some blood elementalists with the Ability of God were able to

grow wings on their back and, like the incarnation of birds, roamed among the clouds.

On the other hand, some blood elementalists with the Ability of God were capable of listening to the wind and hearing movements that were very far away.

There was also the ability to grow horns that were super strong and unbeatable.

How many kinds of Abilities of God were there? No one knew.

Blood elementalists who could comprehend the Ability of God were the best experts and their statuses were equivalent to a Master. Whether it was the blood division or the god division, blood elementalists with the Ability of God were the backbone supporting the divisions.

Xing Shan, himself, was a blood elementalist with the Ability of God and had seven such subordinates under him.

The combat power of these blood elementalists were powerful and comparable to a Master. Even as a secondary combat division, the Ardent Flower Blood Division contained eight blood elementalists with the Ability of God. This showed that a combat division from the Blood of God was way more powerful than its Beyond Avalon counterpart.

Even so, the ability to kill three blood elementalists with the

Ability of God in a single battle was extremely alarming and had a great impact on the war.

This was why, even though Karakorum Polaris had limited tactical acumen, nobody dared to underestimate her. Whoever owned such a large lethal weapon had a great fighting advantage. In particular, when both sides were deadlocked, a sharp sword capable of tearing up the enemy's defenses was often the key to victory.

Xing Shan did not want to encounter Karakorum Polaris. He knew that even if he won the battle, half of his generals would get killed. There were no benefits to be reaped and such victories meant nothing to him.

Just as he was eyeing the leader position of the God Wolf Division, someone else was also secretly coveting his Ardent Flower Division leader position behind his back.

In contrast, Shi Xueman was a much more enticing and worthwhile target.

A very high reward made Xing Shan willing to take the risk. As long as they were able to capture Shi Xueman, they were not afraid if the war sapped their strength. This was because the reward reaped would be worth it.

It was a good deal.

He had already done some preparations beforehand.

He shouted at his two subordinates, a bold man and one dressed like a scholar. The bold man was Kan Yong and the scholar was Wu Wenyi. Both of them were blood elementalists with the Abilities of God.

Xing Shan commanded ,"You two, each lead a small team and go separately. Your task is simply to disrupt the enemy and mislead them into thinking we have three combat divisions."

Wu Wenyi said, "Aren’t we going to launch a surprise attack on them? Won’t our strategy be exposed?"

Kan Yong also gazed at Xing Shan.

"The other party knows that we will take revenge and definitely will take precaution. As long as we get slightly closer to the enemy, they will be alarmed. It is impossible to ambush them. I also suspect they have their traps ready and waiting for us to arrive."

Both of them nodded. Boss’s analysis was probably correct.

Xing Shan continued, "Therefore, we are going to disrupt their arrangement to ensure they do not know our actual situation. If both of you encounter enemies, just harass them, but do not engage them. As long as you stay active, they will be unable to sleep and eat well. No one knows how many people we will send for revenge. They can’t figure out how much depth we have and

will definitely take strict precautions, exposing their plan. It will be better if you can mobilize their battle divisions. Let’s first muddy the water before fishing in troubled waters."

Both said in unison, "We understand!"

They felt that what Boss said was absolutely right. Only if they confused the enemy would they then be able to grab an opportunity to attack. His brilliant achievements in wars and his previous record proved that his strategic insights were excellent, so they were very convinced by Boss.

The two teams disappeared into the mountain forest.

Zu Chun looked at their backs and sighed with emotion, "Hope their luck will improve."

Xing Shan said coolly,"It will."

Then, he said to Zu Chun,"We are now slowing down the speed of advance, but by increasing the number of scouts, we need you to take command. Our target is Shi Xueman."

Zu Chun was startled. Now that he understood the true intention of Xing Shan, he could not help but ask, "Only Shi Xueman?"

"Only Shi Xueman," Xing Shan emphasized again. He noticed the change in Zu Chun’s expression and said coolly,"I did not tell you beforehand for fear of information leaks. You can imagine the

benefits of capturing Shi Xueman. Deploy all the scouts. There is only one target, and I only need to know where Shi Xueman is located."

Zu Chun calmed down and admitted that the concerns of the division leader were not unreasonable. The competition between the different divisions of the Blood of God was a lot fiercer than the gentle competition of the 13 divisions of Avalon of Five Elements.

Each of the scouts soared into the sky or disappeared into the mountain forest.

Zu Chun looked solemn, his spinal column lit up, and indescribable power emitted from him.

There were three kinds of blood elementalists. The most common were god guards, followed by god shamans, and in the minority were god priests.

Both Zu Chun and Xing Shan were god guards. When compared to elemental energy, the effect of using blood spiritual force to temper the body was much better. At the beginning, the physical fitness of the god guards would have an all-rounded enhancement. Speed, strength, dexterity, and self-healing ability were greatly improved. With training, the blood essence of the whole body began to converge on the spine and condensed as spinal blood.

The spine was like the trunk of a tree and was the source of power.

The coagulated spinal blood started from the coccyx and moved steadily upward, just like climbing a ladder. A spine had a total of 33 vertebrae and these were known as the 33 pillars to the sky. It was said that if a god guard could get through the 33 pillars to the sky by traversing the whole spine, he would become a Master.

However, none of the god guards had managed to get through the 33 pillars as of now.

Zu Chun only surpassed 17 pillars, and among the god guards, he was already considered a very tough guy. From the ninth column onward, the strength required to get through each column was multiplied and the difficulty was exponentially increased.

The glistening spine was naturally curved and entrenched like a dragon.

The blood spiritual force in the body converged at an alarming speed toward his back and a dense scar appeared on his back, just like an ancient emblem. The expression shown by Zu Chun was like someone undergoing tremendous pain.

It stung.

The huge black wings rose slowly from his back, growing and extending toward both ends.

Throughout the whole process, Zu Chun was grim until the wings ceased to grow. The pain on his face vanished, replaced with

indifference.

His eyes no longer had focus.

Without any nonsense, Zu Chun flapped the wings behind him and disappeared all of a sudden.

Chapter 529: Reconnaissance

Shi Xueman was patrolling the camp when she saw Jiang Wei and Sang Zhijun. She nodded and asked, "Did you arrange for the reconnaissance?"

Jiang Wei said, "Arrangements have been made for Zu Yan to lead and Fatty has set off as well.

Having been sharpened by the battle, which had greatly influenced him, he appeared more steady and restrained. Not only him, even Sang Zhijun and Fatty seemed like different people individually.

Jiang Wei's work could always be trusted since he rarely made mistakes.

Shi Xueman was surprised, "Even Fatty is going? He is not suitable to be a scout."

Sang Zhijun heard and smiled, "Aren't they both fire elementalists? Both of them used to soak in the fire reservoirs together, and with Fatty so thick-skinned, how can Zu Yan be his opponent? Just a short time was needed for them to become good brothers."

Jiang Wei said hurriedly, "Besides being a little bit thick-skinned, Fatty is actually not too bad."

Sang Zhijun covered her mouth and laughed, "Are you praising him?"

Jiang Wei reacted and laughed heartily.

Shi Xueman noticed the fluctuation of elemental energy throughout Jiang Wei's whole body and her eyes lit up, "Jiang Wei, are you going to have a breakthrough?"

Sang Zhijun was stunned to hear this. She turned her face toward Jiang Wei and gushed, "Breakthrough? Why did you not mention it?"

Sang Zhijun was prepared for action. "It seems like I have to put in more effort and not be left behind."

Shi Xueman looked at the two of them and could not help smiling. Jiang Wei and Sang Zhijun got close to each other recently and gelled really well. Although Jiang Wei did not come from an aristocratic background, he was destined for a bright future as he was steady and calm. The Sang family used to be mediocre, but their situation was not much better now.

Sang Zhijun played a critical role in her family and had sufficient authority to speak.

Jiang Wei thought of something and said, "Zu Yan has recently improved tremendously."

With the achievements of Master Zu Yan, everyone should have addressed him as Master in accordance with the usual practice. However, addressing him as "Master" still made people feel awkward. It also made Zu Yan uncomfortable, so he requested that everyone address him by his name.

Shi Xueman sighed with emotion. "He is probably inspired by Senior Le Buleng."

Jiang Wei and Sang Zhijun nodded one after another as they agreed with Shi Xueman.

Sang Zhijun was full of worries. "I wonder if Senior Le Buleng has reached the Jadeite Forest? I admire the courage of Senior Le Buleng, but to challenge Dai Gang at this time, the odds are slim."

Jiang Wei had a different view. "When will we ever have a high chance to defeat Dai Gang? I, however, feel that the timing is just right. Thus, do not worry about the future of Zu Yan as he is a carefree spirit. After witnessing the actions of Grandmaster An Muda, the battle spirit in Senior Le Buleng was also aroused. Moreover, after seeing the actions of Skyheart City, anger filled his heart. From the moral point of view, it was the limit for Senior Le Buleng."

Talking about Skyheart City made Sang Zhijun angry and she grunted, "Unfortunately, I was not present at that time. It is with great regret that I did not get to see Senior Le Buleng in a rage. Skyheart City really makes people angry!"

Jiang Wei saw that Sang Zhijun was angry and hurriedly comforted her, "There's nothing to be angry about. At least they gave us a God-subduing Peak. A God-subduing Peak is something I have never even dreamed of."

Sang Zhijun grinned from ear to ear and was full of optimism. "Oh yes, with the God-subduing Peak, we do not need to take other's feelings into consideration. Plus, a lot of Xueman's ideas can also be achieved."

Shi Xueman had the utmost expectation for the God-subduing Peak. She used to be stationed at a God-subduing Peak, had experienced its power, and had thought about it before. What would be the result if she possessed a God-subduing Peak and erected the Hellfire Pagoda Cannon on top of the peak.

The recent battles had made her profoundly aware of the changes in her surroundings.

Former combat divisions only had to confront dire beasts, but now they had to face the blood elementalists who were under the reformed combat divisions. The enemy had undergone tremendous changes and many strategies had became less suitable.

This was destined to be a rapidly changing era.

She remembered some of the points that Ai Hui had elaborated on in his letter and had to admit that Ai Hui's keen instinct for battle was extraordinary. He obviously lacked rich experience in warfare, but this did not seem to prevent Ai Hui from

understanding the battle.

Maybe it was a gift.

This thought flashed across Shi Xueman’s mind, and she immediately laughed at the fact that it took until now to discover Ai Hui’s gift. Wasn’t the talent of Ai Hui obvious since the first battle?

She repeatedly warned, "Continue to be alert."

"Yes!"

Jiang Wei and Sang Zhijun obeyed the order with a salute. No matter how close their relationship was in private, everyone was serious when it came to business.

Shi Xueman accelerated her pace and a thought flickered in her mind.

She wanted to capture this feeling.

.....

Fatty scanned the mountain below and muttered from time to time, "This barren land, not even a shadow to be seen. Nothing, there is nothing at all. We have flown for a long time, and it is very tiring. Little Yanyan, let’s go down to rest."

Zu Yan was speechless, "I am taking you to fly. What is so tiring?"

Fatty nonchalantly said, "My eyes are tired. Why don't you try it?"

Zu Yan rolled his eyes, but had to admit that Fatty had the right to say so. Fatty was definitely not a good scout, either in terms of size or speed. Zu Yan was willing to take the trouble of bringing Fatty along despite his habit of constant grumbling for an important reason.

Fatty's eyes were as sharp as an eagle's and even the pheasants who hid in the impenetrable grass could be seen.

Basically, if Fatty said it was safe after a glance at the place, that meant it was truly safe.

Zu Yan was much more powerful than Fatty, but when it came to eyesight, they were not comparable. Fatty could aim the Hellfire Pagoda Cannon so well and so accurately, something that definitely could not be done with bad eyesight.

However, Zu Yan deeply hated some of Fatty's bad habits.

A little bit of work, yet he was already complaining of tiredness. Nonsensical talk from his mouth kept pouring out and could not be blocked. Zu Yan was almost driven crazy by Fatty's nonsense when they were both in the same fire reservoir and had nowhere else to

escape to at the beginning. Zu Yan was powerful and therefore able to endure the high-level fire reservoir. Fatty was obviously not strong, yet he was still able to stay put inside.

It should be due to his skin being thick...

Zu Yan was descending and getting ready to land. He picked out a spot with a very good view of the terrain. It was located on a mountain ridge and the line of sight was very far.

As Fatty was preparing to rest, his eyes suddenly blinked and his body stiffened.

Zu Yan, who was carrying Fatty, noticed it and instantly asked, "Did something happen?"

Fatty did not speak, but squinted his eyes and slowly scanned around. After a while, he turned his body and lowered his voice, "There are blood elementalists!"

Zu Yan trembled with fear. "Where are they?"

He had not discovered anything earlier.

Fatty stretched, yawned, and whispered, "Behind the rock, about six or seven miles away from us."

Zu Yan looked Fatty’s deceitful expression and suspected he was

cooking up a scheme. He asked immediately, "What is your plan?"

"You go get some prey, but do not go too far."

Fatty kept on turning around and his eyes continuously scanned all about, exactly like a veteran scout.

Zu Yan felt suspicious, "Are you hungry? Misleading me by asking me to hunt for you."

Fatty felt indignant. "Where is the basic trust between brothers? What else, what do you mean by misleading you? Isn’t it expected for you to hunt for your brother? When you were in the fire reservoir, I was afraid you would be bored and specially kept you company."

Zu Yan decided to shut up since he had never won an argument with Fatty.

After talking, Fatty swaggered toward the lowlying ground, seemingly looking for a sheltered place to rest.

Zu Chun flew the fastest. He set out last, yet flew the farthest. His Ability of God was [Heavenly Roc Wings] which were very commonly used. The pitch-black wings grew from his back with sections of black and red feathers folded layer by layer. The pattern formed by the black and red was extremely exquisite, graceful, and elegant.

The Heavenly Roc was an ancient divine beast which was fierce and tough, roaming all over the highest of the heavens.

The blood in his body, which contained Heavenly Roc ancestral mark, should have originated from the blood golden eage. However, after millions of years, the content of the Heavenly Roc ancestral mark in the blood golden eagle had become very diluted. Still, the power of this small portion of diluted blood was already sufficient to make a qualitative change in the strength of Zu Chun power.

Zu Chun had already discovered the presence of the two of them earlier.

He did not rush over, but quietly landed. Then, he found a place to hide and waited for the two elementalist scouts to enter into his attack range.

A confrontation between scouts was unusually brutal and cruel.

Every scout wanted to capture the opposite party since a live captive was worth far more than a corpse. A captive scout would have a miserable end as they would be tortured and treated cruelly. Even suicide was an extravagant hope.

The scouts needed not only strong personal strength, but also steel-like willpower. Otherwise, once they were captured, they would not be able to withstand the torture and would divulge information.

He never expected the two elementalist scouts to stop moving forward, but they stopped to take a rest instead.

Am I discovered?

Zu Chun felt this was impossible since he was quite a distance away from them and had not exposed himself.

Afterward, he saw that one of the scouts unexpectedly went to hunt. He felt relieved and thought that he had not been discovered, but had encountered two substandard scouts.

It was extremely dangerous to scout for information. The scouts of any combat division were the best of the elites. However, the amateurish performance of these two made Zu Chun shake his head.

He was even more speechless after seeing Fatty's figure. Which combat division would choose a fat man with such a bloated body to serve as a scout?

Am I getting confused?

Am I encountering another combat division? The Spear of Heavy Cloud, Infantry Division, and Sky Edge Division could not be so novice. The more he thought about it, the more likely it seemed that the victory of Shi Xueman during the previous battle had stimulated the rest of the combat divisions and they also wanted to earn some merits against the God Nation?

Zu Chun sneered.

He quietly walked toward the other party.

The other party was negligent and had their backs facing him. In addition, the two seemed to still be in dispute.

Two rascals!

Zu Chun’s eyes flashed with murderous intent.

Chapter 530: The Bird is in the Net

"Can’t you use a little less force? Control the heat, it’s already burnt. How are we going to eat? And you’re a Master. Aren’t you ashamed of calling yourself a Master when you can’t even roast a bird properly?"

"Don't eat it if you don’t want it."

"I’ll eat, I’ll eat. A Master is cooking personally, so of course I’ll show my support, but in the name of brotherhood, I’m advising you to learn from Lou Lan. Even if you don’t fight in future, at least you can open a roasted chicken stall and live off it. Or you can follow me back to Old Territory and I’ll give you a roasted chicken stall. Aye, I remember how A Hui refused to return to Old Territory. He was made for greater things, and I’ve known it for the longest time. At that time, A Hui..."

"Can’t you even shut your mouth with food?"

...

Zu Chun listened as they quarreled.

Zu Chun was feeling increasingly certain about his conjecture. Which cannon fodder division? A Hui? Never heard of him. Old Territory? Coming from the countryside, it was no wonder he had little accomplishments. And such a rookie Master, one without even the most basic vigilance, would only give away his life on the battlefield.

A cold light flashed across Zu Chun’s eyes as he got ready to make a move.

"The bird is in the net. All on you, pretty boy."

"Scram."

Eh? Zu Chun was stunned. Just then, like a ball, the fatty in front put his hands behind his head and leapt forward rapidly. And another person turned around and looked at him expressionlessly.

The man looked like he was fifteen or sixteen. His skin was quite pale and he looked rather feeble.

Zu Chun shuddered. To become a Master at such a young age meant that his talent was absolutely extraordinary. Plus... was this a trap?

A red light lit up beneath his feet.

He lowered his head and saw a clearly visible red light web. With the pale youth standing right in the center, the criss-crossed red light enveloped a few hundred meters around him like a giant, red spider web.

The pale youth stood in the middle of the red spider web, watching him coldly like a spider hidden in the dark.

Zu Yan was rescued by Le Buleng during the blood catastrophe, and because of the occupation of Fire Prairie, which led to a deficiency in fire elemental ingredients, he was unable to train and was sealed in ice by Le Buleng. Having been frozen over and unable to see the sunlight for a long time, a sickly paleness appeared on his face. Furthermore, the ice seal also froze his looks in time, so he still looked as if he was fifteen or sixteen years old.

Knowing he'd been deceived, Zu Chun was furious, but he quickly calmed down.

He did not know when he'd been noticed or whether they had special tricks, but at that point, anger wasn't the solution. A sinister smile surfaced on the corner of his lips and his gaze became cold. He was determined to catch them both and show them what he was capable of.

He sized his opponent up and felt that he was somewhat familiar-looking, as if he'd seen him somewhere before.

He stirred. "May I know your name, Sir?"

The man expressionlessly replied, "Zu Yan."

Zu Chun's heart jumped. He looked at that faintly familiar face and finally realized why he found it familiar.

Young Master Zu Yan!

Hadn’t the Zu family been completely destroyed? Why was Young Master Zu Yan alive? Complicated emotions that were difficult to understand filled his mind. Although he wasn’t aware of what Zu Yan had been through, Zu Yan was indeed standing before him, alive and well.

Zu Yan’s mind and views of the world were still stuck in the time of Induction Ground, so they were young and tender. In contrast, Fatty, who was hiding far behind Zu Yan, was very experienced. He’d sensed the change in Zu Chun’s expression and demanded, "Tell us your name too."

Quivering, Zu Chun blurted out, "Zu Chun."

He immediately regretted revealing his name.

Indeed, Zu Yan’s face turned grave. He asked coldly, "Which branch are you from?"

The Zu family was a powerful family; it was well-established and still growing, with many side factions. Upon seeing someone from the same family on the battlefield, Zu Yan’s heart felt constricted, as if a ball of fire was stuck in his chest. The Zu family was destroyed, but the branch family was relying on their mortal enemy.

Zu Chun kept silent for a moment before responding. "The Hongling Zu Branch."

Zu Yan’s voice was like an echoing, bitingly cold wind. "There are even branches in the family. The Hongling Zu family is ranked third. The family head is a generous man. I was twelve when I last saw Hongling Zu family’s head, Uncle Ming. Is he still alive?"

Zu Yan was a direct descendant of the Zu family, so ever since he was young, he’d been regarded and nurtured as the successor of the family and was well-respected.

After a long period of silence, Zu Chun shook his head. "Hongling was surrounded for twenty days, and the situation was hopeless. Refusing to surrender but not wanting the family to be slaughtered, Uncle Ming killed himself. Those with "Ming" in their names have all died."

The rage in Zu Yan’s chest was quickly extinguished and overtaken by sorrow.

Zu Yan almost fainted upon waking up to the news that the whole Zu family had been slaughtered without exception. What followed was a long period of depression and decadence. Seeing Zu Chun reminded him of his family, which threw him into a fury. Knowing that Uncle Ming and the rest refused to surrender and committed suicide calmed him down.

He’d felt angry because he was of the opinion that the family head had been betrayed.

And the sorrow he felt now was due to his realization that there

was nothing they could've done. Zu Yan could understand the despair and helplessness Uncle Ming and the rest must've felt when they ended their lives.

Zu Yan said faintly, "Go, I'll pretend we've never met."

Fatty opened his mouth, but he swallowed the words that were about to come out.

Zu Chun shook his head. "You don't have to do that, Young Master. There's no more Hongling Zu family. We're separate individuals and were areon our own, so since we've met, let us have a death match, clean and open, fair and square, so that our friends and families will not be dragged into this."

Zu Yan gave Zu Chun a meaningful look and nodded. "I'm too soft-hearted."

In these few years, Zu Yan had been like a blank slate. He was inexperienced and was still a melancholy and moody youth. Hearing Zu Chun's words woke him up. Not only were their lives at stake but their comrades' as well. If letting Zu Chun go would result in a defeat and the loss of his companions' lives, he wouldn't be able to forgive his sin even if he died.

He reminded himself inwardly.

Zu Chun inhaled a deep breath, gazing deeply at Zu Yan. "I'm assuming this is the family's absolute art [Flaming Heavenly Spider

Transformation]?"

[Flaming Heavenly Spider Transformation] was the Zu family's absolute art, and only direct descendants had the right to practice it. Zu Chun had only heard of the name and had never seen it for himself.

Zu Yan replied, "That's right, but there are differences as well."

In Induction Ground, Zu Yan practiced the [Flaming Heavenly Spider Transformation]. It was an absolute art that had undergone generations of deepening and perfecting. Zu Chun hadn't seen it not only because only descendants weren't able to practice it, but also because it was an extremely difficult skill to master. It demanded a lot, even from the most talented since it was astonishingly challenging to comprehend.

In each generation, no more than three people were able to comprehend [Flaming Heavenly Spider Transformation]. But once they were enlightened, their accumulation would constantly deepen with time and turn them into very strong players.

Due to having been frozen over for many years, the preserved wisp of unextinguished fire element in Zu Yan's body was extremely pure. This was also the reason why he was able to become a Master so effortlessly upon being replenished with a huge volume of snow lava.

Zu Chun's laughter carried on for a while, his vigor rising drastically. "Young Master's [Flaming Heavenly Spider

Transformation] isn’t the only exception!"

Whoosh. He engaged [Heavenly Roc Wings] and his body abruptly vanished.

Zu Yan’s gaze sharpened. With a snort, he swiftly sprang up from the red spider web and wove a shield-sized spider web before him.

Bang!

A blurry afterimage flashed past as a dent appeared on the spider web shield. Sparks flew everywhere.

"Interesting indeed!"

Zu Chun’s laughter sounded in mid air. Borrowing the force of the spider web shield, he flew up into the sky.

The durability of the spider web surprised him. As a member of the Zu family’s branch family, it could be said that [Flaming Heavenly Spider Transformation] had a well-known reputation and a special place in his heart. Because of that, he was even more excited to face his opponent. His battlelust was overflowing.

Returning to the sky, Zu Chun’s hands no longer felt restricted. He felt more carefree.

[Sky Roc Wings] worked better in the sky.

With a tremble of the wings on his back, Zu Yan vanished once again.

He reappeared behind Zu Yan almost immediately like an oblique sword ray, going straight for Zu Yan.

As if he had eyes behind his head, Zu Yan sprang up from the spider web and stayed in the air.

A spider web appeared before Zu Chun once again.

He saw Zu Chun approaching, but he disappeared yet again.

Zu Yan snorted. Like a poisonous snake that had sensed danger and raised its head, the few spider webs beside his legs gathered to form a big spider web over his head.

Diving down without dodging, Zu Chun increased his speed and tilted his body slightly. The wings behind his back spread open like a scissors and smashed violently onto the spider web above Zu Yan’s head.

A devilish, red knife ray sliced the spider web.

Zu Yan’s face changed and he took a step toward his left.

The descending red ray sliced Zu Yan’s body into two.

Snap. The red spider web threads broke.

Zu Chun did not look the least bit happy. That slice felt strange. Indeed, Zu Yan, who had been split into two, did not bleed at all. Instead, he gradually became blurry.

Zu Chun caught a glimpse of a shadow out of the corner of his eye.

Unknowingly, Zu Yan had already appeared a hundred meters away from him.

Zu Yan looked up. The flickering flame in his eyes could cause one's heart to palpitate. He raised his right arm, his fingers spread open, and his forefinger pointed at Zu Chun!

An intense sense of danger rose in Zu Chun's heart. Without the slightest hesitation, he engaged Heavenly Roc Wings.

Hiss hiss hiss!

It sounded like a spitting poisonous snake or a whining of a spider concealed within the darkness. Fire red spider web threads shot toward the sky.

Zu Yan quickly engaged his wings and flew upward frantically.

Densely packed red spider web threads chased closely behind him like a swarm of rapidly slithering red snakes.

Zu Yan, who was on the ground, became a small, black dot, but the red spider web threads showed no indications of giving up.

Zu Chun had decided. If he wasn’t able to dominate them in the sky, he might as well admit defeat!

The exquisite red pattern on his Heavenly Roc Wings emitted a devilish, red light. Zu chun’s speed increased drastically and the afterimage in the sky flickered non-stop. His body had become erratic.

He was like a sharp, red knife ray, plunging into the bitingly cold, golden-wind-filled deep space.

The red spider web threads quickly became disordered.

At the same time, a few hundred meters away, a shadow dove from the deep space toward the ground like a sharp arrow.

Chapter 531: Fatty's Lethal Weapon

The wind whistled as Zu Chun increased his speed, the surging airflow like cutting knives. His field of vision was shaky, but he fixed his gaze onto that shadow on the ground.

It was as if the violent force in his blood had been roused.

Zu Chun wasn't aware that his eyes were bloodshot. The red light enveloping his wings was as dense as a thick layer of red crystal. His aura was strengthening and a gush of azure air surged upward. It was as if he was seeing himself fly beyond the end of the world, over a void, and across the stars. He used to rule the sky. Pride and agitation spread within his body.

An enormous spider web lit up beneath the feet of Zu Yan, who was on the ground.

As if he hadn't seen it, Zu Yan had sufficient confidence that even [Flaming Heavenly Spider Transformation] would not be able to stop him!

Bang!

Just then, with a jolt on his back, it was as if there was a moment of enlightenment. A gush of extremely vigorous force entered his body in an instant. He couldn't help but emit a stern and long hiss, his breath surging.

He was wild with joy. He hadn't expected to undergo a breakthrough at this time!

The eighteenth column had been unlocked!

The curled spider web on the ground enveloped Zu Yan like an unbloomed rose whose petals had folded and stacked over one another. The defensive strength displayed by the crisscrossed canine teeth was absolutely intimidating and unbreakable.

But Zu Chun was full of confidence, and sinister smile surfaced on his lips.

As if feeling Zu Chun's murderousness, Zu Yan raised his head once again and got into an odd position.

His left leg was propped up while his right leg was in a squat, and his upper body was leaning forward.

The slightly paling blazing flame overflowed from Zu Yan's eyes. His eyes were completely hidden amidst the flames. At this moment, his expression was calm, as if a fire god was arriving.

He lifted his face up and fixed his gaze at Zu Chun, who was rapidly plunging downward.

The red light enveloping Zu Chun's body was like a sharp, red knife ray. A mournful, sharp hiss filled the whole sky. It was a soul-shaking sound.

Zu Yan's right leg slammed onto the ground, effortlessly splitting the mud as if a giant had swung his hatchet and drawn a solid and cold arc.

The surroundings curled up and a petal-like spider web lifted off the ground simultaneously as if being blown up by the wind. Piece after piece entered the disk slowly, creating a dazzling sight. It was as if the arc had been dyed red as layers of flower patterns folded over one another. It was absolutely exquisite and beautiful, and the red glow on the arc became increasingly introverted.

Since Induction Ground Time, Zu Yan had already been able to attack with his heavy, axe-like leg, but his execution today was thoroughly different. There had been an intrinsic transformation.

When that wheel, which looked as if layers of flower patterns had been engraved on it, of red flames shot toward the sky silently, a chill went up Zu Chun's spine. An unprecedented sense of danger enveloped his heart.

It hadn't been an easy journey for Zu Chun to survive till this point and serve as the Ardent Flower Blood Division's vice division leader. The fear of danger did not urge him to escape. Instead, he knew that when his life was at stake and that the only way to survive was to be even crazier and reckless.

He placed both hands in front like an ancient, ferocious beast that had been angered. With a sky-filling hiss and devilish red light, he dashed toward that red, flaming arc.

Both had the same surname and both had the same red ray.

The difference was that one was devilish and fearful while the other was reserved and refined.

Like a delayed predestination, the rays collided with a great impact.

The splendid rays lit up abruptly, filling the sky with a sheet of white. Nothing could be seen. An ear-splitting boom sounded, causing the ground to shake intensely. A pounding windstorm followed, frantically sweeping and ripping everything apart. The solid rock shattered instantly as if smashed by a heavy hammer. Even before its fragments could fly everywhere, they were swallowed up by the wind. Trees also got twisted and shattered instantly, and the mud on the ground was lifted a few meters up as if a monster was trampling forward.

It felt like judgment day.

Time seemed to have stopped at this point.

Some time later, a wild laughter rang in the sky.

"Hahahaha!"

Zu Chun was covered in blood, but his aura remained strong as

he floated in mid air. As he looked at the enormous pit below, his laughter became increasingly wild and arrogant.

Zu Yan was in a much more sorry state as he struggled his way out of the giant pit. His clothes were torn and there were quite a few wounds all over his body. His right leg was twisted at a weird angle.

"Hahahahahaha, that's all there is to the young master of the Zu family! That's all there is to [Flaming Heavenly Spider Transformation]!"

Zu Chun only felt an indescribable ease and excitement, as if an invisible shackle that had been binding him was broken. It was satisfying.

From then on, he was no longer the Zu Chun from Zu family's side faction. He was the vice division leader, Heavenly Roc Wing, Zu Chun, from Ardent Flower Blood Division!

Boom!

A dull sound rang from afar.

Zu Chun was stunned, and before he could look toward the direction of that boom, he felt as if he'd been dealt a blow by a heavy hammer. His body shook uncontrollably.

When he turned around, he saw a small mountain peak and an

odd-looking mini pagoda cannon tube from which black smoke was rising in spirals. The pagoda cannon was propped on Fatty's shoulder. Fatty was in a half squat position, his body steady as a mountain.

There was no fear, dread, or cunningness on his face, only complete focus. He was expressionless, with his right cheek stuck close to the scalding cannon tube. Before him was a sturdy trestle that formed a stable triangle with his legs. The cannon tube's tail was connected to a thick and soft tube which extended to a water tank that contained the clear-as-water snow lava on his back.

Their eyes met.

A cold light flashed across Fatty's eyes.

Boom!

Another earth-shattering boom sounded and a dazzling white flame sprayed out from the cannon tube. As if he had suffered a heavy hit, Fatty's feet sunk ankle deep into the rock. His face was flush red, his round eyes filled with anger, and his whole body's power activated. Even then, the huge impact still threw his body backward.

Zu Chun's body trembled once again as the immense force ripped his body.

He lowered his head and saw two bowl-sized bloody holes on his

chest. Connected to them were two biting disks of moon.

What a domineering pagoda cannon, and how accurate...

Could it be Skyheart City's secret weapon?

He fell into an unconscious state and dropped down from the sky.

Fatty was soaked in sweat, and vapor was rising from his body. He was like a freshly roasted pig. His skin was bright red and his sweat was overflowing, but it was as if he was numb. He kept the trestle before him, took down the cannon tube on his shoulder, and disassembled the soft tube. He used a palm carrying elemental energy to wipe across the cannon tube slowly and then it became soft. He then carefully rolled the cannon tube and soft tube up and packed both along with the trestle inside the bag he was carrying.

The whole process was done meticulously and skillfully.

After packing, Fatty leapt off the hill nimbly, which was surprising because of his body size.

With a few jumps, he appeared by Zu Yan's side. Zu Yan was staggering, still overwhelmed with shock, and out of it.

Zu Yan was used to seeing Fatty carry that bag all the time. Little did he know that there was a lethal weapon hidden within.

Zu Yan was already aware that Fatty was an expert in handling the pagoda cannon.

Yet, Fatty had actually modified it, again and again...

Zu Yan knew not how to describe this completely innovative single pagoda cannon. Was it considered a weapon? Probably, although it was very different from the weapons Zu Yan was familiar with.

Without a word, Fatty supported Zu Yan up and lugged him over his shoulder.

Zu Yan only felt his world spinning, and when he regained his senses, he realized he'd been manhandled.

"Put me down, I can walk on my own..."

"Shut up! Don't attract the army!"

Zu Yan was stunned. He'd never heard Fatty using such a stern and serious tone and was caught off guard.

It seemed effortless for Fatty even though he was carrying a big adult and a big bag at the same time. Another few jumps took him to Zu Chun's side.

Zu Yan saw that Zu Chun's eyes were wide open. It wasn't a

peaceful death. There was also disbelief on his face and two ghastly bloody holes on his chest. Fatty's cannon had pierced two holes through Zu Chun's chest. The extremely hot snow lava had scorched all around the holes. This was also why there wasn't any blood flowing out from the holes.

Not at peace, the deceased Zu Chun had probably found it difficult to believe that he would actually die by Fatty's hands.

Zu Yan thought suddenly.

He wasn't confident.

He'd seen Fatty using it to get rid of powerful blood elementalists and had been shocked by the Hellfire pagoda cannon's might at that point in time. But the Hellfire Pagoda was cumbersome to set up, since it required a lot of time. Unless it was for a big scale battle or for defending purposes, it wasn't a favorable piece of equipment, especially in the face of an unexpected attack.

He hadn't expected Fatty to modify the pagoda cannon into a weapon that could be used by one person.

Can't judge a person by appearance...

While Zu Yan was in thought, Fatty grabbed Zu Chun up and lugged him over his other shoulder.

Zu Chun's wide-open eyes met Zu Yan's, causing Zu Yan's hair to

stand on end. "Why are you carrying the corpse?"

Fatty explained while dashing, "To show Xueman and the guys. Maybe they'll find some useful information. At least we'll know which combat division he was from."

Zu Yan immediately felt ashamed. As as investigator, he really wasn't qualified. He was worse than Fatty. An investigator's responsibility was to source for information related to enemies. He only cared about killing his enemy and got tangled into family affairs, forgetting his responsibilities.

How careless.

"Plus, I haven't checked the corpse. Isn't this all for nothing if we waste natural resources... no, leave it to rot? What a pity! I don't do meaningless businesses."

Fatty dashed wildly with both men on his shoulders. He knew that the commotion from earlier had alarmed both sides. If they did not hurry, they might get chopped into minced meat if other blood elementalists rushed over to investigate.

Zu Yan was already half crippled and had no strength left.

Using his pagoda cannon to launch a sneak attack was alright, but to use it in a one on one battle was no different from seeking death. Before he could set up the pagoda cannon, he would've been chopped into pieces.

Fatty was so fast that his legs were producing wind and his face was flush red. Beads of sweat were rolling down his cheeks. He was like an elephant running in the forest.

Quick, come and save me, Iron Lady!

Chapter 532: Face to Face

Even when tidying up the camp, no one in the Ardent Flower Blood Division made any sound. Other than the breaths of the ardent flower night wolves and the soldiers petting them to pacify it, the whole campground was solemn.

Xing Shan managed the military strictly, but whatever War God Ye said, he would complete wholeheartedly. He, too, would do that. Military order was strict, and anyone who dared defy his instructions would be killed on the spot and without hesitation. On the other hand, he knew how to coax his subordinates. Whenever there were money making opportunities, he would bring everyone along instead of hogging everything for himself.

He was born in the marketplace and was very practical and tactful. He knew that flattering and fawning hadn't the least bit of use. Those who led the team well and were loyal and devoted to him would be rewarded immediately and given important posts. That way, subordinates felt it to be rather fair.

As time passed, people were convinced of this boss' leadership. Boss appeared rough, but he was actually a complex person and not someone to be fooled easily.

Xing Shan leaned on his Chieftain Wolf and sprawled on the floor with his eyes slightly shut as if he was resting. He was lightly stroking the wolf's fur with his palm. This ardent flower night wolf was his saddle horse. It was extremely spirited, but also hot-tempered.

In the beginning, Xing Shan suffered some hardships when dealing with the Chieftain Wolf. He was extremely frustrated, but he couldn't bear to slaughter it. With much effort, he finally managed to tame it.

They had a very close relationship, and the Chieftain Wolf had saved his life repeatedly. In Xing Shan's eyes, no one in the whole of the Ardent Flower Blood Division was comparable to his Chieftain Wolf.

With his Chieftain Wolf's ability, this long-range raid wasn't a big deal. The Chieftain Wolf enjoyed Xing Shan's caresses and yawned occasionally. With his eyes shut, XIng Shan was deep in thought.

He didn't know why, but he started to feel ill at ease, which disturbed him, because he had met with danger the previous time he felt this way.

This was an omen, he thought.

He sorted recent affairs carefully but couldn't find anything amiss.

Suddenly, he felt that something wasn't right and jerked his eyes open.

A dazzling light ray lit up in the faraway sky, its intense wave motion alarming Xing Shan. Such a strong motion could only be

due to a confrontation between two powerful players. Was there a powerful figure?

The whole camp had been startled. Everybody stood up and looked toward the ray in bewilderment.

A short while later, an obvious air flow swept across the campground, and Xing Shan's face changed.

This was the shockwave from that earlier collision. From amid the wind, he captured Zu Chun's aura of blood spiritual force!

Quite a few people had detected this. Having interacted with Zu Chun day and night, many of them were familiar with his blood spiritual force's aura. If it had been any other day, no one would be too worried, since in the Ardent Flower Blood Division, Zu Chun's ability was second only to Boss Xing Shan. Yet that wave motion was simply too intense. Zu Chun must have met a Master elementalist!

Xing Shan's face was ashen-colored. Zu Chun was his right-hand man and Xing Shan relied heavily on him. Zu Chun had always been the one in charge of daily training, and even after so many years, he'd never failed to live up to Xing Shan's expectations.

He quickly suppressed his anger, his mind spinning rapidly. Xing Shan had secured his position as the division leader not only because of his own capability.

He originally planned to seek out the location of the Spear of Heavy Cloud first. He hadn't expected to scout out the opponent so quickly, and a Master elementalist at that.

The enemy was very close!

Xing Shan's expression worsened with this realization. The distance between them was much shorter than he'd expected. This meant that the enemy was positioned even more aggressively and invasively and was more ambitious.

While he didn't know which combat division his opponent was from, he knew that the three teams that cooperated and claimed victory previously had no reason to battle separately. If they wanted to join forces, they could not be too far apart.

After analyzing, Xing Shan realized that they were in a very dangerous situation!

The Ardent Flower Blood Division could be attacked from all sides.

Xing Shan calmed down. He was aware that whether or not the opponent was from Shi Xueman's combat division, he would have to use the power of lightning to attack and prevent getting closed in on three sides.

Any hesitation in the face of such an encounter could lead to a catastrophe.

In a battle encounter, both parties were usually unprepared. Many would wait for the right opportunity in hope that they could be more amply prepared, but retreating and hesitating was like bowing and giving away victory.

"Get ready, army! We're setting off shortly!"

Xing Shan roared before turning over and sitting on his wolf.

Everybody responded loudly as they got up in succession and sat on ardent flower night wolves.

They transformed into a deluge and whizzed toward that dazzling light.

Shi Xueman was in the tent, summing up her insights.

If they had a God-subduing Peak and installed a pagoda cannon at its crucial position, it would be alarmingly powerful. She put pen to paper and in the blink of an eye an outline of God-subduing Peak appeared.

She'd been stationed in one before, so she was very familiar with it. Propping her chin, she fixed her eyes on the drawing and quickly marked out a suitable position for the pagoda cannon to be installed.

A mighty force like a Hellfire Pagoda Cannon was very well-suited to a heavy weapon like a God-subduing Peak.

A Hellfire Pagoda Cannon could double the power of a God-subduing Peak and seal off a region that was more than ten times bigger. Shi Xueman was also startled by her deductions. Any tripling or quintupling of power of a heavy weapon was already considered remarkable.

A tenfold increase was completely unbelievable.

Shi Xueman never would've thought that such a small Hellfire Pagoda Cannon could cause such a huge change.

What else would a God-subduing Peak need if it had a Hellfire Pagoda Cannon?

Shi Xueman was very aware that a God-subduing Peak wasn't without its flaws. The Wall of North Sea wouldn't have collapsed otherwise.

And her father wouldn't have...

Shi Xueman pursed her lips tightly, her expression steadfast. She tried hard to dismiss her distracting thoughts. Now's not the time to feel sad and weak, she told herself.

She started thinking again.

She thought about the flaws of a God-subduing Peak since thinking from this angle might lead her to something.

She recalled her journey to Jadeite Forest, trying hard to capture the God-subduing Peak's weaknesses.

Its speed!

The God-subduing Peak's speed wasn't considered slow. Elementalists would get tired from flying, but a God-subduing Peak could travel from Silver Mist Sea to Jadeite Forest without needing to stop. When it came to battles, however, it always seemed clumsy.

The God-subduing Peak was too bulky and could only resist instead of dodge enemies' attacks.

Enemies would throw themselves onto it like a swarm of bees, and that was when the God-subduing Peak was in greatest danger. It wouldn't be able to bear the attacks no matter how solid its defense was. If enemies managed to get close, some unique attacks would smash its tortoise shell like a heavy hammer.

Some extreme blood elementalists would even self-detonate.

The scene of a blood elementalist exploding was very heroic, and its impact was extremely shocking too.

In the midst of killing, soldiers would usually become even more crazy, be it blood elementalists or elementalists. There wasn't any difference.

A God-subduing Peak's speed and agility was difficult to change because of its bulk.

How could she compensate for this flaw then?

What about an even more compressed pagoda cannon? Shi Xueman immediately rejected this idea. While Hellfire Pagoda Cannons were indeed very mighty, their firing frequency was simply too slow and more suited for focused targets.

A God-subduing Peak wasn't very useful when it came to dealing with this swarm battle technique.

What to do?

Increase the number of defending elementalists? This could be a solution. Elementalists were good at flying, so they would be able to block off approaching enemies. An inspirational flash lit across her eyes. That's right, as long as they prevented enemies from getting close to the God-subduing Peak, its might could fully be unleashed.

Shi Xueman was feeling rather agitated. She was aware of the value of this idea.

Quite a few God-subduing Peaks had already been created, but there were always only a few elementalists stationed around each of them. Because there weren't many battle positions onboard, there had always been few battling elementalists.

But its gigantic build could definitely fit the entire combat division!

They just hadn't done it, because they believed that increasing the number of elementalists on board wouldn't increase the God-subduing Peak's might.

But it was as if Shi Xueman had just opened up a new window. She felt that a God-subduing Peak wasn't just an empty castle, it could actually be a beehive!

A flying beehive!

If they weren't able to handle the swarm battle technique, the enemies, too, wouldn't be able to.

Adding a Hellfire Pagoda Cannon to a God-subduing Peak would greatly increase its lockdown region, which meant that their own soldiers would be able to get assistance from a greater area.

Shi Xueman got increasingly excited and stood up abruptly, left her tent, and got ready to discuss this matter with Sang Zi Jun, Jiang Wei, and the rest.

This was their daily activity – non-stop pondering and discussing. From the start of the blood catastrophe, Ai Hui had been the one to host the discussions, and this tradition never stopped since then.

Shi Xueman, who had just walked out of the tent, turned rigid. She raised her head and looked at the dazzling light ray at the horizon.

That was… Zu Yan's elemental energy wave motion!

Zu Yan must have met an extremely remarkable blood elementalist!

Zu Yan was very capable. Although he had become a Master a little later than usual, his abilities in the Spear of Heavy Cloud was second only to Shi Xueman's. He was a even notch better than Yang Xiaodong. Such a violent impact could only be due to an encounter with a powerful blood elementalist.

An enemy was here!

And they were already very close by.

"Get ready for battle!"

Without needing for her to shout, members of the Spear of Heavy Cloud were already alarmed. The elemental energy wave motion was simply too intense.

"Gather the troops quickly, Wang Xiaoshan. An enemy is here."

"Get ready to face the enemy head-on, Jiang Wei."

"Get someone to inform the Sky Edge soldiers that the enemy is here, Sang Zijun."

"Follow me, Yang Xiaodong. We're going to save them!"

The azure wings on Shi Xueman spread open with a jolt and she soared into the sky.

Not daring to lag behind, Yang Xiaodong quickly followed behind.

Jiang Wei fixed his gaze on their silhouettes, clenching his fists. The more dangerous the situation was, the usefulness of a Master became more apparent.

This battle encounter occurred too suddenly, and everyone was caught off guard. Yet none panicked, since they already had a contingency plan. From top to bottom, everybody was working in an organized manner.

The camping ground was in full swing as everyone was operating at full speed, like precise gears.

The courageous reigned supreme!

Chapter 533: So Be It

Fatty was carrying two men on his shoulders, but his speed did not reduce. He was like a rapidly rebounding cannon or a leaping... wild boar.

His big body moved surprisingly gracefully.

Only each time he landed, it was as if a terrifyingly powerful cannon had gone off into the earth, causing a layer of it to rise up.

Fatty was gasping for breath, and his whole body was covered in sweat and was misting. His legs felt really heavy, but he dared not stop at all.

He suddenly felt the ground trembling and fear emerged on his face. In the past, such tremblings occurred whenever a group of beasts charged across the field, but how could there by a group of beasts now? That wave motion from earlier would only have scared all of them away. They wouldn't dare to approach this region.

There could only be one possibility. The enemy's cavalry!

Fatty exerted even his milk-sucking strength and started sprinting with his teeth clenched.

The vibrations were getting closer and Fatty was about to burst into tears.

Come save me, Ah Hui!

Zu Yan, who was still on his shoulder, regained his senses. He was already severely injured and was very feeble. Initially, he felt somewhat embarrassed for having to be lugged by Fatty, but upon noticing that Fatty could run pretty fast, he realized that Fatty had been bluffing all along. He was just lazy.

Each time they were out, he was the one carrying him along as he flew.

After having considered that, Zu Yan immediately felt at ease. After carrying Fatty so many times, it wasn't unreasonable for him to allow Fatty to support him this once!

But he regretted it soon after.

Fatty ran jerkily and landed heavily without the least bit of cushioning. This quickly made Zu Yan feel dizzy and nauseated. He felt that the bones in his body were about to fall apart.

The worst thing was that Fatty was sprinting in the forest like a nimble wild boar.

This wild boar had thick and rough skin, so naturally it was alright, but the branches, shrubs, rattans whipped him directly like raindrops. Red slashes continued emerging on his snow white skin in a criss crossed pattern. It was a tragic sight.

He asked weakly, "Can’t you… just… run properly?"

Fatty’s movements chopped his short sentence into three trembling sections, leaving Zu Yan breathless.

Fatty responded in a sobbing tone, "Why do you have so much sh*t to say!? How about you try?"

Zu Yan was stunned. He softened his tone, answering, "What are you crying for? You don’t have to be so anxious. Rest for a little while if you’re tired."

Fatty burst into tears. "How can I not be? The enemy’s chasing us!"

Zu Yan stared blankly for a while, listening with rapt attention. His face changed and he hurriedly urged, "Run, quick! Run, quick! Faster!"

Fatty cried, "I’m trying. Or do you want to do it?"

Zu Yan was very worried by now. He thought about what to do, turned his face around, and saw Zu Chun’s wide-open eyes staring back at him. He immediately screamed, "Why are you still carrying this thing? The enemy is reaching us. Throw it away!"

Fatty stopped crying. "No!"

Zu Yan was shocked. "No? He’s scorched, so why won’t you toss him aside?"

"This is my loot! I haven’t searched him yet." Fatty’s tone was resolute and decisive. "My head can break, my blood can flow, but I can’t lose my loot!"

"..."

The rumbling sounds from behind became increasingly clear. The ground was shaking, and the movement alone was enough to turn Zu Yan’s face white.

Fatty calmed down at this time. "Don’t be afraid. It’s nothing actually. A Hui and I have seen migrating dire beasts during our time in the Wilderness. That is the real deal."

Zu Yan couldn’t read Fatty. Fatty was usually as timid as a mouse and was all kinds of lazy. He was so money-faced that people often wanted to give him the finger. Still unwilling to give up his loot at this point, Fatty was the quintessential foolish guy – willing to give up his life for money. Yet this same fellow had just killed Zu Chun and was the one who had silently modified a Hellfire Pagoda Cannon.

Even at this time of crucial danger, Fatty did not abandon him, and they joked together.

How could there be such a strange and contradicting person in this world?

Zu Yan quickly noticed that Fatty wasn’t running in a straight line but in a zigzag manner, constantly changing directions.

He couldn’t help but ask, "Why not run toward the our camp?"

"Stupid!" Even during this mad sprint, Fatty couldn’t help but roll his eyes and answered in annoyance, "Remember, when you’re fleeing, do not run in a straight line, or the wild beasts can easily catch up to you."

Zu Yan asked automatically, "Why?"

"How can you be so stupid? It’s such simple logic, so simple that it’s difficult to answer. How did you even become a Master? Under the table...?"

Zu Yan was about to retort, but the rumbling sounds were ear-splitting and he could faintly see some silhouettes.

"There!"

Shouts could be heard from behind.

Fatty, who had been full of mettle, was now shrieking, "Oh my God!’

The wind between his legs grew even stronger, like a whirlpool, shuttling non-stop through the forest.

Xing Shan fixed his gaze on the corpse on the shoulder of that faraway figure. His face turned ashen and his eyes were about to pop.

Zu Chun!

Although only a back view was exposed, Xing Shan was certain that he did not make a mistake.

Zu Chun had been following him for years and was a trustworthy assistant. Their relationship was beyond that between ordinary bosses and subordinates. Seeing Zu Chun's corpse made Xing Shan's heart boil. He made a long and sharp hiss.

Sensing its owner's grief and indignation, the ardent flower wolf, too, howled. The fresh, red flowers on its black, shiny fur transformed into flames that slowly separated from its body and floated around. There wasn't any stray fur on its body. It was pitch black and smooth like satin. With its head high, it hissed in an extraordinarily spirited manner.

The wolf's forelimbs stomped onto the ground, causing flames to splatter everywhere. Carrying Xing Shan on its back, it soared into the sky and toward that faraway silhouette.

Hunting was an inherent ability of the wolf. It locked onto his sprinting prey.

But as if that fat target had anticipated this ability, he jerked his body to the side and borrowed a big tree to obstruct its line of sight before changing directions constantly. The wolf noticed that its prey had managed to break free from its focus.

Boom!

The Chieftain Wolf was like a small mountain, crashing onto the ground heavily and spraying flames from its hoofs. The flames mixed with the earth with a whizz, as if a broad axe had been raised up. Every tree within a thirty meter radius was chopped in half and instantly turned to ashes. The mountain rocks shattered and the fragments shot into the woods, fast and powerful as arrows while emitting "pu, pu" sounds.

Leaving a burnt, deep pit of a few meters radius on the ground, it soared into the sky once again.

Its deep red, ruby-like blood eyes were burning. It had been angered by its prey.

That large prey was exceptionally sly, its body unceasingly moving around like a slippery loach. One moment it was on the left and the next moment it went to the right. Sometimes it used trees to cover itself and other times it drilled into the dense shrubs.

The prey could always sense that it was being locked onto. The Chieftain Wolf had never met such a crafty prey.

Xing Shan had calmed down by now. He had always been an ambitious and ruthless character, so the more angry he got, the more he calmed down. He was extremely cool-headed now, and his body was emitting cold air into the surroundings.

People who were familiar with Xing Shan would definitely run far away upon seeing this. They knew how terrifying a raging Xing Shan was!

Xing Shan looked coldly at that slippery figure. He couldn't help but admit that this was the most deceitful scouter he'd ever seen. It was true that one shouldn't judge a person by his appearance. It was unbelievable that such a fat figure could actually be this agile!

It was his first time seeing a scout with this physique, and one so powerful at that!

But no matter how capable he was, he was just a scout.

He grinned coldly and grabbed hold of a black hatchet that was hanging on the wolf's body.

Fatty felt completely different. His whole body was flush red, as if he was drunk. His pouring sweat was no longer visible and the veins behind his neck were popping. He opened his eyes wide in fear. His breaths were becoming coarser and red flames could

faintly be seen coming out of his mouth.

Zu Yan could hear Fatty’s drumming heartbeat and feel his tensed muscles. Flaming breaths were a sign that a fire elementalist was nearly exhausting his elemental energy.

Fatty...

Zu Yan felt indescribably moved, and his nose started feeling sour. He was simply too grateful for being able to survive the ice seal and to meet such a good companion.

He called out, "Toss us aside, Fatty!"

Without a sound, Fatty was focused on spriting, his bulky body trembling all over like a frantic wild boar.

Zu Yan raised his voice and shouted, "Toss us, quick, Fatty!"

Again, Fatty made no sound, as if he hadn’t heard him.

Zu Yan sensed something amiss and struggled to look at Fatty’s face. He received a jolt.

Fatty’s eyes were hollow-looking and only white flames were flowing within.

.....

Central Pine Valley.

The sword operators' embroidery training had become something everybody watched during training intervals. It was a joy to observe those manly hands holding a delicate embroidery needle, cautiously attempting to create a pattern while sweating buckets.

Ai Hui's stern criticism could be heard occasionally.

"Slow down. Why are you going so fast? Are you holding a sword or an axe?"

"Focus. Stabilize your state of mind. Do you know what stability means? It means that you're able to complete your embroidery unruffled, even if someone behind you is trying to slice your ass with a knife."

Someone from the crowd shouted, "Then what about the butt situation, Boss?"

"Butt?" Ai Hui tilted his head to think. "Mend it after completing the embroidery."

"Hahaha..."

Everyone was rolling on the floor and forgot at that moment that they had been the butt of the joke too when they were training in the Metal Basket Sword Pagoda.

Shi Zhiguang fixed his eyes on the embroidery needle with all the focus he could gather. The audience’s laughter fell on deaf ears. It must be said that this was a totally new experience since he had only been training at a rapid speed in the past.

The faster the speed, the slower he felt time was moving.

But embroidery required slowness, and when a certain speed was reached, he realized in surprise that time seemed to move increasingly faster.

He wondered if others felt the same way.

But as time went by quicker, he felt a different and indescribable kind of "slowness". His heart was exceptionally calm, like a rock amidst the long river that was time. Time was like a river brushing across the stone’s surface, yet every detail was so crisp and clear.

It was a very peculiar feeling, and he was engrossed in it.

He had found his talent. He was extremely sensitive to speed. He felt different sensations toward the lightning speed sword and the slow and focused embroidery. He was unclear of the uses of these sensations.

He had seeked guidance from Boss, and after some thinking, Boss told him to spin silk from cocoons.

As compared to embroidering, spinning silk required an even slower speed, and the sensation Shi Zhiguang felt was even more intense.

Ai Hui looked at Shi Zhiguang, his heart singing praises.

Shi Zhiguang was the most talented out of the three sword operators and had been the quickest to enter that state of mind.

Eh? As if he felt something, Ai Hui looked toward Shi Zhiguang and was emotionally moved.

The thread in Shi Zhiguang’s hand lit up faintly, buzzing and trembling.

Chapter 534: Fatty's Talent

Shi Zhiguang recounted what he felt just now to Ai Hui with excitement. An envious look appeared on everyone's faces. They could all tell that Shi Zhiguang had an extremely bright future ahead of him.

He was very fortunate to have discovered an unknown talent that was hidden for many years.

Everyone possessed a treasure within them.

But how many people actually unearthed it?

Even though aristocratic families possessed absolute arts, famed teachers, and an abundance of wealth, very few of them possessed talents. As such, one could well imagine how few talents those ordinary families possessed.

It was unfortunate that Shi Zhiguang didn't discover his talent when he was young and had missed the best period of life to practice it. However, compared to other people, he was still considered very lucky to have discovered an unknown talent after so many years.

At this point in time, Ai Hui had already confirmed that Shi Zhiguang's talent was speed.

In normal speed, Shi Zhiguang would not have too much of a

reaction. However, when his speed was overly fast or overly slow, he would produce reactions that were completely different from ordinary people's.

Everyone gathered around him with curious looks on their faces.

When they thought of talents, they would think about things like a higher elemental energy connectivity and etc. They had never heard of a talent in speed. Those who were quick-witted were thinking about whether or not did they had some unknown talents as well.

When Shi Zhiguang was talking, everyone was holding their breaths while listening to him attentively.

When Shi Zhiguang finished talking, everyone shifted their gazes to Ai Hui.

In the past, Ai Hui was only known for his powerful strength, superb swordsmanship, and specialization in the theory of elemental traces. After the training session with Shi Zhiguang this time around, all of them realized Ai Hui was a good teacher!

This discovery roused everyone.

Everyone hoped that they could discover what their talents were.

Ai Hui could see the hopeful look on everyone's faces. After thinking for a while, he said, "Nowadays, the training system

focuses on the five residences and eight palaces. After all, this system has been established for quite a while. Indeed, there are many types of talents. During the Cultivation Era, talents were being classified distinctively. That is because the training system at that time was extremely huge; there were many diversifications and types of tests. For example, if a person was slow-witted but had an unusually high willpower, he or she was suitable for the field of meditation. However, if a person in today's world is not gifted in the field of elemental energy, he or she will not have much of a future. Take Zhiguang, who has a talent in speed, as an example. If it wasn't for the fact that our Pinwheel Sword needed a driver, he would not have brought out his talent."

Everyone thought hard and long about Ai Hui's words. Meanwhile, Shi Zhiguang was nodding his head repeatedly.

Ai Hui thought of something and his lips behind the bandages that covered his face curled into a grin. "The most unique talent is probably the talent in escaping."

"Talent in escaping?"

"Does escaping need talent?"

"Hahaha, this talent is quite practical. The moment you see something not right, quickly turn and escape!"

"Who has this talent? Who has this talent?"

Everyone broke into a lively discussion. All of them looked at Ai Hui with curious looks on their faces.

For a moment, Ai Hui felt as if he had become a teacher, standing on the podium while giving a lesson to his students below. Was he going to become a teacher after teaching them embroidery? Was he taking up the roles of Master and Mistress at the same time?

"Everyone knows this person," Ai Hui replied.

"Boss, stop keeping us in suspense! Quickly tell us who it is!" Everyone became impatient.

"Fatty," Ai Hui chuckled.

"Fatty?"

"Really?"

"I don’t believe it. With his body size, he is suitable to be a sacrificial victim for those who are escaping."

"I don’t believe it either."

Everyone shook their heads.

"I am really not lying to you. You guys better not underestimate

Fatty. Fatty is good at two things. The first is his greed for money, and the second is escaping. I am willing to play a second fiddle to him with regards to these two aspects," Ai Hui said solemnly.

"Boss, you're being too humble. With regards to the point of being greedy for money, you definitely will not lose out to Fatty!" Someone blurted out.

"Hahaha! That's right!"

"Don't try to make Fatty the scapegoat!"

Everyone burst out laughing.

Drenched in sweat, Ai Hui was exasperated as he said, "Don't spoil my reputation. Am I this kind of person?"

"Yes!" everyone said in unison and dragged out the word.

They were laughing all over the place.

Ai Hui remained speechless. When he turned around and saw Lou Lan laughing too, he flew into a rage. "Lou Lan, have you finished cooking the elemental soup?"

"Ai Hui, you have just finished yours," Lou Lan blinked his eyes.

"....." Ai Hui.

"Boss, is Fatty's escaping talent very formidable? Is it like my talent in speed?" Shi Zhiguang asked curiously.

"His is slightly more formidable than yours," Ai Hui answered.

Suddenly, everyone's curiosity was piqued. For the past few days, all of them had witnessed Shi Zhiguang's talent with their own eyes. Usually, Shi Zhiguang might appear to be unremarkable. However, when he boarded the Pinwheel Sword and took up the driver's seat , he became a totally different person. Until now, only Shi Zhiguang was able to make those extremely difficult maneuvers and moves in an utterly short period of time.

As such, when Boss said that Fatty's talent was more formidable than Shi Zhiguang's, everyone's curiosity was piqued. Boss would never lie about such things.

Ai Hui smiled. Other than him, no one knew about Fatty's talent. He explained, "If you fight alongside Fatty on the battlefield, you will notice a very strange phenomenon. Even when the battlefield is very chaotic, there are a lot of people, and the ongoing battle is very intense, Fatty will always be ignored by everyone. The most extreme case that I have ever see is when we were in the Wilderness. At that time, we were still working as laborers in the Wilderness. One day, while we were setting up camp, a dire beast attacked us. More than one hundred people had died that day. Everyone in Fatty's unit, except him, had died. I saw with my own eyes that after the dire beast finished biting everyone to death, it walked past Fatty as if it never saw him."

An uproar broke out.

"Really?"

"Sounds like bulls**t to me."

"Boss, are you telling us a fake story?"

Everyone reacted strongly. That was because the story did not make sense and none of them had never heard of such a thing before.

Ai Hui did not get angry and continued, "At that time, I was like all of you. I myself was stunned and even got injured because of it. From that day onwards, I started to observe Fatty. Eventually, I discovered that there is indeed something strange going on with this fellow. Every time he runs into a dangerous situation, he is able to escape unscathed. Later, I slowly understood what was going on."

Everyone pricked up their ears, fearing that they might miss out on any details.

"It is as if he was born with the ability to know which area is dangerous and which area is safe. Subsequently, we were put in the same unit. At that time, I still had not figured out what was going on with Fatty. We managed to dodge dire beasts a few times because of this talent of Fatty’s. Eventually, I understood that

Fatty has a talent in escaping, because he is naturally extremely sensitive to smells. Even if he is very close to a dire beast, he is able to hide in the blind spot of that dire beast and dodge it."

"Ahhhhh..." Everyone came to a realization.

Ai Hui continued, "This innate ability of Fatty is best used when he is escaping. He can use trees, rocks, hills, rivers and etc to hinder a dire beast from locking onto his smell. Unlike humans, most dire beasts don't rely on their eyes. Instead, they rely on the smells to lock onto their targets."

Everyone looked pensive.

"There's one more reason," Ai Hui continued, "Fatty is timid."

An uproar broke out once more.

"Being timid can be a strength too?"

"Boss, are you encouraging us to be timid?"

Ai Hui shook his head. After everyone quieted down, he continued, "Fatty is more timid than ordinary people. Whenever he encounters a dire beast, he will become very scared. To Fatty, fear is also a power. In the state of fear, Fatty can outperform his usual self. Once, I was injured and my unit abandoned me. Fatty was extremely scared at that time. He carried me and ran behind our unit for more than ten days."

Everyone was speechless. This was the first time they had heard this story. Their eyes widened involuntarily and their facial expressions turned shocked.

No wonder Boss and Fatty had such a deep relationship!

Ai Hui felt touched as he narrated this story. However, he kept his tone calm as usual and continued, "Toward the end, he was extremely exhausted and he had almost lost his consciousness. He relied solely on his will to survive. Fatty's will to survive is a lot stronger than most people's. This is a strength. Having a strong will to survive allows Fatty to do a lot of things that ordinary people can't. For example, he was able to carry me for more ten days with his energy completely depleted. I'm inferior to him with regards to this aspect."

Everyone was overwhelmed with shock. They did not expect Fatty, who was usually so lazy and timid, to have such a formidable moment.

Ai Hui eventually concluded, "The only reason why I said Fatty is more powerful than Shi Zhiguang was that he discovered his talent at a very early stage. When we were in Wilderness, dangers were everywhere and they happened to stimulate Fatty's gift. However, Zhiguang, don't give up. Now, you have your talent. As long as you keep on sharpening it, it will become stronger."

With a determined look on his face, Shi Zhiguang yelled, "I will continue to work hard!"

Ai Hui swept everyone with his gaze and said, "I will think of other talents and see if there are any ways to test them. However, I can’t promise they will work."

Upon hearing these words, everyone cheered in unison, "Long live our Boss!"

When Ai Hui saw the joy on everyone’s faces, his lips could not help but curl into a smile.

Just as Ai Hui was analyzing and explaining Fatty’s talent to everyone, in a distant battlefield, Xing Shan was sitting atop a wolf while admiring Fatty’s talent.

Fatty’s plump and huge figure was a facade. He was more nimble and slithery than a snake. However, this was not the only reason why the division leader of the Ardent Flower Blood Division was full of praise for him. The thing that truly roused Xing Shan was Fatty’s instinctive sensitivity to smells.

This was an extremely rare talent.

Smells were harder to detect than elemental energies and blood spiritual force. An outstanding expert could only form this ability after going through countless battles. Xing Shan could tell that Fatty’s strength was around the same as his subordinates’ and yet his performance was unusually impressive.

This fellow's sensitivity towards smell was so formidable that he could use obstacles and directional angles to hinder the Chieftain Wolf from locking onto his smell. He used this kind of special technique to escape again and again. One must know that the Chieftain Wolf was one of the most outstanding ardent flower blood wolves bred by the Beast Venom Temple. As a beast, it possessed powerful hunting capabilities and its sensitivity towards smells far exceeded humans'.

The Chieftain Wolf, which had never failed before, had missed its target again and again today.

Xing Shan did not expect to encounter such an interesting fellow in this world.

A sinister smile appeared on his face. Following which, the black, heavy axe in his hand emitted a bloody glow that shot towards Fatty like a tidal wave of blood.

When the bloody glow left Xing Shan's heavy axe, Fatty, who had being escaping with all his might, froze in his tracks. A look of despair appeared on his face.

Chapter 535: Xing Shan's Strength

Being the division leader of the Ardent Flower Blood Division, Xing Shan was definitely very powerful. He had completed twelve rounds of blood refinement. Even though this number paled in comparison to Red Devil's, it was still the second highest record.

After leaving the Beast Venom Temple, he did not stop improving himself. Not daring to slack off at all, he trained diligently every day.

Going through the blood refinement was like taking a gamble. Before the result was revealed, one would never know whether he won or lost. However, if he lost the gamble, he would never have a chance to play again.

The effort Xing Shan put in had yielded great returns. Twelve rounds of blood refinement had established an extremely solid foundation in him. His blood contained an abundance of precious ingredients. The hard work he put into his training caused the beneficial effects of the ingredients in his blood to be released.

His strength was increasing steadily over a long period of time.

Out of 33 vertebrae, he had unlocked 30 of them. Among so many god guards, this was an extremely impressive result.

Some of Fatty's talent had amazed him, but that was because he had never seen anything like this before. The disparity between their strength levels was enormous. By waving his axe casually,

Xing Shan was able to cut off all of Fatty's escape routes.

Fatty might've been able to cut off his smell and hinder Xing Shan from catching him, but he was completely helpless against an attack that covered such a wide range.

There was no way out for him!

As such, when Xing Shan waved his axe, Fatty immediately knew he was stuck.

Fatty could not even imagine the disparity between his strength and Xing Shan's. His heart was filled with despair.

A strong sense of fear flooded him like a tidal wave.

Suddenly, he looked as if an idea had erupted within his head. He reached out his hand and plucked out the hose that was connected to the snow lava on his back and stuffed it into his mouth.

Gulp, gulp!

Like an incredibly thirsty traveller that was lost in the desert, he began to gulp down the snow lava.

Zu Yan's facial expression changed drastically. He cried out in alarm, "Fatty!"

The crystal-clear liquid was snow lava! It was an A-grade fire liquid!

A drop of it could effortlessly burn through a rock, and Fatty had actually taken two mouthfuls of it.

He was done for!

Zu Yan’s head was buzzing and his mind went blank. How could a mortal drink an A-grade fire liquid?

Following which, Fatty spat out the hose. His face was in daze, looking extremely weird.

When the snow lava entered his body, his nearly depleted fire elemental energy reacted as if it had been doused with a basin of hot oil, intensifying and becoming extremely violent in an instant.

An endless stream of flames was emitting from Fatty’s body. These flames were not bright-red. Instead, they were white in color, resembling the blaze flowing in his eyes.

Fatty’s flushed cheeks suddenly became pale-white, looking as if his blood was being sucked dry. Every now and then, his facial muscles were twitching, making him looked unusually sinister and crazy.

"Fatty, why don’t you want to put me down..." Zu Yan’s cheeks were streaming with tears.

After he was released from the ice seal, his teacher told him that the world nowadays was much more cruel than before. He felt that he had made enough mental preparations, but it turned out that reality was completely different from his expectations.

Fatty could hear Zu Yan crying. At this point in time, he had lost his sanity. Suddenly, he made a very weird posture. He raised his right arm perpendicular to his body and straightened it. Then, he bent his left arm and used it to support his right arm.

When Xing Shan saw that Fatty did not run and turned around instead, a sneer appeared on his face.

Now you know you can't escape. Your courage is indeed laudable, but your strength is too weak. You're merely making a fruitless attempt.

However, when Xing Shan saw Fatty gulping something and then made a weird posture, he was stunned.

What inheritance was this?

Boom!

A muffled boom resounded through the air.

Zu Yan, who was previously on Fatty's shoulder, was tossed into

the air by the impact.

In the mid-air, Zu Yan saw an amazing scene. Fatty's straightened right arm jerked back like a cannon.

A white-colored blaze was shooting out from the fist of Fatty's straightened right arm.

Zu Yan's mind went blank. What kind of technique was this?

Meanwhile, on the opposite side, a cold glint flashed across Xing Shan's squinted eyes.

The white blaze did not look very powerful, but it was extremely fast, resembling an attack that was launched by a pagoda cannon. A white burst of light flashed across everyone's eyes. Following which, the bloody gleam from Xing Shan's axe crashed into the white blaze, resembling a surging tidal wave that collided against a solid reef.

Boom!

A bloody glow rushed towards the sky, making the sky look as if it was raining blood.

The result of the impact caused everyone to turn pale with fright.

All of them knew how powerful Boss Xing Shan's axe was. It

would take at least four people to be able to withstand a casual attack from his axe.

This fatty had actually used such a weird attack to block Boss Xing Shan's axe!

Furthermore, Fatty looked as if he was in dire straits just now.

Just as everyone was feeling astonished, Fatty's body wobbled, looking as if he was going to collapse.

So he was just an arrow that had reached the end of its flight!

A sinister smile appeared on Xing Shan's face as he raised his heavy axe once more. The Chieftain Wolf beneath broke into a small run. It was repeatedly infuriated by Fatty today. Following which, it began to pick up its speed.

Thud, thud, thud!

Every step it took, the earth shook and the mountain trembled. Dirt and flames flew up the air, resembling a hurricane that was devastating the trees and plants in its surroundings.

"Die!"

A roar echoed through the air. In mid-air, the man and the beast looked as if they had merged together. The axe gleam descended

from the sky, resembling a powerful, bloody waterfall. It was accompanied by a terrorizing vibrating whizz. No living things within three hundred metres of Xing Shan could escape unscathed!

Zu Yan widened his eyes as he looked at the red-colored sky that was rapidly falling towards him. His mind had gone totally blank.

They were going to die here today...

Like a wooden puppet, Fatty couldn't move at all. His face was deathly pale.

Suddenly, a shrill whistle rang echoed through the air. It sounded as if it came from a distant place. However, in the blink of eye, the whistle appeared to be right here with them.

A blue-white shadow appeared out of thin air in front of Fatty. The shadow was moving so fast that it appeared blurry. Xing Shan couldn't see the face of the shadow clearly. He could only see a ponytail fluttering behind it...

And the tip of a spear that was rapidly expanding in size before his eyes.

The spear effortlessly pierced through the bloody, waterfall-like axe gleam as if it was a red-colored curtain.

The blue, firmament-iron-made spear tip collided heavily with the blade of the black, heavy axe.

Xing Shan felt as if he had been hit by a berserk dire beast. The terrifying attack caused his facial expression to change drastically. Starting from the bottom of his spine, the vertebrae in his back began to light up one by one.

His eyes widened angrily while his muscles trembled violently. He roared, "Break!"

To his horror, just as the word left his mouth, he discovered that the power coming the spear was becoming stronger and stronger. If his axe gleam was like a surging tidal wave, then the spear tip would be an entire sea!

How could... it be....

The scenery on both sides of Xing Shan’s eyes was flashing by, turning into streaks of shadows from his perspective. The Chieftain Wolf beneath him had already entrenched its four limbs in the ground, but it still could not stop despite using all its strength.

Bang!

Xing Shan’s back slammed against a huge tree. The huge tree was smashed to smithereens and wood shavings were sent flying through the air. Bang, bang, bang. Xing Shan’s body kept on trembling as he continued to fly backwards and knock down trees and rocks along the way. His gaze was fixated on the blue-white shadow that was pulling apart in distance from him.

The sounds of dried branches snapping, rocks shattering, and the earth splitting could not conceal the confident and vigorous voice of a girl.

"I am Shi Xueman."

To Xing Shan’s horror, before he could even stabilize himself, he realized that the girl in the distance was pointing her spear at him.

Shi Xueman’s eyes were so cold that they resembled the ice-blue sky above a snowy mountain.

Suddenly, she disappeared

Not good!

Xing Shan’s eyelids twitched as he subconsciously placed his heavy axe in front of him.

Like the sound of raindrops landing on a banana leaf, a crisp and clear sound of collision resounded through the air.

Xing Shan’s body trembled. Every spear move Shi Xueman executed was crisp, powerful, and unblockable. Xing Shan had never encountered such an attack before. Every move was plain and simple, resembling a standard thrust. There was no dazzling luster, gorgeous techniques, or unnecessary changes. However, her

spear thrusts were still extremely formidable.

The tens of spear thrusts gathered.

Xing Shan looked as if he had been struck by a lightning bolt as terrifying power gathered in the blade of his heavy axe. He and the Chieftain Wolf had completely lost control of their bodies.

However, what everyone saw was completely different.

Shi Xueman suddenly appeared in front of Xing Shan. At almost the same time, Xing Shan and his mount, who were still flying backwards, disappeared.

In mid-air, Shi Xueman calmly withdrew her spear with the side of her body facing forward. She looked around and asked, "Who are you?"

The faces of everyone in the Ardent Flower Blood Division had turned white. All of their eyes were filled with fear. No one dared to reply to Shi Xueman.

Suddenly, a loud rumble resounded through the air behind everyone. Xing Shan and his mount had created a huge trench on the ground.

Everyone regained their senses and rushed towards Xing Shan like a swarm of bees.

A two-meter-deep trench appeared on the ground in front of Shi Xueman. It was perfectly straight and extended over several hundred meters. All of the trees and rocks along the trench were reduced to fine powder.

Zu Yan was dumbstruck as he looked at the scene. He was utterly stunned. This was the first time he was shocked by someone's might other than his teacher's.

Shi Xueman was actually so powerful to such a terrifying extent...

Even Yang Xiaodong, who was standing behind Shi Xueman, was startled.

He had fought with her before in the past. At that time, even though she was very powerful, she was only slightly more powerful than him. How could she have grown so much in such a short period of time?

Yang Xiaodong felt that his training was a waste.

Shi Xueman landed gracefully on the ground. An ordinary-looking movement from her looked peerlessly magnificent in everyone's eyes.

Without turning her head, she said, "Yang Xiaodong, bring them and leave first."

"Yes! Division Leader, be careful!"

Yang Xiaodong replied. His tone involuntarily carried a tinge of respect.

He picked the unconscious Fatty and Zu Yan and flew in the direction of of their camp. His heart was twisting at this moment. He wished that he could stay behind and fight with Shi Xueman. However, this was an order, so he had to obey it.

Zu Yan turned his head around and looked at Shi Xueman too. In the past, he only listened to his teacher's orders. However, from this moment onwards, he regarded himself as a member of the Spear of Heavy Cloud.

Zu Yan turned his head back when he could no longer see Shi Xueman. When he saw Fatty, who was in the other arm of Yang Xiaodong, he was shocked.

Fatty's hand was holding on to a person... Zu Chun.

The unconscious Fatty was holding on tightly to Zu Chun's leg, appearing as if he was holding onto a treasure.

When... had this fellow picked up the body of Zu Chun...

Chapter 536: Netherworld Bestial Ox

Xing Shan stood up from the trench. Holding his heavy axe, he made a soft jump and jumped out of the trench. His Chieftain Wolf followed suit as well. It shook off the dirt on its body and stared at Shi Xueman with fear and hatred in its eyes.

When Shi Xueman saw that Xing Shan looked as if nothing had happened to him, she had no choice but to admit that a blood elementalist's body was far more stronger than an elementalist's. After going up against so many blood elementalists, she realized that they had tenacious life force and powerful physical bodies. Their life force and bodies even surpassed blood fiends'.

"Excellent spearmanship!"

Xing Shan praised Shi Xueman with sincerity.

Shi Xueman's spearmanship was not dazzling at all. It looked no different from the basic spearmanship that any ordinary training hall would teach.

However, it was this unremarkable spearmanship that produced an invincible aura.

Xing Shan was no longer the town butcher that he was in the past. He understood that this spearmanship was a result of hard work and countless revisions. If this type of spearmanship appeared in the hands of someone like Le Buleng, no one would find it strange at all. However, when it appeared in the hands of a

young girl, everyone found it incredible.

Xing Shan petted his Chieftain Wolf dearly. Shi Xueman's previous spear move was unusually powerful. Even though he knew the Chieftain Wolf wasn't weak, he still felt sorry that it was hurt.

Like a docile dog, the Chieftain Wolf intimately licked Xing Shan's wide palm.

Xing Shan's gaze turned cold. He stretched his back and shook his four limbs. The vertebrae at his back lit up one by one.

With a calm voice, he said, "I am Xing Shan. Miss Shi, nice to meet you. I have long heard of your famous name. I am truly blessed to be able to see your beautiful face today."

A storm was brewing beneath his calm tone.

Deep down, Shi Xueman shivered with cold. She could feel that Xing Shan's aura was intensifying.

During the previous battle, Shi Xueman had seen many powerful blood elementalists. However, none of them could be compared to Xing Shan.

After Xing Shan introduced himself, a look of realization appeared on Shi Xueman's face. She swept her gaze across his subordinates, nodded her head, and replied, "So you're the Ardent

Flower Blood Division’s Division Leader Xing Shan."

As the conflict between Blood of God and Avalon of Five Elements intensified day by day, both sides became more and more familiar with each other. Eventually, more and more people knew about the mysterious combat divisions of Blood of God.

"I didn’t expect Miss Shi to have heard of my name before." Xing Shan suddenly burst into a laughter. He waved his heavy axe wildly and continued, "Miss Shi’s superb spearmanship is indeed impressive. Let’s have a good fight today."

As he finished his sentence, a tyrannical aura surged through the air.

Crack, crack, crack!

The sound of fried beans exploding was given off from whole of Xing Shan’s body. Like a balloon, his body began to inflate. His body became tall and sturdy. His height was around 4 meters, his shoulders were broad, his back was wide, and his hair was thick and dense. His skin was now giving off a black, metallic luster. His huge and sturdy muscles looked as if they were made up of iron, and his black-colored armor burst open and embedded itself into skin, resembling black fish scales.

A bone-made helmet grew out of his head. There were two sharp, bull horns on each side of his helmet, giving off a threatening, cold aura.

Even though Shi Xueman looked calm on the surface, she was on high alert deep down.

She had never seen such a weird scene before in a battlefield.

When Xing Shan used his huge, cattail-leaf-fan-like palm to hold up his heavy axe, he looked like he was holding a stalk of rice straw. The heavy axe, which previously looked too big and awkward for his size, looked just right for him now.

A fearsome aura soared through the sky and engulfed the battlefield. The sky looked as if it had darkened at this instant. Qing Shan looked like a thousand-year dire beast that had emerged from the depths of the Wilderness, intimidating everyone present.

Even the Ardent Flower Blood Division's soldiers, who were used to seeing their boss' might, took a few steps back at this moment.

Beside Xing Shan, his Chieftain Wolf howled and shook its body.

Crack, crack, crack.

Its body began to inflate rapidly. All its hair became thick like needles. Its initial calf-sized body had become the size of an elephant now. The ardent flowers that were previously fluttering around it had transformed into streaks of scarlet flames. These streaks of flames were then absorbed by its hair. Its sharp claws were giving off a bright-red glow, looking as if they were just taken out from a furnace. Its deathly pale teeth were growing at a great

speed. They became thicker and sharper. Traces of flames were spiralling in and out of the gaps between its teeth.

Xing Shan then sat on the back of the Chieftain Wolf.

Shi Xueman lowered her gaze, took half a step back with her right foot, and pointed her Cirrus towards the front.

Xing Shan squeezed his legs and the Chieftain Wolf dashed forward all of a sudden.

"Eat my axe!"

A thunderous voice erupted through the air. Everyone felt their visions blur as they lost sight of Xing Shan and his Chieftain Wolf.

Shi Xueman squinted her ice-cold eyes and stepped forward half a step with her left foot. Following which, she thrusted her Cirrus forward.

Clank!

A deafening sound of metal colliding erupted in everyone’s ears. A circular air current that was formed by a white-colored mist and a red, bloody glow swept across the entire place like a red-white hurricane. The blood elementalists’ facial expressions changed as they put up their shields to defend themselves. The dirt and fragments mixed within the red-white hurricane was extremely destructive, causing sparks to fly when the hurricane collided

against the blood elementalists' shields.

Those slightly weak blood elementalists were being pushed back repeatedly. Their bodies were trembling and blood was flowing out from their mouths and noses. However, at this point in time, no one dared to wipe off the blood on their faces as their eyes were fixated at the scene.

The two figures separated immediately after making contact, drawing a distance of a few hundred meters from each other.

There was a hole that had an area of 350 square meters in between them, shocking everyone.

Before the onlookers could regain their composure from the impact of the collision just now, the two of them disappeared at the same time.

The two indistinct figures continuously streaked across the air and collided against each other.

The densely-packed sound of the collisions between the spear and the axe resounded through the air, striking fear into the onlookers' hearts.

Every collision was earth-shaking, creating a red-white, ring-shaped shockwave that swept across the area. Everything in the path of the ring-shaped shockwave was reduced to smithereens as if they were being swatted by a huge, invisible hand.

The Ardent Flower Blood Division kept on retreating. All of them were overwhelmed with horror. When a battle between two experts was taking place, it was extremely dangerous for one to spectate it, let alone lend a helping hand to one of the parties.

The longer Shi Xueman fought, the more astonishment she felt.

Compared to before, Xing Shan was a completely different man after he summoned his Ability of God. A blood elementalist's Ability of God was mysterious in many ways. Qing Shan's strength had increased by at least ten times. Previously, he was easily knocked back in the air by Shi Xueman's spear moves. Now, he could easily ward them off. His blood spiritual force had undergone weird changes as well. Every attack he launched with his axe was covered with a layer of red-colored bloody glow.

The red, bloody glow had high viscosity. There were a few times that it almost pierced through her spear gleam, posing an unusually dangerous threat to her.

The Chieftain Wolf also became more powerful and sly.

So this was an expert blood elementalist?

However, the surprise Xing Shan was feeling was no less than Shi Xueman's.

His Ability of God was the rare [Netherworld Bestial Ox].

One day, while Xing Shan was training, he suddenly sensed a trace of ancient aura in his blood. That was when he formed the Ability of God in the [Netherworld Bestial Ox].

Legend had it that the Netherworld Bestial Oxen lived in the Nether River that connected the realm of life and the realm of death. They were an extremely rare species that lived in the realm between life and death. The Netherworld Bestial Oxen were immensely powerful. Furthermore, their bodies were surrounded by the blood water of the Nether River. Any living thing that touched their bodies would be dragged into the Netherworld.

In this day and age, ancient beasts were thought to possess a myriad of remarkable abilities.

Even though the ancestral mark of the [Netherworld Bestial Ox] in Xing Shan's body was very weak, it still allowed him to become extremely formidable when he summoned it.

In the past, whenever he summoned the [Netherworld Bestial Ox], his opponents would be suppressed by him immediately.

The quality of every component of his body would improve drastically and he would become immensely powerful. An ordinary attack from him would become unblockable. His skin and muscles would become as hard as metal, giving him an extremely formidable defense. There were a few sparring sessions where he used his bare hands to ward off weapon attacks and not a single mark was left on his arms.

His blood spiritual force not only became more vigorous and concentrated, it also possessed the aura of the Nether River, which allowed it to become unpredictable.

Initially, he thought that he could completely suppress Shi Xueman by summoning the [Netherworld Bestial Ox]. He didn't expect Shi Xueman to be able to ward off his attacks steadily. Every time he increased his power, Shi Xueman's spear would increase in power as well.

The thing that bewildered Xing Shan was that the power of Shi Xueman's spear moves was comparable to his!

Shi Xueman's Cirrus was surrounded by ribbon-like traces of mist. These gentle-looking traces of mist were unusually dominating and forceful!

The physiological differences between a man and a woman gave rise to many differences in traits and abilities between the two genders. Strength was one of these differences. A woman's strength seldom matched up against a man's. As such, how would one expect Shi Xueman to go up against Xing Shan, who had just summoned the [Netherworld Bestial Ox]?

Was Shi Xueman made of iron?

If he found out that Shi Xueman's nickname was Iron Lady, he definitely would not be so surprised.

The continuous head-on collisions aroused Xing Shan's bloodlust. With a roar, he streaked towards Shi Xueman.

Shi Xueman was also becoming stronger and stronger. The tougher her opponent was, the more her strength grew. With a snort, she rose into the air. The ribbon-like traces of mist released by her Cirrus were fluttering and dancing along with the wind.

Xing Shan did not have the slightest bit of fear in him. His Chieftain Wolf made a leap and both of them turned into a streak of red shadow.

Boom, boom, boom!

Every now and then, a burst of light and a terrorizing aura would erupt throughout the sky.

The onlookers raised their heads as the battle dazzled their eyes. The two figures in the sky were moving extremely fast. They could see the white-colored mist and the red-colored bloody glow colliding against each other continuously.

Thunderous booms fell incessantly on the onlookers' ears.

The two people had completely different fighting styles.

Shi Xueman's spearmanship was superb. She forcibly used her

spearmanship to ward off Xing Shan's heavy attacks. Those blood elementalists that practised spearmanship widened their eyes for the fear of missing out any detail.

Shi Xueman's spearmanship had indeed reached an unimaginable realm.

Meanwhile, Xing Shan's attacks were extremely heavy and forceful. Every attack caused the sky to turn bloody. All of his subordinates had a taste of his bloody glow before. The moment it made contact with a person, it would invade and attack that person's bone marrow, usually ruthlessly.

Xing Shan and his Chieftain Wolf were telepathically connected. A man and a wolf. Their powers were harmonized perfectly, producing an utterly formidable impact.

One could clearly tell that Shi Xueman was very scared of Xing Shan's bloody glow. She did not dare to touch it at all. The traces of mist surrounding her body were soft like ribbons, changing their forms endlessly. Like an imposing mountain, they were heavy and dominating. They could always shatter the bloody gleam at critical moments.

Shi Xueman was on high alert against the bloody glow. Every time her spear gleam collided against it, she could tell that a trace of her water elemental energy was absorbed by it.

Xing Shan was like a crazy man. His might was terrifying, appearing as if he possessed a boundless amount of energy. The

Chieftain Wolf beneath him kept on howling, not showing a single sign of tiredness.

Shi Xueman quickly realized that this could not go on!

The other party had a huge advantage over her in terms of physical energy. A battle of attrition would be disadvantageous for her.

All of a sudden, Shi Xueman withdrew her spear and flew towards the sky.

"Trying to escape?"

Xing Shan’s sinister laugh followed Shi Xueman relentlessly.

Suddenly, Shi Xueman stopped at the thick and dense layer of clouds.

Chapter 537: [Axe of Nether River] VS [Iron Flowers Thrust]

Yang Xiaodong was flying with all his might.

The distant explosions coming from his back were torturing him. When he turned his head around, even though he was very far from the scene, he could see the red and white gleams streaking through the air.

Like a tsunami from the Nether World, the overflowing red glow was tyrannical and fearsome, dyeing the sky in the color of blood. Streaks of sparkling white spear mist were dancing and raging in the sea of blood like white-colored dragons.

As he looked at the distant scene, he was trembling with fear. At the same time, he was very worried.

Honestly speaking, he joined Central Pine Valley because he had no choice but to do so, and he was very unwilling then. However, after joining the Spear of Heavy Cloud, his impression of Shi Xueman changed completely. Unlike the sly and unpredictable Ai Hui, Shi Xueman was candid and upright. Even though she had a tendency to pull out her spear when things did not go her way, she would lay out the issues and talk about them candidly, winning over everyone.

Yang Xiaodong liked Lady Shi Xueman’s style very much.

Unlike the selfish Ai Hui, who only cared about himself, Lady Shi Xueman would take the initiative to help people around her and assume responsibilities bravely.

In Yang Xiaodong's heart, Lady Shi Xueman's image was far better than Ai Hui's.

Even though the life in the Spear of Heavy Cloud was very tough, Yang Xiaodong felt that it was very enriching as well.

Lady's order was for him to send back the two injured people. He resisted the urge to reinforce Lady and flew towards the Spear of Heavy Cloud's camp at top speed.

When Yang Xiaodong was near the camp, he was quickly discovered by Jiang Wei and the rest. When he landed, Jiang Wei, Sang Zhijun, and the rest immediately gathered over. When they saw the unconscious Fatty and the heavily injured Zu Yan, their facial expressions changed drastically.

Very soon, Fatty and Zu Yan were sent to receive treatments.

"How's the situation?" Jiang Wei asked with a deep voice.

"We have encountered an enemy combat division. Lady is engaged in an intense battle with the enemy. I have to go and help her." Yang Xiaodong was extremely anxious.

Jiang Wei remained calm and stopped him. "Did Lady instruct

you to do anything?"

Yang Xiaodong went into a daze momentarily before blurting out, "She just wanted me to leave first and take the injured back."

Leave first? Yang Xiaodong seemed to have regained his composure.

Jiang Wei nodded his head and replied, "Lady will find a chance to escape. We have to believe in the Lady. It’s very likely that the enemy might be arriving soon, so we have to make preparations. The enemy is from which combat division? Did you recognize him? What characteristics did he have?"

"They ride on black-colored wolves and their leader wields an axe," Yang Xiaodong replied.

When Jiang Wei was in the Sky Edge Division, he was the key figure that the higher-ups wanted to nurture. They felt that he had great potential of becoming an excellent leader.

Jiang Wei was calm, meticulous, diligent, and very strict with himself. All along, he paid great attention of the combat divisions of Blood of God. Upon hearing Yang Xiadong’s words, he immediately said, "It’s the Ardent Flower Blood Division. Their division leader is Xing Shan. He is a fearsome and troublesome individual."

Usually, Jiang Wei would hide key information from everyone.

Back when he was gathering the intelligence on the combat divisions of Blood of God, he had already thought of how to handle the information. At that time, while he was coming up with ideas and deductions, he probably never thought that he would use the information so soon.

In a critical moment, there was no time for deliberation. The experience that was accumulated over time played the most important role now.

Without any hesitation, Jiang Wei quickly said, "We need to add more fortifications. Xiaoshan, I want many pits. Each of them should be forty centimeters deep and wide. The more pits there are, the better it is. I want the camp to be surrounded with them."

Wang Xiaoshan was slightly anxious, but he was able to keep his cool. "This is a very easy task. Do the pits need to be hardened? Or should I add some stone spikes in them?"

For a Master that played with mud, digging holes was extremely easy. He could even make these holes as hard as iron and add spikes into them.

However, to Wang Xiaoshan’s surprise, Jiang Wei shook his head and replied, "No, don’t harden them. I want you to soften them. Can you fill them up with mud? Can the mud be slightly more slippery than the usual types of mud?"

Wang Xiaoshan quickly replied cheerfully, "This is a good idea! Yes, there is a type of mud called quicksand mud. It is very

slippery, so much so that it is more slippery than oil."

Jiang Wei's eyes lit up as he replied, "Alright, we will use quicksand mud then. You have to be fast, the enemy forces are arriving soon."

"Don't worry, it will take at most twenty seconds," Wang Xiaoshan said candidly.

After finishing his sentence, Wang Xiaoshan turned and left.

Jiang Wei gave instructions to everyone in an orderly manner as he rearranged the defense line. Even though no one understood the uses of most arrangements, they knew that the vice division leader had a purpose for every arrangement.

When Sang Zhijun saw Jiang Wei calmly giving everyone instructions, a glint flashed across her eyes. Following which, a look of adoration appeared on her face without her knowing.

Wang Xiaoshan was half-squatting at the edge of the defense line. Both of his hands were pressing against the ground, making him looked like a huge toad. Suddenly, his eyes widened angrily and an air of might erupted from his body while a bright earth-yellow glow engulfed his body.

A concentrated aura of earth elemental energy diffused along the surface of the ground, then the ground began to tremble lightly.

Suddenly, everyone felt as if the entire place was going to sink into the ground. It was as if Wang Xiaoshan was standing on top of an abyss.

One by one, pits began to appear on the ground, spreading all over the place rapidly.

Whoosh.

Suddenly, a pillar of deep-brown mud shot out from the ground. Following which, the mud fell from the sky like rain and filled up the pits in the blink of an eye.

The surfaces of the mud-filled pits began to coagulate. Within a few seconds, the pits vanished and the ground looked just like before.

Wang Xiaoshan, whose body was glowing faintly, stood up from the ground. His face looked simple and honest, completely lacking the formidable air that he exuded just now. If everyone had not witnessed the scene with their own eyes, they would not think that this farmer-like fellow was actually an earth elemental master.

"I have added a very thin layer of camouflage to the ground’s surface," Wang Xiaoshan explained.

"It’s much better with a layer of camouflage," Jiang Wei praised him.

He estimated the time and took a deep breath. Then, with a deep voice, he said, "Everyone, get ready to battle."

.....

Below the sea of clouds, Shi Xueman suddenly stopped in her tracks. From the corner of her eyes, she could see the murderous-looking Xing Shan. However, she was able to maintain her composure. With a solemn facial expression, she gently brandished her Cirrus.

Buzz.

A heart-penetrating buzz resounded through the air.

The sea of clouds above her head caved in. Following which, the sea of clouds formed a white-colored tornado that surged into Shi Xueman’s spear gleam.

Shi Xueman’s arm trembled as a rarely-seen strenuous look appeared on her face.

The eyelids of Xing Shan, who had been pursuing Shi Xueman closely, were twitching furiously. An intense premonition suddenly arose in his heart.

Not good!

However, it was too late for him to turn around now. If he gave his back to his opponent now, the incoming killer move would destroy him.

Xing Shan was a ferocious and ruthless individual. He obtained the position of division leader of the Ardent Flower Blood Division by accumulating meritorious credits from countless battles.

He would give it his all in a life-and-death moment!

The blood spiritual force in his entire body was surging, and an ox-like roar erupted from his chest. The red glow surrounding him suddenly became dense and sticky, resembling fresh blood. The fringes of the fresh blood surrounding him were releasing faint, red energy waves, resembling blood ripples.

An ancient aura descended upon Xing Shan’s body.

The black heavy axe unknowingly became deathly white, resembling the color of a bone that was eroded by time.

The blood-like, sticky-looking, red glow surrounding his body surged towards the deathly white axe in his hand and transformed into a river of blood, dyeing half the sky red.

With the blood river trailing his deathly white axe, he slashed it in the direction of Shi Xueman.

[Axe of Nether River]!

At this moment, Xing Shan no longer cared about catching Shi Xueman alive. Facing such an immense pressure from Shi Xueman, he was actually using his killer move!

Unlike inheritances, once an Ability of God was summoned, the ancestral mark would be activated and the user would naturally understand the marvel within the Ability. However, if a blood elementalist wanted to improve his Ability of God, he or she would need pure ancestral characteristics. Even though Xing Shan only possessed a thin trace of the Netherworld Bestial Ox's ancestral mark, his strength had ascended into an unknown realm.

The Nether River connected the realms of life and death. A drop of water from the Nether River would sever karma.

Xing Shan had yet to understand what karma was.

The ancestral mark of the Netherworld Bestial Ox in his body was not pure, and the bloody glow from his [Axe of Nether River] naturally would not be as powerful as the real Nether River. However, at the moment it came into contact with elemental energy, it would sever the connection between an elementalist and his elemental energy. Subsequently, it would devour that elementalist's elemental energy and strengthen its user's body.

This attack of Shi Xueman must have contained a tremendous amount of elemental energy. In Xing Shan's eyes, this was just a sumptuous meal!

Shi Xueman did not know what Xing Shan was thinking. She did not even sense the aura of the [Axe of Nether River] as she had placed all her attention on her Cirrus.

The Cloud of Firmament Iron!

The gushing mist entered her spear gleam, making it as heavy as iron. Meanwhile, the Cirrus in her hand had become as heavy as a mountain. She needed to focus all her attention on the Cirrus to be able to control it.

Black-colored, flower-like sword gleams were released from the spear tip. Following which, they slowly spiralled around Cirrus. These flower-like sword gleams looked as if they were made up of iron, but in reality, they were made up of mist and clouds.

Every iron flower weighed more than a few hundred kilograms.

Shi Xueman's self-formed technique, [Iron Flowers Thrust]!

People always used adjectives like elegant, light, gentle, and graceful to describe spearmanship. However, at this point in time, the style of Shi Xueman's spearmanship was completely different. Hers was dense and heavy!

When six black-colored, iron flowers swirled around the sparkling white Cirrus, Shi Xueman's aura of might suddenly disappeared.

Her gaze shifted from the Cirrus to Xing Shan.

The image of an enormous axe that had a torrential bloody glow trailing it entered her eyes. The bloody glow was like a red-colored flood that had broken through a dike, surging towards her with an earth-shattering might.

Phew.

Shi Xueman slowly heaved a breath of air. The breath of air she exhaled was like a sword, splitting the sea of cloud above her head into two.

Her gaze was resolute and tranquil; not the slightest bit of panic could be seen in his eyes.

It was as if she did not see the incoming blood river.

She took a long step and thrusted her spear forward.

The spear move was simple-looking and ordinary. There was nothing fancy about it. However, in the hands of Shi Xueman, a simple and basic move possessed an indescribable sense of beauty. It was as if all the lights were shining upon her now. Unknowingly, everyone's attention was captured by her.

This ordinary-looking forward thrust transformed into a chilly gleam. Six iron-made flowers were slowly spiraling around it as it flew towards the blood river.

Compared to the terrifying might of the [Axe of Nether River], Shi Xueman's [Iron Flowers Thrust] looked very ordinary.

However, for some unknown reason, this normal-looking thrust managed to catch everyone's attention.

All of the onlookers were holding their breaths.

Guarded by the six spiralling iron flowers, the chilly spear gleam collided into the overwhelming, fearsome blood river.

Suddenly, Xing Shan's facial expression changed drastically. The blood river in front of hm exploded. Before he could react, the hand that he was using to hold his gigantic axe went numb. His heavy axe, which was releasing an aura of fear and might previously, crumbled into fine powder like a crispy biscuit in an instant. Following which, his palm exploded into a rain of blood. It happened so fast that he could not even feel the pain coming.

Following which, he saw that his right forearm was gone.

Chapter 538: The Enemy Forces Are Arriving!

Shi Xueman didn’t look alright all all. The armor that covered her right forearm had been shattered, revealing her slender, snow-white forearm. She was still holding on to her Cirrus tightly. Her blue-white body armor was filled with cracks. She had been wearing this armor since she was in Central Pine City. Years of battles and training sessions had caused some damage to it. However, she certainly didn’t expect this battle to completely destroy it.

Her face was emotionless, but in reality, she was battling hard with the bloody glow in her body. Even though her powerful [Iron Flowers Thrust] had shattered Xing Shan’s [Axe of Nether River], a few traces of the bloody glow had still managed to enter her body. By the time she could react, it was already too late. These few traces of bloody glow were thin like hair strands. Even though they were not deadly, they swamed extremely fast through her body. To Shi Xueman’s horror, her body’s elemental energy circulation was becoming increasingly sluggish.

"Hahahaha!"

Xing Shan burst into laughter and pleased look appeared on his face. His severed arm was still bleeding, but he looked as if he couldn’t feel any pain.

"How is it? Miss Shi, do you like my [Axe of Nether River]?" Xing Shan smiled.

No one could tell what Shi Xueman was feeling. Deep down, she was trying to expel the bloody glow within her body as soon as possible. However, the bloody glow was unusually slippery, like a loach. There seemed to be a layer of membrane on the surface of the bloody glow. The membrane looked very thin, but it was actually extremely tough and durable. It stopped elemental energy from eroding the bloody glow.

"If Miss Shi has four hours to spare, you might be able to think of a solution. However, right now, you should just follow me. Isn't it too much for your soft skin and tender flesh to take so much pain?" Xing Shan sneered.

His injury looked horrifying, but it was not really severe. Blood elementalists had powerful physical bodies, and their regenerative ability was comparable to dire beasts'. The Beast Venom Temple had many odd methods that could help them recover from their injuries.

Xing Shan purposely used his injury to bait Shi Xueman into fighting him head-on. And by doing so, he could plant [Gadfly] in her body. [Gadfly] was a technique of [Netherworld Bestial Ox]. It wasn't deadly, but it could hinder its host's elemental energy circulation.

Its effect would last for four hours.

From the moment he thought about capturing Shi Xueman alive, he had been thinking of ways to do so. Eventually, he came up with

this idea.

Suddenly, Shi Xueman raised her head and looked directly at Xing Shan and said, "Is it? You're getting happy too soon!"

The smile on Xing Shan's face froze as a premonition arose in his heart. He then roared, "Get her!"

Beneath him, there were a few experts that were prepared to take action any time. They rose into the air and lunged for Shi Xueman!

Suddenly, Shi Xueman dug into the sea of clouds above her head.

Xing Shan's facial expression changed drastically. He had lost Shi Xueman!

Without Xing Shan saying anything, his experts took action immediately. Streaks of red light blasted towards the position where Shi Xueman had disappeared into. A burst of odd-looking, blood-colored flames erupted and burned a huge hole in the sea of clouds.

However, they still could not see Shi Xueman.

The experts flew through the layer of clouds and appeared above it. They scanned the boundless sea of clouds but still could not find Shi Xueman.

Xing Shan's face turned ashen. A cooked duck could fly?

Suddenly, the Chieftain Wolf beneath him howled in at a particular direction.

Everyone stared at that direction. More than a few kilometers away, they could see a figure that resembled an agile whale in the sea of clouds.

"Chase her!"

Without any hesitation, Xing Shan led the chase. That few experts followed suit as well. His main forces on the ground advanced with a loud rumble too.

Xing Shan clearly understood that such an exceptionally good chance wouldn't come by a second time. His eyes were very sharp, so he could tell that Shi Xueman wasn't using her elemental energy to fly. Rather, it was the Cirrus in her hand that was helping her fly.

Upon thinking about it, he felt that it wasn't surprising. After all, she was a member of the Shi family, so how could she not have a few treasures in her hands?

Within these four hours, Shi Xueman's capabilities would be limited. To the Ardent Flower Blood Division, these four hours would be the best and only chance to capture her. Without Shi Xueman, the Spear of Heavy Cloud would suffer a huge loss in

strength.

Shi Xueman's strength was extraordinary, and her skill basics were extremely solid. Furthermore, her spearmanship was out of this world. If it weren't for [Gadfly], Xing Shan felt that he wouldn't have a high chance of pulling this mission off.

This time around, Shi Xueman was unprepared. Hence, [Gadfly] would work by surprise. This move could only be used once. Once the opponent was prepared for it, it would be ineffective.

Shi Xueman was holding her Cirrus very tightly. Traces of mist were spiralling around the body of Cirrus. It was flying Shi Xueman through the sea of clouds at a lightning speed.

The Cirrus' body was forged using a bone of a humpback cloud whale. Shi Beihai personally chose the most perfect bone to forge the Cirrus. Humpback cloud whales were powerful entities that lived in deep space. They were at the peak of the food chain and they were born with the ability to fly in the sea of clouds. At this moment, the Cirrus was flying Shi Xueman nimbly through the clouds.

Meanwhile, above her head, Xing Shan and his counterparts were chasing relentlessly after her.

There was no sign of panic on Shi Xueman's face. She even closed her eyes and let Cirrus fly her through the air freely. Even though she knew that the hair-like traces of bloody glow in her body weren't deadly, she had no intention of becoming a sitting duck.

Xing Shan and his counterparts could only see a faintly discernible figure flying swiftly through the vast sea of clouds.

The sea of clouds was like a thick, protective screen, hindering their sensory perception.

Traces of mist entered Shi Xueman's body in a steady flow. She used the boundless water elemental energy from the sea of clouds to compress the water elemental energy in her body.

The thin traces of bloody glow were very weird. Their surfaces were extremely slippery and they were swimming like loaches in the water elemental energy within Shi Xueman's body. Ordinary methods would not work against them, but Shi Xueman thought of an idea. She intended to compress the water elemental energy in her body and turn it into the firmament iron that made up the tip of her Cirrus. This way, those traces of bloody glow would have nowhere to hide!

Firmament iron was only made up of one ingredient, water. However, now it had become one of the hardest materials in the world.

Compressing water elemental energy was a very bold idea. It was extremely risky as well.

The water elemental energy in the sea of clouds was mixed with other elemental energies as well. For example, metal elemental energy from the metal winds and fire elemental energy from the

sun.

At this point in time, Shi Xueman did not have the time to remove the impurities. Along with the endless stream of water elemental energy, these impurities would gather in her body.

Every elementalist pursued the state of purity for the elemental energy within their bodies. Impurities would affect an elementalist's control over his or her elemental energy. The greatest impact of impurities was that they might gather in the five residences and eight palaces and directly reduce an elementalist's connectivity with his or her elemental energy greatly.

Very often, once an elementalist's connectivity with his or her elemental decreased, the effect would be irreversible.

If one wanted to reverse the effect, it would be as difficult as improving his or her talents.

However, at this moment, Shi Xueman couldn't care about these things. It was too early to think about the negative effects of impurities. She could last for a long period of time before the negative effects set in. Right now, all she cared about was making it out alive!

She kept on compressing the water elemental energy that gushed into her body. Her eyebrows knitted slightly as a rarely-seen tinge of agony appeared on her face. The process of converting water to firmament was extremely arduous and difficult. Similarly, the process of compressing water elemental energy wasn't easy either.

However, Shi Xueman did not give up. She could sense that as the water elemental energy increased in viscosity, it became more and more difficult for the traces of bloody glow to travel around her body,

Suddenly, her body trembled.

.....

Time was passing slowly. The atmosphere in the Spear of Cloud's camp was becoming extremely tense.

The anxiousness on Yang Xiaodong's face was becoming increasingly intense. Sang Zhijun and the rest were becoming nervous and worried as well. Jiang Wei was the only one that was calm and collected. He wasn't affected by any emotions.

The tightly-closed eyes of Fatty, who was still unconscious, kept on trembling. It appeared that the eyeballs behind his closed eyelids were rolling around.

Zu Yan was keeping watch over Fatty by his side. Upon seeing Fatty's eyelids trembling, he became worried. Was he having a nightmare?

Suddenly, Fatty opened his eyes and quickly picked himself up. With a voice filled with panic, he yelled at the top of his voice, "The enemy forces are arriving!"

Everyone shifted their gazes to Fatty.

Zu Yan quickly assured him, "Fatty, we are back in the camp. There's nothing, there's nothing!"

It appeared Fatty was really frightened this time around.

A sympathetic look appeared on everyone's faces. They also thought that Fatty acted this way because he was traumatised badly. However, they also knew that it wasn't easy for Fatty to make it back alive.

Meanwhile, those meticulous individuals felt that Fatty was having a nightmare as they noticed his eye pupils weren't focused.

Jiang Wei, who had been emotionless all this time, suddenly asked, "Fatty, where are the enemy forces coming from?"

"That side!" Fatty pointed to a forest in his southeast direction.

"Get ready for battle! Everyone, get ready for battle!" Jiang Wei suddenly shouted.

He walked around the camp and urged everyone to prepare for battle. Everyone then began to make preparations. However, they were feeling extremely confused.

What was wrong with the Vice Division Leader? Fatty was

obviously traumatized, so how could the Vice Division Leader believe his words?

However, Jiang Wei's gaze was limpid and resolute, putting pressure on everyone. None of them did not dare to hesitate, and they all made their preparations.

Suddenly, Yang Xiaodong's facial expression changed. An incredulous look appeared on his face. "I think... the enemy forces are really arriving!"

He could not help but take a glance at the dazed Fatty.

Fatty had actually sensed the enemy forces' presence earlier than him!

His strength was much higher than Fatty's. Furthermore, he was a Master. Suddenly, he let out a yelp again and looked at Fatty with doubt.

He realized there was something wrong with Fatty's body...

At this moment, the ground began to tremble. Veterans were able to tell that the enemy forces were huge in number.

Rumble! Rumble!

The ground was trembling furiously. Jiang Wei and the rest felt

as if they were standing on a drum that was being beaten. The rising smoke in the distant was coming towards them with tumultuous momentum, and the enormous forest ahead of them turned blurry.

Everyone sucked in a breath of cold air. The previous Blood of God's combat divisions that they fought were much weaker than this incoming combat division!

"Pagoda cannons, get ready!" Jiang Wei remained composed.

In the center of the camp, the twelve pagoda cannons were already prepared. Vats of snow lava were being poured into the fire pools continuously. When the battle intensified later on, they might not even have the time to replenish the snow lava.

At this moment, Fatty had regained his senses as well. The loud rumbles struck fear into him and caused his face to turn white. He quickly dashed to a nearby pagoda cannon and snatched over the main cannon position. "Let me do it!"

The level of Fatty's control of the pagoda cannon far surpassed everyone in the combat division, so naturally, no one would snatch the position from him.

At this point, all of them could see the enemy forces. Deafening rumbles filled their ears. They could clearly see the sinister-looking faces of the enemy forces now. In the face of such a terrifying flood of blood elementalists, many members of the Spear of Heavy Cloud had their faces turned pale-white and their minds

went blank.

The enemy forces were charging towards them.

At this point in time, a familiar figure descended from the sea of clouds above their heads like a kite that had its string broken.

"Lady!"

"Xueman!"

Everyone’s facial expressions changed drastically. Sang Zhijun did not care about anything and soared into the air to catch the falling Shi Xueman.

The layer of clouds above everyone’s heads suddenly exploded and howling laughter echoed through air.

Jiang Wei clenched his teeth. At this moment, even he himself could not maintain his composure. He widened his eyes angrily and roared at the top of his voice, "Pagoda cannons! Listen to my commands! Listen to my commands!"

Twelve pagoda cannons were slowly initializing.

Chapter 539: Confrontation

The one leading the charge of the Ardent Flower Blood Division was its vice division leader, Tao Feng. Tao Feng and Zu Chun had a deep relationship. After he found out that Zu Chun had died, he cried his eyes out.

He was bent on seeking revenge for Zu Chun. When he saw the camp of the Spear of Heavy Cloud, his eyes turned bloodshot with hatred.

He raised his arm and roared, "Kill them! Kill all of them!"

His soldiers echoed after him in unison, "Kill them! Kill all of them!"

Amid the deafening clamor, Tao Feng and the ardent flower night wolf beneath him lit up with a bloody glow. The rest of the soldiers lit up with a bloody glow as well.

All of their bloody glows made contact with each other and combined together into one. Their aura intensified abruptly.

An aura of death rose into the sky. Like a bloody, heavy axe, the aura split the thick layer of clouds above their heads into two.

The bloody glow engulfed the entire Ardent Flower Blood Division. The movements and rhythm of every soldier and ardent flower night wolf began to synchronize more and more.

Their grandeur intensified and their momentum turned increasingly terrifying.

Boom, boom, boom!

The thousands of soldiers advanced together as one. Every time the wolves placed their paws on the ground, the ground would tremble like a drum that was being beaten. Everything that was in the path of the charging, red-glowing army was reduced to fine powder.

When the usually composed Jiang Wei saw the Ardent Flower Blood Division raze a six-meter-tall hill to the ground, his facial expression changed drastically.

He had never seen such a grandeur from a combat division of Blood of God before.

Was this the true might of a proper combat division from Blood of God?

This thought flashed across his mind. The situation that they were facing now had reached a critical junction. He widened his eyes and held his breath.

Boom, boom, boom!

Jiang Wei was counting the pace of the ardent flower night wolves. Wang Xiaoshan's quicksand pit zone was right in front of them.

Like a bloody, heavy axe that was swinging crazily, Tao Feng led the Ardent Flower Blood Division and charged into the quicksand pit zone

Jiang Wei widened his eyes while holding his breath.

He also did not know whether his idea would work or not. He came up with this idea when he was devising battle tactics. At that time, he felt that it would work. However, now that he witnessed the powerful charge of the Ardent Flower Blood Division for himself, he knew he had underestimated his opponent!

Bang!

Suddenly, the outermost edge of the quicksand pit zone exploded. Under the powerful impact of Ardent Flower Blood Division's charge, the quicksand that was more slippery than oil flew into the air from the pits.

Tao Feng and his wolf wobbled. He and his ardent flower night wolf were telepathically connected. As such, they would immediately sense if there was something wrong.

It was a trap!

His mind jolted.

However, at this point in time, he couldn't think too much about it. Both sides were only separated by a small distance. He could clearly see the fear and shock on the elementalists' faces. He immediately made up his mind.

He was too familiar with this facial expression!

Once they covered this small distance and charged into the elementalists' camp, the elementalists would definitely crumble!

A sinister smile appeared on Tao Feng's face, then he roared, "Charge!"

Jiang Wei continued to widen his eyes. However, he was not looking at the incoming Tao Feng. Instead, he was staring at the ground beneath Tao Feng's ardent flower night wolf.

The quicksand that splattered into the air was like a raised brocade, giving off a dazzling luster.

However, the quicksand did not break!

A look of joy appeared on Jiang Wei's face. Yes, the quicksand did not break!

Xiaoshan had succeeded!

The bloody glow that surrounded the paws of Tao Feng's wolf was like knives, shattering the rocks on the ground. However, the soft-looking quicksand did not break under the impact of the bloody glow!

The soldiers following closely behind Tao Feng had charged into the quicksand pit zone as well.

Their bodies could not help but wobble as well.

The bloody glow that engulfed the entire combat division suddenly dimmed slightly. [Bloody Axe Charge] was a unique charging tactic of the Ardent Flower Blood Division. It involved everyone's blood spiritual force combining together and forming a powerful and invincible momentum. However, [Bloody Axe Charge] was very demanding on the combat division that was executing it. Everyone's pace and tempo of blood spiritual force circulation had to be the same; the more synchronized they were, the more powerful they would be.

In a perfect [Bloody Axe Charge], everyone moved together as one, their hearts beat together, their blood spiritual force circulated in the same tempo, and they advanced and retreated together. A perfect [Bloody Axe Charge] was simply unstoppable for attacking a city or a camp.

Jiang Wei had studied the Ardent Flower Blood Divison before, so he roughly knew the characteristics of [Bloody Axe Charge]. He knew that it was ineffective to slow down the enemy forces or

increase their own defense when dealing with this type of charge. Instead, they had to disrupt the enemy forces' tempo. The more chaotic the enemy forces got, the less powerful the charge would be.

He had been waiting for this chance. He roared, "Pagoda cannons! Fire!"

Boom!

The first boom came from the pagoda cannon of Fatty.

A beam of white light flashed through the air and landed squarely on the Ardent Flower Blood Division.

Fatty made a very smart move. He did not aim at Tao Feng, who was right at the front of the combat division. Instead, Fatty aimed at the side of the combat division.

The beam of white light pierced through five blood elementalists, leaving a bloody hole in each of their bodies.

A commotion broke out among the blood elementalists surrounding them. The bloody glow that they thought was impregnable was utterly delicate against the beam of white light. Even though it only killed five blood elementalists, it shocked the rest of the blood elementalists greatly.

The other pagoda cannons reacted as well.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Booms resounded through the air continuously while beams of white light repeatedly shot out of the pagoda cannons and landed on the Ardent Flower Blood Division. Since the two sides were so close to each other, it wasn't too difficult for the pagoda cannons to hit their targets. Only two pagoda cannons missed their targets as the elementalists controlling them were too nervous.

The killing machines from Central Pine Valley had displayed their might.

Those blood elementalists that were hit by the pagoda cannons did not explode into a pool of blood. Instead, a basin-sized hole was created on each of their bodies. If such a huge injury appeared on any part of a body, it would be more than enough to cause death.

When a blood elementalist saw the internal organs and bones dangling from the horrifying hole on his comrade's body and then his comrade collapsed to the ground without saying a word, it was very difficult for him not to feel panic.

Just like how it was the first time the Spear of Heavy Cloud's elementalists had seen [Bloody Axe Charge], it was also the first time that Ardent Flower Blood Division's blood elementalists had encountered Hellfire Pagoda Cannons.

Ai Hui created the Hellfire Pagoda Cannons simply because Blind He complained that the flames used to refine and forge weapons

were not good enough. At the same time, Ai Hui also wanted to recycle the snout of the lava-spitting beast.

He definitely didn't expect the Hellfire Pagoda Cannon to become a weapon that struck fear in people's hearts one day.

In the sky, the faces of Xing Shan and his counterparts turned ugly.

Looking down from the sky, they could see what was going on clearly. They saw with their own eyes how the invincible Ardent Flower Blood Division became sluggish and chaotic instantly when it entered the Spear of Heavy Cloud's trap zone. The straight and brilliant beams of white light were like the gazes of Death itself, creating more chaos for Ardent Flower Blood Division.

As the division leader of the Ardent Flower Blood Division, Xing Shan clearly knew the might of the [Bloody Axe Charge]

When he saw the [Bloody Axe Charge] becoming soft and weak, he knew he had to do something. Otherwise, even if he ultimately obtained victory, it would come at a price of heavy casualties.

"All of you, go down!" Xing Shan instructed with a deep voice.

In the Ardent Flower Blood Division, there were seven blood elementalists that had Ability of God. One was Zu Chun, who had died. Two of them were Tao Feng and a blood elementalist who were currently leading the charge. The remaining three were

beside Xing Shan.

The three of them knew that the situation had reached a critical junction. All of them replied in unison, "Yes!"

The three of them were veterans that had been through countless battles. They immediately split up and flew down from different directions. While they were in mid-air, they summoned their Ability of God.

One person had a row of spurs growing from his back. His limbs became thick and solid and his body became broader. His skin turned coarse and thick with a layer of densely-packed fish scales covering it. A spiky tail grew out of his tailbone. His eyes became almond-shaped, giving off an ice-cold aura.

Another person had a pair of black-white wings growing out of his back. His nails became sharp and crooked while his gaze became unusually piercing. The sound coming out of his mouth resembled the cry of a crane.

The last one was a girl. A pair of thin, spotted wings grew out from her back. Her body was petite, making her looked like an oversized butterfly.

Xing Shan did not move. Even though the injury of his severed arm wasn’t life-threatening and it could be healed by taking a trip to the Beast Venom Temple, it still dealt a significant damage to his body overall. Shi Xueman’s spear gleam was wreaking havoc in his body. Even though it wasn’t deadly, it had a huge impact on his

fighting capabilities.

That three blood elementalists with Ability of God flew towards the camp of the Spear of Heavy Cloud. To everyone's surprise, their target was Shi Xueman, who was still in the arms of Sang Zhijun.

As long as they could get hold of Shi Xueman, their mission would be a success!

As the division leader of the Spear of Heavy Cloud, Shi Xueman was deeply adored by everyone. If they could capture Shi Xueman, they could force the Spear of Heavy Cloud to surrender. The three blood elementalists flew extremely fast. They drew three odd-looking arcs as they swooped down from three different directions towards Sang Zhijun.

Sang Zhijun looked as if she sensed something. She raised her head and revealed a weird smile on her face.

The next moment, Shi Xueman, who was unconscious in Sang Zhijun's arms, suddenly disappeared.

Not good!

The image of a spinning-top-like spear gleam that was wrapped by traces of mist expanded rapidly in the three blood elementalists' eyes.

Intense fear struck the three blood elementalists.

They had witnessed Shi Xueman's battle with Xing Shan with their own eyes. From Shi Xueman's terrifying strength and perfect spearmanship, they knew they had no chance of defeating her.

When Shi Xueman suddenly lunged at them without any warning, their first thought was they had been tricked!

Which part of the whizzing, piercing-cold spear gleam looked weak? In mid-air, the figure of Shi Xueman was very blurry, and only her cold-looking eyes could be seen. Her gaze was so resolute that it sent fear down their spines.

The butterfly-like blood elementalist flew the slowest. Despair arose upon her face. Her hands kept on sprinkling gorgeous drizzles of light through the air. Following which, illusions appeared amid the drizzles of light.

She did not know that even Ai Hui had to play second fiddle to Shi Xueman's determination. Her extraordinary willpower was the reason why she had never encountered an inner demon in her path of training. Her teacher, An Muda, did not give her many pointers. He only told her to continue walking her path.

The spear gleam effortlessly pierced through the gorgeous rain of light and the body of the butterfly-like blood elementalist. The immensely heavy mist spiralling around the spear gleam blasted onto her petite body.

Her beautiful and transparent wings were shattered and its remains drifted in the air.

The spear gleam which had yet to lose its power reached the lizard-like blood elementalist. He let out an angry roar and the bloody glow around his body surged. He then turned his body and swung his spiky tail. The bloody glow entered his tail and the spikes on his tail dazzled with a scarlet glow, resembling the iron nails that were just taken from the furnace.

Following which, he swung his scarlet-glowing spiky tail at the spear gleam!

The whizzing spear gleam suddenly trembled and brushed past the scarlet-glowing tail. From an extremely ingenious angle, it pierced through the lizard-like blood elementalist's chin.

Bang!

A rain of blood descended from the sky while the spear gleam passed through a white rainbow.

Holding a spear, the lone figure of Shi Xueman suddenly surged forward.

Chapter 540: Chapter 540 - 20 Meters Of Life-or-death Experience

When Sang Zhijun caught Shi Xueman in the air, she had already sensed that something was not right with her.

After Shi Xueman surged into the air, Sang Zhijun no longer placed her attention in the sky. She felt relieved in any place that Shi Xueman was in charge of. Sang Zhijun shifted her gaze to Jiang Wei, who was roaring commands frantically now.

She seldom saw such a fervent look on Jiang Wei's face. Her mouth curled into a faint smile.

The calm and seasoned Jiang Wei was usually called "Old Ginger" by everyone. The older a ginger was, the spicier it was.

Sang Zhijun shifted her gaze, withdrew her smile, and placed her attention on the battle.

The situation was much more intense than expected. The Ardent Flower Blood Division had arrived too fast. The Infantry Division and the Sky Edge Division had yet to arrive. Even though the Spear of Heavy Cloud was somewhat powerful, it was still a relatively new combat division with little experience.

This was only the second battle of the Spear of Heavy Cloud. One could imagine their stress in facing a legitimate combat division of Blood of God.

When Sang Zhijun took over the command of the archers, the previously chaotic rain of arrows became orderly now.

Jiang Wei looked very excited, but deep down he was unusually calm. When he noticed there was a change in the nature of the rain of arrows, he knew Sang Zhijun had taken command of the archers. This took some pressure off him.

The two of them had collaborated for many years, so they were well-coordinated.

Jiang Wei fixed his gaze on the quicksand on the ground. He had underestimated the Ardent Flower Blood Division's [Bloody Axe Charge]. However, he also did not expect Wang Xiaoshan's quicksand mud to be so formidable!

The quicksand mud was more slippery than oil and yet it was stickier than sugar syrup.

Every time a pagoda cannon was fired, a commotion would break out in the Ardent Flower Blood Division. Every shot would kill or injure at most five people. For the Ardent Flower Blood Division, which had thousands of men, this number was insignificant. However, the chaos that was created by the Hellfire Pagoda Cannons caused the charging speed of the Ardent Fire Blood Division to reduce sharply.

The impact of having their charging speed reduced was deadly.

The charging impact of a high-speed Ardent Flower Blood Division was extremely powerful. It would cause the pits on the ground to be destroyed. However, once the speed of the Ardent Flower Blood Division was reduced, they would lose their momentum, making it very difficult for them to advance in the sticky yet slippery quicksand mud. The ardent flower night wolves had to be very careful to maintain their balance in the slippery quicksand mud. Every step they took would be harder than usual. The stickiness of the quicksand mud made them felt as if they were walking in a marsh. Every now and then, if the body of a ardent flower night wolf swayed, it implied that it had stepped on a pit.

The quicksand mud and pits were not powerful enough to cause any damage to the ardent flower night wolves. They only had one purpose, and that was to slow down the speed of the Ardent Flower Blood Division.

In the sky, Xing Shan's attention was caught by Shi Xueman. Tao Feng, who was leading the charge, had yet to notice her. All he was thinking of was seeking revenge for Zu Chun. The Spear of Heavy Cloud's camp was almost within reach.

As long as he and his soldiers could cross this quicksand zone, the victory could be easily obtained!

The quicksand zone, which was less than 300 meters, was insignificant in the Ardent Flower Blood Division's eyes.

The commotion created by every shot from the pagoda cannons

dimmed the bloody glow that surrounded the Ardent Flower Blood Division. And every time this happened, a rain of arrows would be released from the archers under Sang Zhijun's command and descend upon the blood elementalists.

This scenario resembled a wolf pack that kept on tearing off the flesh of its prey.

Every small commotion created was like a small cut. Eventually, the small cut would become a huge cut.

Within a short period of time, the sharp and heavy blade of the bloody axe was riddled with damage unwittingly.

At this point in time, the most sharp front end of the damage-riddled bloody axe had finally reached the edge of the Spear of Heavy Cloud's camp. An evil grin was upon Tao Feng's face. As the one leading the charge, he was at the front end of the army. The bloody glow surrounding his body was the most concentrated as well.

However, Tao Feng, who was solely focusing on moving ahead, did not notice that he was slightly separated from his army.

The nearest blood elementalist to him was 20 meters away.

"Master Yang!" Jiang Wei suddenly yelled.

When Yang Xiaodong saw that Shi Xueman was alright, he placed

his attention on the battlefield. A Master was an important offensive power that posed a significant impact on the battlefield. In the daily training sessions of the Spear of Heavy Cloud, a Master's attack was utterly formidable.

A Master usually had two responsibilities. The first was to deal with an enemy expert that was of same level as him. The second was to launch a point source explosion and overturn the battle situation.

The number of Masters in the Spear of Heavy Cloud was very limited. Only Shi Xueman, Zu Yan, and Yang Xiaodong were Masters. Therefore, they had to very careful on how the Masters were utilized in the battlefield. As such, they placed a lot of effort on devising tactics that could be used by a Master.

Zu Yan was too young. Furthermore, he had been ice-sealed for a rather long period of time. Even though he had attained the level of Master, he was still lacking in combat experience.

On the contrary, Yang Xiaodong was much more experienced and shrewd.

An experienced veteran might not necessarily had an advantage in an one-on-one battle. However, when he was in a dire situation, he knew what should be done. When Jiang Wei gave the order, Yang Xiaodong immediately took action.

[Refraction Forest]!

Numerous prisms that were made up of water elemental energy appeared behind Tao Feng. Like a prism wall, it separated Tao Feng from the rest of the Ardent Flower Blood Division.

After losing its speed, the bloody hammer’s momentum reduced greatly. It was easily split by Yang Xiaodong’s [Refraction Forest].

The blood elementalists were dazzled by the sudden burst of light in front of them. Those who had fast reactions attacked the [Refraction Forest] at the first instance.

To their surprise, the bloody glows that they released bounced to and fro within the forest of prism pillars

Hovering in mid-air, the prism "wall" remained the same.

"Pagoda cannons! Concentrate your shots on..."

Boom!

The roar of a blood elementalist commander behind the "wall" could be heard by all blood elementalists. Boiling blood gushed up their heads in an instant.

Not good! Vice Division Leader Tao Feng is in danger!

The other blood elementalist who possessed the Ability of God couldn’t care less. They flew into the air and lunged towards the

position of Tao Feng.

While in mid-air, he saw an appalling sight.

There was someone who had targeted Tao Feng earlier than Jiang Wei. That person was Fatty, who had been controlling the pagoda cannon with all his might.

From Fatty's puffy cheeks and the traces of hot steam coming out from his body, one would think he was utterly exhausted. In reality, he was looking for the weaknesses of the enemy forces. He had long noticed Tao Feng, who was at the front end of the charge.

Tao Feng was too ferocious, too arrogant, and too conspicuous.

However, Fatty had been restraining his urge to shoot Tao Feng, as he knew he had to wait for the right moment to do so. Tao Feng was coming at them with might and great momentum, so Fatty was not confident he could kill him.

As such, he targeted the main forces behind Tao Feng first.

In reality, Fatty was responsible for more than half of the casualties the Ardent Flower Blood Division had suffered. When Fatty took up the position for the pagoda cannons, the other pagoda cannons placed their attention on him. During the daily training sessions, everyone had witnessed Fatty's exceptional prowess in using the pagoda cannon and his extraordinary despicability.

Fatty's shots would always land on the enemy forces' most unbearable area.

After learning from experience, everyone fired at whichever direction Fatty fired at. The casualties the Ardent Flower Blood Division were mainly caused by this tactic.

Fatty felt exceptionally good today. Even though his body was emitting traces of hot steam, he did not feel tired at all. On the contrary, he felt he had an unlimited amount of energy.

The pagoda cannon felt unusually good in his hands as well. Wherever he pointed his pagoda cannon, he would hit whichever specific target he had in mind.

His accuracy was simply on point today!

Fatty also did not know why he was so excited today. However, he knew that today he was on fire.

When Jiang Wei's roar rang across the air, Fatty immediately knew what he was thinking.

When Yang Xiadong's [Refraction Forest] erupted with a dazzling radiance, Fatty's pagoda cannon sounded off.

Boom!

A beam of scorching, white light hit Tao Feng squarely.

Tao Feng sensed danger immediately. He let out a weird yelp that sounded like the cry of a bird.

When the white light hit Tao Feng, he transformed into a pheasant feather with a pop. Following which, the pheasant feather was reduced to ashes.

When Fatty fired that shot, he immediately knew that something was not right. Without any hesitation, he carried the heavy pagoda cannon and took two steps forward diagonally. His feet were unusually nimble and quick.

The heavy pagoda cannon weighed almost nothing in Fatty's hands. Whoosh. A heavy and muffled sound of wind could be heard.

The pagoda cannon was fixed, pointing towards a position where there was no one.

Without any hesitation, Fatty fired the pagoda cannon.

Boom!

A beam of scorching, white light erupted from the pagoda cannon.

A blurry shadow appeared in front of the pagoda cannon. All of a sudden, a burst of white light erupted.

It was too late for Tao Feng to dodge the attack. He could only look on blankly as the beam of white light struck his body.

The scorching, white light collided heavily with the bloody glow around Tao Feng's body. Tao Feng's body trembled as a red-white brilliance erupted.

Fatty felt that his situation was unprecedentedly good. He was visualizing the snow lava being poured into the pagoda cannon and sensing the fine and complicated traces and elemental energy rings on the inner wall of the cannon barrel.

He was doing this purely by his feeling. Boom, boom, boom!

Three muffled booms resounded through the air as three balls of dazzling white-colored flames erupted from the cannon barrel.

Every loud boom caused Tao Feng's body to tremble.

Clink!

A loud and crisp sound that sounded like glass shattering could be heard. The bloody glow around Tao Feng's body had completely collapsed. Blood was seeping out from the corner of his mouth as

his eyes widened angrily. However, at this point, his body trembled so much that it became numb and immovable. The ardent flower night wolf's front limbs were half bent, looking as if they were forcibly being held down to the ground by a pair of invisible hands.

Despicable...

The bitter roar that was echoing repeatedly in Tao Feng's head was drowned by the incessant deafening booms.

The rest of the pagoda cannons responded and fired at Tao Feng frantically.

The bounded Tao Feng could only look on blankly as the beams of scorching, white light shot towards him from all directions.

Bo!

He snarled in his heart.

Dazzling radiance erupted from the [Refraction Forest] behind him, resembling the rising sun.

Beams of white light devoured Tao Feng's body.

When the white light dissipated, four charred footprints were left on the ground.

The man and the wolf were destroyed physically and spiritually.

At this moment, the [Refraction Forest] was shattered.

They had finally crossed the 20 meters of life-or-death quicksand zone. It was because of these 20 meters of quicksand that they lost their vice division leader. Everyone's eyes were bloodshot. The one hundred people at the front end were already setting foot on hard and sturdy ground one by one.

At this moment, all of them knew that their so-called battle tactics and strategies were useless now.

Courage was all that mattered in close quarters combat.

Only the brave ones would emerge victorious.

A devastating and bloody scene began at this point.

Similarly, the battle in the sky became lopsided.

After the crane-like blood elementalist witnessed two of his comrades die, he was overwhelmed with horror. There was only one thought in his mind, and that was to run! His speed was exceptionally fast. In a blink of an eye, he disappeared into the sea of clouds. Even Shi Xueman couldn't catch up to him.

However, Shi Xueman’s target wasn’t this man. Her target was Xing Shan.

The Chinese word for ginger is "Jiang".

Chapter 541: Surviving

His troops had already broken into the enemy's frontline. Even though a huge price had been paid, they had already gained dominance. In previous battles, as long as they entered the elementalists' frontline, the latter would fall into a state of panic.

Elementalists' inheritances were exquisite and abundant and they were courageous and bold.

Blood of God hadn't been established for a long time; it was like a young and vigorous youth. Beyond Avalon, on the other hand, was like an old man who was past his prime, lacking in drive and bravery.

Fighting at close quarters required valor.

Xing Shan felt that the present conditions were already fixed, so he just had to wait for the bottom bcombat division to claim victory. So what if Shi Xueman was strong and powerful? It takes two hands to clap!

He smiled. "Why would you fight this hard-pressed battle? Your troops have already been broken into. Do you still think there's a chance to overturn the situation?"

Shi Xueman replied coldly, "What a pesk."

At that, her figure vanished.

Xing Shan quickly drove his wolf toward a corner to dodge. The snow-white mist curling around the Cirrus brushed past his body like a whip that carried overwhelming power.

Clap. The mist fell into the sea of clouds, causing it to explode and transform into a six hundred meter crack.

Sunlight pierced through the crack like golden light swords.

Xing Shan's scalp went numb. If that mist had struck him, he would've been severely injured if not dead. He was bewildered. Shi Xueman was like a lively dragon, her elemental energy completely unaffected.

Was his [Gadfly] ineffective?

Or was it her plan to lure the enemy? Looking at the mingled crowd beneath, he dismissed that thought. If her opponent had assisting armies, she would reasonably avoid meeting them head on. Why would she present herself at their doorstep?

But Shi Xueman seemed not the least bit affected even after two of his own troops had been taken down by her personally.

Xing Shan racked his brains but still couldn't understand.

But he knew that waiting was his only chance at victory now.

The battle situation on the ground was very tight.

Xing Shan dodged continuously. It was a sorry sight. Shi Xueman's spear techniques were extremely peculiar. The strips of white mist wound around her spear body were like white dragons, and it was precisely this mist that caused Xing Shan such a huge problem. The mist would disperse in a spiral along with the onward spear ray like a big, opened umbrella, enveloping a wide region.

Yet this spotlessly white and floaty mist that looked soft and powerless was in fact exceptionally potent.

These overbearing mist strips had made him suffer quite a bit.

It was the case this time as well.

Seeing that he wasn't going to be able to dodge, Xing Shan could only wave the machete in his left hand to block them off. But the high-quality machete cracked instantly upon impact and shattered into countless fragments that flew in all directions.

Xing Shan spurted out a mouthful of fresh blood, which spilled and stained his garment.

His wolf was covered in injuries as well, with a leg that was bent unnaturally.

Xing Shan bit between his teeth. He mustn’t retreat now.

The soldiers below would lose confidence and hesitate if he fled. Their morale would take a hit and they would lose the upper hand.

He threw the sword hilt away and burst into laughter, disregarding the bloodstains on his face. He was like a malicious spirit that had risen up from the sea of blood inhell. With glaring eyes, he suddenly shouted, "Ardent Flower Blood Division! Kill!"

The members below, who had already sunk into a bitter struggle, received a morale boost upon hearing their division leader’s command. Blood elementalists in every corner of the battlefield raised their weapons in unison and responded wildly, "Ardent Flower Blood Division, kill!"

All covered in bloodstains, Xing Shan watched Shi Xueman coldly. Blood overflowed from the wound on his palm as he stroked his wolf’s head gently.

The state of battle was extremely desperate, especially at the frontline, where blood had already dyed the entire ground red. Elementalists on both sides had bloodshot eyes. The blood elementalists broke into the disposition in hope of opening up a nick, but the guarding elementalists were going all out to defend against the attacks.

Those shooting cannons and arrows bombarded enemies who had sunk into the quicksand in order to cut off the strength of incoming enemies.

Jiang Wei's heart was bleeding. His men were falling successively, but so far no one had cowered.

Th elemental energy light rays and fresh red blood rays interweaved.

About six meters away from the troops, Yang Xiaodong was fighting at close quarters with a powerful blood elementalist. They were both keeping away from the disposition. A battle between Masters would influence a wide area, so not only would enemies be affected, team members would be involved too.

Looking down from the sky, the Spear of Heavy Cloud gradually was gradually into a disadvantageous position!

The current Blood of God combat division were well-trained, their combat strength matchless. When the blood catastrophe first erupted, the combat divisions had an equal number of weak and strong players, but ever since the Holy Emperor made War God Ye Baiyi to lead and establish the combat divisions, the situation immediately changed for the better.

Ye Baiyi had been serving the army for many years and was well versed in the ways of a combat division. He did not blindly imitate the Thirteen Divisions of Avalon of Five Elements. Instead, he altered the allocation of resources according to the unique characteristics of blood elementalists. Following that, he created a duty roster that got the soldiers in the combat division to take turns going to the front line to accumulate actual combat

experience and tempering.

It was precisely Ye Baiyi's string of actions that made abilities on both sides comparable and created a fundamental change.

Blood of God's combat divisions trained efficiently and its soldiers were brave, good, and unyielding when it came to battling. Beyond Avalon's combat divisions, on the other hand, had a bunch of newbies. It hadn't been established for long and so it lacked drilling and the temperings of actual combat.

If not for a batch of outstanding key players inside the Spear of Heavy Cloud defending against the heedless assault of the Ardent Flower Blood Division, the combat division would've crumbled long ago. These key players, taking lead in spite of the dangers, were the ones who managed to keep the situation controlled.

Even then, the scale of victory was still gradually tilting toward the Ardent Flower Blood Division as more and more blood elementalists stepped onto the battlefield.

Yet, blood elementalists weren't the only agitated ones.

Struggling bitterly to brace the disposition, Fatty was going insane.

Eliminating a powerful blood elementalist pleased him greatly and gave him a big morale boost in regard to his condition that day. With his inflated confidence he performed remarkably by

killing thirty six enemies with twelve consecutive shots.

He had killed thirty-six because one shot of his would pierced through three blood elementalists.

In the battlefield, the enemies weren't as closely packed, so it was actually much more difficult to kill off three blood elementalists with one cannon, yet Fatty did it twelve consecutive times. It could be said that he had the assistants, who were refilling the pagoda cannon with snow lava, utterly dumbstruck.

Fatty's well-built body was like an iron tower, resisting the strong recoil of the pagoda cannon. With each shot, his body sank a little and his sweat-covered flesh tensed up like solid metal. His whole body became red, like burning steel. Zzt, zzt, zzt. His sweat instantly turned to thick vapor.

The mist practically enveloped the whole pagoda cannon and Fatty's body.

No one noticed Fatty's gaze changing from its initial ease and confidence into a frightened look.

Each shot was still perfect and flawless, but why was the number of mounted soldiers increasing?

Not only did his exceeding performance fail to enhance his confidence, it brought about an increasing number of enemies, resulting in him feeling increasingly despairful.

He couldn’t control his fear and dread.

He’d been overperforming, so why were the enemies respawning quicker and quicker? He had already hit his maximum potential...

Amid the vaporization, Fatty shivered, his gaze full of fear. His footsteps grew heavier, as if he was sinking into quicksand.

He was beyond afraid.

A Hui, A Hui...

Come and save me, quick!

Tears welled up and fell quickly. Zzt zzt zzt. His red-hot skin vaporized his tears immediately, leaving only two white tear stains.

He dared not stop and could only continue attacking with even more wildness.

It was as if Fatty had become possessed. His face warped and involuntary sounds of crying came out of his mouth.

Suddenly, a white figure descended from the sky.

A spinning spear ray carrying strips of mist smashed strongly into the crowd of blood elementalists like a meteorite.

Boom!

The ground shook and the earth-shattering boom made everyone freeze.

The incomparably aggressive mist was like long vines that whipped the ground strongly, shattering the corpses of the blood elementalists and night wolves together with the mud. It was like a reverse waterfall where everything shot upward into the sky.

A petite silhouette half-squatted on the ground with Cirrus pointing toward the ground.

Their blue and white armor was crushed and only a few pieces remained. Only half a sleeve was left on one shoulder and fresh blood was spilling out from her mouth, causing her porcelain white skin to look even more snowy and tender. Her hair tie was broken and her head full of hair fell upon her shoulders like a waterfall, fluttering along with the wind.

She got up slowly and surveyed the battlefield coldly and loftily.

She raised her head and took a look at Xing Shan, who was in the sky.

She responded not with words but the Cirrus in her hands.

Cheers erupted from the troops of the Spear of Heavy Cloud. The elementalists who had been bitterly assisting were now crying frantically, their morale spiking.

Shi Xueman's universally shocking strike had jolted Fatty out of his despair. With a quive, his crazed mind leapt into action once again.

Like a drowning man, he grabbed onto the last straw of hope.

Whether or not that straw could save him wasn't for him to ponder over. It was his last chance of surviving, so no matter how tiny, it was significant.

Catching sight of a trace of life amid the abyss of despair converted all his fear and dread into drive. As if injected with chicken blood, his flesh started rousing and his footsteps became swift. The heavy pagoda cannon that had been weighing down on him became light as feather.

An image of piled up corpses in the cold forest of the Wilderness appeared in his head. He was digging with a shovel at the heap of dead laborers, some of whom he remembered the names and others whom he did not.

Scenes from the breezy evening that he left the Wilderness floated into his mind.

With the tangerine yellow sunset as backdrop, Fatty called out to Ai Hui’s back, "Live on, Ai Hui!"

Live on! Live on!

You must live on!

Boom boom boom!

Faster, faster!

Damn it, how do I do it faster!

There isn’t enough power, but more snow lava would overheat the pagoda cannon. What to do...

He grabbed the snow lava by his feet and gulped it down abruptly. Whoosh. Surging white flames came out from his body and the white blaze in his eyes throbbed.

This time, Fatty did not lose consciousness!

Clap!

His clasped his fingers together over the cannon tube like two metal pincers that carried flames. The tail was supported by his shoulder, and with his feet placed firmly on the ground, he stood

motionless.

The raging fire elemental energy surged into the cannon tube in his hands.

Like an enormous beast, the pagoda cannon drew out all of the Snow Lava in the fire pond in an instant.

Complicated spiral patterns formed by white flames lit up in the inner wall of the cannon tube, from the tail of the tube to its mouth.

Chapter 542: Pale Flames

Shi Xueman gave up on Xing Shan and joined in the close-quarters fight, which immediately stabilized the situation.

Just then, she sensed something. She looked toward the disposition of troops and joy emerged on her face.

Amid many pagoda cannons one was especially bright, and rings of bright veined patterns had appeared on its body. When it lit up, the air instantly became stifling, as if there was an invisible hand pressing down from the sky.

Xing Shan's face changed. Someone was actually becoming a Master at this time!

When his gaze fell upon the pagoda cannon, he noticed by chance that it was the fatty who had slipped away from his fingers from an earlier chase.

Xing Shan was already spent, but at this point he threw himself toward that pagoda cannon without hesitation.

He mustn't allow him to become a Master!

An intense sense of danger arose within his heart. He had a premonition that this fire would be earth-shattering and alarmingly powerful! Usually, one more or one less Master wouldn't make much difference, but in this close battle, any

change on any side could become that very last straw that breaks the camel's backl.

Both sides had sustained significant losses, and due to fighting aggressively till now, they were all exhausted. Everyone was relying on their last breath, and the side to let go first would lose.

Under these circumstances, a defeat would only lead to one outcome – an all-army wipe out!

Xing Shan couldn't care less about his own safety. With an angry growl, he tightened his grip on the Chief Wolf under him. The crippled Chief Wolf was also spent, but upon hearing its master's command, it started galloping and producing bright red flames with a hiss.

They were the flames of its blood core.

When the flames die out, the Chief Wolf turns into ashes and dissipate in the air.

The fresh flames of blood core wrapped around Xing Shan to nourish his withered body. The tongue of flames was like a mischievous tongue, licking all over his body, full of love and yearning.

Amid the flames, tears rolled silently down Xing Shan's bloody face.

The Chief Wolf raised its head, and with a bend of its back it shot up toward the sky with Xing Shan on its back. Hanging its foot in mid air, it transformed into a red fire flow that dove toward the brightly-lit pagoda cannon on the ground.

The fire flow whizzed downward like falling stars.

The air trembled as strips of white mist swept across the sky swiftly and struck the fire flow.

Bang!

Amid the flying sparks there seemed to be a sorrowful whimper of a wolf. The sparks dimmed and transformed into pale white ashes that filled the sky and faded away with the wind.

Shi Xueman had also been sprung into the sky by the powerful jolt.

Boom!

The heavy boom sounded like a resolute striking of the drum above the battlefield, which made everybody's hearts jump. Before they could react, their field of vision was occupied by a dazzling sheet of white light rays.

The white light rays did not disperse but grew brighter instead. The blinding white flames were like beautiful metal flowers blooming on the ground.

The rapidly extending waves of white flames were like unfolding flower petals that swept across the battlefield while carrying an aura of death.

The blood elementalists couldn’t dodge in time and were engulfed in the white flames.

The blood elementalists who were close by were immediately swallowed up by the flames and couldn’t even scream in time. The spattering white flames, dense as raindrops, raided about a third of the whole battlefield.

Many blood elementalists were caught by the white flames.

The finger-sized white flames hadn’t aroused their attention, since they were still overwhelmed in shock by that astonishing bombardment of the cannon. However, the piercingly painful misery snapped them out of it.

They were alarmed upon realizing that the white flames on their bodies weren’t extinguishable!

No matter the methods, they were unable to put out these strange, white flames.

Fearful screeches and anguished wailings echoed. They were completely out of courage and frenzy. In the face of something unexplainable, they felt afraid.

Some blood elementalists did not get a lot of flames on them and so they clenched their teeth and sliced the parts of their flesh that were caught in flames. Fresh blood poured out of their wounds at a visible pace before being swallowed by the white flames. The ones who saw this happen were all feeling cold inside.

The blood elementalists affected by the flames could only howl in grief, their sharp cries causing hair of those who could hear them stand.

Xing Shan's limbs were ice-cold, his expression grieved. He had thought that Fatty's firing would be extraordinary, but the white flames before his eyes had exceeded his imagination.

Xing Shan shut his eyes in despair.

Fatty's launch had a destructive impact on the morale of the Ardent Flower Blood Division. Their companions were rolling on the ground, howling in grief and pleading for a quick finish. It was a sight difficult to ignore.

Those were devilish flames from hell.

Shi Xueman observed the misery in awe and subconsciously turned her gaze to Fatty. Such strange white flames... what was Fatty's Path of Master exactly?

The battlefield that had just been filled with shouts and cries was

now dead silent as everyone was stunned by Fatty’s launch.

The survivors were pale in the face, as if they’d just seen the devil.

The red glow over Fatty’s body gradually faded along with the cooling down of the heated pagoda cannon. As if all his hair had opened up a valve, sweat started pouring out. Zzt zzt zzt, his sweat instantly vaporized into mist, leaving white, salt stains. The vapor surged like the smoke rising from an erupting volcano. As if the gates of hell had been opened, Fatty’s iron-like body was faintly discernible amid the mist. The salt stains all over his body extended like frost, making the overall sight more ghastly and cold.

Fatty’s gaze was vacant as he murmured.

"Live on... I must live on..."

He then collapsed face down.

Upon seeing this hellborn terrifying fellow collapse, the blood elementalists subconsciously cheered. Since the start of the flickering white light till now, the Ardent Flower Blood Division had actually been so intimidated by this fatty that they had forgotten to resist.

Xing Shan wasn’t the least bit happy, however. He had heard a sword whistle.

The Sky Edge Division was here!

A bitingly cold sword ray broke the sky.

A veiled Karakorum Polaris appeared on the battlefield. The beautiful eyes behind the veil swept across the field full of corpses, evidence of the gruesomeness of the battle.

Her eyes were cold and recklessly murderous. She inhaled a deep breath, calling out, "Sorry I’m late, Division Leader Shi!"

Before she could finish her greeting, a concentrated sword whistle sounded from the sky.

Swoosh swoosh swoosh!

Sword rays lit up the sky and the number of figures increased. The Sky Edge Division had arrived.

Karakorum Polaris did not talk much. She lowered her gaze and ordered in a cold voice, "Kill! Leave not a single one alive!"

A sky full of sword rays fell down like rain.

Karakorum Polaris locked down her target, and with a light wave of her white hand, a sword light flew toward Xing Shan.

Xing Shan looked disappointed. He had thought that the young and impetuous Karakorum Polaris would capture him alive after seeing that he had no strength to defend himself.

Who knew that she was so cautious?

Xing Shan gave a disdainful look. "I’m a hero, how can I die by your sword?"

He stabbed his chest with his intact left palm and gouged his bloody heart out. He then pinched and broke it, causing a blood fog to erupt. His body rapidly withered and transformed into ashes.

When Karakorum Polaris smelled the floating fragrance, her face changed. She withdrew her palm and the sword light circled toward the blood fog.

The sword light rolled the blood fog upward into the sky, taking it higher and higher without any intention to stop. It continued to fly upward until it finally brought it into the wild metal wind. The sword light and blood fog melted like ice cubes at a visible speed.

Blood of God hadn’t stopped analyzing elementalists, and elementalists, too, had never stopped studying Blood of God.

The blood elementalists’ poison was much more potent than before. It was alarmingly contaminating to soil and vegetation, and so the best way to get rid of it was to throw it deep into the sky.

The wild metal wind could completely melt the blood poison.

The surviving blood elementalists weren't willing to stay idle and so they retaliated frantically. Their division leader had committed suicide, they had been surrounded, and they knew that they weren't going to be lucky enough to live past today, so they were going to fight and bring down as many as they could before they perished.

The blood rays did not grant the bitingly cold sword rays easy access.

Within a short time frame, the Sky Edge Division had accumulated a high number of casualties.

Karakorum Polaris appeared calm but was shaking inside. The Ardent Flower Blood Division hadn't actually crumbled yet. She could imagine how cruel the battle must have been for the Spear of Heavy Cloud.

Contending against the Ardent Flower Blood Division one on one and causing enormous damage without falling into a disadvantageous situation was a remarkable feat that forced her to re-evaluate the Spear of Heavy Cloud's combat power.

The battle had already ended when the Infantry Division arrived.

Seeing the ground full of corpses and the battlefield in complete

disorder, Silver Soldier had a grave expression on his face. He was reenacting the bitter battle scenario in his head.

Shi Xueman was inspecting the campground and encouraging the injured.

Upon seeing Shi Xueman, Silver Soldier called out in surprise, "You..."

Shi Xueman shook her head slightly as an indication for him to shut his mouth. While holding onto the Cirrus, she walked around the camp once to examine everyone before handing over the remaining work to Jiang Wei.

She brought Karakorum Polaris and Silver Soldier to somewhere private.

With a worrying look on her face, Karakorum Polaris explained to Silver Soldier, "She forcibly compressed the water elemental energy from the sea of cloud into her body. There are now a lot of impurities that are hard to dispel."

Shi Xueman was very calm however. "I had to do it under those circumstance, or I would have lost my life. It isn't a major problem for my elemental energy to receive some damage."

Silver Soldier knew not how to console her. When he thought about how she had stopped him from talking and encouraged the soldiers, he couldn't help but feel deep veneration for her.

After some thought, he started, "You guys were seriously injured this time. Why not retreat and rest for some time? Heal your injuries first. Even with replenishment, you'll need to train for some time."

Karakorum Polaris reminded, "The God-subduing Peak should be here soon. How about we go and receive it first? The Ardent Flower Blood Division is very powerful and our odds of success aren't high. With the help of God-subduing Peak, we will be much better off."

Silver Soldier already knew that the Karakorum Division had sustained significant injuries.

At that he nodded. "Alright. Let's all go back and receive it. The quake caused by the destruction of the Ardent Flower Blood Division isn't something our three novice military units can handle. Converging with Shenwei and Caijue's combat divisions is the way to go."

Shi Xueman found his suggestion reasonable and agreed right away. "Let's all go then."

Chapter 543: Reward

"Shi Beihai's daughter indeed," Madam Ye praised as she read the battle report over and over again.

Nian Tingfeng stood at the side, smiling. "Like father, like daughter indeed. She's quite similar to her father. I was also very surprised when I received the report and only handed it over to you after three confirmations."

"Yeah." Madam Ye sighed sorrowfully. "It's been so many years since the blood catastrophe, and speaking of which, this is the first time the God of Blood's organizational structure has been destroyed."

Nian Tingfeng responded respectfully, "It's all because of your wisdom, Madam. The situation was so rotten, but you emerged, overturned it, and saved us from the crisis."

Madam Ye burst into laughter. "You're getting better at bootlicking, eh."

Nian Tingfeng cried out, "These are my heartfelt words! Others aren't aware of your troubles, but I've seen them all."

Unconcerned, Madam Ye smiled. "Why care about them? They're either old men one step into their coffins, a bunch of overindulgent fellows, or a group of impulsive and brainless people who think that their enthusiasm can change the world. There's nothing to worry about!"

"You’re right, Madam!"

Madam Ye flicked the report lightly with her fingers and mumbled, "What do you think of this pagoda cannon?"

Nian Tingfeng replied, "What a sharp eye you have, Madam! Your humble servant thinks that this pagoda cannon is one of the key reasons why Shi Xueman was able to resist and prevail over the Ardent Flower Blood Division. Its appearance has had a great impact in that battle. Before, there were not any weapons that could allow those who were of lower skill levels to attack and kill Masters or blood elementalists with Ability of God. Vice Division Leader Tao Feng of the Ardent Flower Blood Division died directly under the might of the pagoda cannon. His body and soul were utterly crushed."

Madam Ye nodded and said in a low voice, "Go on."

"Yes." Nian Tingfeng sorted his thoughts out. He had just gotten the battle report a short while ago after all. He added, "Be it the blood elementalists or our own people, the number of Master level experts determined the combat strength. Strong Master level experts were extremely useful on the battlefield and yet, the pagoda cannon is a threat to their lives. Even if the pagoda cannon was targeted only at the enemy’s Master level soldiers, it could greatly restrain their military unit."

Madam Ye sighed and asked after a short while, "Then are we able to forge a pagoda cannon?"

Nian Tingfeng answered, "I've studied the Spear of Heavy Cloud's pagoda cannons. In the previous ambush battle, the Hellfire Pagoda Cannon's performance was very remarkable as well. At that time, I was wondering if we could create it. After asking some master weaponsmiths, I was informed that forging it isn't difficult. The snout of the lava-spitting beast is difficult to obtain, but not impossible. The problem is not the pagoda cannon, but the snow lava. Only the Central Pine Valley can create snow lava. Many have tried to get ahold of its recipe, but no one has succeeded yet."

Madam Ye was rather surprised to hear that. "The Central Pine Valley's leader is that laborer named Ai Hui? Pretty capable fellow, always coming up with new things."

Nian Tingfeng replied, "He's Wang Shouchuan's only student."

"No wonder!" Madam Ye continued in realization, "A famous teacher producing an outstanding student. Nothing surprising. I've underestimated him, and he actually went on to create such a quality weapon by himself. He might excel someday."

Nian Tingfeng stood tall at the side, lowering his head without making a sound.

Madam Ye added suddenly, "Award Shi Xueman on behalf of Skyheart City. Didn't we reward them with a God-subduing Peak previously? Give them another! The Spear of Heavy Cloud sustained heavy losses and is in urgent need of replenishment of

their manpower. Give her the authority to seek local recruits. Also, the Spear of Heavy Cloud is an important combat division of Beyond Avalon, but has too few Masters. Give her five of them. We can give Shi Xueman a list of Masters to select from. The Surveillance Division will provide a few and the other families will provide the rest. Pick wisely."

Nian Tingfeng nodded. "I understand."

He was speechless. Even he would find it difficult to turn down such a generous offer. One God-subduing Peak and five Masters... even if Shi Xueman knew that there was possibly a hidden motive, she might still be moved.

Since these were enough to substantially improve the Spear of Heavy Cloud’s power.

Pleased, Madam Ye looked at him and said, "Inform those selected to obey Shi Xueman’s orders and not to act willfully. Of course, do not pressure her if she doesn’t need them."

"Yes!"

Madam Ye said suddenly, "Find a way to get this report to Newlight City."

Nian Tingfeng shuddered, "I understand."

He retreated with a respectful bow and realized that he was

breaking out in a cold sweat.

The sunlight was shining down on him, but Nian Tingfeng couldn’t feel any warmth.

"Sir!"

The subordinate waiting below gently reminded him upon seeing that Nian Tingfeng was lost in thought.

With a quiver, Nian Tingfeng regained his senses. "Return to the camp."

He smiled bitterly. He was actually frightened by a woman. He had thought that she coveted the pagoda cannon and hadn’t expected her to want the news to be brought to Newlight City.

Getting someone else to do the dirty work–classic!

There was Master’s Glory in Skyheart City, so Madam had confidence, but Newlight City had nothing except for people. If this news was spread, Newlight City would seek out the recipe for snow lava at any cost.

Watching the fires burn across the river, Madam Ye was waiting for the right time. For example, when Ai Hui was killed and the Central Pine Valley lacked a leader. Then, she would be able to incorporate these soldiers into her troops in the name of justice and revenge.

Killing two birds with one stone!

What a good game plan. All it took for her to come up with something this brilliant was reading that battle report. How amazing!

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The Blood of God’s army camp.

Nangong Wulian looked at the soldiers rushing into the tent and asked in annoyance, "Who let you in?"

A high ranking military officer stepped out and answered, "It’s very urgent, please forgive us!"

Nangong Wulian’s heart thumped. He was prepared to flare up, but seeing the panicked looks on their faces, he had a premonition. "What happened?"

"The Ardent Flower Blood Division has been destroyed and Xing Shan has died in battle!"

Nangong Wulian was stunned. "What did you say? The Ardent Flower Blood Division was destroyed? Wiped out?"

The soldiers quickly gave a battle report in trembling voices.

Nangong Wulian inhaled a deep breath. "So it’s still Shi Xueman?"

"Yes."

Nangong Wulian flew into a rage, cursing aloud, "Trash! Bunch of trash! Taken down twice by a woman. You guys are worse than trash! Are you all not useless? Tell me. What use are you guys?"

Everybody lowered their heads, not daring to retort.

After giving them a scolding, Nangong Wulian’s face turned pale, and he started pacing back and forth.

The God Nation had always had the upper hand and the Avalon of Five Elements was relying on the Wall of North Sea as their last straw of hope. On the battlefield, the God Nation had a major advantage as well and had basically suppressed the elementalists. If not for Shi Beihai defending the Wall of North Sea, the Avalon of Five Elements would’ve long since been razed to the ground. All of the God Nation looked down on the Elders Guild and felt that only Shi Beihai was worthy of their respect.

This wasn’t a simple defeat. It was the first time the God Nation faced such an devastating defeat. How unlucky. Needless to think, Nangong Wulian knew how angry His Majesty would be upon hearing this news!

And he would have to bear the blame!

Thinking about this made him panic even more. His Majesty had bestowed the Heart of God in response to Ye Baiyi's defeat. He would definitely not let Nangong Wulian off the hook easily now that the latter had made such a huge blunder.

He would have to save himself!

Not only Nangong Wulian, but the other soldiers were also feeling anxious. This was the worst defeat ever in the whole history of the Blood of God. His Majesty's rage wasn't something anyone could endure.

"Why are you guys still standing here?" Nangong Wulian's face was as white as sheet. "Go out and attack! Wipe Beyond Avalon out and bring Shi Xueman back to her to His Majesty or else we're all dead!"

"But Sir Ye isn't awake. Without his orders..."

"Are my words not clear enough?" Nangong Wulian seethed with anger. "I'll be straight with you guys. I'll eliminate the families of those who make me lose face in front of His Majesty."

Seeing the hesitant look on the soldiers' faces, Nangong Wulian suppressed his anger and took a deep breath. "I'll tell him when he wakes up, but if you guys continue dilly-dallying, we might as well just sit around and wait for death."

The soldiers made eye contact, knowing it was time to make a choice.

"We'll leave Sir Ye to you and set off now!"

Then, they hurriedly left .

Shortly after, a bugle horn sounded and the voices of men mixed with the whines of blood fiends were heard continuously.

The army was setting off!

The atmosphere over at the Spear of Heavy Cloud wasn't too great. No one seemed happy about their victory. They had lost too much this time. A quarter of their soldiers were gone and half of the survivors were injured. This was the result of occupying a defensive stance.

It was considered a heavy loss for a new combat division like the Spear of Heavy Cloud, especially with the death of 13 Central Pine Faction veterans.

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Shi Xueman and the others weren't the least bit happy. Members of the Central Pine Faction were all survivors from the blood catastrophe. They had fought alongside one another in Central

Pine City and survived through the battle together. Their friendship ran deep.

Along the road, upon seeing the Spear of Heavy Cloud's flag, other combat divisions rushing to the front line would clear a path for them out of respect.

News had already spread and the Spear of Heavy Cloud's reputation skyrocketed, even surpassing that of the Sky Edge and Infantry Divisions. It was currently the premier combat division for elementalists.

Shi Xueman advised these combat divisions not to stay idle at the moment since the enemy would soon take revenge.

Yet, no one heeded her warning.

The Ardent Flower Blood Division's destruction and Skyheart City's rewarding of the Spear of Heavy Cloud made everyone hopeful that one day they, too, could create such a miracle and make a name for themselves!

Blood elementalists weren't undefeatable after all!

Shi Xueman watched their disappearing silhouettes and shook her head helplessly. She knew that their victory was due to luck. If not for Wang Xiaoshan, the pagoda cannon, Fatty's breakthrough, and the Sky Edge's reinforcement...

The distant sky was gloomy, and her heart was disturbed.

Chapter 544: Central Pine Valley

Central Pine Valley.

[Viridescent Flower], type 4800.

Duanmu Huanghun stood motionlessly like a statue. Ai Hui and Lou Lan visited him regularly, but he was still engrossed in his own moment of enlightenment. No one dared to disturb him, but they were somewhat worried. They had never seen such a prolonged moment of enlightenment.

Two months had passed, but he had yet to waken. It was as if he had fallen into a deep sleep and lost consciousness.

He remained spotless, but the aura surrounding him fluctuated.

Sometimes it was tranquil, other times it surged. Occasionally, the wind circled around his body, but periodically, the whole bamboo forest was completely still, like an impenetrable steel jungle.

The bamboo forest grew lusher as the withering drifting jadesword bamboo leaves created a magnificent sight. Not only the bamboo forest, but the Central Pine Valley's vegetation was also growing wildly, perhaps due to Duanmu Huanghun's influence.

A sword ray flashed across the sky.

As if out of nowhere, an enormous Pinwheel Sword appeared in the sky above the Central Pine Valley.

The children who were training raised their head and looks of anticipation appeared on their faces. They had seen for themselves how the Pinwheel Sword came and went like the wind, mighty and unpredictable. Three kids clung onto Ai Hui, wanting to sneak into the Sword of Lightning. Ai Hui had promised them that they could join the combat division if they were capable enough.

As such, the children in the Central Pine Valley trained passionately and diligently.

The Pinwheel Sword gradually descended and a group of sweaty men jumped off of it.

"How satisfying. How are we going to use azure wings when we have gotten used to the Pinwheel Sword?"

"Yeah. Azure wings are as slow as tortoises."

Everyone talked about azure wings with a look of resentment. The Pinwheel Sword’s speed exceeded that of any kind of azure wings. Even those known for speed weren’t comparable to the Pinwheel Sword. Needless to say, slower flight options, like the Fiery Floating Cloud, lagged far behind.

Once they had gotten used to the Pinwheel Sword’s lightning speed, no one was able to endure the exasperatingly slow speed of

azure wings.

"I just don’t know when we’ll be able to go to the front line! Big Sister claimed victory once again!"

"Boss said we’re not at actual combat standard yet."

"Boss demands too much from us. Five swords in one breath... how’s that possible?"

The so-called "five swords in a breath" meant that the Pinwheel Sword had to complete five entire attacks in one breath. If it was just one person, with their current sword mastery, they could easily execute five strikes. However, using the Pinwheel Sword to execute five strikes was extremely challenging. So far, they had yet to succeed.

"Yeah, five perfect resonances in one breath. How unrealistic."

"Three are enough. I don’t believe anyone can block our triple strike!"

"Not even a Grandmaster!"

People were discussing fervently when someone suddenly shouted, "Zhiguang, how about you talk to Boss?"

Shi Zhiguang had become one of Boss’s favorites. Everyone knew

that Boss thought highly of him and regarded him as the future top candidate of sword operator.

Shi Zhiguang remained unmoved. He spread his hands out and said, "Forget it. However he wants us to train, let’s just do it. I still have to practice embroidery later on. Seeing embroidery needles make my fingertips numb."

"Hahaha, Shi Zhiguang is going to be the Central Pine Valley’s first seamstress!"

"Not many of us are as virtuous as Zhiguang!"

After being ridiculed, Shi Zhiguang did not get angry. Instead, he said, "You guys better treat me well. If I can’t master embroidery, none of us will be going to the battlefield!"

"Aye, I really want to fight as soon as possible. I heard that the Spear of Heavy Cloud was severely depleted and practically ruined. How worrying."

"Boss is definitely feeling even more anxious!"

"Yeah."

Everybody subconsciously looked up at Ai Hui, who was absorbing lightning on Blackfish Mouth Mountain’s peak. A ring of faint clouds were fastened to the mountain like a hat.

Every now and then, silvery light would streak across the ground. Rumbling booms could be heard in the air as well.

"Everybody worked hard! Elemental soup is here!"

Lou Lan’s enthusiastic voice rang, immediately producing cheers.

Seeing everyone greedily gulping down the soup, Lou Lan’s eyes narrowed into two crescent moons.

Shortly after, Lou Lan turned around and looked toward the mountain top. The conical bamboo hat was becoming fainter and gradually dispersing. A figure completely wrapped in bandage was revealed.

On the mountain peak, Ai Hui exhaled a long breath.

Hu. Whoosh.

A white swordlike aura appeared with an indistinct lightning flickering inside it.

Behind the red crystal sheet, a light ray flashed past.

He hadn’t been training for nothing. His body was still becoming thinner day by day, but the sword cloud within his body had been growing consistently. He carefully controlled the volume of the

lightning intake in order to prevent over-absorption, which would damage his body.

The sword cloud was now like an orb solid cloud . It rotated slowly, churning indeterminately. At times lightning would flash inside of the cloud orb. Beneath it, there were three tender young sprouts that emitted faint green light.

Although the green light was thin, it protected the sprouts firmly.

The three young sprouts were transformed from the Vitality Branches!

The green light continuously seeped into Ai Hui’s flesh to nourish his terrible body. It was precisely the three Vitality Branches that prevented his body from worsening. The green light released by the branches was the source of life.

Ai Hui looked to the horizon.

The mountains previously accumulated with snow had regained their verdant colors. The sky remained boundless, and the figure that flew by was silent, leaving no trace. It only flitted across the mountain range, producing a gust and faint bell-like laughter.

Ai Hui was slightly out of it.

The good news was that Iron Lady had won. The bad news was

that it was a bitter victory.

He had to be quick.

He took a deep breath and suppressed his worry. Reason told him that being anxious wasn't going to be of any help at this point. Be it the Sword of Lightning or himself, they were further away than anticipated.

Until now, the Pinwheel Sword could only execute one sword move in a breath. Such inefficiency was preventing it from unleashing its advantage in speed. They only had one Pinwheel Sword, and if it could only release one strike per breath, its contribution in battle would be seen as pathetic. It would then be practically useless in the war.

Shi Zhiguang's piloting standard was very lacking. Only by maintaining its speed combined with directional changes could the Pinwheel Sword survive in battle. Its defensive power was far behind that of a God-subduing Peak.

His current state had become a problem as well. He was worried about the sword cloud and not his body. Could a sword cloud in this state handle a battle? If it couldn't even persevere through a battle, he would only become everybody's burden.

These problems were actually very easy to solve, but they required sufficient time.

If they had an adequate amount of time, executing five strikes in a breath wouldn’t be a problem. If they had enough time, Shi Zhiguang’s standard would rise significantly because of his potential. If they weren’t short on time, Ai Hui’s sword cloud would grow strong enough to assist him in a major battle.

Yet, what they lacked most now was time.

Upon being informed of the severity of Iron Lady and her combat division’s injuries, Ai Hui had been looking ghastly for the past couple of days.

Not only him, but the members of the Sword of Lightning were training much more intensely since they were all feeling very anxious

Yet, Ai Hui knew that this was precisely the time that they needed to maintain their composure.

He grabbed the sword hilt, the anxiety in his heart vanishing. His whole person had "cooled" down instantly. The sword was like an extension of his body as his thoughts and perception spread along the body of the blade.

With a tremble of the sword tip, it ripped across the sky, taking in and spitting out sword light.

A gush of power channeled outward from the sword hilt, carrying his body up into the air and transforming into a sword ray

that descended toward the valley from the mountain peak.

The cloud layer dispersed. Sunlight sprinkled over the land, illuminating the mellow and smooth sword ray, producing a dazzling sight.

Members who had just finished their elemental soup were just in time to witness this scene. It wasn't the first time they had seen Boss's swordplay, but not once had it failed to take their breaths away.

Everyone held their breaths and looked toward the sky admiringly as the sword ray formed a beautiful, painting-like scene.

Gu Xuan was especially bewitched by it all.

Boss's swordsmanship was becoming increasingly unimaginable and mysterious.

Gu Xuan's swordsmanship wasn't at a low standard to begin with, yet he couldn't understand Boss's swordsmanship at all. Whenever he saw Boss's sword ray, he would repeatedly simulate it in his mind and wonder if he would be able to execute such a beautiful sword move as well.

Beautiful was the first impression people had of Boss's sword ray.

Breathtakingly stunning!

Everyone knew what kind of person Boss was. He was mean, petty, stingy, cold, ruthless, and even his battle style was blunt and efficient. Basically, there was nothing beautiful about his personality or style.

In comparison, Duanmu Huanghun's temperament was more fitting.

Yet, it was just beautiful. Even a sword reed that Boss casually swiped with was so beautiful that Gu Xuan simply couldn't move his eyes off of it.

However, no matter how much he racked his brain, Gu Xuan was unable to comprehend and imitate Boss's amazing sword ray.

It seemed as though Boss could accomplish anything with a sword. It was unbelievable.

The sword ray was like a rainbow after the rain, gradually dimming and vanishing. Gu Xuan's face was still filled with surprise and admiration.

Ai Hui, who had descended and found Blind He, shouted, "This sword is about to be destroyed!"

Blind He took Ai Hui's sword, gently stroking the sword body. The eye in the center of his palm opened up, shooting out a light ray that swept across the sword body and instantly exposing dense

cracks.

Blind He explained, "Your sword ray contains lightning, which is very damaging to a sword. Even if it’s a Heaven-grade weapon, it would be unable to endure the impact. I’ve yet to find suitable ingredients."

"Just a Unity Sword will do, or else I won’t be able to train." Frustration was evident in Ai Hui’s tone. "Or do I really have to hang swords all over my body in future?"

Blind He responded, "Lightning is an primordial power, the nemesis of all living things. It’s a force even stronger than elemental energy, and no one has studied it before. I’ll need time to figure things out. Furthermore, the Unity Sword isn’t just any sword."

Ai Hui burst into laughter, feeling as though Blind He had just cracked a cold joke. "It’s a heaven-grade weapon. Aye, I know. Give me a few more to carry with me."

Blind He replied expressionlessly, "There’s only one."

Stunned, Ai Hui asked, "How come?"

"Haven’t got time to make more." Blind He groaned, "Been creating fire reservoirs."

Ai Hui now remembered.

Since the volume of training had increased, the amount of snow lava the Pinwheel Sword consumed had spiked as well. Plus, their original snow lava stores were depleting as well. Ai Hui had also considered the fact that the Spear of Heavy Cloud's victory was largely due to the Hellfire Pagoda Cannon's performance. He'd reckoned that the rise in price of the snow lava also contributed to Blind He's forging of more fire reservoirs in order to produce more snow lava.

However, he had still underestimated the influence of this victory.

Chapter 545: Pagoda Cannon Master

"Again!"

Boom!

A loud sound rang as white flames sprayed out from the pagoda cannon’s barrel.

As Fatty’s body sank a little, vapor rose up from all over his body.

A faraway hill exploded suddenly, causing fragmented rocks to fly everywhere. It was a magnificent sight.

The observing audience gasped in surprise.

"Wow, Fatty, you’re amazing!"

"What Fatty? Is that how you should address him? Don’t be foolish! Call him Master Fatty!"

"Oh yeah, Fatty’s a Master now. We gotta call him Master Fatty."

"But... Master Fatty doesn’t sound suave at all!"

"Still gotta call!"

…

Everybody was rather interested in Fatty’s performance. Time passed and the Spear of Heavy Cloud gradually recovered from their disaster. The respect and courtesy other military units had showered them with along the way gave even the lowest ranked elementalists a new lease on life.

They raised their heads and puffed out their chests, striding forward in high spirits. Their demeanor and appearance had undergone a complete transformation.

They sustained heavy injuries, but they were the victors. They had accomplished something people regarded as an impossible miracle.

The difficult victory had given this novice combat division an extraordinary morale boost. They were no longer afraid, and the painful loss reminded them not to be arrogant or get carried away.

Fatty had become a popular figure in the Spear of Heavy Cloud. If not for his last shot, the strange white flames that almost collapsed the Ardent Flower Blood Division, their victory wouldn’t have been certain. Even if they had won, they would’ve incurred a heavier loss.

Every time they pitched camp, Shi Xueman would allow Fatty to demonstrate his pagoda cannon.

Until now, Fatty was still unsure of his Path of Master. Shi Xueman was very knowledgeable, but was somewhat unable to make any sense of it either.

Fatty's cannon attack had indeed become entirely different.

Placing the same pagoda cannon in Fatty's hands would produce a very disparate power when used by another gunner. Ordinary fire elementalists' cannon attacks would only produce a long thin flame that carried a red glow and injured the target by piercing through its body. In Fatty's hands, however, the flames sprayed by the cannon barrel were much bigger. The flames were pure white and burned even more fiercely. Its damage was much more variable as well. Sometimes it would produce white flames like in the previous battle, but it could also produce an explosion and even ring-shaped bullets.

Yet, Fatty was unable to account for this.

Including Fatty, other than being overwhelmed with shock and admiration, everyone felt glad. Only Shi Xueman was keenly aware that a whole new profession had been born.

Fatty was the first ever Pagoda Cannon Master.

No one really placed heavy regard onto the pagoda cannon since it was a new weapon that hadn't been released for long. Even the core members of the Central Pine Valley didn't think highly of it. If not for the Spear of Heavy Cloud's mass recruitment of fire elementalists, Shi Xueman wouldn't have thought about using

pagoda cannons in battle.

New fire elementalist recruits were rather weak. Even with the help of snow lava in their daily training, they needed a much longer time to reach an elite elementalist's level. Because of that, the pagoda cannon, which demanded little from fire elementalists, but produced considerable power, came into Shi Xueman's field of view. After a period of verification, it ultimately became the Spear of Heavy Cloud's standardized weapon.

At that time, she even purchased, through Qiao Meiqi, a batch of lava-spitting beast snouts in order to forge more pagoda cannons.

The emergence of a pagoda cannon Master allowed the Pagoda cannon's might to undergo a fundamental change.

The pagoda cannons in ordinary fire elementalists' hands were more like a strengthened bow and arrow. It was mightier than an ordinary bow and arrow, but its rate of fire was much slower and required more manpower to operate.

Yet, in the hands of a Pagoda Cannon Master, its flaws disappeared. It became mightier, and more importantly, more battle tactics became available for use.

It was very difficult to become a Master. Fatty also became a Master somewhat accidentally, and only heaven knew when the next Master would emerge. Yet, the birth of a Pagoda Cannon Master meant that its potential had far exceeded everyone's initial prediction.

Shi Xueman was thinking about how to unleash its full potential and decided to pester Fatty for every single detail.

"How did you control the cannon attack?"

"Was the snow lava able to sense it? What state was it in?"

...

Tormented, Fatty felt as though his brain was about to combust. He was someone who went by gut feeling. Ai Hui was the one who liked digging up roots and getting to the bottom of things. Although Fatty was very pleased about becoming a Master, he absolutely did not dare to act boastfully in front of Big Sister. Even Ai Hui lowered his noble head before her abuse of authority, so Fatty was merely a docile baby in front of her.

Shi Xueman started gathering more and more information to gain a rough idea of the special traits of a Pagoda Cannon Master.

She asked Fatty, "Do you think there's still room for improving the pagoda cannon?"

"Of course!"

Indeed, Shi Xueman thought to herself. She added, "How so?"

Gesturing with his fingers, Fatty started, "The cannon’s structure can be simplified. I’m able to use it single handedly because I’ve stripped it down many times. It would be good for Ai Hui to use it too since that fellow would definitely modify until it was unrecognizable. The lava-spitting beast’s snout makes a pretty decent cannon barrel, but it’s a little weak and is unable to endure a slight increase in the amount of snow lava. Leaving snow lava in the fire reservoir is simply too hazardous..."

Fatty rambled on, as if enumerating one’s family valuables.

Zu Yan, who stood by the side, was stunned. He had never seen Fatty speaking with such frankness and assurance. To him, Fatty was a bum, all take and no give. He would never sit if he could lie down and would never stand if he could sit.

Shi Xueman noticed people approaching and interrupted, "I’ll leave the modifications to you then."

Fatty’s eyes lit up. He kind of liked that idea, but immediately started grumbling, "But there’s no master weaponsmith. If only Blind He was here."

Shi Xueman responded bluntly, "I’ll think of something."

Fatty was somewhat excited and somewhat distressed. "I’ll have to think about it too."

Shi Xueman continued, "I have a mission for you now."

She saw some elementalist guards stopping a group of people. The leader of the group wore armor and was surrounded by a bunch of guards.

Fatty was puzzled. "What mission?"

Shi Xueman said, "See that group of people? They're interested in our Hellfire Pagoda Cannon. Go receive them."

Fatty stared blankly while pointing at himself. "Me?"

Shi Xueman replied, "You're the first ever Pagoda Cannon Master. Of course it's you."

Fatty was rather satisfied with her answer. "Then am I not quite powerful?"

"Of course," Shi Xueman answered with certainty. "You're the secret weapon responsible for our victory. You deserve the most credit."

Blushing, Fatty responded, "Everyone worked hard together."

Immediately after, his tone changed. "Any reward?"

"Yes!" Shi Xueman answered straightforwardly. "Other than the God-subduing Peaks, Skyheart City also sent a batch of treasures

and you'll get to pick. Also, you'll get essence elemental beans! A million of them!"

Fatty was over the moon. He rubbed his hands together in anticipation. "But how can I accept... how can I..."

Things were different now. There had been a steep decline in the production of essence elemental beans, so a million of them cost an enormous sum of money.

"But you know that the division's budget is tight." Shi Xueman changed the topic. "Do you reckon it's easy to imitate the pagoda cannons?"

After some thought Fatty answered, "It's quite easy. Even I was able to create a simple single man pagoda cannon. Perhaps you're worried about others making fakes? It's easy, but they don't have snow lava."

Shi Xueman asked, "Then can we sell snow lava to them?"

Fatty's eyes shone brightly. "Oh my god! How could I have missed such a brilliant business idea? We'll be a monopoly. That's stable profit!"

Shi Xueman continued, "So, go demonstrate what the pagoda cannon can do. You're the only one here who's done business before. What do you think?"

Fatty patted his chest in assurance. "No problem!"

Shi Xueman led Fatty toward that group of people and greeted them in a friendly, manner "I am Shi Xueman, and you are?"

The man in armor half rose and responded politely, "My armor makes it inconvenient to bow, please forgive me. I’m Ke Ning, division leader of the Blue Flag Division."

Shi Xueman greeted, "Nice to meet you, Division Leader Ke."

Recently there had been innumerable combat divisions popping up like springtime bamboo shoots, and she was unfamiliar with many of those names.

Ke Ning gazed at the hill that had exploded earlier and asked somewhat curiously, "Was that a demonstration of the legendary pagoda cannon?"

"Legendary pagoda cannon" made Shi Xueman smile. "Yes."

Ke Ning’s eyes lit up, and he asked with embarrassment, "This is bold of me, but could I please take a tour around this area?"

Shi Xueman replied generously, "Sure, I’ll let Master Qian Dai bring you around. He is a Pagoda Cannon Master, the one responsible for singlehandedly securing our victory in the battle against the Ardent Flower Blood Division."

Ke Ning had thought that Shi Xueman would've kept such a high-level weapon confidential. Who knew that she would be so generous about it and even allowed a Master to demonstrate its power. He was overjoyed and hurried expressed his gratitude, "Thank you so much! Thank you so much! Thanks for the hard work, Master Qian!"

The Hellfire Pagoda Cannon, once unknown and disregarded, had become a mighty weapon. As more details about the Spear of Heavy Cloud became public, more people started attributing the victory of the combat division to the Hellfire Pagoda Cannon.

Shi Xueman responded, "You're being too polite."

Fatty stood at the side with his chest puffed out. He nodded toward the group of people and said loftily, "Follow me."

Ke Ning and gang followed behind eagerly.

Sang Zijun was dumbstruck by it all and stuttered only after they were gone, "Boss, this..."

Shi Xueman wasn't smiling. She gazed afar and responded after a short while, "We've lost too much this time. If not for Fatty's breakthrough, we would be in a worse state. I'm wondering if we would have sustained less injuries if we had been better prepared and stronger? It's worth working hard if it means we can sacrifice even one less member. Plus, the Ardent Flower Blood Division is merely a blood division. What if we bump into a god division in the

future?"

Sang Zijun and Jiang Wei remained silent since they could relate to her thoughts.

Shi Xueman added, "We need more resources and more money in order to grow quicker and save more lives."

Everyone looked toward the nearby pagoda cannon.

Fatty was talking nonstop, his saliva splattering everywhere as he introduced his pagoda cannon to Ke Ning and gang, whose eyes were all brightly lit.

Chapter 546: The Popular Pagoda Cannons (1)

Ke Ning and his counterparts walked out from the camp of the Spear of Heavy Cloud. There was an unconcealable look of joy on Ke Ning's face, but he did not say anything. After they had walked far away from the Spear of Heavy Cloud's camp, Ke Ning suddenly asked an unremarkable-looking man, "Uncle Li, what do you think of this pagoda cannon?"

The unremarkable-looking man was a famous weaponsmith, Li Houtang.

"Extraordinary!" Li Houtang's voice was powerful and resonating.

"I'd like to hear the details," Ke Ning's eyes lit up.

"I wonder who created this pagoda cannon. It is truly extraordinary. When I first heard that the Spear of Heavy Cloud won the previous battles because of these pagoda cannons, I still thought everyone was exaggerating. After witnessing it for myself today, I realize that I am the one who was ignorant. The emergence of pagoda cannons will pose a huge threat to Masters on the battlefield in the future." A look of admiration appeared on Li Houtang's face.

"Can we imitate and make our own pagoda cannons?" Ke Ning quickly asked.

He was at an age where he was impatient for success. He wanted to achieve accomplishments in the current times of chaos.

Li Houtang and Ke Ning’s father had a deep relationship and he treated Ke Ning like his nephew. He praised Ke Ning, "Small Ning, excellent foresight! The pagoda cannons will definitely be popular in the future. It is a top-notch weapon in the battlefield."

Li Houtang remained silent for a moment and muttered, "I have carefully studied their pagoda cannons just now. It is not really difficult to forge a pagoda cannon. I more or less know how to do it. However, even if I know how to forge a pagoda cannon, there’s still the issue of the snow lava. Shi Xueman probably publicized the forging method for the pagoda cannon because she wants all of us to buy snow lava from her."

"I see!" Ke Ning came to a realization.

Li Houtang nodded his head and continued, "If the Central Pine Valley is willing to sell their snow lava, then we will not have any issue with obtaining it. However, from what I know, the snow lava is extremely expensive. Also, we might not even need snow lava for our pagoda cannons."

Upon hearing these words, Ke Ning looked slightly disappointed. He then asked, "How about we build one pagoda cannon and give it a try first?"

Li Houtang shook his head and replied, "From what I see, the

more pagoda cannons there are, the more useful they will be. On the contrary, it we only have one or two pagoda cannons, they will not be of any use to us."

"However, other than the Spear of Heavy Cloud, who else can equip so many pagoda cannons with snow lava?" Ke Ning asked again.

Li Houtang thought for a while and replied, "Perhaps we can think of a solution with regard to the fire liquid. After thinking about it, as long as a fire liquid is used, the pagoda cannons will work. A pagoda cannon actually imitates the lava-spitting beast. A lava-spitting beast spits out lava. Snow lava is so powerful that it's an A-grade fire liquid. We can mix a few B-grade fire liquids together and add in a small amount of snow lava. As long as we can get the proportion right, we can reduce our costs. Even though this mixture might not be as powerful as the snow lava, it is still powerful enough against ordinary soldiers."

Ke Ning's eyes lit up once more as he said, "Uncle Li, you're right! The Spear of Heavy Cloud's pagoda cannons are indeed powerful and can kill Masters, but then again, how can there be so many Masters on the battlefield? There are more ordinary soldiers. Since the fire liquid we will be using is weaker, the quality of our pagoda cannons can be lowered as well. Therefore, can we use other materials to replace the snouts of lava-spitting beasts?"

Ke Ning thought of the rain of fire released from Fatty's pagoda cannon. It covered an enormous range, making it impossible for anyone to dodge it!

Ke Ning’s eyes became increasingly bright.

If they could carry out a large-scale distribution of pagoda cannons for their soldiers, they could use the rain of fire to seal off the entire battlefield. This tactic might not be effective against Masters, but it would be an absolute nightmare for ordinary soldiers.

As for the enemy Masters, he could just leave them to his Masters!

The more Ke Ning thought about it, the more he felt this plan would work.

Li Houtang cast a satisfied look at Ke Ning. It wasn’t easy for someone of his age to not be deceived by the might of pagoda cannons and pursue more formidable forms of power.

He nodded his head and said, "We will think carefully about it when we get back to our camp. We need to seize the moment now. The pagoda cannons have just come into vogue, but the future battlefield will definitely be dominated by them."

Ke Ning and the rest nodded their heads.

.....

Nowadays, Thunder City had become extremely prosperous.

Being the place where the first Lightning Master, Ai Hui, had had his breakthrough, many people visited it and went to Thunder Mountain to get a feel for the concentrated lightning aura. Up until now, other than Ai Hui, no one was able to comprehend the power of lightning. Many people also understood that what Ai Hui had experienced was an extremely rare event.

For instance, there were also several master swordsmen, but none of them could be compared to Karakorum Polaris.

Thunder City's prosperity was directly linked to Ai Hui. Other than the travellers who were here to admire Thunder City, there were also many businessmen that came here for one thing—the snow lava.

Everyone knew there were only two places in this world where snow lava was sold. The first place was the Central Pine Valley, the second was Thunder City.

Ai Hui had a very close relationship with the mayor of Thunder City, Qiao Meiqi. Qiao Meiqi was the biggest retailer for snow lava. More than 90 percent of snow lava on the market was from Qiao Meiqi.

The Central Pine Valley was mysterious and dangerous. The bloody words at Lemon Camping Ground had yet to dry. That was the burial place for many Masters.

Nowadays, the Central Pine Valley's reputation had spread far

and wide. Some people did not believe the rumors they heard and tried to approach the Central Pine Valley. In the end, these people disappeared forever without a trace.

No scouts dared to get too close to the Central Pine Valley. They could only observe the Central Pine Valley from more than 50 kilometers away.

Qiao Meiqi was like the spokesman for the Central Pine Valley. He was the only one who could obtain snow lava from them. Furthermore, all of the Central Pine Valley's purchases of resources depended on Qiao Meiqi.

Ever since snow lava developed the potential as a weapon, its sale had increased sharply. Qiao Meiqi had made an immense amount of money. Furthermore, the Central Pine Valley was like a monster that devoured money. The colossal amount of money they earned from the sale of the snow lava was then converted into a colossal amount of resources.

Qiao Meiqi could earn money from both sides. It was impossible for him not to get rich.

However, as a visionary businessman, he clearly understood that the Central Pine Valley was the main reason why he could earn so much money. Nowadays, many people felt that he was just a puppet of the Central Pine Valley.

Qiao Meiqi did not deny such rumors. He knew that no one harbored any ill intentions against him because everyone was

afraid of the Central Pine Valley. The bloody wooden sign at Lemon Camping Ground frightened away many covetous and evil individuals.

Right now, after the Spear of Heavy Cloud achieved a huge victory, Shi Xueman’s prestige skyrocketed.

Qiao Meiqi led a luxurious life as he was able to earn top dollar safely. One could tell how happy he was by looking at the everlasting smile on his face when he checked his account book.

The supply of snow lava was almost empty.

"Given the current speed, we have to go to the Lemon Camping Ground a few days earlier." Qiao Meiqi could not restrain the happiness in his voice.

At this moment, he suddenly heard someone yelling from outside, "Is there snow lava for sale?"

The manager outside replied politely, "Yes, there is. Sir, how much do you need?"

"I want all of it!"

Qiao Meiqi could sense the wealth of the customer from inside his room. As such, he decided to go out and take a look. Judging from the person’s generosity with money, he must be a very rich customer!

Qiao Meiqi walked out of his room and took a close look at the appearance of the customer. It was a man who was around 30 years old.

"Sir, nice to meet you. I am Qiao Meiqi, may I know your name?" Qiao Meiqi greeted the customer politely. Following which, he instructed the manager, "Give this customer a 10 percent discount on the price of snow lava."

Apparently, that man knew who Qiao Meiqi was. When he heard there was a discount, a look of joy flashed across his face. Cupping his hands, he replied, "So it’s Mayor Qiao. Thank you very much, Mayor. I am the division leader of the Silversword Division, Liang Zidao."

Qiao Meiqi was a businessman and was very good with his words. Upon hearing Liang Zidao’s name, he became even more friendly. He replied, "So it’s Division Leader Liang, I have long heard of your renowned name!"

Nowadays, there were many combat divisions. Qiao Meiqi did not even know half of these combat divisions. Clearly, he had not heard of the Silversword Division. However, Qiao Meiqi was still beaming with smiles, looking extremely friendly.

After a while, the snow lava was brought out.

After taking a look, Liang Zidao furrowed his eyebrows and said, "You have so little snow lava?"

Knowing that he had encountered a legitimately rich man, Qiao Meiqi’s eyes lit up, and he asked, "Is this amount not enough for you?"

Liang Zidao shook his head repeatedly and replied, "Not enough, not enough. How can this little amount of snow lava be enough?"

"Brother Liang, how much snow lava do you need?"

"I need at least three more vats!" Liang Zidao signaled with his fingers.

Deep down, Qiao Meiqi was overjoyed. However, he replied with an apologetic look on his face, "Brother Liang, I am really sorry! These are all I have right now. Brother Liang, don’t worry, I will procure more as soon as possible!"

Upon hearing these words, Liang Zidao’s facial expression loosened up. He asked, "How long will that take?"

Qiao Meiqi clenched his teeth and replied, "Three days!"

"All right, I will wait here for three days then," Liang Zidao replied.

Suddenly, someone barged in and asked, "Is there snow lava for sale?"

.....

Huo Da was a Master that Qiao Meiqi had just hired.

After Qiao Meiqi became immensely wealthy, the thing he worried the most about was his safety. In times of chaos, one could live without money, but not without strength. When it came to hiring experts, Qiao Meiqi was willing to pay any price.

Currently, Thunder City had three Masters.

The money and benefits Qiao Meiqi offered were much more generous than that of other mayors. With three Masters overseeing Thunder City, the city had extremely good public security. No one dared to create trouble.

Huo Da led a carefree life. If there was no war, everything would be perfect. However, if it weren't for the war, Masters wouldn't be so valuable. He could not have lived such a life in the past.

The mayor had just summoned him. After packing his things, he flew straight to the mayor residence.

Qiao Meiqi was extremely polite to him. As such, he had never put on airs in front of the mayor. Usually, other than inviting the Masters to dinners, the mayor seldom summoned them. After arriving at Thunder City for so long, Huo Da had yet to receive any missions. Therefore, when Qiao Meiqi summoned him this time

around, he was very excited and was prepared to put up a good performance.

When he landed at the mayor’s residence, he shocked to see a massive crowd beneath him.

Was it a rebellion?

Those people glanced at Huo Da and turned back to continue arguing. No one cared about him.

"Do you understand what a ‘first come, first served basis’ is?! I came here earlier than you, so I will buy them before you!"

"How much I want to buy is my business, what can you do about it?"

"Stop bullshitting me. If you’re a man, let’s have a fight at the arena now."

"Do you think I am scared of you?"

…

When Huo Da saw these people arguing furiously, he felt puzzled. However, at the same time, he felt relieved that these people were not after the mayor.

When he entered the mayor’s residence, he was shocked by the mayor’s haggard face. He asked, "Mayor, what happened to you?"

Qiao Meiqi waved his hand and replied with a solemn look on his face, "Master Huo,

. I have an extremely urgent mission for you!"

A cold shiver went down Huo Da’s spine as he replied, "Mayor, feel free to tell me about it!"

Chapter 547: The Popular Pagoda Cannons (2)

Ai Hui still did not know that Iron Lady was actively promoting the pagoda cannons.

As usual, he was training at the mountain peak, absorbing the lightning from the clouds.

Suddenly, he stopped and shifted his gaze to a distant mountain range.

Someone was coming!

Ai Hui closed his eyes and grabbed his sword hilt. The range of his sensory perception extended and the world became unusually quiet and clear to him.

He "saw" a man holding a white flag walking through the forest towards Central Pine Valley. The appearance of that man was fuzzy. However, his movements were clumsy and his base level was low.

Ai Hui suddenly let out a yelp of surprise and looked at another direction.

What day is today? Why are there so many customers?

Ai Hui shook his head. Following which, he transformed into a streak of sword gleam and appeared in front of Gu Xuan and the rest. He said to Gu Xuan, "Stop training. Two guests are coming. Get some people and welcome them."

Huo Da did not expect his first mission to be transporting goods. He wanted to reject this mission. After all, he was a Master and he had his dignity.

Transporting goods? Is this a joke?

However, he could see the unconcealable anxiousness and seriousness in the mayor’s eyes.

Alright, the mayor had treated him rather well. He could only console like this.

Restraining his face from twitching, he forced himself to accept the mission.

However, when the mayor took out an astronomical number of essence elemental beans from the treasury and placed it before him, his eyes widened abruptly!

At that moment, he knew this was an extremely important mission!

He was not the only one. When the mayor took out the essence elemental beans, the noisy mayor residence quieted down

immediately. The glow and elemental energy undulations released by the essence elemental beans were filled with destructive power. Everyone was affected by it.

Subsequently, the mayor reminded him that the other party did not like to sell the snow lava on credit. If he did not see the essence elemental beans, he would not take out the goods. The mayor also told him that the other party had a bad temper and not to get into a conflict with him.

Right now, Huo Da was carrying these essence elemental beans and flying in the sky.

Honestly speaking, this was the first time he had come into contact with so many essence elemental beans. Every now and then, an evil thought would arise in his head. What if he ran away with them? However, his rationality eventually defeated his irrationality. In the current times of chaos, it was very fortunate for him to encounter a boss like the mayor. If he ran away with these essence elemental beans, he would not be able to find a place in this world to settle down.

Now he finally understood that whether or not a flight would be tiring depended on what the flyer was carrying. Even though he carried so many essence elemental beans, he did not feel tired at all. He was flying at his top speed.

When Huo Da thought of the mayor’s reminder, he took out the flag that he gave him. An eye-striking "Qiao" was written on the flag.

The mayor gave him the flag because he was afraid he might get injured accidentally. Huo Da did not completely agree with what the mayor thought. After all, he was a Master. How could he get injured so easily? Even though the story of the bloody sign at the Lemon Camping Ground spread like wildfire, he still felt that he could not get injured so easily.

Right now, all he wanted to do was complete the mission as soon as possible. The mayor had said that this mission was extremely urgent and that he needed it to be completed as soon as possible.

After a while, a few figures appeared in front of him.

Huo Da became energized. Central Pine Valley had a mysterious background. Various versions of rumors surrounded it, and he was very curious. Whether it was the so-called "Lightning Blade", the influential Shi Xueman, or the disciple of Grandmaster Dai, Duanmu Huanghun, all of them had achieved renowned feats.

Right now, they had one more Pagoda Cannon Master. He was the first ever Pagoda Cannon Master, Qian Dai.

"There is a ferocious tiger in Central Pine" was the mainstream opinion that everyone had of Central Pine Valley. In everyone’s eyes, Central Pine Valley wasn’t huge in size and it did not have many people; however, it was filled with experts.

However, when Huo Da saw the elementalists that came to greet him, a disappointed look appeared on his face.

They looked ordinary!

They could not even be compared to the weak guards of Thunder City. There was nothing special about them.

When the person saw Huo Da’s flag, he asked, "May I know who are you?"

"I am Huo Da from Thunder City. I am under the orders of my mayor to come here and purchase a batch of snow lava urgently," Huo Da replied humbly.

The other party cast a glance at him and said, "Follow me."

Huo Da had been sizing these few elementalists from Central Pine Valley along the way. He was greatly disappointed. Their elemental energy undulations were weak and inert. They lacked wariness as well, casually showing their backs to other people.

Was this the true strength of Central Pine Valley?

Huo Da felt very disappointed. It appeared that there was no lack of con artists in this world. Central Pine Valley was deliberately mystifying their existence to build up their reputation.

Huo Da followed the elementalist from Central Pine Valley to an empty earth-made city.

This city was....really ugly!

Compared to the prosperous Thunder City, this earth-made city was pathetically small. Furthermore, it was crudely made and it had no defensive capabilities. At this point in time, Huo Da was utterly disappointed. All he wanted to do now was to complete the mission and return to Thunder City as soon as possible. He was not willing to stay here any longer.

The elementalists from Central Pine Valley brought Huo Da to an empty house. Then one of them pointed to the house and said, "Wait inside."

Instead of getting angry, Huo Da wanted to laugh. This elementalist was weak, but he was arrogant, huh!

As a Master, no matter where Huo Da went, he would be treated with respect. This was the first time he was being bossed around since becoming a Master. He wanted to see how arrogant Central Pine Valley could be.

He strode in the house with his head high.

The house was empty. There was only a stone table inside. On the table, there were a pot of tea and a few ceramic bowls.

To Huo Da’s surprise, there was a person sitting front of the table.

This person was short and fat. His body was covered with dirt, making him looked utterly pathetic. His base level was very low as well.

The fat man was panting as he gulped down the tea. When he heard footsteps behind him, he turned around to see who it was.

When he saw Huo Da, he smiled warmly at him. "Are you here to buy snow lava too?"

He took a bowl and filled it up with the tea from the teapot. Then he placed it on the table where there was an empty seat. "Come and have some tea, you must have flown for a while."

Huo Da’s facial expression loosened up and then he sat down on the empty seat. With a reserved tone, he said, "Thank you."

He took a sip of the tea and he furrowed his eyebrows. It tasted really bad! In Thunder City, the treatment he received was top-notch. When was he ever served such lousy tea before?

The fat man asked smilingly, "Brother, which city are you from?"

"Thunder City, I am Huo Da," Huo Da replied. Then he asked, "Who are you?"

The fat man replied with a smile on his face, "My name is An

Chouchou, I’m from Newlight City."

Thud.

Huo Da’s hand trembled and his bowl dropped to the ground, splashing the tea over the floor.

.....

Newlight City.

"So she rejected?"

Madam Ye’s voice was calm like water, but it still sent a cold shiver down Nian Tingfeng’s spine. He lowered his head and replied, "Yes. Shi Xueman said that the Spear of Heavy Cloud currently doesn’t need so many Masters and she thanked Madam for your kind intentions."

Madam Ye smiled. "It’s normal for youngsters to have resolution. They need to hit a snag to know what this world is truly like."

"Madam is right," Nian Tingfeng replied.

"Anyway, what’s with the issue of pagoda cannons?" Madam Ye picked up the teacup in front of her and took a sip.

"Whenever the Spear of Heavy Cloud encamps, they will showcase the technology of pagoda cannons. They allow people to spectate and study the pagoda cannons. From the looks of it, I think they are trying to sell more snow lava." Nian Tingfeng looked somewhat helpless.

"Since when has Shi Beihai's daughter become a profiteer? It doesn't seem like something she would do." Madam Ye was astounded.

"I am also thinking whether or not it is Ai Hui's idea," Nian Tingfeng conjectured.

"Is the price of snow lava on the market dropping?" Madam Ye asked.

Nian Tingfeng shook his head and replied, "No."

"Then how can those ordinary people afford to use pagoda cannons? Even though the pagoda cannons are powerful, they consume a substantial amount of snow lava. Not many people are rich enough to use pagoda cannons," Madam Ye said.

"I heard they have discovered that B-grade fire liquids can be used as well. As long as they add a small amount of snow lava, the power of pagoda cannons won't reduce too much," Nian Tingfeng reported.

Madam Ye put down the teapot in her hand, and a mysterious

sense of panic arose in her heart.

The Elders Guild had long studied the pagoda cannon. The pagoda cannon was a first-class weapon, but it was very expensive to forge. Furthermore, it needed to use snow lava, and the cost of snow lava was very high. The pagoda cannon also had numerous weaknesses. For example, it needed to be erected, its attacking frequency was low, and etc. Actually, it was more suitable for attacking a city or a defensive battle.

Because of these weaknesses, even though the pagoda cannon was very powerful, the Elders Guild did not really care about it.

They certainly did not expect Shi Xueman to use the pagoda cannons to obtain a great victory.

Shi Xueman actively promoting the technology of pagoda cannons was unusual. Madam Ye also did not think that someone was able to come up with a solution for the weakness of high consumption of snow lava.

Her initial plan to ignite conflict between Newlight City and Central Pine Valley was unexpectedly disrupted by Shi Xueman.

Madam Ye looked very far into the future. The popularity of pagoda cannons would have a deep impact on the future. It had a deadly impact on her Master's Glory.

If a Grandmaster was an asset to a nation, then a Master was an

asset to the battlefield.

The number of Masters and their strength had a direct impact on the strength of a combat division. And the pagoda cannons were a weapon that could threaten Masters. In the past, only Central Pine Valley had pagoda cannons, and they did not have many of them.

With the rise of pagoda cannons, a Master’s importance on the battlefield would be reduced sharply in the future.

Madam Ye, who had placed all her chips in the Master’s Glory, undoubtedly would be the one that suffered the most losses.

After remaining silent for a while, she asked, "Do you have any solutions?"

Nian Tingfeng clenched his teeth and answered, "The success of pagoda cannons lies in the snow lava. If we can take control of the snow lava..."

He clenched his fist in the air abruptly.

A look of uncertainty flashed across Madam Ye’s face.

Even though Nian Tingfeng’s plan would settle the issue once and for all, it faced many impediments. Shi Xueman had just obtained a great victory, and her had reputation skyrocketed. She had done a meritorious service for Beyond Avalon. If they targeted Central Pine Valley at this point of time, it would deal a huge blow

to Skyheart City’s prestige. People would start to question Skyheart City’s impartiality.

Righteousness was a very important weapon in Madam Ye’s hands.

Moreover, Central Pine Valley’s strength worried Madam Ye very much. Up till now, no one knew how the Masters that tried to infiltrate Central Pine Valley had died.

If it was another city, that city would’ve already been razed to ground.

What should she do now?

Madam Ye could not help but clench her fists tightly. Master’s Glory was a war that she definitely had to win at all costs!

She took in a deep breath of air. With a determined gaze on her face , she asked, "Do you have any idea how to get rid of Central Pine Valley?"

Chapter 548: The Deep Conversation With Ugly Elephant

This was the first time Ai Hui had met An Chouchou.

An Chouchou, who was also known as "Ugly Elephant", was the current mayor of Newlight City. Under his leadership, Newlight City had changed beyond recognition. Even though Newlight City's prestige paled in comparison to Madam Ye's Skyheart City's, An Chouchou still did a great job by creating the prosperity it was enjoying now.

Using his performance, An Chouchou was able to gain the respect of everyone in the world.

His appearance was ugly, he was born poverty-stricken, and his base level was extremely low, and yet he could become the mayor of Newlight City. Everyone could not help but respect him for his achievements.

After finding out that this pathetic-looking fat man was the renowned "Ugly Elephant", Huo Da became reserved instantly, sitting down there quietly.

An Chouchou was sizing up Ai Hui as well.

Ai Hui's appearance was too weird. His entire body was covered with bandages and he wore two red crystal chips on his eyes, resembling a red-eyed mummy. An Chouchou had encountered

many experts before, and he had a very high adaptability towards weird-looking clothings.

Experts' tempers were usually different from ordinary people's as well. It was very normal to see some eccentricities in experts.

An Chouchou remained calm to Ai Hui's appearance and chuckled. "I have long heard about the legendary Lightning Blade. All this time, I have been thinking about when to pay you a visit, but I certainly didn't expect I would wait until today to do so. I heard that Brother Ai is injured, how's your injury now?"

A cold shiver went down Ai Hui's spine. The outside world did not know about his injury, hence, he did not know how An Chouchou had gotten wind of it. However, on second thought, he felt that the New Faction having a few spies was nothing to be surprised about. After all, they were a powerful faction.

Ai Hui did not want to beat around the bush and asked bluntly, "Ugly Elephant is a busy man and yet you're here personally. May I know what are you here for?"

An Chouchou was surprised at Ai Hui's bluntness. However, he regained his composure very soon and continued, "I am here to propose an alliance."

"Alliance?" Ai Hui was looking at An Chouchou doubtfully. "I don't quite understand what you're saying."

"Even though Central Pine Valley is small, it is powerful. Even though Newlight City is very huge, it is weak. Skyheart City uses righteousness as its banner and combat divisions as its sword. Master's Glory is about to be completed. Why would they let outsiders share a slice of their pie? The day Master's Glory is completed is the day that my faction and your faction are hegemonized," An Chouchou explained calmly.

Ai Hui laughed involuntarily and replied, "Newlight City is a huge city and you have numerous new citizens. It's normal for Skyheart City to view you as a threat. On the contrary, Central Pine Valley is so small. I'm afraid Madam Ye doesn't care about us at all."

"If that's the case, why is Miss Shi's Spear of Heavy Cloud conscripted?" An Chouchou chuckled.

Ai Hui was stunned momentarily.

"Brother Ai, you have underestimated yourself. Central Pine Valley possesses the technology of pagoda cannons, and snow lava is the key to its success. Currently, Madam Ye sees Central Pine Valley as an eyesore. On the battlefield, the Spear of Heavy Cloud's pagoda cannons were able to rid of the Ardent Flower Blood Division's blood elementalists that possessed the Ability of God. Therefore, it shouldn't be much of a problem for the pagoda cannons to get rid of Masters as well," An Chouchou said casually.

Ai Hui was terrified. He suddenly understood the severity of the issue.

Everyone knew that Master's Glory was Skyheart City's brainchild. If the pagoda cannons threatened the existence of Masters, wouldn't the Central Pine Faction become an impediment that Madam Ye would want to get rid of?

For a moment, Ai Hui was breaking out in cold sweat.

An Chouchou smiled and continued, "If I was Madam Ye, I would first use the name of righteousness to incite the public. A powerful weapon like the pagoda cannon is essential in the war against the blood elementalists. It's related to the fate of mankind, how can it be monetized? Then I would send Surveillance Division and force Central Pine Valley to hand over the refinement method for snow lava to the Elders Guild. Oh, I meant 'buy'. As long as Brother Ai is willing to sell the snow lava, the Ye family will still be willing to fork out a sum of money to buy it. Subsequently, the Elders Guild just needs to say that they will equip every combat division with pagoda cannons and provide them with snow lava. Naturally, no one will object to what they are doing. By then, will Brother Ai hand over the refinement method for the snow lava?"

Huo Da's facial expression changed drastically. He was regretting deeply now. If he knew something like this would happen today, he wouldn't have come even if the mayor kneeled down and begged him. At this moment, he was flustering. These two people were blatantly talking about such classified information in front of him. Would they kill him to prevent him from divulging this information?

Ai Hui, however, calmed down and picked up the teapot. Then he

filled up An Chouchou’s bowl with tea and said, "Brother Chou, don’t tell me you came all the way just to scare me?"

Deep down, An Chouchou was praising Ai Hui. Usually, when a person heard such words, his or her facial expression would change drastically. Ai Hui acted as if he wasn’t affected by it at all. He was calm and collected, and he still could joke about it. He was truly worthy to be the leader of Central Pine Valley.

"Therefore, I am here to propose an alliance with your Central Pine Valley." An Chouchou smiled brightly. "If you hand over the refinement method for snow lava to the Elders Guild, at least you can become a rich person. The Ye family will still show some leniency towards you. However, the case for us is different. Newlight City represents the new citizens. We have a lot of people, sothe Ye family will definitely not let us off. The Ye family will only feel relieved when Newlight City is destroyed, the New Citizen Faction’s Elders are dead, and the new citizens are broken up. It’s a pressing issue for Newlight City."

"If Central Pine Valley allies with Newlight City, we can keep the refinement method for the snow lava?" Ai Hui asked.

"As long as you form an alliance with Newlight City, when the Surveillance Division arrives at your doorstep, we will definitely send troops to assist you!" An Chouchou said with resolution.

"How do we form an alliance then?" Ai Hui asked again.

Deep down, An Chouchou heaved a sigh of relief, then he

answered, "We will enjoy the benefits of snow lava together. I will provide manpower and you will provide the refinement method for snow lava. Newlight City does not have a lot of things, but we do have a lot of manpower. We also have a lot of smiths. Therefore, we can carry out large-scale production of pagoda cannons and snow lava. Other cities don't have as many smiths as we have."

"How do we split the profits then?" Ai Hui continued to ask.

"We will split the profits evenly," An Chouchou replied.

"I roughly understood Brother Chou's idea. However, this is an important issue, so I have to think about it first." Ai Hui nodded his head.

"Of course." An Chouchou nodded his head as well. "But Brother Ai has to make your decision fast, as the Ye family is already taking actions."

"Alright, I get it," Ai Hui replied.

Following which, Ai Hui summoned Gu Xuan and asked him to bring An Chouchou to his resting place.

Ai Hui drummed his fingers lightly on the table as he pondered over the issue.

Huo Da looked as if he was sitting on a bed of needles, not daring

to move an inch. Previously, he was still looking down on Central Pine Valley. However, when he saw the renowned Ugly Elephant anxiously seeking alliance with Central Pine Valley, he knew how foolish he was.

Suddenly, Ai Hui turned around and stared at Huo Da.

Being stared at by the blood-red crystal chips, Huo Da's heart tightened. Was Ai Hui going to kill him? He felt the urge to run away, but his rationality made him stay.

"Old Qiao asked you to come?"

Huo Da's body was frozen. He summoned his courage and replied, "Yes."

"What's the matter?" Ai Hui asked.

"The Mayor wants to buy a batch of snow lava urgently. I have brought the essence elemental beans," Huo Da replied honestly.

"Are there many people buying snow lava?" Ai Hui asked?

"Yes, they are filling up the mayor residence," Huo Da nodded her head.

Ai Hui's mind jolted as he thought of a good idea. He said, "Go back right now and tell your mayor that if he wants the snow lava,

gather a batch of news villages and send them to Fishback City."

Huo Da heaved a sigh of relief in his heart. It seemed that he wouldn't be killed. However, very soon, he became surprised, "News villages?"

"Does Thunder City have them?" Ai Hui asked.

"I'm not sure." Huo Da shook his head.

He was a revered Master, so why would he care about such trivial matters of marketplace?

"No matter what, you have to ask Old Qiao to get them for me," Ai Hui instructed Huo Da with a solemn tone. "This matter is extremely urgent!"

When Huo Da heard the two words "extremely urgent", a premonition arose in his heart.

When Ai Hui saw that Huo Da did not say anything, he continued to ask, "Have you remembered what I told you to do?"

"Yes, I have memorized your words." Huo Da's voice was quivering slightly.

"Tell Old Qiao that how much snow lava he is going to get will depend on whether or not he does this job well," Ai Hui continued.

"I will convey this message to the Mayor." Huo Da nodded his head.

When Huo Da thought of the mayor residence that was fully packed with buyers, he knew how destructive this message was to the Mayor.

"Then what about the current batch of snow lava?" Huo Da asked carefully.

"Get this thing done first!" Ai Hui said bluntly.

"What about these essence elemental beans?"

"Oh, you bring them back then."

For a moment, Huo Da felt that he was going to cry. He painstakingly carried these essence elemental beans and flew here, and now he was going to carry them back to Thunder City?

At this moment, he suddenly heard Ai Hui muttering, "No, he flies too slow!"

Huo Da was annoyed. What a joke! He flew too slow? His azure wings were called "Comet Wings". They had an extremely fast speed. He flew like a comet with them. That was why they were called "Comet Wings".

Speed was a field that Huo Da specialized in. He could not help but blurt out, "Sir, I am using Comet Wings!"

"That's still too slow!" Ai Hui shook his head. Following which, he yelled towards outside, "Get me Shi Zhiguang!"

After a while, a tall and muscular man came in. His entire body was drenched in sweat. He asked, "Boss, you asked for me?"

Without saying anything unnecessary, Ai Hui said, "Zhiguang, I have a mission for you. Bring this Master to Thunder City. Ask the Mayor to find some news villages and gather them here."

"Okay!" Shi Zhiguang replied and prepared to run out of the house.

"Use Pinwheel Sword," Ai Hui instructed Shi Zhiguang. "Ask Gu Xuan to bring some men and go along with you. Take care of your safety."

"Yes!" Shi Zhiguang answered.

Huo Da could not believe his eyes. This muscular man that was built like a iron pagoda could fly faster than him? And what kind of azure wings was Pinwheel Sword? He had never heard of it before. Was it a new model?

He wanted to see what model of azure wings was faster than his Comet Wings!

Huo Da was filled with incredulity. He had decided that later he would compete with Shi Zhiguang's "Pinwheel Sword" to see who was faster.

"Set off immediately. Remember, this matter is extremely urgent! Get it done as soon as possible!" Ai Hui reminded them with a deep voice.

A cold shiver went down Shi Zhiguang's spine. Without saying anything, he broke into a run and dashed outside.

Huo Da quickly followed him.

After a while, Huo Da felt slightly puzzled. Shi Zhiguang wasn't using azure wings, he was actually running with his legs! Huo Da unhurriedly followed Shi Zhiguang, who was running frantically. Subsequently, they arrived at a huge and odd-looking structure.

Huo Da could not help but take a second look at the structure. Such an odd shape.

"Emergency gathering!"

"Old Gu, Boss wants you to bring a team of men and follow me on a mission."

"Alright!" Gu Xuan, who had just walked over, turned around and yelled, "Members from Merak and Megrez! Board the sword now!"

Replies resounded through the air. Huo Da saw a group of people run out from the crowd that was resting. All of them ran frantically towards the odd-looking structure with their foreheads beaded with sweat.

They ran up the structure and dashed into two pagodas.

Huo Da was slightly curious. Were their azure wings inside the pagoda?

"Come up!" Shi Zhiguang yelled at Huo Da.

Huo Da acknowledged him and went up structure with a confused look on his face. He was waiting for those members to equip their azure wings.

Suddenly, the floor beneath Huo Da trembled. His eyes widened abruptly.

It... It was actually flying!

Chapter 549: It’s Coming!

Every "first time" in life was always unpredictable.

For example, Huo Da certainly didn’t expect his first mission in Thunder City to be transporting goods. Shi Zhiguang and Gu Xuan also didn’t expect their first mission on the destructive Pinwheel Sword would be fetching people.

However, Boss had said that this matter was extremely urgent, so none of them dared to idle.

Shi Zhiguang stood at the position of sword operator with widened eyes, looking extremely focused. To him, the difficulty level of controlling the Pinwheel Sword to move forward at full speed paled in comparison to the difficulty level of controlling it to make complicated maneuvers.

Usually, his training was much more complicated than this. The Pinwheel Sword could not fly so fast. He had to control the speed, keep on changing directions, and finding suitable angles to make maneuvers.

Shi Zhiguang was extremely excited to be able to fly the Pinwheel Sword at top speed without any worries. Such a chance was hard to come by. Ever since he became the sword operator, his love for speed had reached an unprecedented level. Being as fast as lightning gave him a mysterious sense of thrill.

This was a speed that Shi Zhiguang found pleasurable. However,

from the moment the Pinwheel Sword took off from the ground, Huo Da's face had been deathly pale.

He was scared out of his wits!

In terms of size, the Pinwheel Sword was much more smaller than the God-subduing Peak. However, in terms of speed, the God-subduing Peak was not Pinwheel Sword's match. Not only the God-subduing Peak, but no flying machine that Huo Da had come across before, be it the Fiery Floating Cloud or azure wings, could match Pinwheel Sword's speed.

It was simply too fast!

Huo Da, who was specialized in flying, actually felt dizzy. It was too fast! The last time he felt dizzy was when he was twelve years old. That was the first time his teacher had brought him to fly.

At this moment, Huo Da finally understood why Ai Hui said that he was too slow.

As Huo Da got used to the speed of the Pinwheel Sword, the color of his face gradually returned to normal. A brand-new experience entered his body. He was slightly excited, looking as if he had gotten a new toy.

How was it possible that it could fly so fast?

Huo Da paid attention to the elemental energy changes taking

place in the Pinwheel Sword. Gradually, a look of awe and realization appeared on his face.

The Pinwheel Sword was indeed a sword!

The design of the Pinwheel Sword was very odd. There was a layer of sword gleam formed around it. The sword gleam was wide and thin, effortlessly slicing through the incoming gale.

Its flying style was very unique as well, resembling a stone that was skipping on water. The Pinwheel Sword would always slice through the blasting wind through various very small angles. It flew swiftly along the gaps within the wind instead of going directly against it.

Such insane creativity!

It was too perfect!

Huo Da never stopped exclaiming in admiration in his heart. In his eyes, the Pinwheel Sword was the perfect flying machine. No other flying machine could be compared to it. He sharply realized that the other flying machines would become obsolete with the emergence of the Pinwheel Sword.

It was simply like a streak of lightning.

He could not imagine how much fear and surprise such a sword gleam would cause in the enemy forces if it appeared on the

battlefield!

Huo Da's gaze subconsciously swept across the other people on the Pinwheel Sword.

Gu Xuan was older and more experienced than Shi Zhiguang. This was his first mission and his mind was tense. He had to do his best for this mission. Throughout the journey, he was on high alert. The two sword pagodas took turns to rest and keep watch.

When Thunder City appeared in Huo Da's line of sight, he was dazed. He found it very hard to believe what he had seen.

Had they really reached Thunder City?

Even though he had already accepted the extraordinary speed of the Pinwheel Sword along the way, he still received a huge shock when Thunder City appeared in his line of sight.

In Thunder City, the cloud defense layer was keeping watch over the city vigilantly.

Last time around, the battle of Masters destroyed more than half of Thunder City. In the process, the cloud defense layer was completely destroyed as well. The current cloud defense layer was built afterwards. Qiao Meiqi still remembered the lesson he learnt from that incident. Having immense wealth now, he built a cloud defense layer that was thicker and sturdier than before. Its defensive capabilities were more outstanding as well. Of course,

the price was much more expensive too.

The number of elementalists stationed on the cloud defense layer was more than before too. There were at least twenty elementalists.

Nowadays, Thunder City had tight security. Even if it was an ordinary day, the guards would not dare to idle at all. The Mayor had told them that any lazy behaviour would result in them being fired. The treatment that Thunder City's guards received was far better than the other cities', so everyone treasured their jobs very much.

Suddenly, someone asked puzzledly, "Do you all hear something?"

The rest stopped joking and listened attentively.

"Nothing."

"I hear nothing as well."

"What did you hear? Have you heard wrongly?"

Everyone shook their heads.

A puzzled look appeared on the face of the elementalist who heard something. Was it possible that he heard wrongly?

"What's that?" an alarmed cry broke out.

Everyone shifted their gazes and saw a pin-sized light spot in the distant sky. The light spot was very small but unusually bright. It was trembling slightly in the sky.

What was that?

The spot that seemed to be glowing with light was far away from Thunder City. They widened their eyes but still could not tell what it was.

"Is it a dire beast?"

"What dire beast is it? Who has seen this dire beast before?"

"I have never seen it before."

Just as everyone broke into a lively discussion, someone said, "Eh? Is it becoming slightly larger?"

Everyone took a closer look. The previously pin-sized light spot indeed became larger.

Became larger...

A fast-reacting elementalist’s facial expression changed drastically as he screamed, "It’s flying towards us!"

Everyone looked as if they had just woken up from a dream and all of their facial expressions changed. The inside of the cloud defense layer went into chaos.

"Alarm! Pull the alarm!"

"Cloud defense layer, activate!"

"Rainscreen defense, activate!"

"Elemental energy pools, all elemental energy pools take note!"

Various orders were being passed down continuously. The atmosphere inside the cloud defense layer was extremely tense. Everyone was on high alert, and a layer of perspiration had appeared on their foreheads.

An elementalist cleared his throat and yelled, "It’s too fast! We can’t lock onto it!"

The intense feeling of nervousness and fear altered the tone of his voice.

After a while, the dazzling light spot had become the size of a fingernail. It looked as if the sun was flying towards them! The

light spot was vibrating slightly, displaying its terrifying speed in great detail.

Buzz, buzz, buzz.

The elementalists could feel their bodies trembling. They quickly discovered that it was the cloud defense system that was trembling. The fragmented yet powerful energy undulations made the cloud defense system looked like if it was on a high-speed vibrating sieve.

"Not good! The elemental energy undulations are interfering with the cloud defense layer!"

An alarmed cry rang across the interior of the cloud defense layer. Everyone’s faces turned numb with fear.

What dire beast was it?

How was it possible for it to possess such an incredible speed?

The atmosphere of the cloud defense layer’s interior was solemn and tense.

The mayor residence.

Qiao Meiqi rubbed his temples. Not only did the number of buyers waiting outside the mayor residence not decrease, it was

increasing constantly. Reportedly, someone had developed a new type of fire liquid that was suitable for pagoda cannons. This fire liquid reduced the usage of snow lava.

This also meant that the cost of using a pagoda cannon would decrease.

Until now, all the fire liquids that were developed for the pagoda cannons needed snow lava. People had tried many methods, but they eventually discovered that the power of pagoda cannons could be increased significantly by adding in a small amount of snow lava. Even though fire liquids that did not contain snow lava could still work, they were not powerful enough.

After obtaining this piece of good news, everyone realized snow lava had become even more important now!

Previously, even though the pagoda cannons were very powerful, no one was interested in using them, as their cost was overly expensive. However, now that the technology of the pagoda cannons was gradually decoded and their cost was lowered, everyone could afford them now. As such, snow lava became more important and the demand for snow lava in the market increased significantly.

Due to this series of information, those merchants who previously did not intend to buy snow lava changed their minds and joined in the panic buying of snow lava.

This in turn caused the overcrowding outside the mayor

residence.

Qiao Meiqi was a businessman. Those who visited him were his guests, and as such, how could he chase them away? He did not want to offend anyone, but he was extremely anxious. Considering the time, Huo Da should be reaching Fishback City.

Now he was just hoping that Huo Da could bring enough snow lava back.

It was still not enough!

When Qiao Meiqi saw the massive crowd, he felt blissful and vexed at the same time. After Huo Da brought back the snow lava, who should he sell it to first? When a commodity was in high demand, a lot of science was involved in deciding who to sell it to.

Suddenly, a deafening alarm rang across the air, disrupting Qiao Meiqi's thought process. His facial expression changed slightly.

During the battle of Masters last time, he almost lost his life. When he heard the alarm now, he was trembling with fear. However, when he thought of the huge sum of money that he invested in the defense system, he felt slightly at ease.

Especially when he saw the two figures in the air, he regained his composure.

What was there that Masters couldn't solve? There were two

Masters in the sky!

At this moment, someone yelled, "Look, what's that in the horizon?"

When Qiao Meiqi heard these words, he quickly looked at the horizon.

An extremely dazzling light spot appeared in the horizon, and it was expanding in size rapidly. The light spot was so glaring that it caused everyone's eyes to tear. No one could look at it directly.

"It's moving extremely fast!"

"Oh god, how is it possible that such a fast-moving beast exists?"

An unprecedented sense of fear slowly extended throughout Thunder City. Those who were looking at the horizon had their faces turned white. A strong sense of fear and uneasiness engulfed their minds.

Suddenly, a faintly discernible vibrating rustle rang across the air.

The light spot became so bright that no one could look at it with their naked eyes.

A sharp and dangerous aura engulfed the city. Like a star that fell

from the sky, it was expanding continuously in everyone’s eyes!

"It’s coming!" someone yelled in alarm.

Inside the cloud defense layer, all the guards were extremely tense. They let off an off-key, alarmed cry in unison.

"It’s coming!"

The indescribable light spot was very close to the city. The visual impact from its extreme speed was overwhelming!

A lightning-like streak of light flashed across everyone’s trembling eyes.

The glowing trail left by it looked as if it had pierced through time and space.

An odd-looking structure appeared outside of Thunder City.

A dead silence swept across Thunder City.

Everyone’s mouths were agape as they stared blankly at the sky. All of their minds were in a daze.

After a moment.

Like a delayed tidal wave, the whistle and boom that followed tightly behind the flying structure collided heavily on the cloud defense layer.

Boom!

Snow-white mist swept across the area. Like a tottering bubble, the rainscreen was fluctuating irregularly, looking as if it would collapse any moment.

Thunder City exploded into an uproar instantly.

Chapter 550: You're A New Citizen

Perfect emergency brake!

Shi Zhiguang heaved a sigh of relief. He was very satisfied with his own performance. During the usual training sessions, he seldom had the chance to push the speed of the Pinwheel Sword to its limits. He also seldom practiced emergency brake when the Pinwheel Sword was travelling at its top speed. Furthermore, he was mentally and physically exhausted after travelling such a long distance.

However, when he saw the chaotic Thunder City beneath him, where everyone was running in all directions in fear and panic, he was stunned.

Not good. Shi Zhiguang's facial expression changed as he knew he had created huge trouble!

.....

The camp of the Spear of Heavy Cloud was packed with people every day.

Various divisions leaders and important figures came all the way here to observe Fatty shoot Pagoda Cannon. Every now and then, alarmed gasps could be heard from the crowd. The power of the Pagoda Cannon was indeed terrifying. In the hands of Fatty, there was a myriad of attacking styles for the Pagoda Cannon.

A eager look appeared on many people’s faces.

"Will we really not get into trouble?" Sang Zhijun was slightly worried.

Beside her, both Jiang Wei and Yang Xiaodong looked distressed. Things were getting out of hand. Those who did not know what was going might think that this was a popular circus, not a combat division. Every day, there would be a huge number of people coming here from various places. They were here just to witness the might of the Pagoda Cannons. As such, the Spear of Heavy Cloud’s camp was always packed with people. Every now and then, there would also be discussions on how to forge the Pagoda Cannons and how to improve them.

This caused the traveling speed of the Spear of Heavy Cloud to reduce significantly.

According to the original plan, they should already have met the Dread Division and Judgement Division, which were escorting the God-subduing Peaks.

The thing that astonished Jiang Wei and the rest was everyone’s fervor toward the Pagoda Cannons. The only event that could be compared to the current Pagoda Cannon craze was when the Elders Guild publicized the blueprint for building elemental energy pools and encouraged everyone to build cities in the Wilderness.

However, the Elders Guild was a highly revered organization

whereas the Central Pine Valley was just a small power.

The craze of the Pagoda Cannons was fully displayed through the current value of fire elementalists.

When the Spear of Heavy Cloud had recruited fire elementalists at Lemon Camping Ground, they had attracted a huge number of fire elementalists. At that time, those fire elementalists were in dire straits. Not too long after the blood catastrophe broke out, the Fire Prairie was annexed by the Blood of God. The prices of fire elemental materials skyrocketed, making them extremely expensive. Fire elementalists could no longer sustain their usual training routines. Facing a similar situation were the earth elementalists.

The emergence of snow lava had captured the attention of fire elementalists. All of them went to Lemon Camping Ground to look for opportunities, leading to the grand occasion back then. Shi Xueman wanted to build the Spear of Heavy Cloud with fire elementalists as its core. The fire elementalists she chose were those that passed the test of the fire reservoir. These fire elementalists were extremely determined. They could endure the extreme pain and never once cried out. They valued the opportunities that were given to them very much. Even though most of them were very low-level, they weren’t a problem to the the Spear of Heavy Cloud at all due to the snow lava production.

However, as the Pagoda Cannons rose in popularity, the demand for fire elementalist skyrocketed. Any fire elementalist could easily find a lucrative job now. Those fire elementalists with outstanding abilities were a hot commodity.

Of course, all the fire elementalists needed to be retrained to learn how to use the Pagoda Cannons.

Pagoda Cannon Master became the premier progression path that all fire elementalists wanted to pursue.

Jiang Wei and the rest saw with their own eyes how everyone's fervor got out of control in an extremely short period of time.

After thinking for a while, Shi Xueman said bluntly, "I can't think of a better idea. Does anyone have a better idea?"

The rest shook their heads.

Honestly speak, they were not optimistic about publicizing the technology of the Pagoda Cannons. Everyone in the command department of the Spear of Heavy Cloud had different opinions toward the disclosure of the Pagoda Cannons' technology. However, Shi Xueman's reasoning eventually convinced them all. Given Shi Xueman's prestige, everyone trusted her decision.

Shi Xueman blinked her eyes. "Furthermore, we still have Ai Hui. We won't get the worst of it."

Everyone burst out laughing in unison.

Shi Xueman suddenly thought of Ai Hui's exasperated curses

coming from behind when she flew off from the peak of Blackfish Mouth Volcano during that snowy day. Her limpid and ice-cold eyes became gentle in an instant. Her lips curled into a faintly discernible smile.

Only those who were very familiar with Shi Xueman could tell that she was very happy now.

"Why are you so happy?" Sang Zhijun was astounded.

"I am thinking how that fellow will handle this matter?" A mischievous look appeared on Shi Xueman’s face.

"I guess he will have a headache," Jiang Wei said while chuckling.

Shi Xueman swept her gaze across everyone and realized that the worried looks on their faces had unwittingly disappeared. Everyone was probably willing to follow Ai Hui because they could let Ai Hui worry about those troublesome issues.

.....

Ai Hui was sitting alone on a rock at the peak of Blackfish Mouth Volcano. He did not know since when, but he liked to sit on this piece of rock to gaze into the distance, ponder about matters, or get lost in thought.

The only thing that he found lacking was that it had never snowed since that day.

In the past, Ai Hui had not liked snowy days since he would be very cold. Now, he felt that a scenery with snow drifting in the sky was quite beautiful and interesting.

Whenever he encountered problems, he would sit here alone and ponder over them. He wasn't a quick-witted individual, and the sly Bangwan had yet to complete his secluded training. As such, he couldn't find anyone to discuss his problems with and could only sit here and slowly contemplate.

A fat figure climbed up to the mountain peak with great difficulty, panting heavily along the way.

An Chouchou sat his fat ass down beside Ai Hui. While panting heavily, he said, "It's very lonely to admire such beautiful scenery alone. Let Chouchou be Brother Ai's companion."

Ai Hui felt helpless. Not only was An Chouchou fat, he was also thick-skinned. He thought of Fatty, who was also very thick-skinned. Was this a nature all fat people in the world?

An Chouchou reclined halfway on a piece of boulder. He did not care about his image at all. Then, he asked, "Is Brother Ai having difficulty in making a decision?"

"There's nothing difficult about making a decision." Ai Hui shook his head.

"Oh? So Brother Ai has made your decision?" A glint flashed across An Chouchou's pea-sized eyes. He smiled confidently and said, "We complement each other very well. This alliance is a win-win situation for both of us. There is a huge number of new citizens, but we lack the resources of aristocratic families. Now that we have Brother Ai's creativity, we are like a tiger with wings. Just like Master Wang, Brother Ai's name will last for all eternity and be remembered by everyone in the world."

Ai Hui merely smiled. He did not agree or disagree with An Chouchou's words.

Ever since Ai Hui injury, he felt that his mind had become calmer, that he, himself, had become a much quieter person. He did not know whether this was because of the existence of the sword cloud or because his body had become weaker. His mind was pure and limpid.

The details that he ignored in the past would occasionally stun him nowadays. They were exquisite and real, making him emotional for some unknown reason.

His ferocity had diminished significantly as well.

If the Ai Hui of the past was like an unsheathed treasure sword that gave off a cold glint, the Ai Hui now was gentle and tranquil like a sword gleam hidden within the sheath.

An Chouchou was in a rather good mood. Filled with vigor, he said, "Brother Ai's way of thinking is creative. You're really a

genius. I wonder what that metal basket-like structure is? I can see that it moves unusually fast."

Even though there was a casual look on his face, deep down he was awaiting Ai Hui's answer with rapt attention. When he saw the enormous structure fly, he was overwhelmed with astonishment.

An Chouchou's eyesight was sharp. He could tell that it was an extraordinary structure with a single glance.

Initially, he thought it was a structure like the God-subduing Peak. The principle behind the God-subduing Peak was developed from the theory of [Treating the city as a piece of cloth], which was the brainchild of Wang Shouchuan. In this world, other than the Elders Guild, the person who was most likely to build a God-subduing Peak was undoubtedly Ai Hui.

Previously, there were some people who were doubtful whether Ai Hui had learned one or two things from Wang Shouchuan. However, after the birth of the Pagoda Cannons, everyone finally knew that Ai Hui was well-versed in Wang Shouchuan's theories. The fact that no one was able to imitate and create snow lava up to this point was the best proof.

"That's the Pinwheel Sword." Ai Hui cast a glance at An Chouchou. "Brother Chou is also interested in swordsmen gadgets?"

"Swordsmen?" An Chouchou furrowed his eyebrows.

He had not expected it to be a gadget for swordsmen. Immediately, he lost interest in it. Swordsmen had enjoyed a rather good reputation for the past few years, but the biggest representative for swordsmanship was still the Karakorum Sword League. In An Chouchou's eyes, Karakorum Polaris was Madam Ye's lackey, and not many people would go to the Karakorum Sword League to learn swordsmanship. As such, there were very few swordsmen among the new citizens. These few swordsmen were very low-level as well.

"Only a swordsman can use it." Ai Hui nodded his head.

An Chouchou initially thought well of the Pinwheel Sword's future and usefulness. At this moment, he said, "It's such a pity. I can see that it moves fast like lightning, so much so that it's faster than any flying devices and structures today. If it was used on the battlefield, it's perfect for long-range raids and sneak attacks."

Ai Hui had no choice but to admit that even though An Chouchou was ugly and his base level was low, he had an extremely sharp insight for things that he had never seen before.

An Chouchou changed the topic and asked shamelessly, "Can Brother Ai build one for Newlight City too?"

Indeed, not only was his insight top-notch, his shamelessness was also top-notch.

Ai Hui could not be bothered with this fellow. He knew An

Chouchou was someone who asked for a mile when one gave him an inch.

Seeing that Ai Hui ignored him, An Chouchou did not get angry, merely smiling.

On the mountain peak, the wind became stronger and colder. Night gradually descended.

"Honestly speaking, I am still not used to nighttime in the wild," An Chouchou suddenly muttered, looking as if he was reminiscing about something. "In the past, in the Avalon of Five Elements, everywhere was brightly lit like the stars in the sky when it was nighttime. One could go anywhere at night. There were no dire beasts, and one did not need to fear for his or her safety. There were stores that sold midnight snacks everywhere on the streets. Everyone could have fun until late into the night. There would still be heavy traffic on the streets at midnight. The powerful individuals could fight with each other, while the commoners could still lead a peaceful life."

Ai Hui remained silent. He thought of Central Pine City.

Back then, even the most ordinary small town would be filled with vigor and liveliness. That scene was so beautiful that it resembled a dreamland. When those days still existed, people complained about them being utterly boring. However, when the conflagration of war arrived and every day was filled with life-and-death struggles and blood, everyone wished they could return to those peaceful and mundane days.

"Ai Hui, you’re a new citizen."

An Chouchou stared at Ai Hui with a solemn look on his face.

"We, as the new citizens, shouldn’t be enslaved and trampled on. Ai Hui, no matter what, we have to decide on this alliance before Master’s Glory is completed. If we drag this decision out until then, everything will be meaningless. Master’s Glory is much scarier than you expect. That woman is a lunatic!"

An Chouchou looked sinister, and his facial expression was distorted. His eyes were filled with deep hatred and resentment.

Ai Hui was startled.

Chapter 551: The Purest Sword Lineage

"When I first saw it, I knew it was extraordinary. It is destined to dazzle the entire sky."

-- News Master Wen Youming

Wen Yongming was a famous news reporter from the news village, "Elemental World."

The rise of news villages, which was due to the decrease in the production cost of the mirage bean pods, happened not too long ago. However, the number of news villages was already growing at a terrifying speed. Everyone was becoming increasingly used to buying newly-released mirage bean pods every day to watch the content they were interested in.

Some high-tier news villages were able to distinguish themselves from the rest and expanded rapidly. Elemental World was one of these news villages.

The rise of news villages also gave rise to a new profession, news reporter. They were hired by news villages to gather news from various topics. They were an indispensable part of a news village.

As a reporter, one did not need to have a high base level, but rather, one definitely needed sharp senses. Knowing how to obtain valuable news from the chaotic world and how to conquer audiences involved a lot of science,

Wen Yongming was a well-known reporter, otherwise, he wouldn't have been targeted and hired by Elemental World.

He had arrived in Thunder City one month ago. His attention was captured by the snow lava. Qiao Meiqi was the only snow lava retailer, and he had a mysterious relationship with the Central Pine Valley.

As a professional reporter, Wen Yongming was very interested in everything that had to do with Ai Hui. Ai Hui's reappearance in the world was orchestrated and hyped up by the New Citizen Faction using news villages. One could say that the Lightning Blade was the first successful news story for the world of news villages.

Unlike those who disappeared without a trace after laying low for a period of time, Ai Hui was able to reappear on the world's radar despite disappearing for some time.

He then established the mysterious Central Pine Valley!

Wen Yongming witnessed with his own eyes how the news of Ai Hui's comeback spread and resulted in the grand gathering of the Central Pine Faction. Wen Yongming was filled with interest toward Ai Hui. All this time, he had been paying attention to various information related to Ai Hui and the Central Pine Valley.

For example, the Battle of Clearwater City, Ai Hui becoming the first ever Lightning Master, the Central Pine Valley's snow lava being graded as an A-grade fire liquid, the bloody signboard at

Lemon Camping Ground, the Shi Xueman-led Spear of Heavy Cloud winning two battles in a row, the recent Pagoda Cannon craze, etc.

The Central Pine Valley was still very mysterious, as if it was covered by a dense fog.

Many aspects of the Central Pine Valley intrigued Wen Yongming.

For example, the fact that the Central Pine Valley's strength kept on increasing. It was not just one person improving, but rather, everyone in the Central Pine Valley was improving together.

Another example was that other powers wished the whole world would know about their feats, but not the Central Pine Valley. It seemed that the entire Central Pine Valley had not appeared on the world's radar at all. No one paid great attention to their existence. Only when certain huge events or conflicts broke out would the long-forgotten Central Pine Valley appear on the world's radar.

A low-profile power like them always got on the nerves of other powers.

Previously, the Central Pine Valley had very few people. Most of them were from the Central Pine Faction. The formation of their combat divisions happened not too long ago. Everyone thought highly of the Spear of Heavy Cloud. After all, Shi Xueman was well-versed in military warfare and the Central Pine Faction was mainly made up of combat veterans. They had a bright future.

However, no one expected Shi Xueman to bring a bunch of unknown rookie fire elementalists to the battlefield and win two battles in a row.

The Central Pine Valley had a magical allure over Wen Yongming.

After waiting for a month, he still did not make any gains. Even so, he wasn't anxious. As an outstanding reporter, having patience was a must. Even if he put in effort, he might not receive any payback. However, if he did not put in any effort, he wouldn't even have the chance to receive any payback at all.

Now, he finally received payback from the effort he had invested. From the huge number of customers crowding outside the mayoral residence waiting to buy snow lava, Wen Yongming immediately understood that the pagoda cannon craze would have an extremely deep impact on Beyond Avalon and the entire world.

However, at this point in time, he could only look blankly at the oddly-shaped structure hovering in the sky outside of Thunder City.

He had never seen such an odd-looking structure before.

It was like a misshapen ladle or a walking stick. Atop it, there were a few pagodas that were of different heights. Beneath it, countless swords were hanging, resembling wind chimes. At the back of the structure, there was a rotatable pinwheel.

No matter how he looked at it, it looked like an oversized handicraft that was made by a child and very stupid-looking at that.

However, it was this odd-looking structure that struck an unprecedented fear and panic in all of Thunder City.

An elementalist from descended from it. Oh? Wasn't that Master Huo Da?

Wen Yongming was stunned momentarily. When he returned to his senses, his face flushed with excitement.

Master Huo Da travelled day and night to go to the Central Pine Valley!

The Central Pine Valley!

This odd-looking structure was from the Central Pine Valley!

Wen Yongming forced himself to stay calm. He knew he had gotten himself a big scoop this time around! He took out a mirage bean pod in a flurry. Following which, he pinched and broke its outer shell, revealing five sparkling, translucent, and dark green beans.

He inserted a trace of elemental energy into the beans. With a soft pop, the beans became a wiggling ball of light. Within the ball of light, there was an image of the odd-looking flying structure

outside the city.

"Hello everyone. This odd-looking structure that everyone is looking at now is a rarely-seen flying device. This is the first time it has appeared in front of the world. We have never heard of it before. It comes from the mysterious Central Pine Valley. That's right! The Central Pine Valley that triggered the pagoda cannon craze! The speed of this flying device exceeds our understanding of speed. When it arrived just now, the violent shock wave it created almost destroyed the defenses of Thunder City. Now, let us take a closer look at it..."

Wen Yongming controlled the mirage bean pod and talked as he moved closer to the Pinwheel Sword.

Huo Da descended to calm everyone down while the rest of the Sword of Lightning's members continued to be on alert.

Previously, the ruckus they created shocked the entire Thunder City. Shi Zhiguang's face was filled with regret. Now, he felt that what he had just done was overly rash. The city gate of Thunder City was absolutely empty, with no one daring to get close to them. It was as if they were a dire beast that would eat people!

At the empty city gate, there was a man holding a ball of light. That man was mumbling nonstop to himself as he moved closer to them.

What should they do?

Everyone looked at Gu Xuan.

Gu Xuan was vexed as well.

Clearly, this person was a reporter. The mission that Boss gave them was to bring as many reporters back as possible. That meant he couldn’t kill this fellow. However, this man kept on recording them, making Gu Xuan extremely uncomfortable. He felt something wasn’t right.

Should he silence this fellow?

Luckily, Gu Xuan was an experienced veteran. After thinking about it, he still had to bring a batch of reporters back. As such, he couldn’t keep the Pinwheel Sword a secret no matter what. He let Wen Yongming move closer and record them. Turning around, he yelled at the other members, "Everyone, wake up! Have you not eaten anything? Whoever looks unglamorous on the mirage bean pod will receive extra training sessions when we go back!"

When everyone, including Shi Zhiguang, heard the words "extra training sessions," they raised their heads and stuck out their chests, releasing a surging ferocious aura.

"... Its shape is extremely odd. It’s uglier than the most ugly-looking dire beast. Until now, we still don’t know what is it used for. However, the speed that this monster displayed just now is unusually terrifying. It is faster than all azure wings, Fiery Floating Clouds, and dire beasts. Since this monster is from the Central Pine Valley, it is destined to be extraordinary..."

Everyone was already stressed out by the man’s nonstop muttering. All of them trained with the Pinwheel Sword day and night, so they had developed a deep relationship with it. As such, when the man kept on referring to the Pinwheel Sword as a "monster," one of the members could not help but cry out, "It’s a Pinwheel Sword! It’s not a monster!"

Wen Yongming’s eyes lit up and quickly raised his volume to explain, "A Pinwheel Sword! This monster-like flying structure is a sword! Oh, that’s right, Ai Hui is the Lightning Blade, and his combat division is called the Sword of Lightning. This Pinwheel Sword no doubt possesses the purest sword lineage. It’s completely filled with the aura of swords..."

Ha.

One of the members could not help but laugh.

Gu Xuan turned around with eyes filled with anger and asked, "What’s so funny?"

"Boss Gu, the purest shamelessness lineage... filled with the aura of shamelessness..." the member’s face was bright-red from holding in his laughter.

"Sword" and "Shamelessness" have the same pronunciation in Chinese.

The rest responded to that member’s joke and laughed all over the place.

Gu Xuan’s face turned black.

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When Qiao Meiqi saw Huo Da, his heart skipped a beat.

Don’t tell me he is also a traitor!

The incident with Yang Xiaodong had left a dark shadow in his heart. Moreover, there was no reason for Huo Da to be back so soon. He had also never seen the odd-looking flying structure in the sky outside of the city before. Furthermore, he could tell that the odd-looking structure harbored malicious intentions just from its recent display of might.

However, when Qiao Meiqi heard Gu Xuan’s roar, he was stunned.

Gu Xuan was the vice division leader of Ai Hui, so Qiao Meiqi naturally recognized him. Qiao Meiqi immediately realized that this odd-looking structure was a new creation of the Central Pine Valley!

His eyes lit up as he took a closer look at it.

In his eyes, the Central Pine Valley was definitely not the strongest power. However, it was definitely the one that knew how to make the most money. Every new creation they came up with was definitely something good, something that made a lot of money.

At this moment, he happened to hear the name of the Pinwheel Sword.

Pinwheel Sword?

So this structure was called a Pinwheel Sword. It was so fast!

Would it sell well?

After thinking about it, Qiao Meiqi knew that it would definitely sell well. Just its speed alone was enough to make people pay for it with essence elemental beans.

It was a good product!

Qiao Meiqi's eyes were brightly lit. However, when Huo Da walked over and told him exactly what Ai Hui had said, his facial expression changed.

Qiao Meiqi was an experienced businessman. After Huo Da told him what Ai Hui said, he knew that Ai Hui must have something to announce, and that it had to be related to the snow lava and the recent pagoda cannon craze.

When he thought more deeply about it, a cold shudder went down his spine.

Right, he and Ai Hui were bound together by mutual benefits. If Ai Hui was done for, his good days would come to an end as well.

Under a strong sense of danger, Qiao Meiqi's efficiency was exceptional. Very soon, he had gathered all the reporters in Thunder City. However, Thunder City wasn't a huge city like Skyheart City, so it didn't have that many reporters.

There were only seven reporters in total!

When Qiao Meiqi thought of Ai Hui's words, "How much snow lava he is going to get will have to depend on whether or not he does a good job," his mind went into a daze. He knew that Ai Hui seldom said such harsh words. If he said these words, that meant he was for real.

Since he did not have that many reporters, he had to use other people to make up the numbers.

The huge number of customers that surrounded the mayoral residence were representatives for various powers. Since Ai Hui had an important announcement to make, it must affect these people as well.

Qiao Meiqi was uncertain. He could only console himself like

this.

Chapter 552: Knife

In a simple room, on a red clay stove, sat a steaming silver pot. It was like an angry little monster spouting thick steam. Mist lingered around, keeping the room especially warm.

It wasn’t easy for Nian Tingfeng to enjoy a leisurely afternoon just reading books and sipping on tea. He was very relaxed.

A knock came at the door.

Nian Tingfeng’s gaze never left the scroll in his hands. He casually called out, "Come in."

An ordinary looking man walked in and bowed respectfully. "Boss."

The Surveillance Division was probably the only combat division that took looks into consideration. Members mustn’t be overly handsome, ugly, tall, sturdy, strong, and so on. If you were thrown into a crowd and became impossible to find, then congratulations, the Surveillance Division needs you.

The Surveillance Division was filled with average looking members. It was difficult to find someone even a little eye-catching.

Nian Tingfeng asked idly, "It’s all arranged?"

His subordinate reported, "Yes, we've made arrangements with the main news village. Everyone will be able to see how the Spear of Heavy Cloud prevailed over the Ardent Flower Blood Division. We were quite far away, but it was a pretty decent spot."

Nian Tingfeng continued reading his book and replied, "Praise Shi Xueman more. We must shape her into the hero of elementalists so she can share the burden of our hope."

"Yes."

"When the time is ripe, we can discuss the pagoda cannon and make a move from there."

"Yes."

Noticing that his subordinate wasn't in high spirits, Nian Tingfeng diverted his gaze and put his scroll down. "Any problems?"

His subordinate kept quiet.

Nian Tingfeng picked up the silver pot unhurriedly and filled it with water. "Xiao Lin, how long have you been working for me?"

"16 years, Boss."

Moved, Nian Tingfeng continued, "Yeah, 16 years. You're the

person I worry about the least. You've never hesitated to execute tasks that I have assigned you, no matter how dangerous they were. I did not expect for you to hesitate today."

Guilt flashed across Xiao Lin's eyes. "I just feel... they're fighting so hard at the front line..."

Nian Tingfeng interrupted calmly, "And we're stabbing knives into their backs? You feel uncomfortable?"

Exposed, Xiao Lin answered frankly, "The situation is so dangerous, but the higher ups are still engrossed in their internal strife. We are at a loss and do not know what stance to take."

Nian Tingfeng explained amiably, "You guys aren't the only one feeling this way. I am too, but look at Beyond Avalon. It is like a sheet of loose sand with the cities standing alone. Can they obstruct the Blood of God? It's true that Shi Xueman is powerful, and it's an amazing feat that the Spear of Heavy Cloud have accomplished by wiping out the Ardent Flower Blood Division. However, the Ardent Flower Blood Division is only one of the 12 blood division. There are still six god divisions above them. Can Shi Xueman pull strongly against this crazy tide? No. Can Shenwei and Caijue do it? No, because our forces are all too fragmented. Will Shenwei and Caijue take orders? Will the Spear of Heavy Cloud?"

Xiao Lin kept silent.

Nian Tingfeng added, "What we need now isn't one or two

victories. We must look at the overall situation. On a large scale, what do we need the most? We must unify the forces. Only then might we be able to win. Victory is impossible if we all fight our own battles. As for the person who will unify the forces, I'm not really concerned. So far, I think the likelihood of Madam Ye being that person is the highest."

"If there's really a hero, us small figures won't be able to obstruct him or her. If the so-called hero can't even get passed us, then hero is not the right term. I don't actually want to talk about any major principles. There are many reasonings in the world, and they all make their own sense. We are like a knife, so we should just do what knives do. Don't you think so?"

Xiao Lin stayed quiet and hung his head down shortly. "You words are right."

Nian Tingfeng waved his hand. "I can't tell when the battle will start. Get everyone to feel at ease. Do things slowly, and look around slowly. We have time. Why be heroic in this chaotic world? This chaotic world is like a sieve, sifting away the unlucky and the weak. We're part of the sieve. How could this sieve get in the way of a true hero?"

Xiao Lin was impressed, his dejected look vanishing. "I'll pass on the message to everybody."

Nian Tingfeng warned repeatedly, "It's most important to get things done properly. As long as the knife is sharp and serviceable, Madam will need it and the hero will need it too. If the knife is not useful, what use would it be for Madam or the hero?"

Xiao Lin was convinced. "Yes!"

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Thunder City, two hours later.

"Everyone securely seated?"

Gu Xuan’s stern gaze swept across the crowd inside of the Pinwheel Sword. He was having a headache. Boss had instructed him to bring some of the news villages’ reporters back. By bringing so many of them back, would it be considered mission accomplished or not?

He was uncertain.

However, he had taken the situation into consideration. Plus, Boss intended that the selection should be done by Qiao Meiqi. They just had to transport the people over as fast as possible.

Needless to say, the reporters stirred at the news that Qiao Meiqi wanted them to head to the mysterious Central Pine Valley. They quickly packed their belongings and brought sufficient mirage bean pods along.

The guests at the mayoral residence’s gate also took the chance to express their interest.

The Central Pine Valley was supremely popular, and everyone wanted to be associated with it. Yet, it was like a tortoise, making it impossible for people to make a move. Those who approached the valley would go missing, their fates unknown.

Those who wanted to purchase snow lava would have to go to Thunder City.

Now that there was a chance to head directly to the Central Pine Valley, no one was going to let it slip by. Agitated they shouted things like "Mayor Qiao, how long are you going to make us wait?" and "This isn’t how you do business" in hopes of traveling along.

Qiao Meiqi, who was initially worried about the number of reporters, took advantage of the situation and "reluctantly" agreed.

He even took Gu Xuan’s doubt upon himself, making others look at him with a whole new level of respect. He’s an interesting guy indeed!

Qiao Meiqi was a wise man. Whether there were sufficient people or not, Gu Xuan wouldn’t be affected, but this plank was still going to land on his buttocks. He reckoned that seven reporters wouldn’t satisfy Ai Hui. Bringing more people would at least present a greater chance.

Everybody boarded the Pinwheel Sword, looking and touching around. They were full of curiosity.

Yet, many of them were also inwardly being mindful.

From the snow lava to pagoda cannon, the Central Pine Faction had created one trend after another. Could the Pinwheel Sword be the next craze?

It was a rare opportunity for them to experience riding in it.

The seven reporters were even more excited, taking out their mirage bean pods and recording fervently.

Gu Xuan couldn’t be bothered with them. He declared the seven pagodas as prohibited ground, sending people to stand guard. As he started operating the Pinwheel Sword, the elemental energy wave that it emitted was enough to cover its elemental trace, so no one could tell.

"Sit tight! We are setting off!"

Gu Xuan was somewhat resentful. There were so few passengers, yet it took two hours just to get everybody seated. How slow. Ever since he started leading his own team, his voice had thickened since he was basically roaring the whole time.

"It looks so strange!"

"Yeah, I wonder why."

"Big dipper. It’s like the big dipper."

"Swordsmen always have such odd things."

Everyone on board discussed enthusiastically as they looked in all directions, full of curiosity and anticipation. Gu Xuan’s words fell on deaf ears. He wasn’t even a Master so why was he yelling? As everyone was in high spirits, no one bothered with Gu Xuan. They were just looking and touching everything.

Gu Xuan didn’t look too good. He felt as if he was leading a group of defiant tourists.

Due to the Sword of Lightning’s training, he had gradually gotten used to a life of strict discipline and tranquility. He wasn’t used to clamorous scenes.

Luckily, there would not be such missions in future, he consoled himself.

He yelled toward Shi Zhiguang, who was at the rear, "Set off!"

Shi Zhiguang, too, shouted, "Set off!"

The Pinwheel Sword lifted off the ground with a lightness that contradicted of its bulk. It then sped up and pierced through the clouds like an oblique sword ray. Those inside could feel the

experience more directly and intensely.

"Ahhhhhhhh!"

"Oh my god, oh my mother!"

"Oh father!"

...

Ear-piercing shrieks echoed. The sudden and sharp acceleration caught everyone off guard. Many of them their lost balance and fell onto the ground like calabashes. It was a mess.

Gu Xuan snorted lightly, raising his chin. He had deliberately chosen not to remind them.

Ever since he had started following Ai Hui, he had been slightly infected by his badass style of doing things.

The passengers were pale, and the more timid ones were trembling uncontrollably in their thighs. They were all familiar with flying, but had never experienced such extreme speed.

The scenery on both sides flew by at a speed difficult for the naked eye to catch. It was like a brightly-colored optical tape. The rising screen was transparent like crystal, and they could clearly see the light scars and sparks created by the friction between the

screen and the violent airflow.

Even if they were separated by a layer of light screen, everybody couldn't help but feel alarmed and frightened.

Wen Yongmin was rather afraid initially. His mind had been blank since they took flight. The tide-like shrieks drowned him, his face was pale, and his whole body was shaking.

When the flight started stabilizing, however, he regained his senses.

Excited, the blood returned to his pale face.

His first reaction was to check his mirage bean pod. Luckily, he had it all recorded. He knew he was going to strike it rich! He could imagine how big of a commotion his video was going to cause!

He surveyed those around him. Everybody was feeling excited and emotional.

As a veteran reporter, Wen Yongmin was an expert at digging for news. He had been presented with an extremely rare chance since the Central Pine Valley had always kept a low profile. Wen Yongmin was determined to cherish this opportunity.

He locked his gaze onto Gu Xuan. This middle-aged man looked like the leader of these people.

Chapter 553: Mirage Craze

Wen Yongmin walked forward and politely greeted, "Hi, I'm Wen Yongmin, a reporter from Elemental World news village. Can I ask you a few questions?"

Upon hearing the words "Elemental World," Gu Xuan's eyes lit up. He had bought Elemental World's mirage bean pods before, but the second half of the sentence alerted him. "You can ask, but I may not answer depending on confidentiality."

"No problem," Wen Yongmin agreed easily. He started, "May I have your name and occupation? Are these confidential?"

After some thought, Gu Xuan felt it unnecessary to conceal these. "I'm Gu Xuan, a swordsman and vice division leader of the Sword of Lightning.

Wen Yongmin jolted. He caught a big fish!

The Central Pine Valley was very mysterious and outsiders knew little of it. They knew of its two combat divisions, the Spear of Heavy Cloud commanded by Shi Xueman and the Sword of Lightning led personally by Ai Hui.

It was said that the Spear of Heavy Cloud was the Central Pine Valley's backbone, so the outside world thought more highly of it. Shi Xueman and her division's miraculous victory also validated the fact that outsiders had been underestimating their capability.

Meanwhile, the other combat division, the Sword of Lightning, was extremely mysterious.

Wen Yongmin was experienced and careful. Expressed a cooperative attitude, he continued, "Is this called a Pinwheel Sword? Can you introduce it a little? You don’t have to reveal anything confidential."

Gu Xuan thought about it and answered, "The Pinwheel Sword is a creation invented by our division leader."

Wen Yongmin’s eyes lit up. "Sir Ai Hui?"

Gu Xuan nodded, satisfied with how Wen Yongmin had addressed Ai Hui.

Wen Yongmin’s impression of the Pinwheel Sword rose a notch. Ai Hui’s creations were always pleasantly surprising.

Wen Yongmin asked directly, "Is the pagoda cannon his creation as well?"

After some thought, Gu Xuan believed that this wasn’t a secret. "That’s right."

"Snow lava too?"

Again, nothing confidential. Gu Xuan answered candidly, "Right."

Wen Yongmin’s heart stirred. This was the first time the Central Pine Valley had given direct confirmation that the pagoda cannon and snow lava were made personally by Ai Hui. In the past, there were only conjectures.

Wen Yongmin exclaimed in admiration, "For being able to innovate so many new things, Boss Ai Hui is simply extraordinary."

With an honored look on his face, Gu Xuan raised his head and puffed his chest. "True, not many can compare to him in this aspect."

"Are members of the Sword of Lightning all swordsmen?"

Gu Xuan hesitated for a while before answering, "Yes. Many of them weren’t at the beginning, but they all are now."

He was uncertain as to whether or not the members were considered swordsmen. He felt that they were entirely different from the traditional definition of swordsmen, but if they weren’t swordsmen, what were they?

All right, new swordsmen.

Wen Yongmin asked directly, "What’s the Pinwheel Sword’s

source of energy? Essence elemental beans?"

Gu Xuan hesitated for a little while but figured that snow lava was no longer a secret substance. "Snow lava."

Wen Yongmin was shocked. Eyes wide open, he repeated, "Snow lava?"

"That’s right."

Wen Yongmin couldn’t describe his astonishment. Using snow lava as the fuel, it was no wonder that the Central Pine Valley possessed the recipe for snow lava.

But to Wen Yongmin, what seemed obvious would actually impact this era greatly.

The pagoda cannon’s popularity and the freshly fashioned Pinwheel Sword were evidence that snow lava’s utility far exceeded people’s imagination.

Furthermore, as the sole producer of snow lava, the Central Pine Valley had a bright future as long as they could defend themselves. Wen Yongmin, who was familiar with the style of powerful influences, knew that many would be lusting over it, however. He suddenly understood why Ai Hui needed to gather the reporters.

Could it be that Ai Hui had realized it too?

Wen Yongmin became agitated once again. No matter what choice Ai Hui made. it would have a significant impact on this era.

No, Ai Hui’s impact on this era had surfaced long ago.

To a reporter, the opportunity to witness such a historical moment was extremely precious.

Suppressing his agitation, Wen Yongmin asked, "Are we heading to the Central Pine Valley?"

"No." Gu Xuan shook his head. "We’re going to Fishback City."

"Fishback City?"

"That’s right. The place where Master Wang Xiaoshan had his breakthrough, and the place he constructed all by himself."

Wen Yongmin was once again in disbelief. Mouth agape, he asked, "He built it single-handedly?"

At that moment, they were flying toward the horizon. Far away, at the confluence of heaven and earth, faint rays of light emerged as they flew to the dividing line between day and night..

Wen Yongmin and the rest enjoyed the sunrise, but were unaware that in the other corner of Beyond Avalon, a storm was

brewing.

The sun had just risen from the horizon, its radiance driving away the darkness as cities awoke from their sleep. Although cities nowadays had fewer skyscrapers, no longer had the whirring of Three Leaves Bamboo Carts and Fiery Floating Clouds to cover the sky, and were less developed than those in the Avalon of Five Elements, there was a kind of never seen before change. As long as there were citizens occupying the land, it would quietly blossom with the aura of "life."

On the streets, steam was hanging in the air above the bun and pastry shops, attracting the gaze of passersby rushing past. Having starved for a whole night, the best consolation for these empty stomachs would be a bowl of piping hot soy milk to go along with some deep-fried breadsticks.

No matter how the eras changed, how trends faded, how Three Leave Bamboo Carts and Fiery Floating Clouds might disappear from the lives of citizens, this "life" would live on forever. It wouldn’t stop for a rest, just like the sun that rose and set every single day.

Still, it was predestined that this wasn’t going to be an ordinary morning.

"Watch how the Spear of Heavy Cloud defeated the Ardent Flower Blood Division, from beginning to end!"

"Gruesome! Gruesome! Gruesome! Timid ones stay away!"

"The North Sea’s lone girl. A woman not letting a man off!"

"Enlightenment on the battlefield. The first Pagoda Cannon Master releasing deadly white flames!"

...

Outside the mirage bean pod shop, sales assistants shouted at the top of their lungs, their faces flushed. This scene was replicated throughout all mirage bean pod shops in every city.

Passersby stopped at these shops. Like magic, the assistants’ shouts pulled them over.

"Give me a copy!"

"One copy for me."

Everyone was filled with curiosity and incited. The Spear of Heavy Cloud’s victory had been widely disseminated earlier, but the details hadn’t been made public.

Now that the details were being revealed, everyone was highly interested. Their enthusiasm far exceeded the news villages’ predictions. Even before noon, all the mirage bean pods had been sold out. News villages had no choice but to increase production of new mirage bean pods.

He Min was 14 years old. He was a student of the Hyde Training Hall. The Hyde Training Hall wasn't considered big, but was well-known for grooming youngsters. The training hall was responsible for producing quite a few talented individuals, and among them was one who had gone on to become the Wind Mail Division's vice division leader. Due to this affiliation, the Hyde Training Hall had also become the division's co-training ground. Each year, the Wind Mail Division would go over to the Hyde Training Hall to pick suitable students to replenish its ranks with young blood.

In this chaotic world and time, being recruited into a combat division was the best way out.

After becoming the Wind Mail Division's co-training ground, the skills that the Hyde Training Hall imparted changed somewhat. In this era, there wasn't time for you to slowly instruct your students. If they could not adapt to battles quickly, their future would be very bleak, and the training hall would be renounced by the public since no one would train there. The number of students selected by the combat divisions was an grand yearly test for the training hall. If students were recruited into a well-known combat division, the reputation of the training hall would soar.

As usual, He Min arrived at the training hall and was greeted by excited faces. They gathered around and discussed fervently.

He didn't exactly like to join in the buzz, so he stayed apart.

He changed into his training garments and went over the

imparted content from the previous training in his head a few times. He was very focused and quickly started to sweat. He came from an ordinary family, and before the blood catastrophe, they had managed a small family business and were living quite well. When the blood catastrophe erupted, however, the whole family followed the exodus into the Wilderness to rebuild their lives, and they fell into financial straits.

The good thing was that his whole family was alive and together. It was the biggest fortune amid the misfortune.

During his migration, he had experienced a lot of thrills and had faced the attack of dire beasts quite a few times. As such, he had been sensible since a young age, and his goal had always been to enter a combat division. Now that the training environment was completely different from the past, students with ordinary family backgrounds, like him, wouldn't be able to continue training if they were not recruited by a combat division.

Only by entering a combat division would they be provided with a steady flow of training resources.

He looked at the time. The lesson was about to start. He Min stopped to wipe the sweat off his face.

With a mirage bean pod in his hand, Teacher arrived right on time, appearing rather excited.

"Let's watch this clip before we start training. The best among you guys will be recruited into combat divisions in future, so

battling will be inevitable. Teacher hasn’t been on the battlefield, so there’s nothing I can impart to you guys. The clip that I’m about to show you all is real battle footage."

The students stirred restlessly as some even started shrieking out of agitation.

He Min was flabbergasted and somewhat puzzled.

Teacher, who was usually stern, did not get angry today. In fact he was smiling, which was very strange to He Min.

"Looks like many of you have already guessed it. That’s right, I’ll be showing you the classic battle footage of how the Spear of Heavy Cloud, led by Shi Xueman, defeated the Ardent Flower Blood Division!"

He Min quivered. He thought he had heard wrongly.

The training hall was already in an uproar.

"You’re amazing, Teacher! You actually bought it!"

"I heard it’s out of stock everywhere!"

"You moved quick, Teacher!"

...

Teacher was pleased, but he deliberately put on a straight face. "Quiet! Observe carefully. I’m not simply gonna let you guys watch it. I want each and every one of you to submit a reflection report after!"

The students, who were jumping excitedly just a moment ago, were now whining like geese.

Yet, when the clip started playing, everybody automatically sat up straight.

Chapter 554: Entering the Camp

Along the way, the Spear of Heavy Cloud, which had been delayed, was finally about to join forces with Shenwei and Caijue's combat divisions. From afar people, were already able to catch sight of the God-subduing Peaks floating in the sky. Four majestic God-subduing Peaks formed a line in the sky, creating a magnificent sight. Light screens lit up and flickered from time to time, contributing to the God-subduing Peaks' already mysterious vibe.

"Those are God-subduing Peaks?"

"How spectacular!"

"Two of those are ours? Oh my, how great!"

Members of the Spear of Heavy Cloud exclaimed in admiration. Their eyes shone brightly as a look of infatuation and longing flashed across their faces.

The God-subduing Peak, a top-notch battle weapon forged by the Elders Guild. It played a huge role in assisting the Wall of North Sea in defending against the Blood of God. So far, God-subduing Peaks were still the most powerful battle weapon in the world.

The God-subduing Peaks were enormous and bulky, able to station a whole combat division. Each God-subduing Peak was unique because they were made by slicing off mountain peaks at their waists. It was said that the selection of mountain peaks was a

stringent process, with the first requirement being that they must be over 1.3 kilometers in height.

Its defense was extremely shocking. Each God-subduing Peak was basically a fortress in the sky. Its offensive power was equally astonishing. It possessed all five elements and could quickly change its attacking methods.

The God-subduing Peak gathered the Elders Guild's most exquisite elemental trace research, the most valuable ingredients, and the top forging methods. Only the Elders Guild had the ability to forge a God-subduing Peak since they were the only ones with an abundance of valuable materials and extremely skillful craftsmen.

Standing against the God-subduing Peak, the Blood of God had no choice but to attack forcefully.

When facing an elementalist combat division, a blood elementalist combat division had a relative advantage over them. In a one ono one battle, a blood elementalist combat division had an 80 percent chance of victory.

However, if the elementalist combat division had a God-subduing Peak, the blood elementalist combat division only had a threefold advantage in terms of military strength, and this was only if they chose to attack head on. Even then, they would have to be prepared to pay a heavy price in exchange for breaking through a God-subduing Peak's defense.

To the elementalists, the God-subduing Peak held the most

supreme position.

Even Shi Xueman, who was usually steady and calm, seemed touched. She had been in a God-subduing Peak before and had experienced for herself its immeasurable might. Two God-subduing Peaks were enough to place the Spear of Heavy Cloud onto the list of the most powerful combat divisions.

Everyone sped up in unison. Even the injured members were excited.

There were already people waiting outside the camping ground.

"Are you Shi Xueman, division leader of the Spear of Heavy Cloud?"

The speaker was a middle-aged man, 40 or so with average looks. However, the occasional glints in his eyes convinced people that he wasn’t someone whose abilities should be underestimated.

Shi Xueman composed herself. "Yes, I’m Shi Xueman. You are?"

The man made his salutations, "Your humble servant, Zhao Mingwei, is from the Surveillance Division."

The Surveillance Division. Shi Xueman became vigilant and asked calmly, "I’m here to receive the God-subduing Peaks and some resources. Are there any procedures to follow?"

"I’ve been waiting days for you and thought you weren’t coming." Zhao Mingwei smiled. "There’s no procedure. You’ll just have to enter the camp to verify."

Shi Xueman nodded. "All right. Where are the two division leaders? Xueman will pay them a formal visit."

In terms of seniority, Wan Shenwei and Ximen Caijue were on par with her father, so she spoke as a junior.

She walked toward the camping ground as Sang Zhijun and the rest followed behind.

"Halt!" Zhao Mingwei spoke suddenly, "Sorry, everyone. Only Division Leader Shi is allowed to enter."

The faces of Sang Zhijun and the others changed abruptly. Members of the Spear of Heavy Cloud put on an unfriendly face, and the atmosphere instantly became one of mutual hostility. Everyone was highly guarded against Skyheart City, and now Shi Xueman was going to enter alone. How could they not be worried?

Shi Xueman stopped them and looked at Zhao Mingwei, saying coldly, "I’ll be quick, don’t worry."

After that, she entered the camp with her head high.

Jiang Wei looked murderous at this point. He ordered in a low voice, "Be on guard everyone."

Members of the Spear of Heavy Cloud took out their weapons silently and got into position. With pagoda cannons in place, they pointed them toward the camping ground. A murderous aura filled the air.

Thousands of miles away.

The mirage bean pod light ray flickered.

There wasn't any sound in the room since everyone was holding their breaths. They had forgotten how to breathe.

It was evident that the clip had been recorded some distance away from the battlefield, but because of the ample distance the whole battle could be recorded. The wood elementalist who had recorded the clip was so skillful that even the veteran reporters were left sweating from head to toe.

The gruesome battle had the audience shaken up and emotionally moved. Blood and flesh splattered everywhere and carelessly right before everyone's eyes. The Ardent Flower Blood Division's head on attack made their scalps tingle. Even if it was merely a recording, it was enough to evoke intense reactions from the crowd. The dazzling white flames sprayed by the pagoda cannon ripped through the sky. Trampled by the ardent flower night wolves, the yellow mud on the ground was like a sheet of raised silk, tan in color and carried a devilish luster that flickered

nonstop.

The close quarters fight between Shi Xueman and Xing Shan was on full display.

Vapor rose from Fatty's body. He was like an iron tower, domineering and sturdy. A sinister look flashed across his face as he mounted a sneak attack on the enemy division leader.

Wang Xiaoshan's transformation of the ground into a muddy marsh was a perfect showcase of a Master's aura.

The remarkable blood elementalists' might and malevolence.

The bitterness of the short range fights and the hysteria of both parties were clearly demonstrated. They were willing to do anything to continue breathing. The cruel sight of fresh blood mixing in with mud made people feel suffocated.

Fatty's breakthrough at the ultimate moment, the terrifying fiery rain, and the strangely inextinguishable white flames made their limbs cold and sent a chill down their spines.

The Chieftain Wolf's sacrifice, Xing Shan's suicidal counterattack... it was moving and tragic.

When the final scene ended, the room sank into darkness, and no one said anything for a long time.

Whoosh. The windows were opened and sunlight entered the room. The bright and beautiful sun couldn’t provide the room with any warmth. Only fear and shock remained on the audience’s faces.

Prince Gong couldn’t help but exclaim, "I did not expect the battle to be this gruesome. Shi Xueman’s victory didn’t come easy."

Gong Peiyao pursed her lips. Her face was pale and bloodless. She had been thoroughly frightened and felt extremely regretful. She wouldn’t have watched it if she’d known how gory it would be. She was definitely going to have many sleepless nights. More so than fear, she felt impressed. It was no wonder that Shi Xueman had always been the one looking after her. How much tenacity and perseverance this battle had required! She had felt happy for Sister Xueman upon hearing about the good news, but hadn’t realized how difficult it had been for them to claim this victory!

Han Li was out of it and shaken up. He had always been responsible for his own sword mastery. Ever since he became a Master, he was convinced that he could go anywhere in this world. Only now did he realize how ignorant he had been. He had been intensely proud of his skills, but how much help would he be when placed on that battlefield?

On the contrary, being used to such sights, Venerable Volcano wasn’t too affected, but his eyes lit up at that point. "What an amazing pagoda cannon! What a strange Path of Master! I did not think that a Master could be born out of a pagoda cannon. This thing has great potential."

Prince Gong nodded. "Recently pagoda cannons have been popular and Shi Xueman seems to be marketing them as best as she can. I had been led to think that the Central Pine Valley was on short of money."

"War costs a lot." Venerable Volcano nodded. "A combat division's expenditure is no longer like in the past, when they only had two or three hundred members. It's normal to be short on money. It would be weird if they were not."

Prince Gong asked directly, "What do you think about pagoda cannons, Venerable Volcano?"

Venerable Volcano answered without hesitating, "Great prospects! Slightly inconvenient when used single-handedly, but for a combat division they're perfect. Fire elementalists are cheap nowadays..."

Prince Gong interrupted Venerable Volcano with a bitter laughter. "Venerable, fire elementalists aren't cheap anymore..."

Venerable Volcano was slightly taken aback. "How come?"

Prince Gong laughed even louder. "Shi Xueman had been demonstrating the power of pagoda cannon on the trip back. She allowed tours and answered all related questions. Pagoda Cannons are in high demand now, and the price of hiring fire elementalists is spiking. Every family has a shortage of fire elementalists."

A look of realization flashed across Venerable Volcano’s face, and he burst into laughter. "How unexpected, how unexpected. Here I was thinking that fire elementalists were about to fall into decline and look what happened in the blink of an eye. Ai Hui is remarkable, remarkable indeed."

He was a fire elementalist, so naturally it was happy news.

Prince Gong muttered, "Looks like we’ll need to polish up the pagoda cannon’s techniques. Engaging fire elementalists isn’t a problem. It doesn’t matter if they’re expensive, so just scout them out. However, we will have to purchase snow lava. Doesn’t that mean we will be in the hands of the Central Pine Valley?"

Venerable Volcano had seen a lot, so he suggested, "Buy some first and we will study it ourselves. If the pagoda cannon is really that popular and snow lava is really essential, would others simply let those people control them?"

At that he stopped abruptly.

Prince Gong’s eyes lit up and were twinkling.

They exchanged gazes.

.....

Fishback City.

The recording had finally ended, and An Chouchou gave Ai Hui a side glance. A pity his face was wrapped up in bandage, so his expression couldn’t be seen. Ai Hui would probably have an engrossed look on his face right now.

An Chouchou waved his hand. "This is my subordinate who just went to purchase this mirage bean pod. If Skyheart City wants to make a move, it would definitely gain support first, and this mirage bean pod is the best way to do it. I had my man be on the lookout, and sure enough, it’s out."

Ai Hui asked faintly, "What does this show?"

An Chouchou laughed out loud. "Why feign ignorance, Brother Ai? Things have already come to this point, is there any meaning in concealing and hiding?"

Ai Hui sighed. "Looks like Skyheart City is really about to make a move. You’re wise, Brother Chou. What should the Central Pine Valley do?"

An Chouchou smiled. "It’s just a small issue. Surely Brother Ai wouldn’t be defeated by it?"

He was full of confidence. It was already set. Skyheart City’s first step was as he had predicted. He believed that this would serve as a message to Ai Hui that the situation was under his control.

An Chouchou didn’t want to talk too much. Ai Hui was a smart man. With his accumulated experience, Ai Hui could always seek out opportunities.

Ai Hui’s only chance was to cooperate with Newlight City!

Only by cooperating with Newlight City could he intimidate Skyheart City and prevent it from making any reckless moves. Other influences, even the Gong residence, wouldn’t be able to do this. Other smaller powers wouldn’t even be able to resist against Skyheart City.

"I can’t even earn some money peacefully." Ai Hui sounded helpless.

He stood up, walked toward the door, and left An Chouchou with some parting words, "It’s late. You should rest early."

Chapter 555: Decoy

Entering the camping ground. Shi Xueman saw that it was empty. She narrowed her eyes and stared coldly at Zhao Mingwei. "What’s going on?"

Her gaze was bitterly cold. To the Spear of Heavy Cloud, the two consecutive bloody battles were like two completely transformative tempering sessions, but wasn’t it the same for her? Although she did not raise Cirrus in her hand, she still released a frightening aura, which seemed to freeze the air in the camp.

However, Zhao Mingwei only smiled bitterly. "Please calm down, Leader Shi. I wasn’t being deceitful, but was left with no choice..."

Suddenly, two figures dashed in. They were Silver Soldier and Karakorum Polaris. Seeing the hostile situation outside the camping ground upon arrival had shocked them. After receiving information from Jiang Wei, they couldn’t help but charge in without delay.

They were also worried that Skyheart City would harm Shi Xueman.

Silver Soldier looked around and said in a deep voice, "What’s going on?"

By now Karakorum Polaris had already rested her sword against Zhao Mingwei’s neck.

The bitterness on Zhao Mingwei's face intensified. "Now that all three division leaders are here, my mission is complete. The Dread and Judgement Divisions are long gone."

As it turned out, Wan Shenwei and Ximen Caijue, while formulating a plan on the road, had decided to change their route. They had ordered Zhao Mingwei to advance according to the original plan and to put forth a great display, allowing everyone to have a look at the four majestic God-subduing Peaks. Yet, the Dread and Judgement divisions had long since disappeared.

All three division leaders made eye contact.

Silver Soldier asked, "Did the two leaders say where they were going?"

Zhao Mingwei cried, "I did ask, but they ignored me. You sirs are finally here! I was in fear the whole time. We're talking about four God-subduing Peaks and endless supplies. If I had lost them, even nine lives wouldn't be sufficient for me to compensate. I haven't had a peaceful night of sleep and have been traveling in trepidation this whole journey..."

Silver Soldier inquired once again about the details of the Dread and Judgement divisions' departure.

After a while, the three of them gathered again.

Silver Soldier said in a low voice, "He’s not lying."

Shi Xueman asked, "If this was a decoy employed by them, where would they be targeting?"

Silver Soldier shook his head. "I don’t know yet. Perhaps they would attack the enemy headquarters directly or the Blood of God’s territory. The former is most likely. How bold of them!"

Shi Xueman looked impressed too. "The enemy would never expect it, but they still have a narrow window."

Everyone kept quiet.

Such a dangerous war strategy was greatly avoided and employed as a last resort. This also meant that the two division leaders were pessimistic about the situation. They were convinced that ordinary methods would give them little chance of victory.Thus, they chose to risk it.

Worry flashed across Shi Xueman’s eyes. "We have to make full use of this time. The enemy’s counterattack might be too aggressive for us to handle this time round."

They had initially thought that with the two central combat divisions, Dread and Judgement, there would not be any problems even if the enemy attacked more forcefully. After all, they were the two strongest combat divisions in the Avalon of Five Elements.

They believed that while an ordinary combat division would be unable to resist the blood elementalists' retribution, it would at least have sufficient members to exhaust a significant portion of their energy. Plus, they would have the Dread and Judgement divisions as the core while the Spear of Heavy Cloud, Infantry, and Sky Edge would assist by forming a new defensive line to obstruct the enemy.

But with the Dread and Judgement Divisions' sudden change in attacking route, their plan had already failed before it even started. This also meant that the situation had become extremely dangerous.

Having battled with blood elementalists, the three of them were clear that an ordinary elementalist combat division was no match for the enemy. They were most worried that the combat divisions charging toward the front line would keep getting defeated and eventually collapse.

With the entire front line collapsing, there would be no chance of victory.

Everyone was speechless. Suddenly, Beyond Avalon's fate had fallen onto their shoulders, and the immense pressure rendered them breathless. In reality, they were merely three nobodies and their combat divisions were completely new. Looking around, however, they realized that there wasn't anyone else.

Silver Soldier exclaimed, "We must obstruct them!"

Shi Xueman raised her Cirrus up.

A snow-white long sword was raised.

An iron fist was raised.

"To the death!"

"To the death!"

"To the death!"

.....

Central Pine Valley.

Ai Hui, Lou Lan, Blind He, and Mister Dou sat together. They listened carefully as Ai Hui went through his whole plan. "That’s about it. Any problems?"

Mister Dou was the first to speak. In a worried voice he asked, "Can we really succeed?"

Ai Hui replied calmly, "This is the best solution I can come up with. Whether or not it will work, I’m not sure. Lou Lan has tested this hypothesis, and theoretically speaking, it should work, but no one has done it before, so nothing can be guaranteed."

With an exceptionally grim and assured tone, Lou Lan exclaimed, "Lou Lan believe it will definitely succeed!"

Mister Dou sighed. "It’s too much of a risk."

Ai Hui said in a low voice, "A loosed arrow cannot be retrieved. The tigers and wolves are watching all around, so we have to defend ourselves."

Mister Dou couldn’t help but sigh and remained silent. When compared to the serenity within the valley, the fire of war outside was like a whole different world. He was no longer a leader in the underworld, but an average old man who enjoyed teaching a bunch of kids every day.

He sighed deeply. He’d hoped for these kids to grow up safely, but judging from the current situation it was an extravagant wish.

The chaotic world was like a copper furnace that trapped everyone in it. There was no hope of escaping.

The Central Pine Valley was also unable to stay out of it.

He closed his eyes and envisioned many small and weak figures fighting through the war amid the wind and rain. Some fell while others gradually grew stronger.

This was the chaotic world.

Blind He said faintly, "It’s fine on my side. I can make whatever is needed. The rest can be put aside for now."

Ai Hui added, "Regarding manpower, I will engage all the members of the Sword of Lightning and all of the kids from the valley. Lou Lan will be in charge of coordinating and rectifying the situation."

"No problem, Ai Hui! I’ll work hard!" Lou Lan answered enthusiastically before asking, "What about Bangwan?"

"Don’t disturb him." Ai Hui continued, "Bangwan’s spontaneous enlightenment has been going on for such a long time. I have a feeling that he will be at a totally different level when he awakens."

Mister Dou opened his eyes, revealing the depth of his empty eye sockets. With a disdainful expression, he commanded, "Just leave the Northern Underworld King Tree to me."

Ai Hui watched him attentively and bowed. "Thank you, Sir."

Mister Dou laughed. "You need not be so polite with me. I’ve been waiting for this for a long time. Just the thought of it makes my blood race. One foot already in the grave,n but still able to go down in history. How lucky am I! There are no regrets left in life!"

His long grey hair fluttered in the air. Despite the emptiness and

haggardness on his face, he spoke heroically, "Remember to prepare some good wine!"

Ai Hui spoke solemnly, "On the day of victory, we will have a drink together."

Pinwheel Sword.

As everyone gradually got used to the speed of the Pinwheel Sword, their excitement cooled off too. Nevertheless, they never stopped pondering over it.

Qiao Meiqi wondered if he should get a Pinwheel Sword from Ai Hui. From what he saw, circulation was the essence of business, and in the circulation of money and goods, speed was always crucial. Even if placed in the era of the Avalon of Five Elements, the speed of the Pinwheel Sword would be incomparable, let alone the load basin beasts that were currently the main mode of transport.

As for the fact that the Pinwheel Sword ran on snow lava and was therefore extremely costly, Qiao Meiqi did not see it as a problem at all.

Now was the time of wars and chaos!

Who would care about costs when it was a matter of life and death?

As for the swordsmen needed to operate the Pinwheel Sword, he could simply pay Ai Hui to train them! With his understanding of Ai Hui, any definite benefits would effectively convince him. There was no difference between chasing a duck or a flock of ducks. He wasn't expecting those swordsmen to fight his war, but to transport his goods.

After a while, he realized that only Shi Zhiguang was operating the Pinwheel sword while the other swordsmen were merely standing guard. Qiao Meiqi's eyes became even brighter. Wouldn't that be even easier?

A Pinwheel Sword being attacked? With such speed, enemies would only be eating the dust coming out of it. Not even dire beasts would be feared! Practically all the dire beasts that could catch up to the Pinwheel Sword's speed lived in the upper atmosphere.

No matter how he saw it, the Pinwheel Sword was the perfect transportation tool!

The more he thought about it, the brighter his eyes became.

What he had thought of wasn't anything special, but at this moment, no one could imagine the enormity of the storm that the Pinwheel Storm could possibly raise. No one knew how deep of an impact it could bring to this world.

Everyone was aware of the advantages of the Pinwheel Sword, but its disadvantages were similarly evident. The high cost of snow lava greatly limited its suitability. Only the wealthy, like the

Central Pine Valley, would spend so recklessly. How were others going to afford it? Even if they could, they would only have enough for one or two.

Throughout the journey, Huo Da had been by Shi Zhiguang's side.

Shi Zhiguang was feeling uneasy after being stared at for a long time. "What are you looking at?"

Huo Da replied truthfully, "Looking at how you control the Pinwheel Sword."

Shi Zhiguang laughed out loud. "Is this something you can learn just by looking? It's not so easy being a sword operator!"

Huo Da questioned, "Sword operator? Specializing in the Pinwheel Sword?"

Shi Zhiguang had been piloting the Pinwheel Sword in a fanciful manner and had been totally enjoying the process. Upon executing an emergency brake maneuver outside Lightning City, he had almost caused an uproar, but became significantly more well-behaved on the route back. However, merely operating the Pinwheel Sword at full speed required little effort, and he quickly got bored. Huo Da's words easily got him excited.

He was, after all, a young chap in his twenties. Seeing a Master who was looking at him in such an inquisitive manner

immediately fed and satisfied his vain heart.

In high spirits, Shi Zhiguang started bragging about the importance and power of sword operators. "That's right! A sword operator holds the most important position on the Pinwheel Sword and has complete control over its flight. He decides how and where it flies. Think about it. All lives on board are in your hands, so how can you not be important?"

Huo Da nodded his head in agreement. With slight astonishment he cried, "That's really good!"

Huo Da's compliment excited him even more. "Now that you have experienced the Pinwheel Sword's speed for yourself, how do you feel?"

Huo da replied sincerely, "Fast as lightning. It's incomparable."

"That's right!" Shi Zhiguang hurriedly added, "With this speed it is extremely challenging to alter its direction. You must find a loophole in the enemy's troop disposition and seek a suitable path to cut in. All of this has to be completed in a second. I'm not lying. It must all be done in the blink of an eye or else you'll overshoot."

Huo Da knew that Shi Zhiguang was speaking the truth since Huo Da was also an expert in flying. His Comet Wings were known for their speed. He had rich experience in flying and knew that the faster the speed, the harder to control. With the Pinwheel Sword's speed, it was true that Shi Zhiguang would only be given a split second to react.

Huo Da exclaimed, "You must have trained for a long time!"

Shi Zhiguang opened his eyes wide. "Definitely! I've been through some vigorous training. There's no other way. There were so many times that I felt like I was going to die."

Huo Da asked curiously, "How do sword operators train?"

Shi Zhiguang's face instantly turned red. After a short while he stammered, "Embroidery."

Huo Da was utterly shocked.

Chapter 556: Open Conspiracy

An Chouchou faced the mirror, looking at the figure in it. A look of satisfaction flashed across his face.

He had come forward personally, not hesitating to take risks, in order to express his sincerity. To form an alliance with Central Pine Valley was, for Newlight City, a game of chess, of life and death. To date, despite Newlight City's development, it was unable to get rid of its status as a big but powerless city. It had the most people but lacked powerful players. It had the most craftsmen, but they weren't highly skilled.

Everything was related to new citizens. In the past, in Avalon of Five Elements, new citizens were of lower-middle class. While they had a great number, they lacked accumulation. Aristocrats were the exact opposite. They were small in number but wealthy, had inheritance and profound accumulation.

And Central Pine Valley was like an enormous treasure chest!

Be it pagoda cannons, snow lava, or the Pinwheel Sword, they all had An Chouchou drooling with desire.

Especially snow lava. If he could just get its recipe, Newlight City would undergo a complete transformation and it would be able to make up for its biggest weakness.

As long as Central Pine Valley became Newlight City's ally, the latter would be in control of the situation. Central Pine Valley was

powerful indeed, but they had too few people. In time, Ai Hui and gang would find themselves being outnumbered, ultimately needing to join Newlight City to become new citizens or lose their controlling power.

It was an open conspiracy.

Because Newlight City was Ai Hui's only choice.

Forming an alliance with Skyheart City? The disparity in abilities of both parties was simply too huge, such that Skyheart City could effortlessly swallow up Central Pine Valley. An Chouchou was even convinced that if Master's Glory was a success, the first batch of Masters would be ordered by Madam Ye to first target Central Pine Valley and not Newlight City.

Destroying Central Pine Valley and gaining ownership of snow lava would mean that whether she threw it aside or used it, Madam Ye would be able to sleep peacefully at night.

An Chouchou had even more inside information. He knew that Master's Glory was Madam Ye's real foundation. For it, she had even put her own son inside. Anything that could threaten Master's Glory in the slightest was a thorn in her flesh.

Ai Hui, who was able to create snow lava, should be buried in the loess.

An Chouchou studied Ai Hui before. No matter the time, Ai Hui

was able to recognize the state of affairs. It seemed that he was especially able to seek opportunities amid despair. He never pinned his faith on luck and his hope on others.

This was an intelligent and pragmatic young man.

An Chouchou pushed open the windows and saw a descending Pinwheel Sword.

He walked out, full of confidence.

Those in the Pinwheel Sword, which had just landed, were absorbing the sights of Fishback City. In all honesty, Fishback City was small and ugly, but there was only respect on their faces.

Because this city was built single-handedly by an earth elementalist.

Just this fact alone was sufficient to evoke veneration and admiration.

Wen Yongmin and the other reporters started recording. They hadn't forgotten about their job and definitely weren't going to waste such a rare opportunity. No one knew what was up with Ai Hui and why he would actually invite them over.

Some adaptable reporters were already wondering if they could get a chance to apply for a tour around Central Pine Valley.

In Beyond Avalon, Central Pine Valley was simply too mysterious, and it was said that even Qiao Meiqi hasn't been inside. It was a restricted area.

Some people were admiring the galaxy of talent within Central Pine Valley and the fact that yet another earth elementalist Master had been born. Central Pine Valley was like a treasure land with good feng shui, consistently producing capable talents.

"I heard that they're all survivors from Central Pine City."

"Sometimes we really gotta admit that marvelous things do happen. Look at them. Survivors of Central Pine City uniting to form a pool of great talents."

"Yeah. Ai Hui, Shi Xueman, Qian Dai, Wang Xiaoshan, and Lu Mingxiu. Five Masters... heaven really is spoiling the Central Pine Faction."

"One is bound for good fortune upon surviving a great disaster."

...

Ai Hui heard people gasping from afar, and in that instant it was as if he'd been isolated from the world. To those people, they were already being regarded as talents. In the past, who would have thought that Fatty, who was lazy, unreliable, and needed Lou Lan to supervise his daily training, would've accomplished this much.

Also, other than playing with mud, Wang Xiaoshan had no other skills, and he even felt guilty for not being able to contribute to the team.

Iron Lady had always been that brilliant and lofty Iron Lady.

And himself? He was a pauper who had to clean up the training hall and even owed his mistress a large sum of money. He made daily visits to the Suspending Golden Pagoda to temper his body and would be very happy whenever he managed to earn a little bit of money. At that time he hadn’t known Lou Lan for long and Teacher and Mistress were still alive...

His thoughts grew further and further away into the olden days of the gentle and warm sunshine.

"Boss, the people are here."

Gu Xuan’s words pulled him back to reality. Behind that fresh, red crystallic sheet, a faint trace of tenderness and sorrow flashed across his eyes before he regained calmness.

Qiao Meiqi came over, asking, "What happened exactly, my boy? Why such a big troop?"

Ai Hui smiled slightly. "You’ll know soon."

Coincidentally, An Chouchou came over and called out with a smile, "Mayor Qiao!"

Somewhat puzzled, Qiao Meiqi asked, "This is?"

Ai Hui introduced, "Newlight City, An Chouchou."

Qiao Meiqi’s face changed. He was overwhelmed with shock, countless thoughts rolling within his mind. Even though he had been doing business for a long time and was extremely experienced, his mind went black and he actually forgot to greet An Chouchou.

An Chouchou chuckled without getting angry. He was somewhat pleased.

He raised his head slightly, a confident smile appearing on his face.

An Chouchou’s identity was quickly revealed to the rest, and those present cried out in surprise. They looked doubtfully at An Chouchou and Ai Hui, wondering to themselves what was going to happen that day.

Wen Yongmin and the other reporters were busy recording. They had a feeling that a piece of sensational news was about to arrive!

Central Pine Valley, a few miles away from Fishback City, was in a frenzy at that moment.

The members of Sword of Lightning and all the children had been mobilized. They were working hard under the command of mini Lou Lans, who covered the mountains and plains. Mini Lou Lans waved their little flags, running here and there and occasionally shouting in their high voices.

"Go, go! Everyone go!"

Some had stern faces as they stood at the end of a moat, gesturing and instructing in a serious tone.

"Here, here, not aligned!"

"Not deep enough, a foot short!"

Others floated in the sky, forming different words made of sand.

"Work harder, everyone, we're about to finish!"

"Thanks for the hard work, everybody!"

A white light ray, unique to White Cluster Flames, illuminated Blind He's expressionless face. The eye on his palm emitted a golden light that shot onto the materials that were piled like a mountain. By his feet lied a freshly casted component. Its red glow had yet to fade and it was emitting hot steam.

Su Qingye asked in a low voice, while burying his head in work,

"Know what this is for?"

Hua Xiaoyun bit her lips, answering softly, "No idea. Teacher Dou refused to answer! You got news?"

Among the many children, Teacher Dou doted on the sensible and adorable Hua Xiaoyun the most and was much more strict toward boys. Mischievous ones would definitely get caned, but when Hua Xiaoyun made a mistake, he would just laugh it off.

Zhou Wen added, "Why do you ask so much? Just do what you're told."

Su Qingye knew Zhou Wen's character well. Without getting angry, he said, "From what I see, something big's about to happen! What do you say, Little An?"

Wei An was brought back by Ai Hui and could be considered his student. Wei An was naturally cautious, different from the three kids who had been following Ai Hui for many years. Ai Hui didn't have time to guide him, so Wei An felt slightly lost. "I... I don't know."

"Don't bully Little An!" Hua Xiaoyun glared at Su Qingye. Wei An's awkwardness and uneasiness had evoked the kind-hearted Hua Xiaoyun's sympathy. She added, "Only Skyheart City would dare to find trouble with us."

Su Qingye rolled up his sleeves and rubbed his fists. "Skyheart

City’s looking for death!"

The kids had already gotten used to the valley’s power. To them, Central Pine Valley was the world’s most powerful and safest place.

"Everyone, have a break! Elemental soup is here!"

When Lou Lan’s voice was heard, cheers followed. All problems and doubts were thrown to the back of their minds.

There wasn’t anything Lou Lan’s elemental soup couldn’t solve. If there was, then it was a sign that another bowl must be served!

He Min had been out of it for the past few days as the gory scenes from the mirage bean pod appeared in his mind from time to time. Not only him, his classmates were in a worse state. Quite a few timid students had been absent from training. Even the teacher had been feeling slightly depressed these few days.

The weather that day was pretty good, the bright sunlight providing them with much needed heat. The atmosphere had lightened up a little. For the past few days, even the sunlight couldn’t warm their cold bodies up.

It was a pity the Spear of Heavy Cloud never recruited members here, or else He Min would definitely apply.

On second thought, He Min felt he was indulging in fantasy.

Countless people were trying to squeeze their way into the Spear of Heavy Cloud, so he would never get his turn.

As he was passing by the mirage bean pod shop, He Min stopped.

He had very little change with him, but he still ran over to ask, "Do you have the latest mirage bean pod of the Spear of Heavy Cloud, Boss?"

"There are some Masters' analyses of that battle, do you want it?"

He Min clenched his teeth. "Yes!"

Surprisingly, He Min didn't feel much of a heartache for having spent money on it.

He was very curious as to what the Masters had to say about the battle.

He looked at the time. It was still early, so he found himself a remote place to enjoy the clip.

"In that battle, it can be said that the Spear of Heavy Cloud's performance was perfect. There were a few key areas. First would be the disposition constructed by Master Wang Xiaoshan. In past battles, while earth elementalistal masters were of significant use, Master Wang Xiaoshan was completely different from them. According to our materials, he used to be very good at building camps. And constructing battlefields is a new discovery and

development for earth elementalists. Master Wang Xiaoshan's quicksand paste played a huge role in delaying the enemies' attacks. Second would be Shi Xueman's outstanding performance. On fighting Xing Shan one on one, she didn't fall into a disadvantageous position at all. Plus, after a few crucial collisions, she had greatly boosted the team's morale. But the most crucial parts would be the pagoda cannons' execution and Qian Dai's breakthrough. It's no doubt that him becoming a Master was a chance occurrence, but pagoda cannons are undoubtedly the most powerful weapons to deal with the blood elementalists!"

He Min continued viewing only to find more promotion about the pagoda cannon. He was somewhat disappointed.

He wasn't a fire elementalist, so he couldn't become a pagoda cannoneer.

He shut the clip off and jogged toward the training hall.

Chapter 557: New Pagoda Cannon

It was a bustling day at the Spear of Heavy Cloud's encampment

The two gigantic God-subduing Peaks were absolutely eye-grabbing. The people on it were like little ants. Everybody was familiarizing themselves with the God-subduing Peaks. After all, the God-subduing Peaks were big fellows that weren't easy to operate properly.

The Spear of Heavy Cloud breaking into the God-subduing Peaks was rather smooth since Shi Xueman and Sang Zhijun had been stationed in them before and were very clear about the procedures. In comparison, the Infantry and the Sky Edge Division were in a much worse state. They had never been in direct contact with the God-subduing Peaks, so they had to send people over to the Spear of Heavy Cloud to learn.

With Sang Zhijun leading the team, Shi Xueman had more time to recuperate from her injuries.

Her internal injuries were due to an over-absorption of impure water elemental energy. These impurities, upon entering the body, would settle within and become very difficult to eliminate. The longer time dragged on, the more harmful it became to the body. Furthermore, this type of injury was permanent and incurable, so elementalists wouldn't do what she did unless they absolutely had no choice.

Shi Xueman composed herself and with rapt attention she held

onto the Cirrus, her legs slightly apart and her gaze seemingly fixed on the spear tip.

Time passed and she remained motionless, just like a statue.

Gradually, a grey, hairlike mist rose from the spear tip. It was very peculiar and did not disperse.

Hu!

Shi Xueman slowly kept her spear.

There still weren’t any good solutions to heal an injury like this. However, Shi family was rich and powerful after all and had collected all kinds of strange things. By influence, Shi Xueman naturally knew much more than average people.

She had just executed a move from a remnant piece of writing, "Dirtless Sheet". She had been flipping through her family’s ancient books, so this was very helpful to her.

"Dirtless Sheet" was just a piece that survived time and had no beginning or end. Remnant pieces like this could be found in every family. They were basically items passed down from the Cultivation Era. Some contained exquisite knowledge, some were interesting, while others could be used as references even when it came to elemental energy.

While every family had its own collection, only a few specialized

in studying these remnant sheets. A remnant sheet of writing was usually cryptic and difficult to comprehend. Also, these pieces weren't systematic; everything was broken and in disorder. Some were even preposterous and unimaginable. A lot of energy had to be invested, but not much benefit could be reaped, so naturally, families wouldn't waste time on these remnant writings.

If not for the fact that Shi Xueman had been diligent since young and had a solid foundation, she would have forgotten the contents.

"Dirtless Sheet" talked not only about refining the body but also about the state of mind, so it was somewhat marvelous. Shi Xueman had tried it since there was nothing to lose, but she realized that it actually worked.

She extended her palm, and her skin felt as though there was an additional layer of moisture.

A significant amount of impurity had been eliminated, but according to this speed she would need a lot of time. Unfortunately, her schedule was extremely tight at the moment since there were a lot of things to do at the Spear of Heavy Cloud and there was going to be another fierce battle soon. Where was she going to find the time to recuperate? It would be good enough if she could just prevent her injuries from worsening.

Her abilities had deteriorated by ten percent.

It was extremely difficult for newly promoted Masters to see any slight improvement.

She walked out from the room and quickly noticed that people were gathered and were making noise.

She walked over silently and saw them watching the mirage bean pod. Its contents had her stunned.

"Aye, they didn’t capture my face, what a loss. I’ve lost the chance to become famous."

"At least I can see your rear view. I got blocked by a d*mn tree."

"Master Fatty’s last shot was really amazing!"

"Yeah, if he hadn’t undergone a breakthrough at that critical moment, we would’ve all been in big trouble."

…

Everyone was having a lively discussion, and unlike outsiders who viewed the clip, they weren’t shaken up. They had already broken free from the battle trauma and were better able to face that cruel battle calmly.

Sang Zhijun and Jiang Wei noticed Shi Xueman’s entrance and walked to her side.

Shi Xueman retracted her gaze and asked, somewhat puzzled,

"From where?"

Sang Zhijun smiled. "We went to the nearest city to buy some things and found a lot of mirage bean pods involving us. We then realized that we have all become a hot topic, so we bought one of each clip. There are still many others, but they are all Masters' analyses. This is the only one that recorded us."

Jiang Wei added, "I wonder who recorded it. We didn't detect any ambusher."

Ai Hui had more information, so she answered, "It's Surveillance Division."

Sang Zhijun was stunned. "Why would Surveillance's clip be on the market?"

"Yeah, why would Surveillance's clip circulate? Logically speaking, it's strictly confidential content."

Fatty asked, "Could it be that they are thinking of giving us yet another God-subduing Peak?"

The mention of a God-subduing Peak had everyone excited. They had thrown themselves on it the moment it arrived and finally experienced its might for themselves.

Jiang Wei laughed. "You really think it's that easy? These four God-subduing Peaks are probably Skyheart City's whole fortune. If

not for the fact that we were moving together with the Sky Edge and the Infantry, our merit would simply be too huge. Skyheart City wants to lure the talented ones, so it won't be our turn."

Fatty chimed in, "Who cares. The God-subduing Peaks are now in our tummies, and no one's going to seize them."

There was no joy on Shi Xueman's face. She asked Sang Zhijun, "What about other bean pods?"

Sang Zhijun hurriedly took out a bag of bean pods. "They're all in here. We haven't had time to view them yet."

Shi Xueman crushed one of them, and in the clip the Master kept on going on about how powerful the pagoda cannon was and how it was the number one weapon to deal with blood elementalists.

Following that, Shi Xueman kept crushing more bean pods, and the smiles on everybody's faces vanished.

Practically all of the clips talked about how the "pagoda cannon was the key to tackle blood elementalists".

Even those who weren't as sharp sensed an unusual atmosphere rising.

Just then, a scout rushed over. He cried out, "Boss! The front line has been defeated. Blood of God broke in and got in deep, and our combat divisions have suffered heavy losses. Six combat divisions

have already been scattered."

Everyone’s faces changed. Thinking back to the sentence that the "pagoda cannon was the key to tackle blood elementalists", they felt a chill spreading all over their bodies.

Fatty burst into a rage. "Skyheart City! It must be them!"

Sang Zhijun looked at Shi Xueman anxiously. "What now?"

"Continue familiarizing yourselves with the God-subduing Peaks. There’s not much time." Shi Xueman remained calm as her gaze swept across the room. "We’re dead if we lose, so let’s not care so much. Focus on battling. We’ll leave these things to Ai Hui. He’ll handle them well."

She then added, "No one can do it better than he will."

Her words calmed everyone down slightly.

Fatty nodded continuously. "That’s right, that’s right, don’t worry. I know him. He has a pretty black heart too, it doesn’t lose to anyone else."

After some thought, Shi Xueman instructed, "Zhijun, Get Master Yang to bring these mirage bean pods and this report to Ai Hui as soon as possible."

At that, Sang Zhijun hurriedly left to look for Yang Xiaodong.

Shi Xueman turned around to face Fatty. "How's the modification coming along?"

Fatty's eyes lit up. "The prototype is more or less completed. Old Li is forging it now. He should be almost done."

Old Li was a decently skilled craftsman that they had recruited.

His words caught everyone's interest. "Let's go take a look."

Fatty behaved like a pagoda cannon expert now, but as the first ever Pagoda Cannon Master, he did have that right. No one, including Ai Hui, could say with certainty that they knew more about it than Fatty.

Old Li had a coal-like face. When he spotted Shi Xueman and gang, he instantly became overcautious.

Fatty cleared his throat. "Old Li, is it done?"

"Yes, I was about to look for you."

With a wave, Fatty called out, "Quick, let me have a look."

"Aye, have a look," he said as he carried a box that was bigger

than him.

Without a word, Fatty opened it, and the rest gathered around quickly.

Upon hearing that Fatty's new pagoda cannon was done, the people who had been watching the clips threw them aside and rushed over. Even Zu Yan was there. Everyone was very curious to see how Fatty's modified pagoda cannon would look like. He had, after all, made a single-person pagoda cannon by himself.

No one cared much when he took out his single-person pagoda cannon. They thought that Fatty was just having fun and hadn't expected him get rid of a remarkable blood elementalist with it.

It wasn't wrong to say that Fatty was the Ardent Flower Blood Division's greatest jinx. Two outstanding blood elementalists had died by his hands, and his last shot was the final fatal blow.

Fatty took strangely-shaped components from the box and started assembling them. Although it was his first time installing them, Fatty didn't seem the least bit unfamiliar. His hands worked nimbly, as if he'd practiced it many times before.

Shi Xueman couldn't help but feel moved. Each Master had his own talent, and even such a lazy person like Fatty had extraordinary passion when it came to pagoda cannons. She could still remember the time in Central Pine City when Lou Lan had to supervise Fatty's training. No one had expected him to successfully become a Pagoda Cannon Master one day.

Fatty was completely focused, his plump fingers moving quickly.

In his hands, a whole new pagoda cannon emerged before everyone’s eyes.

It was much more bulky, but the trestle had been simplified. The position of the fire reservoir had also undergone a major change and its volume had increased significantly as well. The most eye-catching part would be the thick and solid red cannon tube. The modified tube was about three times thicker and twice as long. Its entire body was now bright red in color, appearing like an enormous city-attacking hammer. There were two small, wing-like structures at the tail of the tube, formed from stacked layers of black metal.

"This is the new pagoda cannon. I call it the ‘Beehive Heavy Cannon’!"

Pride was evident on Fatty’s face.

Chapter 558: Improving The Fort

"Ai Hui created the pagoda cannons and snow lava. However, the one who truly promoted and developed pagoda cannons was his good friend, Qian Dai. Qian Dai, who was timid and hated close combat, had an exceptional talent with pagoda cannons. Not only did he become the first Pagoda Cannon Master, he also relentlessly improved the pagoda cannons relentlessly. The pagoda cannon craze that he single-handedly promoted had an extremely deep impact on the war back then. These two laborers from the Wilderness joined hands to start a brand-new era. In the history of pagoda cannons, no other invention's glory could be compared to theirs. We have benefited from both of them, we are trapped by them, and we can't escape from them.

-- < The History of Pagoda Cannons>

Fatty was enjoying the limelight and the respectful looks he received. He was curious and hopeful, feeling as if something in his body was leaping, boiling, and bursting forth. This was a very unfamiliar and new experience for him. He had never experienced this feeling before.

He coughed softly and said, "When the Division Leader asked me to improve the pagoda cannons, I actually already had a few design plans in mind."

A few soft laughter broke out in the crowd.

Fatty became worried in an instant. He replied, "Hey, hey, hey, I

am not boasting! I came up with those design plans when I had free time. There were even a few of them. However, eventually, I felt that these pagoda cannons should be equipped on the God-subduing Peak. I have looked through a few design plans, but I was not really satisfied with them. Therefore, I decided to come up with another new design."

Everyone was very quiet as they listened to Fatty attentively.

Fatty also gradually went into a zone as he continued to talk. His plump face had a glint that radiated . "I have never been on a God-subduing Peak. After I boarded it this time, I realized that the God-subduing Peak is really a treasure. It is an air fort that can fly in the sky. Since it is an air fort, what attributes do the pagoda cannons equipped onboard need? The first attribute I thought of was long range. The longer the range of the pagoda cannons, the safer we are. Since there is so much space in the sky, we should make good use of it."

Everyone nodded their heads. This logic was simple to understand.

"The next one is high attack speed. The God-subduing Peak will definitely be surrounded by enemy forces. Since the enemy forces will surround the God-subduing Peak, we will be attacked from all directions. If the attack speed of the pagoda cannons are too slow, they will be useless to us.

"The third attribute is area-of-effect attacks. Since the God-subduing Peak was destined to be surrounded by enemy forces, we will have to fight many enemies at once. If one shot only kills one

person, how many shots will we have to fire? This will not have too much of an impact on the overall battlefield either. Actually, I was inspired by the previous battle. The last shot was rather effective. If we can't kill an enemy soldier with a single shot, we can compensate with a huge number of shots. After all, the God-subduing Peak has a huge surface area and we can equip it with a sufficient number of pagoda cannons."

Zu Yan was overwhelmed with shock. Was this really Fatty?

Fatty's explanations were clear and precise. Every part was well thought out. Furthermore, he explained with assurance, looking as if he had become a completely different person. Was this the same Fatty that kept on yelling he was tired and hungry whenever they went out to scout?

An absolute silence descended upon the room. Everyone was listening to Fatty attentively. Everything he said had substance.

A look of surprise flashed across Shi Xueman's eyes. She had only casually mentioned improving the pagoda cannons and had not placed too much hope on Fatty. She hadn't expected for Fatty to give her such a huge surprise.

"What everyone is looking at now is a scaled-down version," Fatty smiled.

Everyone cried out in alarm. The size of the pagoda cannon they were looking at now had already exceeded the size of any pagoda cannons they had ever seen before. This was considered the scaled-

down version? How big would the actual Beehive Heavy Cannon be?

"As for the actual version, everyone will get to see it in the future." Fatty kept everyone in suspense. "Let’s try this out."

"Master Fatty! Show us a thing or two!" someone yelled.

Shi Xueman, Jiang Wei, and the rest felt anticipation. Being the first ever Pagoda Cannon Master, no one doubted Fatty’s talent with pagoda cannons. After Fatty bragged so much about the might of the Beehive Pagoda Cannon, everyone was looking forward to it.

After pouring the snow lava into the fire reservoir, Fatty stood behind the pagoda cannon.

His facial expression was solemn and his legs were spread apart. His plump and huge body was a fleshy mountain. Using his shoulder to support the back of the pagoda cannon, he then placed both his hands on the cannon barrel. In an instant, the snow lava in the fire reservoir was sucked dry.

The surroundings were so quiet that one could even hear the sound of a pin dropping on the ground. Everyone held their breaths while widening their eyes. They were afraid to miss out on any details.

Fatty’s stance began to change. His left leg extended forward

while his waist was lowered, forming a bow stance. Elemental energy was inserted into the pagoda cannon from Fatty's palms. The beehive-like inner chamber of the pagoda cannon began to spin rapidly.

It was only at this moment that everyone noticed the new pagoda cannon was double-layered. The inside of the pagoda cannon could actually rotate.

The beehive-like inner chamber spun faster and faster. It was like steel heated by fire, emitting a bright-red glow. If one looked inside the cannon barrel, he or she would see the dazzling red light in the center of the beehive-like inner chamber gradually becoming white in color.

Hiss, hiss, hiss!

A sound that resembled countless snakes hissing together was produced by the pagoda cannon, causing everyone's hair to stand on end.

A beam of red light shot out from the cannon barrel.

A powerful shock wave erupted from the pagoda cannon. Fatty's body suddenly sank into the ground. His eyes were angrily dilated, and his muscles became taut with veins popping out, making him looked very muscular. Boiling hot steam engulfed his body.

The beam of red light was spinning extremely fast. On the

contrary, its flying speed did not look fast at all.

A disappointed look appeared on many people's faces. This speed was too slow, and the enemy forces would have enough time to dodge the pagoda cannon's attacks.

At this moment, the single beam of red light suddenly scattered into countless beams. Densely-packed beams of red light flew in all directions, resembling an enormous red dandelion.

Its diameter was more than 150 meters.

Pop.

One of the beams of red light suddenly inflated and burst, transforming into a streaking tongue of white flame that was more than 60 meters long. Pop, pop, pop.

A sound like that of beans popping could be heard incessantly. The enormous red dandelion exploded all at once! Countless white tongues of fire criss-crossed in the air, forming a gigantic blazing net. It burned for more than 10 seconds before vanishing into the air.

Phew!

Fatty heaved a breath of air. The breath of air he exhaled gave off sparks, making him look like a fire-breathing dragon.

Oh? Can all of you show me some reactions? Where is the round of applause for me? How come there are no reactions at all? Did I mess it up?

Fatty was baffled.

Suddenly, a clamor erupted. Fatty was so scared that he almost threw away the pagoda cannon and ran away.

"Formidable! White hot flames!"

"It looks slightly like the shot that Master Fatty fired last time!"

"The elemental energy undulations are really scary. I thought a volcano had erupted."

"Yes, yes! Master Fatty is becoming more and more powerful!"

...

Jiang Wei's eyes were brightly lit. He spat out a series of questions in quick-fire succession, "How big is the actual version of the Beehive Heavy Cannon? How large of an area can the explosion cover? Can the range of the explosion be altered? How much snow lava will it consume..."

Upon seeing such strong reactions from everyone, Fatty became

pleased with himself in an instant. He coughed melodramatically and replied, "There are so many questions from everyone. I still don’t know the answers to most of these questions yet, but I can tell all of you my opinion on this new pagoda cannon."

Everyone gradually quieted down. The elemental energy undulations from that shot had displayed to everyone the might of the new pagoda cannon.

"Why is it called ‘heavy cannon?’ That’s because it is extremely powerful, far more powerful than other types of pagoda cannon. I have looked through all the other design plans. They don’t have the God-subduing Peak, so they don’t have the advantages that we have. What are the advantages of the God-subduing Peak? It can fly and has a huge amount of space. Therefore, we can make the pagoda cannons equipped on the God-subduing Peak larger. This is why I named it ‘heavy cannon.’ The Beehive Heavy Cannon is equipped with a Zi-Mu fire reservoir. What you’re seeing now is a Zi fire reservoir. A Mu fire reservoir has a larger volume and can contain more snow lava. As for the snow lava, I also have some ideas. I feel that if we purely use snow lava, our consumption of snow lava will be too great. After the previous battle, I realized that the pagoda cannons are more effective if there were more of them. In the future, when we equip a God-subduing Peak with a huge number of pagoda cannons, we will not have enough snow lava. I think we have to look into a new type of fire liquid as well. A mixed one. I feel that a fire liquid blend is the future."

"The fire liquid blend will reduce the power of the Beehive Heavy Cannon, right?" Jiang Wei asked.

"That is for sure," Fatty replied. "However, I think we can split the blood elementalists into two groups and use two different types of pagoda cannons against them. The Beehive Heavy Cannons can be used to deal with ordinary blood elementalists. We can build enough of them to deal with the sieging enemy forces. If we are dealing with blood elementalists who possessed the Ability of God, we can devise a new type of pagoda cannons and use pure snow lava. However, we don't need too many of this type of pagoda cannons. Snow lava is so expensive that only those blood elementalists who have high statuses deserve it!"

Everyone burst out laughing.

"I will leave the new type of pagoda cannons to you then," Shi Xueman said.

"Division Leader, what about my reward?" Fatty intentionally put a pitiful look on his face.

"No problem," Shi Xueman replied bluntly. Then, she added, "I will have Ai Hui pass it to you."

Fatty shivered in fear. Immediately, he spoke with a solemn tone, "I was just joking! I was just joking! As a member of the Spear of Heavy Cloud, it is my responsibility to shoulder the honor of the Spear of Heavy Cloud! This is my job! Furthermore, what does the Spear of Heavy Cloud's business have to do with the Sword of Lightning?!"

Shi Xueman nodded her head and replied, "I will also tell him

what you said."

"Big Sister, Boss, Great Aunt, please let me off." Fatty looked like he was going to cry soon.

Everyone laughed heartily. Shi Xueman could not help but smile too.

Everyone, especially those from the Central Pine Faction, saw with their own eyes how Fatty was tortured by Ai Hui in the past. The shadow cast on his mind was as dark as the night.

Subsequently, Fatty returned to his usual self and continued, "The Beehive Heavy Cannon is powerful, but its consumption of snow lava is huge too. We need to replenish our stores of snow lava. Moreover, the Beehive Heavy Cannon needs more people to operate. According to my estimation, one Beehive Heavy Cannon will need at least 20 people to operate. Only the main gunner needs to be a fire elementalist. The rest of the crew can be of any elemental type. One God-subduing Peak will need at least..."

Fatty tilted his head and thought about it for a while before continuing, "50 Beehive Heavy Cannons?"

Ssss!

Everyone gasped. All of them were shocked by this number!

Fatty’s plump and sweaty face smiled. He did not seem crazy at

all. However, everyone knew how crazy this number was. Right now, the Spear of Heavy Cloud only had 12 pagoda cannons. If both God-subduing Peaks were to be equipped with 50 Beehive Heavy Cannons, they would need a total of 100 Beehive Heavy Cannons.

100 Beehive Heavy Cannons!

The terrifying, blazing, white flame net just now was a scaled-down version... Wouldn’t 100 full-sized, blazing, white flame nets... form a sea of fire!

When everyone imagined the sight of a sea of white fire covering the sky, they became extremely excited.

"100 Beehive Heavy Cannons need 2,000 men. We need increase our manpower then," Sang Zhijun was already doing the calculations.

Fatty continued, "That’s right. We have to make some early preparations or else it will be hard to recruit people at the last moment. If we have too many empty positions, it will create another issue."

Fatty looked at Shi Xueman.

"Speak," Shi Xueman said.

After witnessing the might of the Beehive Heavy Cannon, she had already decided that they needed to equip the God-subduing Peaks

with Beehive Heavy Cannons no matter what. If they really equipped the two God-subduing Peaks with 100 Beehive Heavy Cannons each, they would look like two enormous porcupines. The enemy forces would not know how to deal with them.

She knew that this plan was not easy to implement. However, she had a decisive and determined character. Once she decided to do something, she would do it at all costs without fearing the difficulties. Since she already made up her mind on equipping the God-subduing Peaks with Beehive Heavy Cannons, she would overcome any obstacles along the way.

"Not only do we have a problem with the manpower, we also have a problem with the number of smiths. Old Li alone is not enough. We need to recruit more smiths. Otherwise, I don't know when can we finish equipping the 100 Beehive Heavy Cannons for each God-subduing Peak," Fatty said.

After thinking about it for a while, Shi Xueman made a decision and said, "Skyheart City has allowed us to conscript elementalists from any local places to replenish our manpower. Jiang Wei, Zu Yan, both of you bring some men and go to the surrounding cities to recruit elementalists and smiths. For the elementalists, follow the usual procedure. As for the smiths, tell them we have the conscription authority first, and then give them some snow lava in exchange for their service."

"We will set off immediately." Jiang Wei was filled with admiration toward Shi Xueman.

By telling the smiths that the Spear of Heavy Cloud could

conscript them by force first and then giving them snow lava in exchange for their service, they would not make things too difficult for the smiths.

As for Zu Yan, his task was to hold the line. Without a Master among them, people would not take them seriously.

Shi Xueman turned around and said to Fatty, "I shall leave the new type of pagoda cannons to you. Time is running out. In the future, you will be responsible for anything that has to do with pagoda cannons."

An unprecedented feeling extended throughout Fatty's body like an electric current. His face flushed as he replied emotionally, "I will do my best!"

This was the first time he had been entrusted with such a heavy responsibility in the Central Pine Faction.

At this moment, his eyes became slightly red. It was a pity that Ai Hui wasn't here. The fatty who shivered with cold in the pool of mud, the greedy demon who liked to steal money, the coward who hid behind Ai Hui, the lazy bum who did not like to train or bear hardships had finally been entrusted with a heavy responsibility. He could finally stand tall and proud in front of everyone.

The cowardice, laziness, and shame had become a page from yesterday. The new page was shining brightly.

Life was like flipping through a book. Every page was different. It always waited for a better version of itself to appear.

Chapter 559: The Time Has Arrived

The reporters in Fishback City were feeling very weird. After staying here for so many days, when they saw An Chouchou, they had a feeling that a hot piece of news would break out soon. However, up till now, no news had been announced. All of them were puzzled.

Wen Yongming guessed that Ai Hui was waiting for the right chance to do so.

As such, unlike the other reporters, who stayed in the courtyard drinking tea and chatting every day while waiting for Ai Hui to announce the news, he went around interviewing the people of Fishback City. He was filled with curiosity toward the Central Pine Faction. He tried to gather any information that was related to the Central Pine Faction, but made little progress. There was very little information about the Central Pine Faction circulating outside. These people had almost zero communication with the outside world and had never released any information about themselves to the outside world.

Therefore, the Central Pine Valley was unusually mysterious to the rest of the world.

Even though Wen Yongming was in Fishback City and not the Central Pine Valley, it was still an extremely rare opportunity for him to observe the Central Pine Faction, the Sword of Lightning, and Ai Hui from such a close distance.

He clearly knew that no one in Fishback City trusted him at all. Any sensitive or out-of-line questions would put them on high alert against him and would cause them to be annoyed with him. As such, no matter what he did, he would always ask Ai Hui for permission first.

For some unknown reason, Ai Hui agreed that he could interview the the Sword of Lightning's members on the condition that he did not disturb the members' daily training sessions. However, when Wen Yongming asked for an interview with Ai Hu himself, he was simply rejected by the latter. Ai Hui seemed very busy and was seldom in Fishback City. No one knew where he went.

To be able to interview the members of the Sword of Lightning, Wen Yongming was also very excited. As compared to the other combat division of the Central Pine Valley, the Spear of Heavy Cloud, the Sword of Lightning did not have much of a reputation yet. The outside world did not think too highly of them. However, Wen Yongming was filled with expectation for the Sword of Lightning Sword. He firmly believed that a combat division built by Ai Hui would definitely be extraordinary in the future.

With Ai Hui's approval, the members of the Sword of Lightning cooperated very well with Wen Yongming for the interviews. All of them were youngsters. Who did not want his face to appear in front of the world?

Be it Ai Hui, Wen Yongming, or the members of the Sword of Lightning, none of them probably expected that this information would be passed down forever. These accounts would become the most important historical evidence that the later generations used

to study Ai Hui, the Central Pine Faction and the Sword of Lightning.

Due to this, Wen Yongming's name would be remembered forever.

At this point in time, Wen Yongming had no knowledge that the contents he recorded would bring so much shock to the later generations. Thanks to his reporting, this fog-covered period of time could be presented to the later generations. During this period of time, the king had yet to wake up, Lou Lan was still wearing a cooking apron, the legendary combat division was still in its embryonic stage, and the world-shaking names who accumulated countless outstanding military merits were still shy youngsters.

Wen Yongming specialized in socializing and was able to easily mix with this group of innocent youngsters in a short period of time.

The Sword of Lightning also gave him a pleasant change of environment.

In this place, no one cared about status or fought and schemed against each other. Everyone sweat with all their might. Their daily training sessions had a terrifying intensity.

In a notebook that was passed down to the future generations, the few pages that mentioned the daily training sessions of the Sword of Lightning stunned the future combat divisions. Those

future combat divisions underwent training that paled in comparison to the Sword of Lightning’s.

There were many minor details mentioned, such as the sword operator who would practice embroidery. In the future, one had to practice embroidery before becoming a sword operator. As such, many people also referred a male sword operator as a "male seamstress."

The praises for Lou Lan’s elemental soup mentioned in the notebook were enthusiastically talked about the most by the future generations. The number of compliments Lou Lan received per day was directly linked to the number of times he had served his elemental soup that day. If he served his elemental soups three times in a day, he would definitely receive more than three compliments for that day.

The number of times that the elemental soups was served had a direct correlation with the amount of praise Lou Lan would receive.

However, the thing that left the deepest impression on Wen Yongming was the unity and diligence displayed by this small combat division. All of them were filled with vitality, behaving differently from the people in the outside world.

This group of people was extraordinary.

It was a pity that he did not get to see the Spear of Heavy Cloud.

As usual, after the members of the Sword of Lightning had finished their training session, Wen Yongming eagerly went over to chat with them. At this moment, he felt slightly puzzled. The duration of the training session today was shorter than usual. By now, he was already very familiar with the members of the Sword of Lightning. They would greet each other, and he would even tease those members who were tired to death. Today, however, everyone responded to him absent-mindedly. Usually, they would burst out laughing and cheer him on.

Wen Yongming could sense that the atmosphere was becoming tense.

Had the time arrived?

At this moment, a figure suddenly descended from the sky. All the members could not help but stand up. Upon noticing this minor detail, Wen Yongming knew something was up. When he saw who the figure was, his mind shook.

Yang Xiaodong!

Being curious about any information that was related to the Central Pine Valley, Wen Yongming could recognize any important figure of the Central Pine Faction. Yang Xiaodong used to be a Master hired by Thunder City. Subsequently, he betrayed Thunder City, but was defeated by Ai Hui and his counterparts. Eventually, he and Mister Dou became captives of the Central Pine Valley. After Yang Xiaodong joined the Spear of Heavy Cloud, he became an important figure in the combat division and displayed outstanding performances under Shi Xueman’s leadership.

Yang Xiaodong had returned from the front line!

Indeed, after a while, the mysterious Ai Hui appeared in Fishback City.

After approximately four hours, Yang Xiaodong left hurriedly.

Fishback City was very small. Almost everyone saw Yang Xiaodong arrive and leave. The atmosphere suddenly became tense.

Whether it was the reporters or the snow lava buyers who had followed along, all of them understood that the time for the announcement was arriving soon.

"Mayor Qiao, the Division Leader wants to see you."

Qiao Meiqi was slightly surprised that his name was called first. Deep down, he felt anxious. No matter how he looked at it, Ai Hui was going to do something astonishing this time around. Right now, almost 60 percent of the profits that Thunder City made came from the snow lava. If anything was to happen to this business deal, Qiao Meiqi would suffer huge losses. Unfortunately, he had no say in this issue.

In the past, the Central Pine Valley needed to worry about how to sell the snow lava. Now that the demand for snow lava had skyrocketed, the Central Pine Valley could easily sell its snow lava.

The only thing that made Qiao Meiqi felt at ease was that both of them enjoyed a pleasant collaboration. Ai Hui was someone who valued old relationships. However, he was also a businessman. If he knew there were no mutual benefits for both sides, he wouldn’t care about the relationship between them.

He did not know Ai Hui’s plan and felt uncertain.

When Qiao Meiqi walked into Ai Hui’s office, Ai Hui was looking at a map on the wall. When Qiao Meiqi took a closer look at the map, his body shivered. It was a map of the front line. The most eye-catching position on the map was where the Spear of Heavy Cloud was currently stationed.

Qiao Meiqi could not help but ask, "Brother, are you preparing to go to the front line?"

Ai Hui shifted his gaze from the map and nodded his head at Qiao Meiqi, "Yes, we will be going to the front line very soon."

Upon receiving a confirmed answer from Ai Hui, a cold tingle went down Qiao Meiqi’s spine. Even though Ai Hui’s face was covered by bandages and his eyes were blocked by the crystal chips, Qiao Meiqi could still sense Ai Hui’s resolution.

Suddenly, Qiao Meiqi asked, "What about the Central Pine Valley? Who will protect it?"

"I have already made arrangements for it," Ai Hui replied calmly.

He was too calm!

Ai Hui was so calm that Qiao Meiqi felt panic. He had been through countless difficult negotiations and had rich experience in this aspect. However, at this point in time, the experience he had was of no use to him at all. Ai Hui was calm like a silent sword, but released a sharp glint. This implied that Ai Hui had already made a decision and possessed the overwhelming determination to carry it out.

This was what Qiao Meiqi was most afraid of because Ai Hui was a businessman.

Qiao Meiqi was so nervous that he did not even notice his trembling voice. "Brother, don’t do anything rash. After all, you’re someone who has a stable business now. You must be careful with any decision you make."

Ai Hui picked up the teapot and poured a cup of tea for Qiao Meiqi. Then, he replied, "The reason I asked you come today is because I want to talk about our future collaboration. Whether you agree with my choice or not, it will not affect our relationship."

In the end, Qiao Meiqi was an experienced businessman. He quickly regained his composure and said, "Brother, speak your mind."

"Very soon, I will bring the Sword of Lightning to the battlefield. However, my relationship with Skyheart City will completely

collapse as well. I hope that Brother can help me, but I also clearly know the risk that you will face if you help me. Therefore, I can understand the worries you have," Ai Hui said calmly.

Ai Hui's relationship with Skyheart City would completely collapse!

Qiao Meiqi, who had just regained his composure, almost jumped out of his seat when he heard these words. Had the relationship between the Central Pine Valley and Skyheart City already deteriorated to this stage? Qiao Meiqi forced himself to stay calm and replied, "If I don't agree, our snow lava business deal will no longer continue?"

"Yes, I will have other plans for the snow lava," Ai Hui replied bluntly.

Qiao Meiqi admired Ai Hui's straightforward character. At this point in time, he had already calmed down completely. He asked bluntly, "If I agree to help you, what can I do to help you? And what will I get in return?"

Apparently, Ai Hui was already prepared for this question. He continued, "I want Brother to be in charge of our logistics. This war will continue for a long period of time. Our relationship with Skyheart City will deteriorate rapidly, so it is impossible for us to get any resources from them. Therefore, I hope Brother's enterprise can provide resources for us. We will hand over our spoils of war to you. Other than this, Brother will continue to be the only channel where the outside world can get snow lava."

"So we are like an exclusive resource convoy that supports the Central Pine Valley's combat divisions?" Qiao Meiqi palpitated with eagerness.

"That's right." Ai Hui nodded his head.

Qiao Meiqi was incited by Ai Hui's words. Of course he knew of the risk that came along with it. From the look of it, Skyheart City was naturally the most powerful at the moment. If he offended Skyheart City, he would have bad days ahead. However, the profits that Ai Hui could provide him were immense. Being the sole retailer for snow lava was like having a gold mine. Similarly, the profits from being the resource supplier that supported the Central Pine Faction enticed him.

Spoils of war were usually worth 10 times more than their original value after they were used on the battlefield. The profits he could earn from the spoils of war were immense!

Of course, the risk that came with all these benefits would be huge as well. Their lives would be in danger, and the transportation of resources would be filled with danger. They would be prone to sneak attacks by enemies.

If it were other people who came up with this proposal, Qiao Meiqi would have rejected it straightaway. However, it was Ai Hui who proposed it, causing him to hesitate. He believed in Ai Hui's fighting capabilities. This fellow looked as if he was born to fight.

Furthermore, there was still the Spear of Cloud that kept on performing miracles.

In his mind, Qiao Meiqi was weighing the pros and cons. If he agreed to the proposal, it would be equivalent to him joining the Central Pine Faction. This was something that neither Skyheart City nor the Gong Residence, which he had close ties with, could tolerate.

"I need to think about it," Qiao Meiqi replied with difficulty.

"You indeed have to think carefully about such an important issue. I am sorry, but you will have to stay in Fishback City for a few more days and wait for me to complete my affairs," Ai Hui said understandingly.

Qiao Meiqi left Ai Hui’s office with a complicated look on his face.

Ai Hui’s voice was calm and collected the entire time. The aura he displayed was completely different from the past.

Qiao Meiqi realized that he might need to reassess Ai Hui.

Chapter 560: The Central Pine Valley's Declaration

When An Chouchou saw Qiao Meiqi walk out from Ai Hui's office with a complicated look on his face, he felt slightly pleased with himself. Qiao Meiqi's largest business was the snow lava. It was normal to be distressed after losing such a huge piece of pie.

An Chouchou had done some research before. More than half of Thunder City's profits came from snow lava. This was also why An Chouchou came alone this time around.

Why wasn't Newlight City powerful even though its population was so huge? It was because it wasn't rich. Whether it was inheritances, elemental traces, or the God-subduing Peaks, the expenditure of resources was astronomical. The aristocratic families controlled a powerful economy. Meanwhile, the new citizens were the low and middle classes of the Avalon of Five Elements. How would they possess such powerful wealth then? Even though Yuchi Ba was an Elder in the Elders Guild, he still couldn't be compared to those well-known Elders from aristocratic families.

The snow lava could bring about huge profits. If Newlight City could ally with the Central Pine Valley, their economy would skyrocket.

An Chouchou had the confidence that he would be able to bring qualitative changes to Newlight City within the next few years.

After a while, Ai Hui walked out as well. Then, he nodded his head at An Chouchou, "Brother Chou, I’m sorry for making you wait for such a long time."

"Brother Ai, are you ready to make the announcement?" An Chouchou smiled with a calm look on his face.

"Ah, yes." Ai Hui turned around and spoke to everyone, "Everyone, I’m sorry for making all of you wait for so long in this desolate place. I am really sorry. However, since this issue is related to snow lava, I had to be prudent about it. Now, I have two announcements to make."

Everyone became excited on the spot. Were the announcements ready?

Wen Yongming and the other reporters began recording.

Suddenly, Ai Hui said to An Chouchou, "Brother Chou, please stand beside me."

An Chouchou gave a confident smile and stood beside Ai Hui. Even though he knew all this time that he would be able to convince Ai Hui, he still felt extremely excited when the moment arrived. Back in the day, when he took over the construction project of Newlight City, no one held him in high regard. However, he still completed the project perfectly.

The success he had this time around would be the starting point

of the rise of Newlight City.

And because he came alone on this mission, his name was destined to be remembered by Newlight City forever.

He was extremely confident.

Beside him, Ai Hui opened his mouth and began speaking, "I have taken note of the numerous discussions regarding pagoda cannons and snow lava. Moreover, Brother Chou has travelled a long distance to come here and discuss this issue with me. Newlight City is a huge city and Brother Chou has great foresight. I have benefitted a lot from the discussion we had. I am also very glad that everyone supports the pagoda cannons. The Central Pine Valley's resolution in opposing the Blood of God has never changed. From the day the blood catastrophe broke out in the Induction Ground at Central Pine City, we have been doing this. Our most important mission now is to fight against the Blood of God. Having a brave, responsible and powerful partner is more important than securing a victory on the battlefield. Therefore, I have two announcements to make..."

An Chouchou tried his best to restrain his emotions, but his lips still curled into a smile eventually.

Success!

.....

Skyheart City.

Xiao Lin was reading the battle report that was sent to him. He flipped through and finished the first few pages with a glance. Suddenly, he stopped flipping the pages as a cold glint flashed across his eyes. His ordinary-looking face turned fierce and sinister all of a sudden. At this moment, Xiao Lin looked as if he had become another person. His body emitted a chill, resembling a poisonous snake that was hiding in the dark.

He picked out a few pages from the battle report file and placed them within his robe. Subsequently, he turned back to the ordinary-looking man.

Following this, he walked out of his room. After making several turns, he set foot on the street.

There were not many people on the street. Skyheart City was no longer prosperous like it was in the past. After the Bloody Night of Guillotines, Skyheart City had declined significantly. Madam Ye did her best to govern the city. She disliked extravagant and excessive behavior. The reputable aristocratic families had already cut down on their indulgences by quite a bit.

However, there were still a lot of criticisms against Madam Ye. The most widely spread and impactful were Le Buleng's words.

On the surface, Le Buleng was talking about the three central divisions. However, who didn't know that those words were targeted at Madam Ye in reality?

Xiao Lin knew where the problem laid.

Until now, Madam Ye had not personally orchestrated a victory. This was why people lacked confidence in her. In many people's eyes, Madam Ye was more interested in engaging in internal strife than fighting the blood elementalists. Furthermore, Madam Ye's brainchild, Master's Glory, had yet to be completed. Everyone had misgivings about the Master's Glory program.

Among the higher-ups in Skyheart City, Xiao Lin had heard them complain about Master's Glory more than once. They said that if the resources spent on Master's Glory were used to build God-subduing Peaks, they would have a lot more God-subduing Peaks, and the situation wouldn't be so grim now. With a few more God-subduing Peaks, the Wall of North Sea also wouldn't have collapsed so easily

Xiao Lin knew things weren't that simple. However, he did not think about doing anything.

What Boss told him that day made sense. They were just a knife. They had no say in when they were use or how they were used. It was enough for them to complete the tasks that the higher-ups gave them.

Right now, he was completing the task that the higher-ups had given him.

After walking past a few blocks, he came to the entrance of a

news village. He walked into it, appearing as if he was very familiar with this place.

A reporter who was currently refining some mirage bean pods turned around. A faintly discernible look of disdain flashed across his eyes, but he quickly became all smiles. "Sir, you can just ask us to go over. There’s no need for you to come here personally."

Shen Jin was around 50 years old. He looked like a honest person, but one could tell he was actually a profiteer.

No matter how good Shen Jin tried to hide his look of disdain, Xiao Lin, who was specialized in observing body language, could still see it clearly. However, he did not care about it all. So what if this fellow disliked him? He was fine with anything as long as he could complete his task.

He took out the few pages of the battle report from his robe and placed them on the table. Then, he said plainly, "It’s all right. I want you to take a look at these few pages."

When Shen Jin picked up the battle report and read the first line, his facial expression changed slightly.

"Do you know how to write?" Xiao Lin asked indifferently.

"Sir, please guide me," Shen Jin stuttered.

Xiao Lin did not beat around the bush and bluntly said, "Many

combat divisions have failed even though they have pagoda cannons. After investigation, we realized these combat divisions lacked snow lava. They used a low-grade fire liquid blend that caused the power of the pagoda cannons to be greatly reduced."

Shen Jin’s facial expression changed again. He of course knew what these words implied.

Upon seeing the worried look on Shen Jin’s face, Xiao Lin said plainly, "Don’t worry, there will be many people supporting you."

Shen Jin knew he had to comply with Xiao Lin today. Therefore, he added, "Should we also say that the Elders Guild will pay a handsome sum of money to buy the refinement method for the snow lava from the Central Pine Valley? We can also say that the combat divisions at the front line were sacrificed in vain because they lacked snow lava."

A look of admiration flashed across Xiao Lin’s eyes. Just as he was about to speak, someone barged in and yelled, "Old Shen! Old Shen! Big news! Big news!"

Shen Jin’s facial expression changed. Before he could react, that person had already barged in.

The person only realized there was a guest after he barged in. He did not know who Xiao Lin was. He felt slightly embarrassed and said, "Old Shen, I’m sorry. I don't know you had a guest. I will come and find you later."

"What’s the big news?" Xiao Lin suddenly asked.

The person thought Xiao Lin was Shen Jin’s friend and hurriedly said, "Absolutely hot news! It just came out this morning, and I just bought it. I am shocked..."

"The main point please," Xiao Lin interrupted emotionlessly.

The person looked slightly embarrassed. However, he quickly started talking with excitement again, "The Central Pine Valley has made two important announcements. Let me tell you, when I first saw it..."

When Xiao Lin heard the three words "Central Pine Valley," his mind jolted. He turned around abruptly and appeared in front of the person. "Hand the mirage bean pod over!"

Xiao Lin’s suddenly display of might froze that person in an instant. He subconsciously handed the mirage bean pod over to Xiao Lin.

Xiao Lin returned to his original position and crushed the mirage bean pod.

Ai Hui was entirely covered by bandages with two red crystal chips over his eyes, resembling a red-eyed mummy. He looked extremely comical, but Xiao Lin knew how scary this mysterious man was. Ai Hui was truly a ruthless individual.

When Xiao Lin clearly saw who the fat man beside Ai Hui was, his eye pupils dilated abruptly.

An Chouchou!

The mayor of Newlight City, An Chouchou, who was also known as the "Ugly Idol." An Chouchou handled things firmly and carefully. He was honest and sincere as well. With the addition of his body size, he was affectionately known as the "Ugly Idol" by the citizens of Newlight City.

The Central Pine Valley and Newlight City were going to ally with each other.

Xiao Lin felt as if he had been struck by lightning. This result was what Madam Ye least wanted to see happen. He could almost imagine how angry Madam Ye would be when Boss meet her later!

"I have taken note of the numerous discussions on pagoda cannons and snow lava..."

"Our most important mission now is to fight against the Blood of God. Having a brave, responsible, and powerful partner is more important than securing a victory on the battlefield..."

Eh? Xiao Lin was stunned all of a sudden.

"Therefore, I have two announcements to make. The first one is that the Sword of Lightning will be going to the battlefield to fight

alongside the Spear of Heavy Cloud. The second one is that we have decided to open up snow lava and the technology behind the pagoda cannons to the public in order to put up a better fight against the Blood of God and to find like-minded comrades. We will form a brand new Pagoda Cannon Alliance. We will provide free snow lava to the members of the Pagoda Cannon Alliance and will share with them our research on pagoda cannons. Our requirements are very simple. First, only those combat divisions that fight long-term on the front line will be provided with free snow lava. We feel that the combat divisions at the front line need the snow lava more urgently. Second, all combat divisions that wish to join the Pagoda Cannon Alliance will have to undergo our assessment and possess enough military experience as well as tenacious willpower..."

In the mirage, An Chouchou's facial expression was frozen. The confident smile on his face had disappeared as his face began to turn ashen.

At this moment, Xiao Lin wanted to burst out laughing. An Chouchou had been fooled!

However, this notion of his was soon gone.

He stared at the red-eyed mummy in the mirage. He wished he could tear the bandages off Ai Hui's head to see the ambitious look on his face.

They had discussed the possible responses that Ai Hui would come up with, but they had definitely never thought of this response.

How ambitious did he have to be to choose this method?

Did he really think that he could use the snow lava to make everyone listen to him?

A sneer appeared on Xiao Lin’s face.

Naive!

Chapter 561: The Pagoda Cannon Alliance

He had been fooled. An Chouchou felt like he was a clown.

He was calm toward this outcome. He realized he couldn't blame anyone but himself.

He had underestimated Ai Hui.

Ai Hui was far more ambitious than he expected, far more daring than he thought.

Deep down, An Chouchou sighed with sorrow. A newborn doesn't fear the tiger, but did Ai Hui really think this was an easy feat to pull off? Was snow lava really that powerful? So much so that Ai Hui could use it to command everyone?

It was not that easy.

Most of the combat divisions that went to the front line were under the Elders Guild's command. They were motivated by Skyheart City's generous rewards. Anyone who joined Ai Hui's side would cause his or her relationship with Skyheart City to collapse. How many people were willing to take the risk of falling out with Skyheart City?

What gave him the right to think that he could control the situation? To make everyone listen to him?

There were many things that couldn’t be achieved just by being ambitious.

An Chouchou was very curious about what Ai Hui would do next. From Ai Hui’s past, he could tell that Ai Hui wasn’t a brainless youngster. On the contrary, the way Ai Hui handled things displayed maturity that surpassed his age.

He had been stupid to underestimate Ai Hui once. He would be worse than stupid if he underestimated him twice.

Very soon, An Chouchou regained his composure and told Ai Hui, "Brother Ai is really bold."

The bandages on Ai Hui’s face twitched, appearing as if he was smiling behind the bandages. "I’m not bold, but rather, I’m being forced into this situation. I can’t possibly resign myself to my fate."

An Chouchou did not believe Ai Hui. He felt that Ai Hui’s words were just civilities. However, he did not wish to linger on this issue and changed the topic, "What about the Central Pine Valley? Aren’t you worried about it?"

Then, a look of realization appeared on An Chouchou’s face, and he continued, "Ah, the bloody signboard in Lemon Camping Ground has yet to dry. There should be no one that dares to mess with the Central Pine Valley during this period of time."

Ai Hui declined to say anything about this issue. He merely

replied, "Brother Chou will know in two days' time."

Upon hearing these words, An Chouchou chuckled. "I will have to be thick-skinned and stay for two more days then."

Most of the people had left. Hoping that his message could be spread faster, Ai Hui used the Pinwheel Sword to send Wen Yongming and the rest back to Thunder City. The customers who wanted to buy snow lava were sent back as well. Ai Hui's announcement had given them a great shock.

When the Pinwheel Sword returned, Gu Xuan had an annoyed look on his face. Upon seeing this, Ai Hui asked, "What's with that look on your face? Something happen along the way?"

Shi Zhiguang interrupted, "These people are too vile. Along the way, they kept speaking ill of Boss. All of us were infuriated. They only shut their mouths when we threatened to throw whoever that kept on talking off the Pinwheel Sword."

"What did they say about me?" Ai Hui looked interested.

Shi Zhiguang was an honest individual. When Ai Hui asked this question, he replied frankly, "They said Boss is delusional. They also said you have overestimated yourself and that you think you're a very important figure. Why can't everyone survive without your snow lava?"

Ai Hui laughed out loud. Then, he patted Gu Xuan and Shi

Zhiguang’s shoulders and said to them, "Go and have a rest."

After flying such a long distance, both of them were tired. They knew they had a lot of things to do afterward, so they went back to rest.

Qiao Meiqi walked over to Ai Hui.

Ai Hui was shocked by Qiao Meiqi’s appearance. He asked, "Brother, what happened to you?"

Qiao Meiqi’s eyes were very red, resembling the eyes of a rabbit. His hair was unkempt, and he looked as if he had not slept for a few days. Disgruntled, he said, "It’s your fault. You have created such a huge uproar. Haa, why did I have to fall in? If you want me to replenish your supplies, I will do it for you. Why did you have to trouble me by asking me to fall in?"

Ai Hui smiled and did not say anything.

Qiao Meiqi clenched his teeth and said, "After thinking it through over the past few days, I feel that I have more prospects for success following you. Anyway, in Skyheart City’s eyes, I am on the Gong Residence’s side. If the Ye Family really dominates the world, they will definitely target me as well. If that’s the case, I might as well take a gamble with you, Brother. What’s the worst that can happen to me? At worst, I die!"

After Qiao Meiqi finished this sentence, he looked as if he was

relieved of a burden, calming down in an instant.

"Brother thought so highly of us?" Ai Hui cast a glance at Qiao Meiqi.

"It’s not that I thought highly of all of you," Qiao Meiqi shook his head as his tone changed, "but rather, it’s that I think highly of you. You’re born to be a troublemaker. The more chaotic a situation is, the more effective you are. I guess you have never noticed this characteristic of yours before. In the past, I was puzzled about why you were willing to stay in a desolate place like the Central Pine Valley. Now that you’re going to the front line, I feel that you’re back to normal. Can the Ye Family solve the chaotic situation now? No, I don’t think so."

"Brother feels that I can solve it?" Ai Hui was extremely surprised.

"No, you can’t," Qiao Meiqi replied bluntly. "You don’t have this capability yet. However, if we talk about who has the higher chance of surviving, I would pick you. I am very confident in you regarding this aspect. Furthermore, with your snow lava trump card, no matter who you seek help from in the future, no one will reject you. At worst, I will surrender along with you. Since there’s a way out and I can have the opportunity to make big bucks, this little bit of risk is nothing to me."

Ai Hui was astonished by Qiao Meiqi’s thought process. He was truly a businessman!

"Welcome aboard!" Ai Hui reached out his hand to Qiao Meiqi.

It was only after careful deliberations that he chose Qiao Meiqi to become his partner. Both of them had collaborated for a long period of time, and they had enough trust and confidence in each other. If it was someone else, Ai Hui would not be at ease. He or she would not be on Qiao Meiqi's level either.

Qiao Meiqi high-fived Ai Hui's hand delightedly. Following which, he frowned and sighed deeply. "Haa, why do my Masters always become your subordinates eventually? Huo Da just told me that he wants to be a sword operator and requested that I ask you about it."

"He wants to be a sword operator?" Ai Hui was slightly surprised, but soon nodded his head. "All right, he can follow Shi Zhiguang and train for a period of time first. He is a Master and I believe he will master the position very soon."

An elementalist who could become a Master definitely had an outstanding level of intelligence. A person that solely depended on diligence would never become a Master. A Master had a deep understanding of elemental energy. No matter what new skill they learned, they could pick it up easily.

Ai Hui also had not expected that Huo Da wanted to become a sword operator. He hadn't expected the position of sword operator to be so attractive to a Master.

Immediately, he thought of a brand-new opportunity.

Currently, Shi Zhiguang was already very competent with operating the Pinwheel Sword. Shi Zhiguang was still young, so he had more potential than Huo Da. However, as a Master, Huo Da was at his peak now. Huo Da would rapidly grasp the trick to operating the Pinwheel Sword. However, an ordinary Pinwheel Sword did not have enough room for a Master to display his entire might.

Being a Master at his peak, Huo Da was able to manage a higher speed, carry out more complicated maneuvers, endure a more powerful impact, and exhibit a better control over the Pinwheel Sword.

Should he make Huo Da a solo Pinwheel Sword?

The image of an enormous sword that was covered with a thick sword gleam disappearing into the sky and then creating a bloody trail in the enemy camp appeared in Ai Hui's mind.

Fast and invisible!

As long as it was fast enough, it could produce a horrifyingly destructive power.

Sword operator was a new profession Ai Hui had made up. A master sword operator was something that he had never thought of. There were many areas that he needed to think about in detail. However, Ai Hui felt that this idea was really worth considering.

The addition of Qiao Meiqi was extremely beneficial for the entire Central Pine Faction.

The Central Pine Faction was mainly made up of combat elementalists. If they were asked to handle business deals, they would definitely cause a huge mess.

Getting rid of their dependence on Skyheart City for resources was the first step of Ai Hui's plan. With the snow lava, Ai Hui wasn't afraid of not having enough money. However, whether it was selling snow lava or buying an enormous amount of resources, they needed people who were capable of doing it.

By joining the Pagoda Cannon Alliance, one had to undertake a huge risk and break ties with Skyheart City. However, he or she would have no risk in buying snow lava. Skyheart City's influence was not enough to hinder people from buying snow lava.

Now, there was one final issue left. The Central Pine Valley.

Lou Lan ran over to Ai Hui and yelled, "Ai Hui, the arrangements in the valley have been settled!"

Ai Hui's mind jolted.

After Yang Xiaodong returned to the Spear of Heavy Cloud, he repeated everything Ai Hui said to Shi Xueman. After hearing the message, Shi Xueman did not say anything.

Early in the morning, Shi Xueman sent her subordinate to a nearby city to buy a mirage bean pod.

Inside a tent, Shi Xueman, Fatty, Jiang Wei, and the rest were staring at the mirage.

Fatty was slapping his thigh as he watched the mirage, "Oh my! This move of A’ Hui is really beautiful! Did you see the look on An Chouchou’s face? Hahaha!"

The rest had their faces filled with shock. They needed some time to digest Ai Hui’s sudden announcement.

Clearly, they understood what Ai Hui’s declaration implied. From today onward, their relationship with Skyheart City was completely broken. This meant that they were going to establish a power of their own. In the past, the Central Pine Valley was too small, and they had too few people. It was very hard for them to establish themselves as a power back then.

Everyone was startled by Ai Hui’s audacity and resolution.

When the mirage finished playing, there was absolute silence in the tent.

Shi Xueman looked around and calmly said, "Let’s talk about it."

Without hesitation, Fatty yelled, "I support Ai Hui! Everything we do, we have to do according to that old witch! Boring! Skyheart City is obviously trying to snatch our snow lava. This is a golden egg laid by our old hen. Even if we die, we are not giving it to them!"

The rest nodded their heads. Fatty's words spoke for their minds.

Madam Ye and Skyheart City were not really popular among the soldiers on the front line. Everyone was limited by the "Elders Guild." Deep down, they lacked respect toward Madam Ye. The more battles a combat division fought against the blood elementalists, the more they would feel this way. Why would they respect Madam Ye when she was doing nothing in Skyheart City while their comrades kept dying on the battlefield?

"I agree. However, we still need to discuss any unforeseen events that we might encounter. For example, will our relationship with the Infantry Division and the Sky Edge Division change? In our original plan, we needed the coordination of four God-subduing Peaks to form a defensive line. If our relationship with the Infantry Division and the Sky Edge Division drifts apart, do we need to have a backup plan?" Jiang Wei spoke with a deep voice.

"How do we resolve the issue of resource replenishment?" Sang Zhijun asked.

"After all, it is obvious that we are trying to form a power of our own."

"What if no one joins our Pagoda Cannon Alliance?"

"What will happen to the Central Pine Valley? Who will protect it?"

Everyone broke into a lively discussion. The atmosphere heated up in an instant.

Ai Hui's audacity had shocked everyone. However, they subsequently felt more excitement than shock. All of them were still young, filled with vigor and courage. Of course they did not want to stay and hide in a desolate valley. All of them wanted to make a name for themselves.

Furthermore, the enmity between them and the blood elementalists was unresolvable.

They completely disagreed with Skyheart City's style of handling things. Deep down, they disdained and hated Skyheart City's actions. Now that they could finally expand their power and influence to step onto the world stage, they were filled with hope and expectation.

Everyone knew that this path was arduous and dangerous. Even so, this couldn't suppress their fervor or stop them from pursuing what they desired.

These invisible restraints had been suffocating them for a very long time. They longed to be free from them.

As for the danger and risk that came along with this decision, none of them cared at all. Weren’t they in danger every day on the battlefield? No matter what dangers or adverse effects came along with this decision, it couldn’t be worse than the dangers and tragedies they faced on the battlefield.

"We will discuss these issues again when Ai Hui is here. I’m not too sure about his exact arrangements either. However, everyone doesn’t need to be too worried. Ai Hui already has a solution to the issue of the Central Pine Valley. He will give all of you a surprise," Shi Xueman said.

Surprise?

Everyone looked at each other, feeling even more curious.

Chapter 562: Skyheart City's Countermeasures

The Infantry Division's encampment.

Silver Solder looked silently at the red-eyed mummy who was covered in bandages in the mirage. Other than his voice, Silver Solder couldn't link the person in the mirage with the youth in the embroidery workshop in Central Pine City. Even his voice was slightly different despite it sounding familiar. The tranquility and resolution in his voice were forged by steel-like willpower. It was no longer young and tender like it was in the past.

Silver Soldier felt as if a lifetime had passed.

After he woke up from his injury, he was suffocated by the devastation caused by the Battle of Central Pine City.

When he saw Ai Hui plunge his sword into the body of Wang Shouchuan and Mingxiu's tear-streaked face, he was heartbroken. He felt as if his heart had been slashed by a sword.

That night, he was dead drunk.

Fate seemed to play a cruel joke on him. It first threw him into the comforting warmth of sunshine, then it ruthlessly threw him into a cold and dark abyss.

A slightly warm palm gently held his metallic hand. The texture of the palm wasn’t soft since it was covered with calluses from long term swordsmanship practice.

He returned to his senses from the whirlpool of memories.

Silver Soldier laughed at himself. How could a person whose life did not belong to himself be qualified to feel sentimental?

He smiled at Karakorum Polaris and said, "I am fine. I just didn’t expect this fellow to grow to this level."

Karakorum Polaris knew that her senior had thought about Central Pine City again. She could feel that her senior had been depressed all these years. Every time he thought about Central Pine City, he would become emotional.

She wondered what her senior was like before he was injured. Was he always solemn like this? Did he never smile like he did now?

"It seems like Aunt Ye has an eye on the snow lava," she said softly.

"It’s not ‘seems like,’ but rather, she has had an eye on the snow lava all along. Snow lava is an A-grade fire liquid, and there are many uses for it. With the emergence of Pagoda Cannons, why would Skyheart City ignore such a powerful weapon?" Silver Soldier replied.

"That lad Ai Hui is very crafty. He will not allow anyone to get the better of him. He will definitely fight to his death with anyone that tries to steal from his bowl. Look at his message. He obviously knows that Skyheart City is going to target him, so he struck first and obtained the upper hand," Silver Soldier continued.

"Take a look, he is actually taking a shot at Skyheart City with his words. The combat divisions at the front line need the snow lava more urgently than those who aren't at the front line. Skyheart City must be feeling angry and humiliated right now. However, they can't do anything against Ai Hui at the moment. This lad is a bad boy. That's the way he has always been. One has to be very careful when dealing with him. A moment of carelessness will cause one to be eaten by him. I also don't know why a decent girl like Shi Xueman fell for a bad boy like him."

The eyes behind Karakorum Savant's veil curled slightly. She liked it the most when her senior pondered over something seriously. It was only in these moments that her senior would forget about all his depressing memories and become focused.

"What about us?" she continued to ask.

After thinking about it, Silver Soldier replied, "We will carry on what we have been doing until Skyheart City gives us a clear-cut order. I don't think Skyheart City dares to act recklessly anyway. Furthermore, the situation now is critical. If the situation gets out of control and creates a chain-reaction, we will not be able to hold off the blood elementalists. Eventually, the enemy forces will be able to attack Beyond Avalon directly. This is definitely an

outcome that Skyheart City doesn’t want to see."

Karakorum Savant wasn’t a brainless person. After thinking about it, she felt that her senior’s words made sense. She knew Aunt Ye very well and knew that Aunt Ye was very good at practicing forbearance. Karakorum Savant nodded her head and replied, "Senior is right."

"That’s why I said this lad Ai Hui is very crafty. Look at the timing he chose to make this announcement. Skyheart City can’t do anything to him at all. Even though I don’t know how this lad is going to handle the situation, I know he can do a lot of things during this period of buffer time. This lad is an expert during chaotic situations. He is like a slippery loach that can make the most out of every opportunity."

"I think Senior actually admires Ai Hui a lot." Karakorum Savant laughed.

Silver Savant was stunned momentarily. Then, he nodded his head and said, "There are many unusual aspects about him. He is strong-willed and tenacious. I have never seen someone like him before. To other people, willpower might be a form of persistence with a particular faith. Ai Hui, however, seems to be born with willpower. It’s an instinct to him. The words ‘giving up’ don’t seem to exist in his dictionary."

"Senior has such a high assessment of him!" Karakorum Savant was astonished.

"Actually, what right do we have to assess him? His achievements today were obtained through his own hard work. We are inferior compared to him."

Karakorum Savant tilted her head and thought about it. Then, she nodded her head and replied, "Senior is right."

She and her senior became the division leaders of the Infantry and Sky Edge divisions only because of her father. Ai Hui became the leader of the Central Pine Faction through his own abilities. Even Shi Xueman became his subordinate.

After fighting alongside Shi Xueman, she rather admired Shi Xueman's strength and character. Ai Hui was indeed formidable if he was able to make an outstanding individual like Shi Xueman his subordinate.

"Let Skyheart City stress over the issue of snow lava. Right now, I am actually very interested in Ai Hui's Pagoda Cannon Alliance. No matter what, this lad is exceptional in combat. He can relieve us of some of our burden," Silver Soldier said.

"After listening to Senior, even I hope Ai Hui can arrive earlier." Karakorum Savant chuckled.

Silver Soldier was right. Skyheart City was stressing over Ai Hui's prestige now.

"This is what you meant by you are confident of getting it done?

This is what you call getting it done?"

Madam Ye's enraged voice echoed throughout the meeting hall. Everyone kept quiet out of fear. Madam Ye had always been graceful and refined. This was the first time they had seen her lose control of herself. She wasn't even this angry when the Dread Division and the Judgement Division had left the city.

A layer of perspiration appeared on Nian Tingfeng's forehead without him knowing. He had thought of various possible moves that Ai Hui would make, but he definitely never thought of this response. Ai Hui's style of handling things was indeed surprising.

"He is slapping our face! By saying the front line needs the snow lava more urgently, he is saying that we are doing nothing at all! Hmph, he even said that he is going to the front line immediately. A smart move indeed. The slap he gave our face is loud and clear. Now, we can't even do anything against him!" Madam Ye's face had turned ashen as she chided everyone.

"This subordinate is incompetent. Madam, feel free to punish me," Nian Tingfeng summoned his courage and said.

Upon sensing the sincerity in Nian Tingfeng's words, Madam Ye's rage lessened. Following which, she snorted, "Punish? What's the point of punishing you now? Can I stop the world from mocking us by punishing you?"

Now that she talked about it, she felt extremely distressed. She always felt vexed whenever she had to deal with issues that were

related to the Central Pine Valley. She regretted not razing the Central Pine Valley to the ground earlier!

"This subordinate deserves to die." Nian Tingfeng lowered his head even more.

Madam Ye took a deep breath and suppressed her emotions. "Punishment or not, we will talk about it later. Right now, let's discuss what we should do now. And I want to know what Ai Hui's intentions are for making this declaration."

Everyone looked at each other. No one was willing to say anything.

Upon seeing this, Nian Tingfeng opened his mouth and said, "This subordinate has come up with some conjectures."

"Speak!" Madam Ye said coldly.

Nian Tingfeng did not speak immediately. It was only after he reorganized his thoughts that he started to talk, "Initially, after looking at Ai Hui's declaration, this subordinate was also shocked. However, after thinking about it, I realized this is actually his last resort. He might have found out that we are interested in seizing the snow lava from him and simply used our tactic against us. By using the pretext of going to the front line and fighting, the public can't expect anything from him. Ai Hui also knows that the front line is filled with dangers. The Central Pine Valley alone can't do much to help. Therefore, he thought of the idea of the Pagoda Cannon Alliance. He wants to rope in a bunch of people to build up

his prestige and influence. This will increase his chance of securing a victory on the battlefield."

"Ai Hui this bastard... On the surface, he acts as if he is being magnanimous. In reality, he is just a treacherous individual," Madam Ye snorted.

A cold shiver went down Nian Tingfeng's spine. Madam Ye spoke the words "Ai Hui this bastard" with an obvious killing intent.

Everyone nodded their heads. Before this incident, no one felt that Ai Hui could pose any threat to Skyheart City. Even though the Central Pine Valley was impressive, it was too small. How could such a small group of people pose a threat to them?

Right now, however, the Central Pine Valley was like a fish bone that was stuck in the throat of Skyheart City. It wasn't deadly, but it was extremely unbearable.

"Madam is wise!" Nian Tingfeng flattered Madam Ye first before continuing, "From the look of it, it's best that we don't do anything now. There are two reasons for this. First, the situation is critical now. Any reckless moves will cause us to lose this fight. Second, the Sword of Lightning Division is taking the initiative to fight on the front line. We can't find a reason to bring them down now. At the moment, we should cope with all actions by remaining inactive. There are still many obstacles between Ai Hui's path and his goal. He is facing a few problems now."

"Continue." Madam Ye became excited.

First, he has a low prestige. Before this incident, the Central Pine Valley was just a small power. Ai Hui's personal strength is rather impressive, but that's not enough to attract other people to join him. Even if there are people joining him, he will face the problem of insubordination. How is Ai Hui going to convince the masses?"

Everyone nodded their heads. What Nian Tingfeng said made sense.

Madam Ye clearly understood the problem of insubordination from her personal experience.

In the past, no one cared that Ai Hui became the leader of the Central Pine Faction because the Central Pine Faction only had a few hundred of people back then. It was not easy for a power that had such a small number of people to achieve anything.

Madam Ye was born from nobility. She was born in the oldest family of the Avalon of Five Elements. Even with the Great Elder paving the way for her, there were still many people who refused to support her. For Newlight City, it might appear to outsiders that An Chouchou was in charge. In reality, Yuchi Ba and the other Elders were really the ones who called the shots.

Once Ai Hui formed the Pagoda Cannon Alliance, the issue of authority would arise. On the battlefield, life-threatening situations might arise at any moment. Would people obey him just because of the snow lava? This was something that was not going to happen.

"Second, since he has already announced to everyone that he is going to the front line, he must secure a victory. Otherwise, he will become a laughingstock."

Nian Tingfeng continued, "Whether there is internal strife in the Pagoda Cannon Alliance or Ai Hui fails to secure a victory, we will have enough reasons by then to pick up the pieces for him. When that day comes, the snow lava will naturally be ours."

"We must encourage those capable combat divisions to join the Pagoda Cannon Alliance." Madam Ye softly coughed.

"Yes," Nian Tingfeng replied.

"We have to be on the offensive and not the defensive all the time," Madam Ye said.

"This subordinate will bear this in mind!" Nian Tingfeng replied respectfully.

"Even if we are bound to fail, we have to wait until this issue blows over," Madam Ye muttered.

"Understood," Nian Tingfeng acknowleged.

"I hope the Dread Division and the Judgement Division don’t let me down," Madam Ye mumbled.

Nian Tingfeng did not say anything. He had become the focal point of the entire meeting hall. A few people were looking at him with disdain. He did not do anything and remained calm. After the Dread Division and the Judgement Division headed toward the front line, the Surveillance Division had been mocked by many people.

By this point in time, Madam Ye’s rage has completely disappeared. Her gaze shifted to Ma Shiji as she said, "Master’s Glory is our brainchild. I’m sorry for troubling Sir over this issue. There’s no need to rush it. Stability comes first. Only success is allowed."

Currently, Ma Shiji did not dare to hesitate and replied with a prudent look on his face, "Yes."

Chapter 563: The Transformation of the Central Pine Valley

Unlike Skyheart City, which was anxious over the Central Pine Valley's declaration, heated debates erupted in other cities instead. Everyone discussed the Central Pine Valley's declaration, making it the hottest discussion topic at the moment.

The previous craze over pagoda cannons and snow lava allowed Ai Hui's declaration to create a sensation the moment it was announced to the world.

In short, this was the first time Ai Hui took the initiative to step onto the radar of the world, creating and gaining quite a huge amount of attention on himself. Many people also suspected that there was someone in the dark helping Ai Hui build momentum for the previous pagoda cannon craze.

Everyone argued enthusiastically about the weird appearance of the red-eyed mummy as well as the proposal of the Pagoda Cannon Alliance.

Those who bootlicked Skyheart City were speechless at the formidability of Ai Hui's move. It was very hard for them to imagine that such a fearsome and deft move was executed by the hands of a young man.

Wen Yongming and the other reporters were very experienced. They did not release all of their recorded content to the world at once. Ai Hui's declaration would take away all the attention from

the rest of their news stories and overshadow them.

When everyone began to debate passionately about Ai Hui's declaration, Wen Yongming and the other reported began releasing their additional material. These reports included the odd appearance of the Pinwheel Sword and its terrifying speed, the magical sword operator, the Fishback City that was single-handedly built by a Master, the daily training sessions of the Sword of Lightning, etc.

These new and odd topics immediately attracted everyone's attention and piqued their curiosity.

The lightning fast Pinwheel Sword in the mirage attracted the most attention. Countless people were eager to try it. Those who had traveled in it before boasted about it endlessly.

These released mirage bean pods did not increase everyone's understanding of the Central Pine Valley. Instead, they further increased the mystique of the Central Pine Valley in everyone's hearts. Aside from the pagoda cannons and the snow lava, now there was the Pinwheel Sword and Fishback City. The Central Pine Valley was like an enormous treasure trove that always gave people surprises.

How many things were there in the Central Pine Valley that were unknown to the world?

Being a war machine, the Pinwheel Sword had a terrifying speed, but what about its offensive capabilities? How could it be used to

fight on the battlefield? Did it work in a similar way as the pagoda cannons?

Countless questions swirled around everyone's heads. All of them were filled with curiosity and expectation toward the Sword of Lightning's trip to the battlefield.

Meanwhile, at Fishback City, the most tense moment had arrived. Even Ai Hui, himself, could not help but feel tense.

"Lou Lan, have you checked everything?" Ai Hui asked.

"Ai Hui, Lou Lan has already checked everything." On Ai Hui's shoulder, there was a mini Lou Lan tilting his head while counting with his fingers. "Ai Hui, this is the seventh time that Lou Lan has checked everything."

When Ai Hui saw the look on Lou Lan's face, he could help but feel overjoyed. The anxiousness he felt was reduced significantly.

Beside him, Qiao Meiqi felt excited and anxious. Since he had already made up his mind to join Ai Hui's side, every success and failure of Ai Hui's operations was closely related to him.

All along, Ai Hui had not wanted to tell him how was he going to protect the Central Pine Valley. The more Ai Hui did not want to tell him, the more curious he felt. It was as if there was a kitten that kept scratching Qiao Meiqi's heart. He had asked other members of the Central Pine Faction, but none of them knew. Even

though they were digging and building things in the Central Pine Valley, none of them knew what they were doing this for.

An Chouchou was the only outsider here. He saw that everyone's gaze was directed at a distant valley.

Was it possible that the Central Pine Valley was there?

Ensuring the safety of the Central Pine Valley was a huge problem that Ai Hui faced. After all, the Central Pine Valley was the home of the Central Pine Faction. Nobody wanted their home to be thrashed when they were out on a war expedition.

From the look of it, it appeared that Ai Hui already had a plan.

Suddenly, An Chouchou thought of Ai Hui's master and mistress. Was Ai Hui going to use [Treating the city as a piece of cloth]?! The moment this idea appeared in An Chouchou's head, he couldn't get rid of it. Ai Hui had managed to inherit Wang Shouchuan's legacy. Currently, Ai Hui's knowledge of elemental traces exceeded his teacher in many areas. Given Ai Hui's abilities, it was possible that [Treating the city as a piece of cloth] would reappear.

Using this method, even though the people living in the valley would be trapped for the time being, the safety of the valley would be ensured.

The more An Chouchou thought about it, the more possible he felt it was. His facial expression changed.

Then, he heard Ai Hui asking again, "Is Bangwan protected?"

"Ai Hui, he is protected," Lou Lan yelled.

"Are the others out?"

"Ai Hui, they have already come out."

Ai Hui's mood was involuntarily affected by Lou Lan's. Lou Lan always made everyone feel that their lives were filled with valor and sunshine.

When the situation finally came to a head, Ai Hui actually felt nervous. He could not help but laugh at himself. Then, he spoke with a solemn tone, "Get ready."

The mini Lou Lan standing on Ai Hui's shoulder flew into air. A small red flag mysteriously appeared in his hand. The mini Lou Lan waved the small red flag with all his strength and yelled, "Get ready!"

"Get ready!" The mini Lou Lans all over the mountains and valley echoed after him.

Everyone held their breath. The air seemed to freeze at this point in time.

"Begin!" Ai Hui gave the order firmly.

The mini Lou Lan in the air waved down the red flag with a whoosh and yelled, "Begin!"

"Begin!"

"Begin!"

The responses from the mini Lou Lans resounded through the air like a tidal wave.

An Chouchou looked at Lou Lan with curiosity. This was the first time he had seen such a sand puppet. However, he didn’t really care about it. Fire elementalists were benefiting from the rising popularity of pagoda cannons, so their social status elevated. Meanwhile, the status of earth elementalists was still on the decline. Nowadays, many earth elementalists started learning construction. They hoped they could become a battlefield construction master like Wang Xiaoshan

The sand puppets seen today were remnants from the Avalon of Five Elements.

The last family who specialized in producing sand puppets, the Sha Family, happened to be annihilated by Ai Hui.

From the look of it, An Chouchou felt that what Lou Lan was doing might just be an ability of a sand puppet. To him, the utility

of a sand puppet was very limited.

Rumble!

A deep and muffled sound came from the ground. The ground beneath everyone's feet was trembling furiously, causing all of them to lose their balance.

Crisscrossing streaks of light erupted in the valley.

A powerful elemental energy wave swept across the area like a hurricane. An Chouchou was overwhelmed with shock. What was going on?

He was not the only one. The others were overwhelmed with shock as well. The scene happening before their eyes had far surpassed their imagination.

What was going on?

In the Central Pine Valley, all five types of elemental energy pools were bursting with radiance. Five different colored lights erupted at the same time. Along with the dazzling radiance, concentrated elemental energies flowed through the crisscrossing channels in the valley.

If one looked down from the sky above the Central Pine Valley, he or she would see a gigantic cycle of five elements forming.

Rumble! Rumble!

The rocks surrounding the Central Pine Valley began to collapse. The mist-covered valley appeared in front of everyone. A gorgeous radiance erupted behind the mist, preventing anyone from taking a clear look inside of the Central Pine Valley. Because of the radiance, the mist that covered the Central Pine Valley became unusually beautiful. Powerful elemental energy undulations kept on muddling the mist.

This mighty scene frightened everyone.

Rumble.

The mountains around the valley were collapsing at a terrifying speed. A colossal crevice appeared around the valley. The only thing that was not affected was a mountain ridge on a particular side of the valley.

The crevice around the valley became larger and large, more than 70 meters wide. It was astonishingly deep as well. If one looked at it from afar, he or she would think that it was an abyss that led to hell.

The bottom part of the valley was hanging in the air and gave off a brilliant glow.

An Chouchou’s brain had completely stopped working. Newlight

City and the Windy Resonant Pagoda had been personally built by him, but he had never seen such a spectacular sight before.

All this time, Ai Hui had been staring at the glow from the valley. Suddenly, he yelled, "Mister Dou!"

The others looked as if they had just woken up from a dream and searched for Mister Dou, especially those children from the Central Pine Valley. They were frantically looking for their teacher, but couldn’t find him.

Suddenly, Su Qingye pointed to the volcanic crater of Blackfish Mouth Volcano and yelled in surprise, "Look over there!"

Everyone’s gaze followed Su Qingye’s finger and shifted to the Blackfish Mouth Volcano. The edge of the volcanic crater had become unusually dark, as if the volcano was devouring all the light around it.

"Teacher is in the volcano!"

"It’s Northern Underworld King Tree!"

Alarmed cries broke out among the crowd.

At the volcanic crater, Mister Dou was standing on a red-hot rock and surrounded by lava. Beside him was the Northern Underworld King Tree that he had planted. His hand held onto a branch of the tree. His facial expression was solemn and the elemental energy

undulations released by his body were surging.

A dazzling red light was being absorbed by the Northern Underworld King Tree.

Indistinctly, the red light was covered with traces of black lines.

The stimulated Northern Underworld King Tree was frantically devouring the light surrounding it, causing the weird phenomenon in the volcanic crater.

Traces of black light entered the surging lava.

The surging lava within the volcano was connected to the earth fire beneath the ground. There was an abundance of lava in the volcano, resembling a hidden sea of fire. Mister Dou felt so insignificant in the face of nature.

He suddenly grinned.

Mankind had always been insignificant like dust. He had never been a great man before.

With such a chance given to someone like him who had reached the twilight years of his life, what more could he ask for?

His hollow eyes were as deep as an abyss. Traces of intense black light shot out from the Northern Underworld King Tree and

penetrated downward through the lava of the volcano.

The traces of black light resembled a black muslin canopy and a huge net at the same time.

The traces of black light penetrated the volcano deeper and deeper.

Blood started to seep out from the corner of Mister Dou's mouth. The look on his face, however, looked extremely happy. If it weren't for the fact that he had yet to complete his task, he would definitely laugh to his heart's content.

After an unknown amount of time, Mister Dou knew he had reached his limit. Instantly, the traces of black light that were penetrating downward through the lava suddenly converged, cutting off the lava within the volcano from the underground earth fire like a sharp knife.

Pfffft. He spat out a mouthful of blood into the air,entirely dyeing his robes with the color of blood

He did not care at all as he laughed heartily at the top of his lungs.

Crack!

A crevice suddenly appeared at the base of Blackfish Mouth Volcano. The crevice immediately extended around the volcano at

a terrifying speed. Blackfish Mouth Volcano looked as if it had been sliced by a gigantic sword. Surging lava erupted from the crevice and flowed along the mountain ridge. Quickly, the flowing lava cooled down and solidified.

It stopped flowing before reaching Fishback City. However, at this moment, no one bothered to pay any attention to the lava. No one could take their eyes off of the Blackfish Mouth Volcano.

The crowd gaped with wide eyes. At this moment, their brains had stopped working.

In front of their eyes, the Blackfish Mouth Volcano and the mist-covered Central Pine Valley slowly floated up from the ground.

Dead silence descended upon Fishback City. It was so quiet that one could even hear the sound of a pin dropping on the ground. The distant, yet overwhelming smell of sulfur, the bubbling sound of the flowing lava, and the sizzling sound of the cooling and solidifying lava could be distinctly smelled and clearly heard.

An Chouchou was dumbstruck.

Chapter 564: An Chouchou's Change

What was he seeing?

What was he seeing!

The mountain peak was flying!

Oh god...

An Chouchou's head was buzzing, and he felt as if he was being electrocuted while an intense numbing sensation rendered him motionless. Everything he was seeing was beyond his imagination.

The surrounding clamor seemed to be coming from afar, and everything felt unreal.

Amid the dead silent Fishback City, an explosion abruptly went off. It looked as if an erupting volcano had instantly collided with a thick layer of ice. The chill and the quiet had been shattered and catapulted into the skies by the sudden release of raging passion and agitation.

Everyone had gone mad!

Completely mad!

Shi Zhiguang held his head with both hands and kneeled on the

ground, his face full of disbelief. "Oh my god! It flew up! It flew up! How's that possible... how's that possible..."

Gu Xuan stood at the side, his mouth trembling. He was unable to speak, and unknowingly, tears had filled his face.

Qiao Meiqi rushed to Ai Hui's side and roared frantically, "God-subduing Peak! God-subduing Peak! This is a God-subduing Peak right? You did it on purpose, you must have done it on purpose! Oh my god, you actually made a God-subduing Peak. What can't you make? Are you human? Are you human or not! You're not! Not human!"

Choosing Ai Hui had been a tough decision, and Qiao Meiqi had to endure immense pressure and risks. Be it abilities or magnitude, Ai Hui was far behind Skyheart City. Qiao Meiqi thought highly of Ai Hui, but at the same time, his confidence had no basis. Seeing Blackfish Mouth Volcano flying up relieved him of all pressure, thus causing him to act this way.

Although Ai Hui felt very emotional, he did a good job of remaining calm. "It's not a God-subduing Peak. Although I made some theoretical references, they are still very different..."

When Ai Hui had decided to rush to the front line, the Central Pine Valley's safety became the greatest obstruction that needed to be fixed. The Central Pine Valley contained all the elderly and the young, so just one Mister Dou wasn't enough to resist an enemy invasion. He came up with many possible solutions, but they weren't able to guarantee the Central Pine Valley's safety, so Ai Hui felt that it was better to just bring all of them along.

However, danger lurked in every corner of the battlefield, so Ai Hui had to once again think about how to ensure everyone's safety.

He then thought about the God-subduing Peak.

The Central Pine Valley was uniquely shaped and contained all five elements. Plus, disregarding costs, they had constructed five elemental energy reservoirs to form a Circle of Life. While a God-subduing Peak had all five elements as well, its elemental energy reservoirs were much smaller than those of the Central Pine Valley. Plus, the valley's elemental energy reservoirs had already been built for quite some time, and they had constantly been using fire elemental energy to nourish and strengthen the Circle of Life. As such, the quality and scale of the five elemental energy reservoirs were far superior to when they were first constructed.

Conditionally speaking, the Central Pine Valley's flying mountain form was much more outstanding than a God-subduing Peak's. The former naturally contained all five elements, and after Ai Hui's modification, its Circle of Life became even more perfect. A God-subduing Peak, on the other hand, had an ordinary mountain form and the five elemental energy reservoirs were refined by people, so it had to consume an alarming amount of precious ingredients in order to maintain the operation of the reservoirs.

Yet, Ai Hui's idea was even bolder.

Although the Central Pine Valley had the five elemental Circle of

Life, the cycle would gradually disperse from wear and tear if there wasn't a way to replenish it. The same principle applied to a God-subduing Peak. As such, Ai Hui thought about using the Blackfish Mouth Volcano since it contained an astonishing amount of lava, which was the key to replenishing the fire elemental energy of the cycle as well as producing snow lava.

That way, it would not only provide unceasing nourishment, but would also upgrade the Central Pine Valley's five elemental Circle of Life as well as supply the combat division with snow lava.

No one, however, listened to Ai Hui's explanation. Fishback City was in a raucous frenzy.

The lofty mountain peak ascended gradually as everyone watched in awe. It was much bigger than the Pinwheel Sword. It was so bulky that the Pinwheel sword was like a toothpick before the peak of Blackfish Mouth Volcano.

The volcano had an unique shape, like that of a blackfish which was halfway out of the water. Beside its huge body was a bright plain enveloped in mist. This was the former Central Pine Valley. The other three faces of the valley had been peeled off and exposed.

Ai Hui was the first to fly to the mountain peak, and the rest, who were unable to hold back any longer, followed closely behind.

Ai Hui did not go to the Central Pine Valley, but flew toward the volcanic crater of Blackfish Mouth Volcano. The devilish red glow

over the lava lake converged to form a beam that shot into the Northern Underworld King Tree. Next to the tree sat a figure covered in blood.

Ai Hui jumped in shock. His figure shook a little and appeared beside Mister Dou. "Sir!"

Mister Dou appeared much paler and even the wrinkles on his face had deepened. He burst into laughter. "Hahaha, mission accomplished, mission accomplished!"

The red glow in Lou Lan’s eyes flickered rapidly, and he said shortly after, "Mister Dou’s injuries aren’t fatal, but he might not be able to engage his elemental energy in the future."

Emotions stirred in Ai Hui’s heart, and he extremely guilty. He carefully supported Mister Dou up.

He had considered this matter to be highly challenging, but it seemed that he had still underestimated the difficulty of cutting off the earth fire’s pulse.

Feeling Ai Hui’s guilt, Mister Dou shook his head. "I know my injuries well. It’s not a big deal. No worries at all. I’m blind and old, so am I expecting to go into battle? I have no more regrets for being able to accomplish this matter. Haha, this is something never done before, and I can teach peacefully from now onward. Where’s the wine? I’m going to drink my fill!"

Lou Lan did not hesitate to deny him. Eyes wide open, he very seriously said, "You aren’t fit to drink wine right now, Mister Dou."

Ai Hui did not waste any more time either. He supported Mister Dou up and flew outward cautiously. "Yeah, listen to Lou Lan."

Mister Dou burst into a rage. With a hand supporting his neck he scolded, "How can I not have wine now? How can I not have wine now!"

Without even turning his head Ai Hui shouted, "Lou Lan!"

"I’m coming!" Lou Lan replied loudly, before catching up quickly. He persuaded Mister Dou patiently, "You really shouldn’t drink, Mister Dou. Before your injuries heal you can’t drink. Don’t worry, it won’t take long. About half a year will be sufficient, so before that, not even a drop of alcohol should be consumed since it will severely impede your recovery. It will have three negative effects. Firstly..."

Mister Dou’s face was flushed. He was furious, but couldn’t do anything to Lou Lan.

After nagging for half a day, Lou Lan tilted his head, saying, "Although you can’t drink, there are other ways to celebrate. I’ll prepare elemental soup, so use that to celebrate, Mister Dou."

Feebly, Mister Dou started drooling. His anger vanished like a

puff of smoke as he said softly, "So be it, but since it’s a celebration, just one bowl won’t do."

"Two bowls at most." Lou Lan blinked before adding, "Your body can’t take any more than that."

"Fill both bowls to the brim then."

"But..."

Mister Dou became impatient. "Full bowls! I’m not even drinking wine anymore and you’re telling me I can only have two bowls of soup. If you can’t even give me two full bowls, what kind of celebration would it be?"

"All right. Two full bowls it is."

"Hahahahaa. I can finally have two bowls!"

Their conversation made Ai Hui smile.

Everybody walked around Blackfish Mouth Volcano in high spirits. Looking down from above was a very refreshing experience. Even Shi Zhiguang and the rest were filled with curiosity.

Being onboard Blackfish Mouth Volcano and the Pinwheel Sword were two entirely different experiences. The Pinwheel Sword was

as fast as lightning, but very small in size, so the ride was clearly very shaky. Blackfish Mouth Volcano, on the other hand, was absolutely stable and motionless. There was no swaying, and if not for the fact that they were overlooking the ground, they wouldn't even know that they were in midair.

To them, this was a whole new experience.

The children ran about, excited and unable to stop.

On the contrary, An Chouchou was dazed. Standing at the edge of the mountain peak and surveying the ground, it could be seen that the trees had become like little ants. Blackfish Mouth Volcano's chopped side emitted a red glow, like a gradually cooling molten steel. It was a rather shocking sight.

Before such an overwhelming force, An Chouchou only felt his body turn cold as an intense fear clasped his heart tightly like a devil's claw that had crawled out from the abyss.

He knew that he had once again underestimated Ai Hui and finally understood why Ai Hui had allowed him to stay and watch.

God-subduing Peak!

Ai Hui could forge a God-subduing Peak. If this news were to spread, what kind of storm would it raise?

An Chouchou saw Ai Hui walking over. Feeling the bitterness in

his mouth, he asked, "Is this a God-subduing Peak, Brother Ai?"

Ai Hui answered calmly, "There are some differences, but yeah."

Upon hearing Ai Hui's answer, An Chouchou felt agony. Having just pagoda cannons and snow lava versus having the blueprint for the God-subduing Peak were two completely different situations. Everyone favored pagoda cannon and snow lava, but other than the Spear of Heavy Cloud, there weren't any other testimonials. The God-subduing Peak's might, on the other hand, was known and witnessed by all.

An Chouchou was filled with fear.

Ai Hui, who looked like a red-eyed mummy at this point, had become unfathomable.

Pagoda cannons, snow lava, Pinwheel Sword, God-subduing Peak...

What else did he know? Exactly how deep was his understanding of elemental traces?

With a dull, defeated look he cried out, "Great work, Brother Ai! How unpredictable! I'm impressed!"

Ai Hui looked at him. The red crystals and bandage concealed his expression, but his tone remained calm. "What do you think about the Pagoda Cannon Alliance?"

Ai Hui’s words did not surprise An Chouchou at all. Ai Hui had him witness the ascension of Blackfish Mouth Volcano precisely for this. Having already expected this question, An Chouchou wasn’t the least bit happy. He was discouraged in fact. Other than this last sentence, he had judged everything else incorrectly. Plus, Ai Hui’s words left him with no choice.

An Chouchou sighed inwardly, "Brother Ai’s capability is immeasurable, and the Pagoda Cannon Alliance’s future is inevitably bright. I’ll make the announcement when I return. It’s going to be a great undertaking!"

Ai Hui rose halfway and said, "Thank you so much, Brother Chou."

Not wanting to stay any longer, An Chouchou bade goodbye. "There’s a lot of work to do in the city. I’ll leave now."

Ai Hui added, "Have a safe journey, Brother Chou."

An Chouchou staggered away as the elementalists from Newlight City, who had long since been waiting from afar, rushed forward to receive him. From time to time they glanced over at Blackfish Mouth Volcano, their eyes filled with fear and shock.

Chapter 565: God Wolf Division

Upon receiving the order to pitch camp, the God Wolf Division's soldiers sighed a breath of relief. While their consecutive victories were gratifying, they felt extremely tired and needed to take a breather.

The God Wolf Division and the Silverfrost Blood Division's officers were gathered at the leaders' tent to discuss some official matters.

The God Wolf Division's leader was Helian Tianxiao. He was about 30 years old, had deep set eyes, and his brown eyes were ice-cold and sharp, as if they could pierce one's heart. The consecutive victories hadn't improved his mood the slightest.

Ye Baiyi had gone all out against the Wall of North Sea, deploying four great god divisions and eight full blood divisions into battle. Ye Baiyi was still unconscious, and after much discussion, the officers decided that the God Spirit Division would oversee the Dawn Blood Division and the Dusk Blood Division. They would defend the camp at the rear while the other combat divisions would split into three groups and advance together.

The God Tiger Division would lead the Radiance Blood Division and the Bluster Blood Division in one direction.

The God Wolf Division would lead the Silverfrost Blood Division in a second direction.

The God Devil Division would lead the Birth Division and the Death Division in the last direction.

The destruction of their subordinate Ardent Flower Blood Division was a huge disgrace to the entirety of the God Wolf Division and because of this, the latter had been facing a huge amount of pressure. The first ever destruction of a blood combat division in the whole history of the God Nation had already pinned the God Wolf Division up on a pillar of shame.

In order to wash off this shame, they had to secure even greater achievements. As such, the God Wolf Division's thirst for victory was the most intense out of the three military contingents.

Helian Tianxiao asked coldly, "Everyone present?"

After a headcount, his assistant reported, "Everyone is here."

Helian Tianxiao waved his hand. "Let's watch a clip first."

The lights in the tent were dimmed. A person completely wrapped in bandage and wearing red crystals over his eyes appeared before the officers' eyes, effectively catching their attention.

"... Therefore, I have two announcements to make. The first one is that, the Sword of Lightning will be going to the battlefield to fight alongside the Spear of Heavy Cloud. The second one is that we have decided to open up snow lava and the technology behind

the of pagoda cannons to the public in order to put up a better fight against the Blood of God and to find like-minded comrades. We will form a brand-new Pagoda Cannon Alliance. We will provide free snow lava to the members of the Pagoda Cannon Alliance and will share with them our research on pagoda cannons. Our requirements are very simple. First, only those combat divisions that fight long-term on the front line will be provided with free snow lava. We feel that the combat divisions at the front line need the snow lava more urgently. Second, all combat divisions that wish to join the Pagoda Cannon Alliance will have to undergo our assessment and possess enough military experience as well as tenacious willpower..."

Upon hearing "pagoda cannon" everybody's faces turned serious.

The clip wasn't long and ended quickly. Soon, a discussion broke out in the tent.

"Who is he? He speaks authoritatively."

"I know him, he's Ai Hui. I think he invented the pagoda cannon."

"Then we gotta be careful."

"The first Lightning Master; a big threat. Lightning is our bane."

Helian Tianxiao allowed the discussion to go on. He wasn't a boss who could decide and act alone. While he felt anxious and

impatient, the words "pagoda cannon", also evoked vigilance.

Not only him, but the officers and soldiers were discussing with very grave expressions on their faces.

Recent battles had been rather smooth-sailing, but the new weapon, the pagoda cannon, had dealt them significant injuries. Furthermore, they had an encounter with the Blue Flag Division a few days back, and it was precisely their pagoda cannons that had dealt the Silverfrost Blood Division a significant blow.

It was not until they had gained possession of a mirage bean pod recording of the battle between the Spear of Heavy Cloud and the Ardent Flower Blood Division that they started to gain a better understanding of the pagoda cannons. It was also from there that they started coming up with strategies to deal with them, resulting in an improvement of the battle situation.

The utilization of pagoda cannons by the combat divisions that they had encountered wasn’t at all comparable to those of the Spear of Heavy Cloud. The counter-strategy they had come up with crushed those combat divisions easily, and even the Blue Flag Division, whom the blood elementalists had found tricky to deal with, suffered heavy casualties.

Yet, they dared not regard Ai Hui’s declaration lightly.

The Spear of Heavy Cloud’s mastery of pagoda cannons was the highest thus far. A close analysis of the deathmatch with the Ardent Flower Blood Division had shaken up the blood

elementalist officers. No other blood division would've been confident about securing victory.

When the discussion started to die down, Helian Tianxiao spoke up, "All right."

The camp quieted down immediately.

He scanned through his audience, causing them to shudder. Helian Tianxiao narrowed his eyes, saying, "Tell me, what are your thoughts?"

Someone stood out, commenting, "We will face a great threat if an alliance is formed. The Spear of Heavy Cloud's pagoda cannons are much more destructive than those employed by other combat divisions such as the Blue Flag Division."

A crisp female voice sounded. "I don't think we have to worry at all. Firstly, we have already found the loophole and flaw of the pagoda cannons. Actual combat has proven that our strategy is effective. Next, the alliance appears to be a good concept, but there are many practical problems, like the supply of snow lava. How is the Central Pine Valley going to supply such huge volumes of snow lava? Also, other than the Spear of Heavy Cloud, the Sky Edge, and the Infantry Divisions, there aren't any other proper elementalist combat divisions. How is it going to be easy for Ai Hui to assemble a bunch of unorganized and scattered groups?"

The lady speaker had short hair, a decent appearance, and a cool demeanor. Her armor made her look tall, accentuating her delicate

figure.

She was Song Xiaoqian, the division leader of the Silverfrost Blood Division. Able to command a combat division on her own, her abilities were naturally unquestionable.

Helian Tianxiao nodded his head slightly, a tinge of admiration flashing across his eyes. He said in a deep voice, "I'll lay the plans out. We must defeat and capture Ai Hui, Shi Xueman, and the rest. With regard to the Ardent Flower Blood Division's humiliation, we are going to repay it doubly. This is a mission we must accomplish! There's no other way!"

His tone relaxed, and he said to Song Xiaoqian, "Continue."

A light flashed across her eyes as she added, "I have an idea. Why not her the sheep?"

"Herd the sheep?"

Song Xiaoqian played with her clothing fringe and smiled. "That's right. Look, aren't these so-called combat divisions like a flock of sheep? They're just a group of mobs, so defeating them is of no use to us. Why not drive them toward the Spear of Heavy Cloud, the Sky Edge, and the Infantry Divisions? No matter how many big the mob, they are still just rabble. They would become dead weight for Shi Xueman and her compatriots, dead weight that they can't get rid of even if they wanted to. When there are many people, there will be distractions and internal conflicts. Even if they fear Shi Xueman's prestige, with slight external pressure they

will reveal their true selves and thoroughly collapse. When that time comes, what use will Shi Xueman and her troop's defensive line be?"

Helian Tianxiao immediately captured the ingenuity of it all, and his eyes lit up. "Great idea!"

He said decisively, "I'll write a letter and send it to the other two god divisions!"

Newlight City.

An Chouchou fixed his gaze on the faraway Windy Resonant Pagoda and was in somewhat of a daze. His journey to the Central Pine Valley had impacted and shaken him up greatly. He even felt utterly defeated. Many people had been fooled by his amiable appearance and weren't aware of his pride and arrogance.

In his eyes, Newlight City's only enemy was Skyheart City.

Now, he knew he had been a frog in a well. What a joke.

All that he had seen and heard during this journey had completely shocked him. Even after returning to Newlight City, he was unable to overcome his mixed emotions. He was at a loss. What could Newlight City and the Central Pine Valley fight together for?

His unfocused gaze had ultimately fell upon the Windy Resonant

Pagoda. Helpless, he realized that the only chance he had was Elder Yuchi.

If Elder Yuchi could become a Grandmaster, all problems could easily be solved, and Newlight City would have a better chance against Skyheart City.

But becoming a Grandmaster...

Even the most optimistic wouldn’t be able to pin much hope on it.

Tong Gui and Yu Jin came over together, and Tong Gui asked, "Are we really going to do this Mayor?"

An Chouchou regained his senses. Upon seeing both of them, his vision regained its clarity. "That’s right. It’s our only chance. The Pinwheel Sword is incomparably sharp, but its range of application is simply too small, so it’s not employable on a large scale, but the pagoda cannon is different. There are many more fire elementalists than swordsmen, and the former’s accumulation is more profound as well. In this case, they have much better prospects, and I think better of the pagoda cannon. We have quite a number of fire elementalists of our own, so that’s an advantage we can tap into."

Yu Jin spoke suddenly, "Then aren’t we going to be manipulated by Ai Hui?"

An Chouchou smiled bitterly. "Until Elder Yuchi exits from his seclusion, it remains a fact that we are in a weaker position."

Both Tong Gui and Yu Jin kept silent because they knew this was true. However, there was only a negligible chance for Elder Yuchi to become a Grandmaster. All of Newlight City was very pessimistic about this as well.

With a change of tone, An Chouchou added, "But the alliance with the Central Pine Valley isn't a bad thing for us. Nominally, it sounds as though we are the weaker party, but the power of speech depends on the respective abilities of the combat divisions. As long as we master the pagoda cannon, we can quickly establish many pagoda cannon combat divisions. The Central Pine Valley's greatest weakness is their lack of people, and it is a weakness that can't be sorted out within a short period of time. Unlike the Spear of Heavy Cloud's previous recruitment, there won't be as many fire elementalists begging to be chosen anymore. This isn't a problem for us at all. Instead, our elementalists are weaker on average, which does not impede the efficiency of pagoda cannon."

Tong Gui and Yu Jin nodded slightly. The best thing about the pagoda cannon wasn't that its cannoneer was powerful, but that it demanded less from elementalists. This meant that it was easier to spread the mastery of pagoda cannons to more people.

An Chouchou's tone became stern. "Set off today, head toward the front line, and join the Pagoda Cannon Alliance. Remember, it is most crucial to grasp the technique of the pagoda cannon first. Do not worry about other matters. Do not try to seize control or power. It will come naturally when we grow stronger. Plus, when

there are more people, it won’t be as easy for Ai Hui to monopolize the production of the snow lava.

Tong Gui and Yujin responded at once, Yes!"

Both of them were highly convinced by An Chouchou’s wisdom. Newlight City was what it was because of him. Initially, they were worried that he wouldn’t be able to recover from that discouraging journey, but upon seeing him snap out of it, they were beyond glad.

A guard came forward to report, "Everything is in order and everyone is present Mayor."

An Chouchou told both of them, "I shall not send you two off. This journey is going to be dangerous. I would not be sending you guys out if this was not our only chance to overturn the situation. Come back alive, no matter what. Leave the rest to me."

After that, he bowed, turned around, and left with his head held high and chest puffed out.

Tong Gui and Yu Jin followed An Chouchou’s disappearing figure with their eyes.

Yu Jin commented, "I did not expect Ai Hui to be this capable."

Tong Gui sighed. "Yeah, he used to be somewhat famous, but still insignificant. Now, he’s the man of the moment, and we have to

move according to his actions. What a difficult situation to be in."

Yu Jin looked at An Chouchou’s back. "He has a strong fighting spirit."

Looking pensively, Tong Gui said, "He probably met his match?"

Far away, An Chouchou said to all the reporters and their respective news villages in an energetic and steady voice, "Newlight City is the Central Pine Valley’s closest ally. The Central Pine Valley’s conduct serves as our model. I hereby announce that Newlight City is joining the Pagoda Cannon Alliance. We will send our two largest combat divisions to the front line to join the alliance. I’m also calling for the stronger combat divisions to also join the alliance..."

Chapter 566: One-versus-One or All-versus-One

Newlight City's high-profile announcement of joining the Pagoda Cannon Alliance shook the entire Beyond Avalon.

The Central Pine Valley was rather well known and had strong abilities as well. However, in the eyes of others, it was only a small power after all. Newlight City, on the other hand, was a big player. It was secondary compared to Skyheart City, but was the second largest city with the largest population. Newlight City represented an alarming number of new citizens. Although the new citizens were generally not that strong, nobody could belittle the vast number of them.

When Newlight City publicly announced that they would support Ai Hui's decision to set up the Pagoda Cannon Alliance, it momentarily disrupted the combat divisions which were waiting on the sidelines. Everyone was originally worried that Ai Hui could not handle this, but with the support of Newlight City, they could immediately see the future of the Pagoda Cannon Alliance.

The Spear of Heavy Cloud, the Sword of Lightning, and Newlight City's combat divisions were the core divisions that were capable of forming the foundation of the Pagoda Cannon Alliance.

Previously, many people were worried about Skyheart City's sanctions, but after witnessing Newlight City's declaration, they were worried that this opportunity would vanish all of a sudden. With Newlight City as their shield, why would anyone be worried?

The Pagoda Cannon Alliance, which had yet to form, was already becoming popular.

.....

Skyheart City.

Madam Ye was fixated on the mirage bean pod and could not take her eyes off of it.

"Newlight City is the Central Pine Valley’s closest ally..."

Just like a hammer’s head, An Chouchou’s voice was calm and powerful. Every sentence that came from him was hammered into everyone’s mind.

The crowd beneath were overwhelmed with shock. The Central Pine Valley and Newlight City becoming allies was what worried Skyheart City the most. Although the Central Pine Valley had pagoda cannons and snow lava, their small population eventually limited them. Newlight City, on the other hand, had a large population that wasn’t strong. They were only strong in appearance, but weak in reality, which was unworthy of Skyheart City’s worry. However, when both factions united, it caused Skyheart City to feel utterly frightened.

Nian Tingfeng was extremely cautious since he could imagine how furious Madam Ye could get.

However, what took him by surprise was that Madam Ye was not the least bit angry. In fact, she replied with a smile, "This An Chouchou is pretty good at using powerful connections to intimidate people. Back then, we were under the impression that the new citizens had new tricks up their sleeves. Never did I expect that he would not even have the boldness to compete with Ai Hui today."

No one dared to even exhale. From Madam's tone, they were unable to distinguish if she was pleased or furious. Everyone became even more worried, especially Nian Tingfeng. He had already been warned by Madam for fouling up the previous issues and had not expected that An Chouchou would actually release a statement.

"An Chouchou has lost his determination, so there is nothing to worry about," Madam Ye faintly replied. "As for the Pagoda Cannon Alliance, hehe, do you think it is so easy to establish? Let them torment themselves."

Nian Tingfeng heaved a sigh of relief. "Yes."

Madam Ye continued, "This problem is beyond our scope of concern. Just let them do as they please. As to what extent, this will be their own doing. What we need at present is the Master's Glory. The first batch of Masters are going to leave seclusion. Skyheart City should be on the alert and not mess up at this moment."

Everyone replied in unison, "Yes."

Madam Ye’s gaze was as cold as ice. "I will not blame anyone for the things that they are not in charge of, but do not blame me for being vicious and merciless if anyone does not fulfill their own duties."

Everyone uniformly trembled in fear.

Madam Ye continued, "Tingfeng, what is the situation for the selection of the next generation of Master’s Glory?"

Nian Tingfeng quickly replied, "Reporting Madam, the 40 closest cities to Skyheart City have already completed the selection."

Madam Ye faintly replied, "Is anyone obstructing?"

Nian Tingfeng immediately replied, "No one is obstructing."

Madam Ye nodded her head in satisfaction, "That is great. Master’s Glory is the right path for elementalists to resist the blood elementalists. Whoever dares to obstruct will be deemed as the entire Beyond Avalon’s enemy and a traitor! Inform them that when it comes to this point, feelings and sentiments will not be considered."

Nian Tingfeng immediately responded, "I understand!"

Madam Ye continued asking, "How many people have been selected as of this moment?"

Nian Tingfeng replied, "There are currently 76 people selected. 36 of them have arrived at Skyheart City, and the other 40 are still en route.

Madam Ye faintly knitted her eyebrows since the number of people selected were far lower than her expectations. However, thinking of the current situation as compared to when Master's Glory first started, it could be said that there was a world of difference.

Nian Tingfeng sensed that Madam Ye was displeased and hurriedly replied, "We are currently heading toward the further cities to select the most suitable candidates."

Madam Ye solemnly warned, "This is the most crucial matter. Ai Hui and An Chouchou are merely little rascals. Do not mess up your priorities."

Nian Tingfeng quickly replied, "I understand."

Madam Ye restrained the jitters that she was experiencing in her heart as she had to rely heavily upon Nian Tingfeng. Surveillance Division was the toughest and strongest combat division in Skyheart City. Moreover, their ability to dig for intelligence was what she required at present.

Even if Nian Tingfeng did not do a good job, she would not reprimand him on a whim, but would rather win him over.

Once the Master's Glory program was over, all the difficult issues could be solved easily!

I'll just have to endure for a short period!

.....

Shi Xueman slowly opened her eyes, and Cirrus which was stationary, started to tremble lightly. A strand of black smoke could be seen emitting from the tip of the spear.

Her internal injury was gradually improving. Although the amount of recovery was small, she was already very content.

She retracted her spear, rose up, walked out of the tent, and discovered that something was amiss outside.

Within one night, the camp had become packed with people. Where did all these people come from?

Holding onto Cirrus, she walked toward Sang Zhijun who was currently busy and asked in a low voice, "Why are there so many people?"

Sang Zhijun was both excited and and concerned, "Yesterday,

Newlight City’s An Chouchou publicly claimed to form an alliance with us. They will be dispatching Tong Gui and Yu Jin’’s combat divisions to join the Pagoda Cannon Alliance. These fellows are just like wolves who smelled their prey and rushed over. Newlight City’s hard-earned savings were utilized this time since Tong Gui and Yu Jin are their most capable division leaders. Is this how optimistic An Chouchou is about us? I wonder what spell Ai Hui casted on him!"

Shi Xueman finally understood what had happened, lowered her guard, and plainly replied, "Do you not understand him? Haven’t you realized that there is nothing that he will not stoop to doing?

Sang Zhijun let out a gentle laugh. "Yes, yes, they have even abducted our division leader."

Shi Xueman replied unpleasantly, "I can’t be bothered with you."

Sang Zhijun quickly replied, "Don’t go. How do we handle these people? There are so many people at the side, and it’s likely to get chaotic."

Shi Xueman replied, "Inform them to retreat 10 miles and wait for Ai Hui’s announcement of the Pagoda Cannon Alliance’s constitution. Do not allow any pitching of tents within the 10 miles radius.

Sang Zhijun got a little worried. "Will this create any chaos?"

Shi Xueman replied, "It will be better with chaos since they can’t even suppress it now. Furthermore, with the establishment of the alliance, wouldn't it be even more chaotic?"

Sang Zhijun eventually understood that Shi Xueman wanted to punish some of the gathered fellows as an example for the others.

She immediately went to announce the order.

As expected, some people came to create trouble.

"For what reason! For what reason should we withdraw?"

"Exactly! Does this place belong to the Spear of Heavy Cloud? This is a no man’s land!"

A few started to create a disturbance and immediately triggered others to follow suit.

Upon seeing that many people came to cause trouble, the other divisions did not immediately depart. Rather, they were engrossed in watching from the sidelines and were curious to see how the Spear of Heavy Cloud would handle this.

All of a sudden, a silhouette appeared, and the complacent people in the crowd were knocked down to the ground.

Just like calabashes, they all fell right by Shi Xueman’s feet.

The bystanders were dumbstruck. The speed of Shi Xueman's silhouette was too fast, and they had not managed to catch a glimpse of her actions. Yet, those Masters who managed to distinctly see Shi Xueman's actions revealed grave looks as the smiles on their faces disappeared.

When an expert struck you, you would know how good he or she was.

Shi Xueman was agile, swift as lightning, and had clean technique. The Masters in the crowd were pondering if they could achieve the same result, but they would absolutely not be able to do so as beautifully as Shi Xueman had.

One of them had been badly thrashed and was still in a daze. At this moment, there was a voice that came from the front half of the crowd, "Which division are you from?"

He subconsciously blurted out, "The Yellowsand Division."

"Oh, the Yellowsand Division has lost the opportunity to join the Pagoda Cannon Alliance."

This sentence scared the confused and dizzy man until he became deathly pale.

At that moment, a tall and sturdy figure who possessed a fierce and tough aura appeared from the crowd. His face was filled with

anger, "I am the division leader of the Yellowsand Division, Hei Yan. My subordinate might have been slightly rude and impetuous, but you should not be so overbearing. On what basis did you disqualify us?"

Shi Xueman did not answer, but questioned him, "One-versus-One or All-versus-One?"

Hei Yan nearly thought that he had heard incorrectly, "What?"

Shi Xueman repeated once more, "One-versus-One or All-versus-One?"

Hei Yan's face became flushed as he fumed with rage between gritted teeth. "Intolerably bullying! Intolerably bullying! This arrogant and despotic person still dares to establish the Pagoda Cannon Alliance?

This sentence caused many to hesitate since everyone still wanted to join the Pagoda Cannon Alliance, but did not want to give up their authority. If the Central Pine Valley was as powerful as what Shi Xueman had revealed, then many of them would have given up deep in their hearts.

Hei Yan glanced across the crowd and felt internally complacent.

Shi Xueman remained aloof. "One-versus-One or All-versus-One?"

Hei Yan who was somewhat arrogant awhile ago, glared at her. "You!"

Although he fumed with anger, he did not lose his rationality. Shi Xueman was indeed extremely powerful. In the mirage recording, she had battled against heavy odds when she encountered a few elementalists with the Ability of God. She had displayed an extremely terrifying combat power, and he knew that he had no chance of winning. There was also a huge gap between the Yellowsand Division and the Spear of Heavy Cloud.

Hei Yan was flustered and exasperated, "Is it a big deal to be strong? Does being strong permit you to bully the weak?"

Shi Xueman nodded her head. "Yes, it does."

Hei Yan was dumbfounded and could not respond in time.

At this moment, someone stepped forward, "Division Leader Shi's combat power is incomparable. The Spear of Heavy Cloud is indeed outstanding, but can you convince everyone if you only use your fist?"

Shi Xueman nodded, "Yes, I can."

This person was dumbfounded as well. After a short period of time, his face flushed. "But..."

Shi Xueman calmly scanned her gaze all around and

straightforwardly interrupted his words, "Who is not convinced?"

The people present remained silent out of fear.

Chapter 567: Master's Glory Selection

Gong Residence.

Gong Peiyao was startled when she saw Venerable Volcano who came to bid farewell. "Venerable, this is...."

Venerable Volcano firmly replied, "I am here to bid farewell."

Gong Peiyao's eyes turned red immediately. "Did Peiyao neglect Venerable Volcano in any way? Why do you want to leave?"

Thunder City had managed to survive only because Venerable Volcano went all out to risk his life. Gong Peiyao felt devastated upon hearing that he was going to leave.

Venerable Volcano shook his head. "I have already repaid the family head's kindness. With Han Li by your side, I can also be at ease. I wish to check out the situation at the front line. Back then, it was thanks to Ai Hui's porridge that my injury healed. I also wish to experience what the Pagoda Cannon Alliance is like."

Gong Peiyao was choked with emotion. "The front line is so dangerous..."

Venerable Volcano laughed heartily. "I already have one foot in the grave, how dangerous can it be? If not for how much I detest blood elementalists, I wouldn't have made this choice."

Before Gong Peiyao could persuade him to stay, Venerable Volcano interrupted her. "I have already made up my mind, do not attempt to persuade me anymore. Before I leave, I have a message for your father."

Gong Peiyao resisted her tears. "Please speak, Peiyao will definitely pass on the message."

Venerable Volcano glanced intensely at Gong Peiyao. He was quite fond of her and knew that she had a good personality, otherwise, he would not have stayed at the Gong Residence for so long.

Such a pity that he really did not fancy Prince Gong or the culture at the Gong Residence. If this little girl had been in charge of the household, he might have stayed on for another few years.

But, these words were not necessary for the little girl to know. He replied calmly, "Your father and the Assembly of Patriarchs are very close. He must be careful of them, as the Assembly's people are vicious and ruthless. Associating with them is akin to asking a tiger for it's skin. Okay, I have nothing more to say, so I'll be leaving."

After finishing his message, Venerable Volcano disappeared in a burst of flames.

The sea of clouds in the night sky was like a black curtain embedded with diamonds, boundless and wide. This was the most majestic and also the most enchanting view in the world. Jiang

Wei was deeply moved by the sight.

Hundreds of millions of years ago, the vast sky full of stars was just like the illuminated sky today.

During the era ruled by the ancient dire beasts, their backs, multi-colored feathers and footprints were illuminated by the stars' radiance sprinkling down from the night sky.

Cultivation Era, which had been reflected in this night sky, witnessed the magnificence of swordsmen. The myriad sword rays had surged through the sky, exuding an earth-shattering brilliance that eclipsed even the dazzling stars. Tens of thousands of swordsman sects were ripped up from the earth while an endless number of seals were placed across mountain ranges. The starry night sky seemed to reflect the grandeur of the swordsmen and their naive ignorance. The splendour of the earth will last for all ages, just like them.

Is there anything that is immortal on this earth?

Jiang Wei sighed softly.

The elementalist by his side heard his sigh and teased him, "Old Ginger, thinking of Sister Sang?"

Jiang Wei and Sang Zhijun's intimate relationship was observed and blessed by everyone. Jiang Wei was steady and experienced, while Sang Zhijun was bold and incisive. They were both vice

division leaders and their romantic relationship was termed as "the spring of vice division leaders."

Jiang Wei retracted his thoughts as he was already used to being teased. He smiled. "A little."

On the contrary, due to his honesty, everyone felt embarrassed to tease him. In fact, they were envious of their relationship. With the rampant wars and bombardments in this era, nobody knew when they would die. It was somewhat lucky to be able to find someone who loves you and who you love in return.

Jiang Wei sized up the city in front of him. It was not big and had guards standing perfectly straight in a considerably imposing manner.

Jiang Wei was a little taken aback. With regards to such a small city, its combat division's strength and discipline should be relatively ordinary and relaxed. As for its financial status, it would be difficult to support an elite combat division as the amount of resources one consumes is very shocking. Without strong and solid financial resources, it would be difficult to support a combat division.

If Central Pine Valley did not have the support of the snow lava, they would also be unable to support Spear of Heavy Cloud and Sword of Lightning.

As a result, Jiang Wei's heart stirred when he saw the guards at the city gate. It seemed that security was rather strict. Could there

possibly be a capable person inside Wind Mail City?

Wind Mail City was located neither too far off nor too close to the front line. As it was still within the range in which they could recruit, Jiang Wei and a few elementalists made a trip down.

The previous battle heavily damages Spear of Heavy Cloud and they urgently needed to replenish their manpower. In addition, Shi Xueman considered how this battle would not end anytime soon and specially relaxed the restrictions on recruitment. She hoped that they would be able to recruit a few youngsters with potential. Although these youngsters would not be able to immediately become a combat power, they would still be able to improve quickly over time spent enduring the battlefields. Most importantly, they would continue to improve while penetrating deeply into the battlefield. Only then would they become the future backbone of Spear of Heavy Cloud.

Jiang Wei liked youngsters even more as they were not influenced by the bad habits of other combat divisions. With proper nurturing, they could become outstanding soldiers. When they had been recruiting fire elementalists, it was by chance that fire elementalists were at their lowest point. As a result, they were able to filter in the fire elementalists who had tenacious determination. If it had been like the current situation, they would have thanked heavens for being able to recruit any fire elementalists at all. As for the strength of these fire elementalists or whether or not they had strong determination, they completely had no choice in the matter.

One of the guards came forward and asked, "Here for the

selection?"

Jiang Wei stared blankly. "Selection?"

Another guard checked Jiang Wei from top to bottom, smiled, and told his comrade, "Maybe he's not here to take part in the selection. He's not qualified to join the selection due to his old age."

Jiang Wei heard what was said and bowed politely to a few others. He curiously asked, "May I know what selection everyone is talking about?"

One of the guards smiled and explained, "Ignore them. The city is currently selecting the best seeds for Master's Glory."

Jiang Wei was overwhelmed with shock. "Master's Glory has succeeded?"

The guard shook his head, "Not yet, we have not heard any news, but we did hear that they are preparing for the next generation's Master's Glory. We assume that it will succeed soon."

Jiang Wei heaved a sigh of relief. They had previously discussed how Master's Glory's success would be bad news for them. There was a high possibility that a fundamental change would take place in the current situation.

They were still uncertain whether the situation would take a turn

for the better or for the worse, but they knew that it would be a turning point.

Jiang Wei laughed. "I have yet to experience Master's Glory. Since I happened to passed by, I will have to tour around properly. I wonder which training hall it is being held at?"

"It's the mayor's residence, of course!" The guard looked at him as if he was a country bumpkin. "They are our valued and distinguished guests, how could we degrade them and make them travel to different training halls?"

Jiang Wei was not angry and nodded repeatedly. "That's true."

He was a little disappointed. It turned out that the guards were being serious and conforming to standards because of the selection. There really weren't any talented candidates.

He handed over a few elemental energy beans and was released.

After a short while, one of the guards suddenly became suspicious. "That person from a moment ago seemed a little familiar. It felt like I had met him somewhere before."

Another guard was also a little suspicious. "Now that you mention it, he did seem familiar."

"Maybe he came to our Wind Mail City before?"

"Sigh, I just can’t recall anything. Not going to care anymore."

After entering the city, Jiang Wei and the rest headed towards the mayor’s residence. Earlier on, the mayor’s residence had already been surrounded by people until it was impossible to get through. Such a selection was a rare occasion in a small city like Wind Mail City. The entire city was there to enjoy the bustling scene.

"It was such a pity. That child almost made it. "

"Yes, anyway, this selection is really stringent. Not a single soul has succeeded yet."

"If it was easy, how could it still be called Master’s Glory?"

Jiang Wei waited to mix into the crowd as he darted his gaze towards the second floor pavilion of the mayor’s residence. The mayor looked like he was a rich middle-aged man. Beside him was a fair skinned youngster who was lavishly dressed and had a cold and gloomy gaze. His status seemed to be rather honorable. It could be seen that the mayor was constantly expressing goodwill towards him.

Jiang Wei’s gaze ultimately landed on the servant behind the youngster. The man wearing servant’s clothes gave off a dangerous vibe; it was as if he knew that someone was spying on him. The servant turned his head and looked in Jiang Wei’s direction.

Before the other party even began to turn his head, Jiang Wei had already shifted his gaze elsewhere.

The official in the training hall spoke loudly, "The next batch joining the selection, Hyde Training Hall."

He Min stood on the stage and was the sixth person in the queue. He was not in the least bit nervous. Frankly speaking, he was not even interested in joining this selection. If it weren't for the fact that every student in the training hall had to take part in it, he would have slipped away.

He did not like Skyheart City.

When did it start? As he stood on the stage, he was bored stiff and thought to himself, oh, probably because he liked Spear of Heavy Cloud. After seeing that mirage bean pod, he became Spear of Heavy Cloud's die-hard supporter. He had dreamed of joining Spear of Heavy Cloud countless times. Even if he was unable to qualify as a pagoda cannoneer, he was fine serving as a transport soldier.

He was unsure why the gruesome battle had given all the other students nightmares. He'd thought that the battle with flesh and blood spattered everywhere, the booming sound of the pagoda cannons, and the fluttering quicksand was brimming with power and aesthetically pleasant. In He Min's eyes, the malevolence exuded by the Spear of Heavy Cloud's members ignited a certain indescribable conviction in him.

He felt as if he was possessed. In the past, he'd longed to join the Wind Mail Division, but as he looked at them, he felt that they were undisciplined, like a bunch of disorganized and uncoordinated soldiers.

Skyheart City had a hostile relationship with Spear of Heavy Cloud, making He Min detest it even more.

All the students in front did not succeed.

This was nothing odd. Including himself, the entire Hyde Training Hall did not have any gifted students.

Wind Mail City and Hyde Training Hall were respectively a small city and training hall. He was only an ordinary person.

Spear of Heavy Cloud, that was where all the heroes were congregated. He looked forward, but felt even more frustrated.

"Next, He Min."

The voice on the stage woke He Min from his thoughts and he returned to reality. He subconsciously walked towards the centre of the stage.

As he strode over the shadow backstage, the glaring light ray prevented him from seeing anything clearly.

Even many years later, he was unable to forget that image.

Chapter 568: Effect of Reputation

Several guards were chatting excitedly at the city gates, discussing which of Wind Mail City's talents were likely to be selected. Some said Yu Xiaobai of Wind Trail Training Hall and others supported Zuo Chao of Cold Ray Training Hall. Everyone stuck to their own arguments, bragging about how they had seen these amazing geniuses with their own eyes.

Someone noticed that one guard had suddenly stopped moving and asked, "Hey! What happened, Old Xu?"

Old Xu seemed not to hear anything and stood motionless.

Some people panicked. "Hey! Hey! Old Xu, don't scare us!"

One of them hurriedly patted old Xu's face. It quivered and then his whole body shivered.

The crowd heaved a sigh of relief and someone shouted, "What's the matter old Xu? How many people do you want to scare to death!"

Old Xu's face flushed and he stammered, "I, I remember!"

Everybody was curious and yet disapproving. "What do you recall? What has surprised you?"

Old Xu stammered, "The, the person just now!"

The others were confused. "Who did you see just now?"

Old Xu swallowed his saliva, but was still agitated. He finally found his tongue. "That guy who laughed loudly when you said he was too old to participate in the selection. Later, we realized that he looked familiar."

Everyone reacted; they had a pretty strong impression of that person.

"That man? What happened?"

"Do you remember?"

"Who is he? You're scared out of your wits."

Old Xu swallowed his saliva again. "Yes, Spear of Heavy Cloud!"

"Spear of Heavy Cloud?"

Everyone was stunned. In a short while, it became completely silent.

After a while, one of them looked a little unnatural and forcefully laughed. "Old Xu, do not scare me, what Spear of Heavy Cloud?

Why not Sword of Lightning?"

Another man appeared as if struck by lightning. "Spear of Heavy Cloud!"

He finally recalled why he found that man familiar. He shivered and exclaimed, "He, he is Jiang Wei! Spear of Heavy Cloud's vice division leader!"

"Jiang Wei!"

"Spear of Heavy Cloud's vice division leader!"

The others gradually changed their expressions as they finally recalled and understood why they found him familiar. Some time ago, a mirage bean pod of the overwhelming battle between a blood elementalist division and Spear of Heavy-Cloud had been studied and analyzed by countless masters. Every important figure in Spear of Heavy Cloud had been repeatedly mentioned.

As the vice division leader of Spear of Heavy Cloud, Jiang Wei was naturally not left out.

Everyone expressed their disbelief and stood rooted.

That was Spear of Heavy Cloud!

And what more, the vice division leader of Spear of Heavy Cloud!

He came to such a small city like Wind Mail City...

All of a sudden, everyone simultaneously quivered and then regained their composure.

"Why would Spear of Heavy Cloud come to Wind Mail City? Would it be disadvantageous for us?"

"Come on, what do they see in Wind Mail City? Seems too good to be true!"

"To replenish resources?"

"We are so poor..."

"What should we do now?"

"Hurry up and report to the mayor!"

A few of them beckoned to each other and, without a care for the others, turned and ran towards the mayor’s residence.

He Min stood uncomfortably in the middle of the stage.

He was not used to having so many pairs of eyes on him, but unlike the others, he had nothing to gain or lose and thus was not

as nervous as the other students.

In the centre of the stage was a half-man high, four foot tripod. The tripod was covered with layer after layer of delicate and meticulous elemental traces, through which light flowed slowly like water. The tripod was filled with colorful liquid like a beautiful python entrenched therein.

Not knowing why, the multicolored liquid in the tripod made He Min fearful.

He turned his face away and dared not look at the tripod.

The elementalist who stood beside the tripod was responsible for the testing. "Put your hand out."

He Min extended his palm.

The elementalist tester grasped his palm and gently scratched it. Fresh blood seeped out immediately and dripped into the tripod.

He Min had witnessed the first few people drip a few drops of fresh blood into the tripod without any reaction. He did not expect any reaction either and was getting ready to step down from the stage.

At that moment, the colorful liquid which had just engulfed the blood unexpectedly emitted dazzling lights.

Multicolored lights were projected from the tripod. Together with the rotating light beam, they transformed into a five colored flower representing the five elemental energies. Each petal floating on top of the tripod represented one of the elemental energies. All of a sudden, the five petals broke into five groups of fragmented lights and combined into a glowing cocoon.

A strange wave of sound burst out.

Five little dragons of different colors emerged from the broken cocoon and hovered around, chasing each other.

This strange vision lasted more than ten seconds before it faded and disappeared.

The mayor and a few men were laughing and chatting in the pavilion. Instinctively, they stopped and gazed uniformly at the stage. As the flower formed into a cocoon, the servant behind the well-dressed young man suddenly widened his eyes. Even his normally expressionless face displayed surprise.

The onlookers marvelled that they did not know what a five-colored flower signified, but this peculiar vision made them realize that it was extraordinary.

He Min stood blankly on stage while looking at the huge tripod in front of him, unsure of what to do.

Suddenly, loud panting sounds drowned out all other noises.

"Mayor! Mayor! Spear of Heavy Cloud is coming! Spear of Heavy Cloud is coming! "

"Mayor!It is vice division leader Jiang Wei!"

The guards' shouts plunged the audience into silence, then in the next moment, they burst into an uproar.

"Spear of Heavy Cloud! Is it that Spear of Heavy Cloud?"

"Certainly! Didn't you hear him say vice division leader Jiang Wei?"

On the stage, He Min heard the words "Spear of Heavy Cloud" and was dumbfounded. Spear of Heavy Cloud... Spear of Heavy Cloud was actually here!

Upon hearing the name "Spear of Heavy Cloud", the mayor became agitated and suddenly stood up. Wind Mail City was not near the battlefield, but neither was it considered far. His biggest worry was the possibility of a blood elementalist combat division approaching the city. The world-renowned combat division "Spear of Heavy Cloud" certainly could be a protective talisman in these troubled times.

Previously, he had been wondering how he could make connections with Spear of Heavy Cloud, but did not know where to

begin.

Spear of Heavy Cloud actually took the initiative to come to Wind Mail City!

It was a golden opportunity !

The mayor was overjoyed with this chance of a lifetime and could not let it slip away. He wanted to inquire for more details, but the booming noise was just like an angry wave that could practically lift Wind Mail City up to the sky.

Jiang Wei and several other members looked at each other and were bewildered. They were almost drowned in the noisy boom, as if they were in the midst of a stormy sea.

One of his members silently mouthed the words, "Are we that famous now?"

Jiang Wei was uncertain and replied the same way, "I also do not know..."

He really did not know.

Due to time constraints, members who had previously been recruiting had all gone directly to the training halls at the fastest speed. After selecting recruits, Jiang Wei would immediately arrange another member to escort them to the camp and took the remaining members quickly to the next city.

They all underestimated the far-reaching impact of the mirage bean pod.

They were at the front line every day, tense and busy, with no time to pay attention to the various messages coming from the rear. All of them had only seen the mirage bean pod once. They could only judge feelings of the figures in the clip from their back views.

They didn’t experience the development of the whole incident. They had no idea that they have long been legendary in the eyes of the world.

So, when the tsunami-like noise overwhelmed them, they looked dazed and did not know what was going on.

"Quiet! All keep quiet!"

The Master by the mayor’s side projected his elemental energy and the thunderous sound silenced everybody.

The mayor anxiously asked several guards, "Where is he? Where is vice division leader Jiang Wei?"

The guards stuttered, "They said, said that they are here to see the selection..."

Noting the situation, Jiang Wei knew he must come out to clarify. "I am Jiang Wei, glad to meet the mayor and sorry for the disturbance."

All eyes in the field turned to Jiang Wei. Many were excited to see him. It was really Jiang Wei! He looked exactly the same as in the mirage bean pod!

As the initiator of the incident, Skyheart City had not expected this move to push the reputation of Spear of Heavy Cloud to an all-time high. Compared to any time in the past, this was the lowest point of Beyond Avalon as elementalists faced repeated defeats against the blood elementalists. Even the prestigious and illustrious Shi Beihai suffered a disastrous defeat to them.

The survival of Beyond Avalon was at stake. The unprecedented fear and despair overwhelmed the residents.

All of Beyond Avalon seemed to be drowning.

In this most desperate and darkest hour, Spear of Heavy Cloud’s victory had been like a ray of sunlight shining through thick clouds. It gave hope to everyone.

It was just like a drowning man finally clutching a rice straw.

The mirage bean pod which recorded the entire battle between Spear of Heavy Cloud and Ardent Flower Blood Division had shown everyone the enemy’s ferocity and Spear of Heavy Cloud’s

strength. More importantly, it had been the first real head-on victory.

There was nothing more convincing and reassuring than this segment of mirage.

People could now understand that blood elementalists were not invincible and that they themselves were not entirely vulnerable.

This was how Spear of Heavy Cloud had caused such an unprecedented sensation and gained the greatest reputation.

Although the people were agitated, no one said anything. They consciously made a path through the crowd.

Jiang Wei was surprised by the great courtesy he received. He nodded his thanks to the crowd on both sides and walked out.

The mayor was very excited, but to be able to become a mayor, he definitely was a man of some caliber. He smiled and said, "Dear Mister Jiang, your gracious presence has brought glory to Wind Mail City! What do you mean trouble? If it is trouble, I hope you can make it everyday. Mister Jiang, you hardly ever come by, you should stay for a few more days."

Jiang Wei bowed slightly. "Thank you for your good intentions, I appreciate it; however, given the present situation, I really have no time. If I gain a victory in the future, I shall trespass on your hospitality."

"Oh! That is such a pity." The mayor sighed. He knew that Jiang Wei was telling the truth. He soon became somewhat curious and asked, "I wonder why you have made your trip here? As long as I can be of service, the whole of Wind Mail City would not hesitate to lay down their lives if needed."

The man in gorgeous clothes beside the mayor took on a ghastly expression. At this moment, he had been completely forgotten.

Jiang Wei thanked him again. "Thank you mayor. I am here to recruit some manpower to supplement the combat division."

He just finished speaking.

Boom!

The crowd blew up again.

"Me, Me, Me!"

"Choose me, choose me!"

"I want to participate!"

Jiang Wei felt like he was standing on an erupting volcano. The ground was shaking and he was a little dazed. His mind echoed the words that had just been spoken by his comrades.

Are we so famous now...?

Chapter 569: To Die for a Belief

Wang Rui overlooked the surging and frantic crowd, his mood completely ruined.

On behalf of Skyheart City, he had come to select the best candidates for Master's Glory, but these people were only here to join in the buzz. Yet, upon hearing that the Spear of Heavy Cloud was recruiting, they became so agitated and wild. Wang Rui felt terrible, as if he had just swallowed a fly.

Wang Rui was born into an aristocratic family that had a close relationship with the Ye family.

The Wang Family had a long history, but hadn't been illustrious for a long time. However, by riding on Madam Ye's newly gained power, the family immediately had a change of fortune. In terms of seniority, Madam Ye was Wang Rui's maternal aunt, and Wang Rui often played around in the Ye residence when he was young.

Madam Ye considered visiting various cities to scout for candidates since just relying on the Surveillance Division wasn't enough. She needed someone who was decent in all aspects, including family background, to coordinate the selection so that the respective mayors would follow through or at least not obstruct her plans.

Having followed Madam Ye for some time, Wang Rui had had his glorious moments, but it was still his first time carrying such a heavy responsibility.

He truly cherished this opportunity and wanted to get things done properly.

Seeing the scene before him, a rush of anger filled his heart, and his face was terrifyingly gloomy. Could it be that the popularity of the Spear of Heavy Cloud had already surpassed that of Skyheart City?

"Quiet! Quiet!"

The Master beside the mayor had no choice but to step forward to maintain order.

The excited crowd gradually calmed down, but the passion and fervor on their faces had yet to fade.

The mayor wanted to speak, but a tender voice broke the silence from on the stage, "I don’t want to go to Skyheart City! I want to join the Spear of Heavy Cloud!"

The speaker was He Min, who had an agitated expression on his face.

He was extremely agitated. Ecstasy filled his heart, and he felt as if he was dreaming.

The Spear of Heavy Cloud had actually come to Wind Mail City to

recruit new members!

He Min’s voice rang just when the crowd had quieted down, so everybody’s gaze fell onto him. However, no one, including the mayor, was surprised. In fact, they urged him on.

"Good one!"

"That’s our boy!"

The crowd starting an endless cheer.

Master’s Glory had been discussed for so many years, but nothing had come out of it yet. There weren’t any Masters, so people thought of it unfavorably. Plus, while Skyheart City emphasized righteousness, citizens had nothing good to say about it. Le Buleng’s satirical speech circulated more extensively than anything else, and to the ordinary citizens, the so-called general situation was simply too vague and distant.

Meanwhile, the Spear of Heavy Cloud grappled at the front line with real swords and spears. Wine, to them, was boiling fresh blood. Those who died were eternal heroes. What they chopped were the heads of their enemies.

In the eyes of ordinary people, joining Master’s Glory and going to Skyheart City meant that they might gain power and become an influential figure. Joining the Spear of Heavy Cloud, however, meant that they could immediately enter battle to fight against the

blood elementalists.

The latter was for the hot-blooded!

"No way!"

An angry voice boomed across the field.

Wang Rui's face was ashen, and he felt his face burning, as if he'd received a few hard slaps. He hadn't expected the Spear of Heavy Cloud to be this popular!

The servant behind him whispered, "We must take He Min away no matter what. So far he's the most talented candidate, second to none!"

Wang Rui also had no plans of letting He Min go. If he were to join the Spear of Heavy Cloud, Skyheart City would reach rock bottom. Wouldn't it be an extreme humiliation if this were to spread? And how could he, Wang Rui, allow himself to become the butt of the joke? His bright future would be thoroughly thrashed.

Furthermore, that servant had reminded him that he absolutely could not shrink back.

He stood up slowly. With a stern expression, he walked to the edge of the pavilion and surveyed the audience. In a deep voice, he started talking, "The Spear of Heavy Cloud is the pillar of the Elders Guild and a combat division most worthy of our trust. Their

outstanding performance was indeed up to the Elders Guild's expectations, but Master's Glory fundamentally influences our ability to resist and claim victory over the blood elementalists."

Terrified by his might, the clamorous crowd unconsciously lowered their voices.

His tone was powerful and resonating. "Thus far, Master's Glory is our greatest and strictest plan. The Elders Guild will supply endless effort and resources! Countless people are advancing dauntlessly, wave upon wave. What for? To defeat the blood elementalists and take the Avalon of Five Elements back! Every one of you must understand the Elders Guild's painstaking effort. Regarding the fight against blood elementalists, the Elders Guild is more determined and well-prepared than anyone else."

He Min shook his head stubbornly. "I want to join the Spear of Heavy Cloud!"

Wang Rui suppressed his impatience, responding calmly, "If you join Master's Glory, you'll be able to unleash greater potential and become a powerful Master! You will become the Elders Guild's core, and they will focus on grooming you!"

He Min refused to listen. Like a monkey drum he shook his head. "No! I'm joining the Spear of Heavy Cloud!"

Wang Rui ran out of patience. Under the eyes of those present, he flew into a rage and berated, "Why are you so insensible? Do you not have any regard for the present situation? Are you able to take

responsibility if Master’s Glory fails because of you?"

He Min answered righteously, "I’m a child!"

The crowd burst into laughter. Everyone was amused by his response.

"Exactly. He’s just a kid. What responsibility?"

"The Elders Guild is so useless!"

"Heh, heh. An old man is dead in the enemy country, new soldiers are defending our territory, a lone girl is fighting at the front line, and now it’s this kid’s turn!"

...

He Min’s words made Jiang Wei smile too. This kid seemed really stubborn, but somewhat quick-witted and clever.

The mocking and ridiculing turned Wang Rui’s face as red as pig liver. Each verbal attack was like a iron sword that pierced right through his heart. He had never been in such an embarrassing situation. The humiliation made his body tremble uncontrollably. Finally losing control, he roared, "Enough!"

The audience sank into momentary silence, but what followed after was an even more intense wave of angry reactions.

"What nonsense! Too afraid to go to the front line, yet you dare shout at us?"

"I've already said it. The Elders Guild is as useless as mud, and the inside officials are only interested in saving themselves!"

"Don't waste the kid's time. Bullsh*t Master's Glory. Rubbish!"

...

The crowd was absolutely agitated. Some of the stronger men were even rolling their sleeves up, ready to charge forward.

Wang Rui's face was ashen, and his body shivered. He muttered to himself, "Wicked citizens. A bunch of wicked citizens..."

Wind Mail City's mayor stood at the side, his face turning gloomy. Calling his people wicked right in front of his face... was that fellow implying that he was a wicked mayor? Expressionlessly, he commented, "Wicked indeed. How could such wicked citizens be worthy of such a grand plan like Master's Glory? Kindly head over to other cities to find your candidates."

Wang Rui turned his head, his face distorted. His eyes spat fire as he roared like a ferocious tiger, "You..."

Wind Mail City's mayor wasn't the least bit afraid. He asked

coolly, "What? Is Prince Wang going to call me wicked too?"

The servant behind Wang Rui sighed and placed his palm on Wang Rui's shoulder. Wang Rui only felt a heavy weight pressing on his body. Not only was he unable to move, but he couldn't speak a word either.

A powerful elemental energy wave enveloped the whole of Wind Mail City, and the dark clouds overhead instantly vanished, revealing the clear, blue sky. Yet, no wind could enter Wind Mail City, as if the air had solidified.

All noise faded in a flash.

The surging clamor from earlier seemed to have frozen all of a sudden, and everybody's faces changed. They were so overwhelmed with shock that they couldn't speak.

The middle-aged man bowed toward Jiang Wei, calling out, "Sir! I'm a nobody from the Surveillance Division and have received an order to select the candidates for Master's Glory. I think we have found a very suitable prospect. Please give us that honor. My division leader will never forget this and will repay you in future for sure."

Jiang Wei sighed. He was somewhat hesitant.

He was a prudent and experienced man who did not wish to become enemies with the Surveillance Division. While the two

parties did not see eye to eye, the Surveillance Division was very strong with the Elders Guild was behind their back, so it was best for the Spear of Heavy Cloud to not fall out with them.

He Min was confined by the invisible elemental energy and couldn't speak. He felt absolutely anxious, fearing that he was going to be sent to Skyheart City.

No way!

He couldn't let the opportunity to join the Spear of Heavy Cloud slip away!

He Min frantically engaged the elemental energy within his body. Although he was aware that his own frail elemental energy was in no way comparable to the energy that confined him, he couldn't care less. All he could think of was joining the Spear of Heavy Cloud!

The elemental energy within his body attacked the invisible shackles recklessly and incessantly!

His face was twisted, and the bones in his body were cracking, but the elemental energy trace rendered him immobile.

He must go to the Spear of Heavy Cloud!

He had never mobilized all of his energy this wildly before. Unable to adapt to such a great intensity, he started feeling dizzy as

his head buzzed nonstop.

Suddenly, somewhere deep within his body, a hot stream gushed from his abdomen up toward his neck, and a ball of raging flame burned in his chest. His head rumbled as he entered a fuzzy state of consciousness. He could only feel a rush of intense heat enter his throat as the invisible shackles loosened slightly.

He used all his energy to shout, "I want to go to the Spear of Heavy..."

Before he could finish, a ball of bloody mist sprayed out of his mouth!

The middle-aged man opened his eyes wide in disbelief.

Upon seeing the bloody mist that He Min spewed out, Jiang Wei jolted. The doubt in his heart vanished like a puff of smoke.

Jiang Wei stood forward and spoke in an unhurried, but firm as steel, tone, "Sorry, but we’re taking this kid."

The other members followed closely behind. As the troops spread out, everyone had solemn and resolute expressions.

It would be their greatest honor to have a kid who was this stubborn, who would choose to injure themselves in order to join the Spear of Heavy Cloud.

The middle-aged man sighed. "As a vice division leader with an immeasurably bright future, why put yourself in danger for a kid? You only have one life, so why not use it where it matters? The divide between a Master and yourself is too huge. You can’t win."

Jiang Wei did not stop. With determined and steady eyes, he calmly unslung the bow from his back and said in a low voice, "We were born with a belief, and we will die with it. We will not live perfunctorily, and we will die for our belief!"

His scattered comrades formed a miniature vanguard, walking in sync. There was no fear on their faces, only persistence and courage. They were one. Old Ginger’s words had touched them, and they couldn’t help but cried out in unison.

"We were born with a belief, and we will die with it. We will not live perfunctorily, and we will die for our belief!"

Clearly, they weren’t walking fast, but each step shook the earth like claps of thunder. Their voices clearly weren’t loud, but they reached far and wide and into people’s heart. They clearly had few people, but fearlessness spread across the field. They were invincible.

With each step and sentence, their aura strengthened like a rising tongue of flame, burning the skies like fire and like blood.

The middle-aged man’s face changed.

Chapter 570: Three Bunny Hairs

Jiang Wei wasn't a rash individual; he was calm and steady. In everyone's eyes, he was a reliable and trustworthy person. They did not need to worry about anything that he was in charge of.

He wasn't really talented. Among the students of Central Pine Academy, he wasn't considered outstanding. As compared to other students who were more talented than him, sometimes he felt that his achievements today were largely due to the coincidental encounter with Ai Hui at the Garden of Life where the blood catastrophe first broke out.

If one was to ask him what his strengths were, his answer would most likely be his trustworthiness and tenacity.

Whether it was the escape from the Garden of Life, the Battle of Central Pine City, or the battle with the Ardent Flower Blood Division, he was the least noticeable and seldom put up an extraordinary performance. However, he would never give up and was always a reliable force to the team.

Everyone liked calling him "Old Ginger" because they felt that his character was too elderly for his age. He was like a 50 year old middle-aged man.

He would properly carry out the missions Ai Hui and Shi Xueman gave him. He would not skimp on the training tasks that were given to him either. He did all his tasks meticulously. Even if he knew the camp was stationed in an absolutely safe area, he would

not lower his guard and slack off defensively.

He was a person who treated his job seriously and did not like to let his imagination run wild.

However, after having witnessed the blood catastrophe, the death of his classmate's teacher, the collapse of the Avalon of Five Elements, and the world becoming increasingly chaotic, he felt helpless and insignificant and realized that human lives were fragile like grass. There were more and more things that he couldn't understand accumulating in his heart.

He was not good at motivating people or talking.

He had said these words because he was giving a serious reply to the other party.

When these words left his mouth, he felt as if he was enlightened. His entire body relaxed, appearing as if he had shed the shackles that bound him. The haze that clouded his mind was completely lifted off. At this moment, his mind was in a state of clarity. He had finally expressed his desired answer.

Whether an enemy was powerful or weak, whether the world was safe or dangerous, life still remained short and unpredictable.

Live not an ignoble life, die an honorable death.

Jiang Wei's elemental energy surged excitedly. It was as if his

elemental energy was cheering in high spirits. His facial expression remained composed, he had his huge bow in his hand, and his eyes were like an abyss, deep and unfathomable. Behind him, three elementalists took up their positions and formed an irregularly-shaped rhombus with him. Finally, there was one more elementalist standing directly behind the rhombus.

The Lesser Arrow Formation was a battle formation that was commonly used by elementalists.

However, in Jiang Wei and his counterparts' hands, it displayed a terrifying might.

Wang Rui's face turned deathly pale. Jiang Wei and his counterparts were only five people in total, yet they were able to cover his line of sight. The aura of devastation exuded by Jiang Wei and his counterparts made Wang Rui feel as if he was on a battlefield where people were blasted into pieces. Like humongous, malevolent beasts, they advanced slowly toward him.

Thump.

His legs gave way, and he fell to the ground.

At this point in time, the middle-age man behind him did not bother with him. He withdrew all his elemental energy and prepared to face Jiang Wei.

After one entered the Surveillance Division, he or she would not

use his or her birth name anymore. This symbolized a farewell to his or her old life.

The middle-aged man was called Xiao Shan even though he wasn't young anymore. Only those who were familiar with the Surveillance Division would know that members who had the word "xiao" in their names were the legitimate core members of the division. These core members either held key positions in the division like Xiao Lin or were powerful experts like Xiao Shan.

At this moment, there was a solemn look on Xiao Shan's face. The Surveillance Division was one of the Three Central Divisions, so how could they not be familiar with a battle formation. Furthermore, wasn't this the commonly used Lesser Arrow Formation?

The Lesser Arrow Formation was a battle formation that every elementalist in every combat division had to learn.

The Lesser Arrow Formation arranged in front of him looked extremely absurd and was filled with many mistakes. The biggest mistake was its arrowhead position. Xiao Shan had never seen a Lesser Arrow Formation that put an archer at the arrowhead position.

An archer was a role that needed range in order to be useful in combat. How could an archer stand at the arrowhead position where he would be put in a close combat situation with the enemy?

There were a lot of other mistakes as well. For example, their

formation was much more spread out than a typical Lesser Arrow Formation.

However, the imposing aura and elemental energy undulations released by Jiang Wei and his counterparts were definitely no joke!

As an expert even among Masters, Xiao Shan's eyes were naturally very sharp. He was quickly able to tell that there was something odd about Jiang Wei's Lesser Arrow Formation.

Jiang Wei stood at the arrowhead position of the Lesser Arrow Formation. Behind his left and right flanks, there were two fire elementalists. At the arrow nock position to the rear, there was also a fire elementalist. These three fire elementalists formed a perfect triangle. Right behind Jiang Wei, there was an earth elementalist. The earth elementalist happened to stand in the center of the triangle formed by the three fire elementalists.

Such an elaborate structure!

In his heart, Xiao Shan exclaimed in admiration. He had not expected the commonly-used Lesser Arrow Formation to become so special in Jiang Wei's hands.

Even though they had not fought yet, and he could not see all of the marvels of Jiang Wei's formation, he could sense that there was something unique about it just from its elaborate structure.

However, even though the other party's Lesser Arrow Formation

lit his eyes up and he looked forward to experiencing it, he stood by the words he said just now. The strength disparity between a Master and someone who had yet to become a Master was incredibly wide.

On the battlefield, a Master wasn't invincible, but he or she had the ability to ultimately change the outcome of a close fight.

Having only five people in total, Jiang Wei and his counterparts couldn't pose any threat to him.

However, he did not want to start a feud with the Spear of Heavy Cloud. After all, both sides had no enmity toward each other in the beginning. This candidate selection trial was prepared for Master's Glory, not for the Surveillance Division.

Among the higher-ups of the Surveillance Division, there were many divided opinions about the Division Leader's decision.

Many people felt that the Surveillance Division should head toward the front line like the Judgement and Dread divisions. On the contrary, another group of people felt that they should follow the Division Leader with resolution. Ultimately, Madam Ye's qualifications and achievements weren't enough to convince everyone.

Xiao Shan looked at Jiang Wei and his counterparts with a complicated facial expression. The rise of the Spear of Heavy Cloud had caused the rift between members of the Surveillance Division to grow wider and wider. Skyheart City's performance had

disappointed a lot of people. Many were disappointed that an elite force like them were hiding in Skyheart City doing dishonorable things. At the same time, they felt conflicted too.

Xiao Shan belonged to the neutral party. Whatever tasks his division leader gave him, he would carry them out earnestly. He had no ill intentions toward the Spear of Heavy Cloud. Instead, he rather admired them.

He had seen the mirage bean pod of that battle. If it had been the Surveillance Division, he believed they would have obtained a victory as well.

The Surveillance Division was one of the Three Central Divisions. Generations of trial and error were conducted and a countless amount of manpower and resources was spent before this Central Division was born.

Every member had to undergo multiple stages of selection tests before he or she was chosen. They had gathered the most outstanding elementalists.

In Xiao Shan’s eyes, it wasn’t easy for a regional combat division like the Spear of Heavy Cloud to obtain such a military success.

Xiao Shan had made up his mind. He wanted the other party to retreat on their own accord. With an apologetic tone, he said, "This is my duty. Pardon me then, Sir Jiang!"

He raised his right hand.

Snap.

A loud and crisp sound of fingers snapping resounded through the air.

A weird elemental energy wave swept across the area like a ripple.

Crack!

A small ice cube formed between his fingers. The ice cube was irregularly shaped, and it was sparkling and translucent, giving off an oddly beautiful fluorescence.

Crack, crack, crack!

The frightening sound of ice forming echoed through the air. A irregularly shaped, dazzling ice dragon was growing thicker and longer at a terrifying speed as it neared Jiang Wei. The ice dragon grew in an expansive manner. The further it grew, the thicker and wider it became, resembling an enormous cone that was oriented horizontally.

Xiao Shan's Path of Master: [Tears of Amber]!

The demonic, yet beautiful, ice wasn't really ice. It was actually

crystallized elemental energy. When the elemental energy surrounding an enemy crystallized, the enemy would become like an insect trapped in resin that slowly became amber. The seemingly weak crystallized elemental energy was actually very firm and strong. A person who was trapped by it would not be able to move at all, resembling a bug encased in amber.

Jiang Wei's gaze was lowered, his feet were spread out, his straightened left arm was holding his bow, and his right hand was holding the bowstring, looking as if he had not seen what was going on.

A transparent glass bamboo vial appeared in each fire elementalists' hand. Each glass bamboo container was filled with crystal-clear snow lava.

Crack.

The glass bamboo vials shattered as the crystal-clear snow lava immediately ignited into a faint blaze. The three fire elementalists had solemn looks on their faces. Their hand signs transformed nimbly as the faint blaze danced between their fingers.

At almost the same time, a quicksand whirlpool formed beneath the feet of the earth elementalist behind Jiang Wei.

Following which, the surging sand whirlpool swirled around the five squad members.

The movements of the three fire elementalists were uniform and synchronized. They pressed their hands downward, and the faint blaze generated by the snow lava entered the quicksand whirlpool beneath their feet.

Boom!

Surging fire elemental energy gushed into the sand whirlpool. However, the weird thing was that the fire elemental energy only gathered at the outer ring of the sand whirlpool. The earth elementalist took in a deep breath of air as his face became bright-red. He pointed, raised his palms upward, and roared, "Rise!"

The quicksand whirlpool behind Jiang Wei began to rise from the ground, looking like a quicksand monster climbing out of a sand pit.

The wiggling quicksand engulfed Jiang Wei’s feet and extended upward to his waist, his upper back, and over his shoulders to his arms.

Jiang Wei looked as if he felt nothing, remaining motionless.

In the blink of an eye, Jiang Wei was entirely covered by the quicksand, leaving only his head exposed. More and more quicksand rose from the ground and flew toward the back of Jiang Wei. Following which, the quicksand became an enormous and solid sand wall that supported Jiang Wei like a firm and hard pedestal.

The frantically crystallizing elemental energy grew increasingly larger in Jiang Wei's line of sight. It was as if a huge wall had been hurled at him.

A demonic, yet gorgeous, radiance flooded his line of sight. He had nowhere to run.

Suddenly, violent elemental energy surged from his back. A brilliant glow erupted from Jiang Wei's eyes as he pulled the bowstring!

However, there was no arrow nocked on the bowstring!

Jiang Wei pulled the bowstring further back as violent elemental energy surged through his right arm. A dazzling glow blossomed from the bowstring as an arrow began to form.

The arrowhead was made up of shining silvery metal elemental energy, the arrow shaft was made up of quicksand that was swirling nonstop, and the arrow fletchings were made up of scarlet feathers of dancing flame.

The Spear of Heavy Cloud's unique Lesser Arrow Formation, [Three Bunny Hairs]

This unique name was chosen Sang Zhiijun. The Bunny Hair Arrows she used in Central Pine City had burned a huge and painful hole in her pocket, but they were very effective in battle. In her eyes, Bunny Hair Arrows were the best arrows. Of course, they

were the most expensive as well.

The bowstring was released.

After flying for two meters, the arrow collided with the frantically growing wall of crystallized elemental energy.

Clink!

The deafening sound of a collision rang through the air.

The rain of fire released by the arrow fletchings silently entered the quicksand arrow shaft. Then, the fire elemental energy from the fletchings and the earth elemental energy from the arrow shaft entered the dazzling arrow head.

These three different types of elemental energy fused together.

Boom!

A deep and muffled explosion resounded through the air.

The crystallized elemental energy wall that was growing frantically appeared as if it had been heavily struck by a dire beast.

The crystallized elemental energy wall stopped two meters in front of Jiang Wei.

"Xiao" in Chinese means small or young.

Chapter 571: Valiant Warriors

The momentum of the frantically growing crystallized elemental energy stopped abruptly, looking as if it had hit a wall.

The arrogant Xiao Shan's eyes lit up. Interesting!

Fire engendered earth and earth engendered metal. As the arrowhead, Jiang Wei happened to be a metal elementalist. The amount of metal elemental energy that Jiang Wei could utilize was plentiful, but he did not convert all the elemental energies into metal elemental energy. He still maintained a portion of the fire elemental energy and earth elemental energy as they were. This was why the previous explosion occurred.

There were two advantages to using metal elemental energy to form the arrowhead. The first advantage was it had an extremely strong piercing ability. The second advantage was it could fuse with the other two types of elemental energy to create an explosion.

This was indeed unique!

Xiao Shan could not help but exclaim in admiration once more. This was the first time he had seen such an exquisite arrangement being utilized in a basic battle formation like the Lesser Arrow Formation. From the excellent coordination among the five people, Xiao Shan could tell that they had undergone a huge number of training sessions.

Actually, judging from the strength of each elementalist in the unit in front of him, they looked very ordinary. Jiang Wei's strength was rather impressive. He was the only bright spot among the five man squad and was not far from becoming a Master. The strength of the other four elementalists was ordinary, especially the three fire elementalists. These four elementalists were even weaker than the ordinary members of the Surveillance Division.

Given Jiang Wei's strength, he could only become an unit leader in the Surveillance Division. However, since he had many military accomplishments, he could become a middle-ranking officer instead.

Of course, the position of vice division leader in the Surveillance Division was absolutely out of his reach.

Xiao Shan's high rating of Jiang Wei's military capabilities wasn't baseless. The performance put on by Jiang Wei's low-level comrades had displayed Jiang Wei's capabilities. For example, the fire elementalists were too low-level and could not produce sufficient fire elemental energy. The glass bamboos vials that were filled with snow lava could make up for the fire elementalists' deficiency and improved their performance.

The earth elementalist wasn't really powerful either. However, the huge amount of quicksand was able to act as a connection for the five person squad. The sand wall that supported Jiang Wei withstood significant impact and acted as protection for him.

These details might seem insignificant, but it was precisely these details that displayed Jiang Wei's capabilities. It was these details

that allowed his weak and ordinary-looking comrades to display extraordinary fighting capabilities.

A look of admiration flashed across Xiao Shan's eyes.

However, this level was not enough to win this fight.

Snap.

Xiao Shan snapped his fingers again.

The ice dragon that was frozen in the air exploded with a loud bang. Countless crystallized fragments swept across Jiang Wei and his counterparts like a blizzard. Every tiny fragment was like a seed that caused the surrounding elemental energy to crystallize and grow.

Soon, a gigantic, dazzling, transparent bell canopy covered Jiang Wei and his counterparts. The canopy bell was formed by the frantically crystallizing elemental energy.

The onlookers cried out in alarm as looks of shock appeared on their faces.

Jiang Wei and his counterparts had nowhere to run!

Within the bell canopy, Jiang Wei's facial expression did not change. He placed his huge bow in front of him and put his right

hand fingers on the bowstring. With a deep voice, he said, "Two bamboos. Attack!"

The earth elementalist understood what Jiang Wei meant and manipulated the wiggling quicksand beneath his feet. The quicksand lifted the five people up and launched an attack forward.

Two more glass bamboo vials appeared in the hands of each fire elementalist.

Without any hesitation, they crushed the vials in their hands at the same time.

Boom.

The flames produced were much more powerful than the previous time. The three of them had grave looks on their faces. They used their hands and guided the flames to their bodies. In the blink of an eye, the blazing flames engulfed their bodies and turned them into three men who were on fire.

The onlookers cried out in alarm again.

The three flaming fire elementalists began to run around the earth elementalist with all their might. If one looked down from the sky, he or she would see a flaming triangle that was spinning.

In front of the earth elementalist, the roiling quicksand

transformed into a brown cauldron with three legs.

Wisps of fire were released into the three-legged cauldron by the three flaming men as they ran wildly on the quicksand. A red glow suddenly erupted from the three-legged cauldron, making it look as if it was being heated.

In an instant, the quicksand beneath their feet looked as if it was boiling, sweeping up numerous sand waves.

Amid the rolling waves of sand, speckles of silvery light appeared. Like a school of fish, they swam toward Jiang Wei. The sand-made pedestal that carried Jiang Wei was as bright as snow, looking as if it was cast out of iron.

Jiang Wei's elemental energy was operating at its limit. Faint silvery stars appeared in his eyes.

The metal elemental energy in the sand pedestal that carried him was becoming more and more vigorous. He felt like his body was ripping apart. In reality, this wasn't a misperception. A slight moment of carelessness would cause his body to be ripped apart by the surging metal elemental energy.

He carefully controlled the vigorous and fearsome metal elemental energy. The huge bow that he placed in front of him was bursting with a brilliant silvery light, appearing as if a glowing silver needle had grown out of his bow.

The quicksand lifted them and continued moving forward!

Xiao Shan's facial expression became solemn once more.

This was...

He realized that he had underestimated Jiang Wei and his counterparts.

The fire elementalists, whom he previously thought were the weakest and most useless, actually had their merits. The fire elemental energy released by the snow lava was extremely powerful. From Xiao Shan's perspective, it was too much for each fire elementalist to handle all of the fire elemental energy from the two glass bamboo vials of snow lava.

But the three of them managed to do it!

They distributed the flames around their bodies proportionally. By doing so, they could reduce the amount of flames they had to control at any given moment. However, Xiao Shan had not initially thought of this method because he knew the agony that he would have had to face if he allowed the flames of snow lava to engulf him.

Under such agony, the three fire elementalists could still synchronize their movements and release the flames into the three-legged cauldron at the same speed.

Xiao Shan could not help but feel surprised. Such an aggressive execution!

Each combat division had certain moments where they would fight with all their might. However, this was the first time that Xiao Shan witnessed the ubiquitous Lesser Arrow Formation being executed with such aggression. From their excellent coordination, Xiao Shan could tell that they had practiced this formation many times.

Was this done to make up for the deficiency in their strength?

Xiao Shan's gaze became slightly complicated.

The theory behind it was easy to understand, yet very few combat divisions could implement it. It was akin to how the fire elementalists allowed their bodies to be engulfed by flames. This could only be done with an extremely high endurance, steel-like willpower, and strict self-discipline.

In front of him, there wasn't just one, but three fire elementalists who possessed such characteristics!

Wasn't the Spear of Heavy Cloud scared of a mutiny occurring?

Suddenly, he thought of an interesting fact about the Spear of Heavy Cloud's recruiting process. Fire elementalists had to pass the fire reservoir test before they could enter the Spear of Heavy Cloud. Previously, everyone had not thought much about it. They

merely felt that Shi Xueman valued individuals with high willpower. After the rise of Pagoda Cannons, the value of fire elementalists skyrocketed, and everyone felt that the Spear of Heavy Cloud was too lucky for taking the best fire elementalists all for themselves,

Who would have thought that the Spear of Heavy Cloud designed their battle formations based on the exceptional willpower of their fire elementalists?

Xiao Shan no longer looked down on the Spear of Heavy Cloud. Not only did he admire the perseverance of the fire elementalists, he also admired the ingenuity of the Spear of Heavy Cloud.

Suddenly, his mind trembled.

While he was distracted by his thoughts, the quicksand that carried the entire Lesser Arrow Formation was just about to collide with the expanding crystallized canopy.

The statue-like Jiang Wei began to move as he pulled the bowstring with his right hand.

His huge bow suddenly erupted with a brilliance. The space between the bow and its bowstring was covered with a silvery light, resembling a glowing silver fan.

The silvery light then converged toward the horizontal line formed by Jiang Wei’s fingers on the bowstring. The glowing

silver fan that had previously been open was now closed.

Following which, a thick glowing silver arrow that was the size of a javelin appeared on the bowstring.

Clink!

The bowstring twanged as a silvery light streaked through the air!

Jiang Wei's face remained emotionless as he pulled and released the bowstring with lightning speed. An arrow was released again!

Boom!

The arrow gleam blasted a huge hole in the ice-like, crystallized elemental energy. However, the edge of the hole began to regenerate almost immediately. The second arrow gleam struck the crystallized elemental energy again, deepening the hole by a few meters.

Clink, clink, clink!

Boom, boom, boom!

In the midst of the brilliant silvery light, Jiang Wei moved extremely fast. The onlookers couldn't clearly see the action of him pulling the bowstring. Only once in awhile could they catch a

glimpse of him doing so.

The glowing silver arrows that appeared on the bowstring remained the same. However, the onlookers quickly realized that the hand which Jiang Wei used to pull the bowstring was dripping with blood.

Razor-sharp metal energy gathered on the bowstring, making it as sharp as a knife!

Even so, Jiang Wei's facial expression remained emotionless. It was as if he couldn't feel anything at all. The bowstring was pulled and released mechanically.

Amid the dazzling streaks of silvery light, the explosions, and the fluttering fragmentary light, they advanced with aggression!

Xiao Shan finally understood why the fire elementalists were fighting with all their might and why they could endure such a painful battle tactic. It was because Jiang Wei took the lead.

However, how many combat divisions could actually implement this simple principle?

It had been ages since the Surveillance Division had last set foot upon the battlefield...

All of a sudden, Xiao Shan felt a sense of embarrassment. These weak and low level individuals were fighting with all their might.

To secure a victory, they were willing to use a battle tactic that filled them with agony.

Valiant warriors like them... should be in the Surveillance Division!

Division Leader, you should look at these people!

Live not an ignoble life, die an honorable death...

Xiao Shan suddenly became very excited.

Jiang Wei and his counterparts, who were advancing frantically, did not know what was going on outside at all. All of their facial expressions were distorted as they advanced with all their might. The moment Jiang Wei's shooting speed slowed down, the hole would regenerate. Jiang Wei did not care about anything else and shot the arrows intensely.

There were no more distracting thoughts in his mind.

He only had one thought now.

Attack! Attack!

Separated by the pure and gorgeous crystallized elemental energy, the figure of the middle-aged man appeared distorted. However, Jiang Wei's bloodshot eyes did not blink at all.

He was getting closer!

10 meters, 7 meters, 2 meters...

Jiang Wei was becoming more and more excited. He did not know whether or not he could obtain victory. All he knew was that if his attacks got closer to Xiao Shan, his chance of winning would be higher!

Boom!

Breaking out of the elemental canopy, Jiang Wei felt his body become lighter and his vision become clearer. The figure of his target was exceptionally distinct now.

He was within reach!

Without any hesitation, Jiang Wei pulled the bowstring with all the strength he had left and placed all his attention on his bow.

Locked on!

Snap.

Suddenly, his hand became empty. The bowstring had snapped.

He was stunned. Like the sharp blade of a sword, the bowstring hit his body and created two lacerations, but he couldn’t feel anything.

Wang Rui, who hid far behind Xiao Shan, suddenly yelled, "Kill him!"

The air seemed to have frozen at this moment.

Wang Rui kept on yelling, "Kill him! Quickly kill him..."

Snap.

Xiao Shan snapped his fingers without turning back. Wang Rui’s voice abruptly came to a halt. He had been imprisoned by Xiao Shan’s elemental energy.

Xiao Shan looked at the unconscious He Min, the dazed Jiang Wei whose palm was badly mangled, the exhausted earth elementalist who was scowling at him, and the three fire elementalists whose bodies were still ablaze with flames.

"You’re more suitable for this kid, so nurture him properly," Xiao Shan said indifferently.

Jiang Wei raised his head abruptly. He couldn’t believe what he had just heard.

Xiao Shan turned around and flew up into the air. A lingering voice spiralled through the air.

"We will meet again on the battlefield in the future."

Chapter 572: The Utter Defeats At The Front Line

When Ke Ning retreated along with the Blue Flag Division, he discovered that the area around the Spear of Heavy Cloud's encampment was packed with people.

The Blue Flag Division had suffered heavy losses. Less than one-third of its troops had made it back alive. One could say that they had completely lost their ability to fight on the battlefield. However, Ke Ning did not want to go back with his tail between his legs. He brought the remnants of his combat division and encamped at a location that was far away from the Spear of Heavy Cloud's camp.

Now that the Blue Flag Division finally had a chance to take a breather, everyone in the combat division heaved a sigh of relief.

However, they had suffered heavy casualties, so the soldiers were low in morale and dejected. Before they headed toward the battlefield, they were grandiose and smug. They felt that they had obtained the key to victory after modifying the pagoda cannons.

However, during their first battle with the blood elementalists, they watched their comrades being mowed down like fragile grass. It was then that they realized how wide the strength disparity between them and the blood elementalists was.

Anguished wails and groans filled every corner of their camp. The survivors were crestfallen and dejected. Ke Ning felt stressed

and walked out of the camp alone.

Li Houtang noticed Ke Ning’s irregular behavior, stopped working, and walked out of the camp as well.

Ke Ning sat beside a brook not far away from the camp.

When Li Houtang walked closer to the brook, he heard Ke Ning stifling his crying. Li Houtang sighed and sat beside Ke Ning. Then, he consoled him, "It’s not your fault. You don’t need to blame yourself."

Ke Ning was like a nephew to him, and he had watched him grow up. Ke Ning had been a very arrogant individual from a very young age. This defeat had dealt a huge blow to him. Li Houtang was very worried that Ke Ning wouldn’t recover from this setback.

Li Houtang continued to console him, "There are not many combat divisions that can contend with the blood elementalists. Therefore, there’s nothing embarrassing about losing to them. This place isn’t safe, so it’s better if we retreat as soon as possible. Given the advancing speed of the blood elementalists, they will reach here very soon."

Ke Ning stopped crying and wiped the tears off of his face. Then, he raised his head and said, "I’m not leaving."

Li Houtang sighed. "Do you think now is the time to throw a tantrum? This time around, all of the God Nation’s combat

divisions have been activated. Who can stop them? Even the Spear of Heavy Cloud, which has God-subduing Peaks, might barely hold them back."

"If the Spear of Heavy Cloud can't hold them back, where can we go even if we retreat?" Ke Ning asked.

Li Houtang was speechless.

What Ke Ning said was true. The Spear of Heavy Cloud was the last line of defense. If they couldn't hold back the flood of blood elementalists, then no one could.

"We have to stay...," Ke Ning said as his tone became more solemn, "... and join the Pagoda Cannon Alliance. In reality, our pagoda cannons do cause damage to the enemy forces and are really useful, but our level is too low. By joining the Pagoda Cannon Alliance, we can learn how to really use the pagoda cannons and will definitely increase our offensive power."

"But I heard Shi Xueman is domineering and arrogant. What if she wants us to hand over the command of our combat division to her if we join the Pagoda Cannon Alliance?" Li Houtang said in a worried tone.

"Then we will hand it over!" Ke Ning's tone was determined. Following which, he muttered, "What's the point of holding onto the remnants of this combat division?"

Li Houtang did not try to persuade Ke Ning anymore. He was right. Their combat division had been broken, while the morale of their troops had reached rock bottom. The devastating defeat had caused many of them to lose the courage to fight the blood elementalists ever again.

"So many of our brothers have died. There's no way I can go back and hide from this fact," Ke Ning said as he stared at the brook.

"There are so many combat divisions that want to join the Pagoda Cannon Alliance. I'm afraid it won't be easy for us to do so." Li Houtang was slightly worried.

"Very soon, there won't be that many combat divisions," Ke Ning muttered.

"What do you mean by there won't that many combat divisions very soon?" Li Houtang could not help but ask.

"What does Uncle Li think of our Blue Flag Division?" Ke Ning asked.

"It can't be compared to the Spear of Heavy Cloud, but it's definitely much more powerful than the ordinary combat divisions," Li Houtang replied with pride.

Ke Ning nodded his head. Apparently, he agreed with what Li Houtang said. However, his tone then changed as he continued, "If we suffered such a devastating defeat, what makes you think that

the others won’t suffer the same fate as us?"

Li Houtang was stunned.

Ke Ning continued, "Uncle Li, you shall see. Soon, there will be a lot of bad news, and more than half of the combat divisions here will run away."

Li Houtang was astounded. He could not help but examine Ke Ning closely.

Ke Ning’s previously young and tender face seemed to have aged and matured significantly overnight. The arrogance that he used to possess had completely disappeared and was replaced by maturity.

Li Houtang felt very glad.

Ke Ning’s words came true.

The Green Heavy Division was defeated, the Golden Feather Division was defeated, the Poplar Division was defeated...

More and more combat divisions were utterly defeated. The record for news of these defeats was five different combat division being defeated in one day.

Currently, the true strength of the enemy forces was gradually

surfacing. The enemy troops were split into three separate forces and advanced at the same time.

The God Tiger Division, which led the Radiance Blood Division and the Bluster Blood Division, and God Tiger Division, which led the Birth Blood Division and the Death Blood Division, served as the left and right wing forces. The God Wolf Division, which led the Silverfrost Division, served as the central force.

Beyond Avalon's combat divisions that stationed to oppose these three forces were obliterated.

The pagoda cannon technology, which everyone placed their hopes on, did not bring about victories.

The atmosphere suddenly became tense and grave. The retreat of the defeated combat divisions from the front line dealt an extremely huge blow to the morale of Beyond Avalon. According to the survivors, the God Nation's combat divisions were invincible like God himself.

The members of various combat divisions felt panic. Various versions of rumors were spreading everywhere.

Some combat divisions had already sensed that something was wrong and began to retreat. This created a chain reaction and caused an upsurge in the number of retreating combat divisions. Every day, there were combat divisions that decamped and retreated.

The surrounding area of the Spear of Heavy Cloud's camp, which was previously packed, was now spacious and empty.

The atmosphere in the Spear of Heavy Cloud became tense as well.

Jiang Wei, who had just returned to the camp, did not even have the chance to allow his injuries to recover. He had already begun to prepare for battle. The newly recruited members had been sent to training as well. Originally, these newly recruited members were intended for future deployment, but due to the sudden critical situation, they had to be immediately trained and prepared.

Inside the camp, the one with the most stress was Fatty.

Initially, Fatty was filled with enthusiasm. This was especially the case after he learned that Ai Hui would arrive soon. He acted as if he was on steroids. Being able to show off to Ai Hui was a dream that he had had since the days he worked in the Wilderness as a laborer.

However, as the situation worsened, his intention of showing off to Ai Hui had been thrown to the back of his mind.

Pagoda cannons were the key weapons they used against blood elementalist combat divisions. This weapon was also the cornerstone for their battle formations and tactics. If something went wrong with the pagoda cannons, they would have to redesign their battle formations and tactics.

Fatty, who had never taken on such a huge responsibility before, felt as if he was carrying a mountain on his shoulders now.

Unfortunately, the process of building the pagoda cannons had currently gone astray.

There was an area in the camp that was specifically converted into a smithy and buzzed with activity. A huge number of blacksmiths that had been conscripted with snow lava as payment were trying to forge real Beehive Heavy Cannons at the moment.

The heavy cannon that Fatty had previously used for demonstration was a scaled-down prototype. He envisioned the true Beehive Heavy Cannon to be 18 meters in length and three meters in diameter.

Everyone was unfamiliar with forging pagoda cannons, let alone building the high level Beehive Heavy Cannons. Up until now, they had yet to succeed. Fatty was so anxious that his mouth developed ulcers and his eyes became bloodshot.

"Master Fatty, what kind of pagoda can hold such a heavy cannon?"

"Master Fatty, how about we make it smaller? It’s okay if the power is lower!"

The blacksmiths kept on trying to persuade Fatty. The consecutive failures had dealt a huge blow to everyone’s morale.

"All of you, shut up!" Fatty's eyes were inflamed.

Whenever Fatty flew into a rage, a cold shiver would go down everyone's spine. All of them lowered their heads in fear.

Currently, Fatty missed Blind He terribly. Even though Blind He always looked cold and unfriendly, his skills were superb.

Zu Yan walked over and squatted down to examine the scrapped heavy cannon. Swiftly, he discovered that the problem laid in the beehive-shaped inner chamber. There were many small tears in the inner chamber.

This was the main reason why the blacksmiths could not forge an actual Beehive Heavy Cannon.

Zu Yan also racked his brain. His injury had yet to recover completely, and he knew the current situation was critical. There wasn't much time left for them. If they could not produce enough Beehive Heavy Cannons, their strength would be greatly reduced.

However, Zu Yan wasn't a weaponsmith, and he knew nothing about forging weapons. He was not able to gain any further insights even after he stared at the cannon for a long time.

After he left the smithy, he still could hear Fatty's thunderous roars. This was the first time Zu Yan had seen Fatty care so much about something. In his eyes, Fatty was someone who never set his

heart on doing anything.

His tyrannical behavior made him look like an entirely different person now.

Fatty had saved Zu Yan's life before. As such, he was also racking his brain to think of a solution for Fatty.

He remembered that Fatty had said there wouldn't be any problems with forging the Beehive Heavy Cannons as long as they had an outstanding blacksmith. Unfortunately, their blacksmiths were conscripted and weren't really high-level. Furthermore, the level of a blacksmith couldn't be increased in a short period of time.

Should he go and find a formidable blacksmith?

But where could he find one? Their camp wasn't near any cities or villages, so how could there be blacksmiths available?

Suddenly, Zu Yan's eyes lit up. He knew where he could find blacksmiths, but he soon felt apprehensive. After all, the pagoda cannon forging process was confidential. After thinking it over a second time, he changed his mind. If they were to lose this battle, they would have nothing left. Thus, there was no point for them to keep anything confidential.

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The current situation was exactly what Ke Ning expected. He had not remained idle. These past few days, he had been encouraging his troops and had given pensions to those soldiers who had lost the will to fight, letting them return home.

After carrying out this reorganization, he was left with over 100 men in his combat division. His camp was rather empty, but the morale of his men had completely changed. Those soldiers who stayed were hungry for vengeance.

There was no news from the Pagoda Cannon Alliance. Ke Ning remained patient and did not seek out Shi Xueman. He was waiting for a chance.

Ke Ning had been observing the Spear of Heavy Cloud from the side. When he saw an elementalist from the Spear of Heavy Cloud walking in his direction, he became energized.

Taking the initiative, he asked this elementalist, "Has the Pagoda Cannon Alliance begun the recruiting process?"

The other party was stunned. Then, he shook his head and answered, "No."

Ke Ning felt slightly disappointed, but he maintained his patience. Upon seeing that the other party had an anxious look on his face, Ke Ning asked, "Can I be of any help to you?"

"Do you have any blacksmiths? We need outstanding

blacksmiths," the other party replied.

Ke Ning was surprised. The other party was actually looking for blacksmiths. He couldn’t help but ask, "May I know what the problem is?"

The other party did not want to answer his question.

Ke Ning’s mind jolted. They needed blacksmiths at this moment, but did not want to answer his question, could it be...

He forced himself to stay calm and said, "Give me a moment."

He turned around and yelled for Li Houtang.

The person examined Li Houtang and said politely, "We need outstanding blacksmiths. May I know your honourable name?"

"My name is Li Houtang. I’m a master weaponsmith," Li Houtang replied with pride.

He was extremely proud of his qualifications.

The shock that the person initially felt rapidly turned into ecstasy.

Chapter 573: Fish Bone

The situation was worsening much faster than Shi Xueman and the rest expected.

Shi Xueman, Silver Soldier, and Karakorum Polaris convened an emergency meeting. Important generals from the three combat divisions gathered and discussed how they were planning to deal with the current situation. Everyone had grave looks on their faces.

"I have just received news that the Poplar Division and the Green Heaven Division suffered heavy losses and that the Northfield Division was completely destroyed. Up until now, there have been more than 20 combat divisions that are out of action and more than six combat divisions that have been annihilated. According to the survivors, the enemy forces seemed to purposely allow our allies to withdraw when they could have annihilated them," Silver Soldier said solemnly.

"Purposely allowed them to withdraw?" Sang Zhijun was shocked.

"They are trying to use the defeated soldiers to overwhelm and swamp our defensive line." Shi Xueman looked worried after thinking about it.

Silver Soldier let off a bitter laugh behind his mask and said, "That’s correct. Right now, the combat divisions at the front line are scared out of their wits and are retreating with all their might.

Looking from their positions, the three enemy forces are like a huge cloth bag with our location as the only opening. Every day, numerous combat divisions are retreating through our location."

"The number of combat divisions around our camp has already reduced greatly. Those opportunists have already run away," Jiang Wei said.

"It’s good that they ran away. They were just a ticking time bomb." Silver Soldier nodded his head.

The rest nodded their heads as well. Silver Soldier was right. Those combat divisions were nothing but trouble. Not only were they weak, they were insubordinate as well. Just two days ago, Shi Xueman had to personally teach a lesson to a few troublesome combat divisions before they retreated obediently. By not impeding Shi Xueman and her counterparts, these combat divisions were already helping them.

There was a huge number of such combat divisions. There were different types of people from various cities, and they were unruly. Shi Xueman and her counterparts couldn’t kill them. It was better that they retreated now.

Even though everyone knew the strategy of the blood elementalists, they could not come up with a solution for the time being.

"Can we open up a passage for these combat divisions to retreat through?" Karakorum Polaris asked.

Everyone shook their heads. To establish a defensive line, they purposely chose narrow terrain that was easy to guard and hard to attack. On the two flanks of this locations, there was a canyon of unfathomable depth. Violent metal winds blew within this canyons all year round. This location was the famous Windy Pearl Bridges. The canyon was very long, and the surging metal winds formed a barrier that was very difficult to pass. Above the canyon, there were more than 10 naturally-formed stone arches that were not affected by the metal winds.

This location was called Windy Pearl Bridges because the natural stone bridges were covered with long and narrow cracks, resembling pearl necklaces.

The width of each stone bridge was different. The narrowest was only a few hundred meters wide while the widest one was a few kilometers wide.

To reduce the area they had to defend, Silver Soldier purposely used a God-subduing Peak to destroy the other windy bridges and left only the most suitable bridge for them to defend.

Their defensive plan was built around this Windy Pearl Bridge.

The canyon was approximately 500 kilometers long. If the enemy didn’t attack through the remaining bridge, they would have to make one very large detour through arduous terrain in order to advance. If it was a typical situation, Shi Xueman and the rest would be worried that the blood elementalists would take the the

detour and attack them from their rear. However, the blood elementalists were eager to seek revenge. Therefore, Shi Xueman and the rest felt that the blood elementalists would try to attack through the Windy Pearl Bridge by force.

Thus, they felt this place was most suitable for defending.

As they had expected, the enemy forces chose to forcefully attack and advance toward the Windy Pearl Bridge. However, they had not expected the blood elementalists to use the weaker elementalist divisions as a tactic to attack them.

"It’s highly likely that the enemy forces will stick close to the retreating forces and use them as cover to get close to us. This way, our offense will be restricted," Shi Xueman muttered.

"We can only strengthen our defensive line for the time being." Silver Soldier could not think of a better solution. When he saw the discouraged looks on everyone’s faces and felt that the atmosphere had become tense, he changed the topic and asked, "Ai Hui should be arriving soon, right?"

Even though Shi Xueman tried her best to restrain her emotions, she still displayed the excitement of a young girl while replying to Silver Soldier, "Yes, he should be arriving soon."

"Ai Hui will definitely have a solution!" Sang Zhijun said.

When Silver Soldier swept his gaze across everyone, he

surprisingly discovered that all of their faces had relaxed.

It was as if they had a type of... absolute confidence in Ai Hui.

He suddenly looked forward to Ai Hui’s arrival.

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"Just a while longer before we reach the front line."

Qiao Meiqi was very excited. He had placed all his material goods and family members on the Fish Bone. After discarding all his worries, he looked as if he had been reborn and appeared much younger.

"Fish Bone" was the name given by Ai Hui to the floating landmass comprised of Blackfish Mouth Volcano and the Central Pine Valley. The shape of Blackfish Mouth Volcano looked like a leaping black fish with the top-half of its body out of the water. In order to make it fly, Ai Hui had to shave off the outer layer of the volcano, making it skinnier than before. Therefore, Ai Hui renamed it Fish Bone.

As usual, everyone disdained this name. Let’s look at the name "God-subduing Peak." So domineering! The size of Blackfish Mouth Volcano was much bigger and mightier than any God-subduing Peak, yet its name was so ordinary. Ai Hui should have given it a better name!

However, Ai Hui had not done so.

After they set off, they had not stopped to take a single break. They did not try to cover their tracks either. They swaggered in the direction of the Spear of Heavy Cloud’s camp.

The journey was so smooth that it seemed as if they weren’t in times of chaos.

"How come no one asks about us?"

"That’s true, our big black fish is so impressive! How can there be no reactions toward it? No one even bothers to record an image of it."

"It’s too weird."

When Huo Da heard the members’ mutters, he was slightly amused by them. The members of the Sword of Lightning were basically youngsters who were filled with passion and ambition. Even Huo Da felt very happy being around them.

Quickly, Huo Da regained his concentration and humbly asked for guidance from Shi Zhiguang, who was training by himself on one side. "Zhiguang, I still don’t quite understand this embroidery technique."

Shi Zhiguang stopped what he was doing and replied, "Ahh, reversal embroidery technique. This is quite difficult. The key is to

create a reversal and move side by side along with it..."

He provided a voluminous answer and did not hide anything from Huo Da. Meanwhile, Huo Da listened to Shi Zhiguang attentively and nodded his head every now and then.

Initially, when Huo Da came to ask Shi Zhiguang for guidance, the latter was slightly nervous. After all, Huo Da was a Master. When a Master came and asked him for guidance, he felt insecure. However, as they became more familiar with each other, Shi Zhiguang gradually loosened up. Subsequently, Shi Zhiguang fell in love with providing explanations to Huo Da. This was because he realized that when he was explaining to Huo Da, some of his thought processes became clearer.

It was unknown whether or not the skills of operating the Pinwheel Sword were related to embroidery. Shi Zhiguang was very talented in embroidery and progressed at lightning speed.

Sometimes, even Ai Hui was surprised. In the future, if Shi Zhiguang no longer wanted to be a sword operator, he could open an embroidery workshop with his embroidery skills.

In the past, everyone teased Shi Zhiguang about embroidery and called him Embroidery Lady Shi. However, when they saw that Huo Da was also addicted to embroidery, they did not dare to mock Shi Zhiguang anymore. Huo Da was a Master and highly revered. Hence, Shi Zhiguang's image improved significantly in everyone's eyes.

Shi Zhiguang did not feel pleased with himself because of this.

Master Huo might seek guidance from him, but it was because of this that he understood the might of a Master. Even though Huo Da had just started learning both embroidery and how to operate the Pinwheel Sword, he did not look like a newbie at all. Shi Zhiguang merely mentioned some complicated moves and Huo Da was able to execute them on the spot.

During the previous battle, they had killed a few Masters. All of them felt unconcerned about Masters.

What was so great about a Master? Those Masters were still killed by a single sword move!

Initially, Shi Zhiguang thought like the others. However, after getting to know Huo Da, he felt just how ridiculous the rest of the division members were. They might not have heard of Huo Da's name, but he was still a Master after all. A Master would always be a terrifying entity.

A Master's understanding and control of elemental energy was on a completely different level from theirs.

Huo Da had a different perspective from them. In this place, he had experienced many brand-new things. The thing that shocked him the most was the Sword of Lightning's battle tactics, which completely defied the traditional elemental energy channelling technique.

He wished he to be able to soon operate the Pinwheel Sword. It was a pity that there was only one Pinwheel Sword. They would arrive at the battlefield shortly, and Shi Zhiguang had been training with everyone else. Huo Da had not found a sparring partner yet.

Meanwhile, Ai Hui sat on a boulder and looked at the glowing Duanmu Huanghun in the bamboo forest nearby.

Duanmu Huanghun had yet to wake up, and Ai Hui was feeling slightly worried for him. However, after taking a closer look and realizing that Duanmu Huanghun’s breathing and elemental energy undulations were very stable, he felt significantly relieved.

Lou Lan ran over and yelled cheerfully, "Ai Hui, we are entering the front line zone and are going to see Xueman soon!"

"Wow, that was fast," Ai Hui said as he stood up. "Lou Lan, let’s go up to the mountain."

Ai Hui and Lou Lan went up to the mountain peak and gazed into the distance.

Evening soon descended. The color of the setting sun resembled blood, causing the vast earth to be bathed in a bright red luster. The trees looked as if they had been dyed with the color of blood. The wind became stronger and colder, seemingly bringing forth the sound of war from the distant horizon.

The vast earth was filled with desolation. White bones could be seen scattered throughout the grass and thickets.

The joy of seeing Iron Lady instantly and unknowingly disappeared.

When he returned to his senses, he realized that all the division members had gathered behind him.

He turned around, looked at his soldiers, and yelled, "Assemble!"

Swoosh.

Everyone looked as if they had woken up from a dream and quickly stood neat and orderly in front of Ai Hui.

Ai Hui glanced at Huo Da, who stood to one side. Like the other members of the Sword of Lightning, he stood upright and at attention.Ai Hui was surprised. He had not expected the position of sword operator to be such a strong enticement for Huo Da.

Ai Hui withdrew his emotions and said, "From today onward, we will be entering the front line zone. I declare that the Sword of Lightning is entering standby mode now."

The glow of the sunset shone on the youthful faces of the division members. Their young and tender faces exuded hope and ambition, completely devoid of fear. The Sword of Lightning’s members had been waiting for this day to come. They were like a

bunch of hungry tigers that were finally allowed to enter the battlefield.

Unfortunately, Ai Hui knew that the Sword of Lightning was more likely to become prey than predator when it set foot upon the battlefield.

This was war.

Ai Hui felt disheartened instead of hopeful or ambitious. If it weren't for the circumstances, he definitely would not have wanted to go to the front line. At least not so soon. Now that he brought his men to the front line, how many of them would actually survive? He did not know the answer to this question. He did not even know whether or not he, himself, would survive.

Simultaneously, he also did not feel any fear.

When he thought of the fact that he would shortly be battling the blood elementalists, he felt an eagerness as well. He had never forgotten the blood that Central Pine City had bled. He had never forgotten the vengeance he needed to seek for his master and mistress.

The depression and the eagerness were two completely different emotions. They intertwined in his heart, causing him to fall silent.

The members looked at Ai Hui, seldom looking at him like this.

After thinking about it, Ai Hui said, "We are going to reach the battlefield soon. The enemy forces are very strong, much stronger than us. Everyone will face death at any time. I can’t promise that I will lead all of you out of the battlefield alive, but I can promise that I will definitely not forsake you and run away by myself."

The members quieted down. The hope and ambition displayed on their faces had disappeared and were replaced by solemnity.

Ai Hui took in a deep breath of air and said with a serious tone, "Listen to my commands! Everyone, board the Pinwheel Sword now! Sword of Lightning, prepare to set off for a patrol mission!"

"Yes!" everyone replied in unison.

The neat and orderly members of the Sword of Lightning scattered in an instant as they boarded the Pinwheel Sword from all directions.

The five-colored pinwheel at the back of the Pinwheel Sword began to spin.

Chapter 574: The Yellow Sand Division

Along the way, the Fish Bone did not cause too much of a commotion. People thought that it was a God-subduing Peak. In the past, the appearance of a God-subduing Peak would evoke alarmed cries from onlookers. Nowadays, however, everyone was used to seeing this.

In the past, the God-subduing Peak was seen as the mightiest war machine. From its name, one could tell how much hope the Elders Guild had placed in it.

At the beginning, the God-subduing Peaks were indeed quite useful. The enormous role that they played was what allowed the Wall of North Sea to withstand the blood elementalists for such a long time. Currently, however, those who had some rationality clearly understood that one or two God-subduing Peaks would not overturn the present situation.

Ai Hui sent the Pinwheel Sword out on patrol to allow everyone to have a feel for wartime tension. The Sword of Lightning consisted of a bunch of brand-new rookies and paled in comparison to the current Spear of Heavy Cloud. The core members of the Spear of Heavy Cloud had had a lot of real combat experience.

The only battle that the Sword of Lightning had experienced was merely dealing with sneak attacks from a distant mountain peak.

Ai Hui was very worried about placing a bunch of rookies on the

cruel battlefield. As such, he decided to give them a warm-up first and let them experience the atmosphere of the battlefield. Ai Hui did not know whether or not this method would work, but he had no other ideas currently.

Luckily, the Pinwheel Sword flew very fast, so it was very easy for it to escape.

The patrol mission continued as usual. However, this time around, Gu Xuan brought back an unconscious captive.

"Boss, we discovered that many combat divisions are retreating from the front line. Something huge seems to have happened. This fellow was bad-mouthing Big Sister, so we captured him," Gu Xuan reported to Ai Hui.

"Good job! Be brave and don’t restrain yourself. Interrogate him first," Ai Hui praised Gu Xuan.

He let Gu Xuan be the vice division leader the Sword of Lightning because he knew Gu Xuan was a veteran. Other than having experience, a veteran was bold and cunning. Everyone else was pure and naive like Shi Zhiguang.

Gu Xuan carried the captive into a room and slapped him repeatedly until he woke up. Initially, Gu Xuan just wanted to ask him about the current situation, but it just so happened that this fellow was bad-mouthing Shi Xueman. Without hesitation, Gu Xuan knocked him out and brought him back.

When the captive woke up, he was at a loss. After seeing that he was surrounded by unfriendly gazes, he returned to his senses and stuttered, "Who... who are all of you? May I know how have I offended you..."

"Which combat division are you from?" Gu Xuan interrupted with a scowl on his face.

"The Yellow Sand Division! My division leader is Sir Hei Yan. You must have heard of him..." the captive replied hurriedly.

The captive feared that the other party might kill him. Since the other party asked him about his background, his chances of surviving were higher.

A look of realization dawned upon Gu Xuan’s face. His ice-cold face defrosted as he became extremely amiable. "Oh, so you are the subordinate of Sir Hei Yan of the Yellow Sand Division. I met Sir Hei Yan a few years ago. Even now, I still have a deep impression of him. Sorry for this misunderstanding!"

The captive could not help but smile. In his heart, he heaved a sigh of relief.

So they are familiar with Sir Hei Yan... It seemed like it was a misunderstanding after all...

Even though he was knocked out for no reason, he did not dare to pursue the matter. All he wanted was to safely return to his

combat division.

The captive beamed and said, "The moment I saw you, I knew you were an extraordinary and friendly individual. So you're a friend of Sir Hei Yan. I will not hesitate to swim through water and tread on fire just for you!"

The captive did not know the other party's intentions. However, since he was in other people's territory, he did not dare to try anything funny.

Gu Xuan smiled and replied, "May I know what the current situation is at the front line? I heard that the Spear of Heavy Cloud is very domineering. Can Brother tell me more about this?"

Previously, the captive found this person in front of him to be slightly familiar. He seemed to have seen him somewhere before, but couldn't recall where. When the captive learned that Gu Xuan was a friend of his division leader, he began to trust him more.

Upon hearing Gu Xuan's words, the captive became agitated and said, "That's right! She's arrogant, really arrogant! Pagoda Cannon Alliance my foot! I think she just wants a group of obedient dogs! I couldn't take it anymore and denounced her in front of everyone. Can you guess what happened next? She attacked me! Everyone left on the spot. If we were to enter the Pagoda Cannon Alliance, wouldn't we be ordered around by her every day? Sir, you better not get tricked by her. All of us have seen through the Pagoda Cannon Alliance's true colors."

The smile on Gu Xuan’s face became wider. He nodded his head and asked again, "I have seen many combat divisions retreating. What’s going on at the front line?"

"What’s going? We have suffered countless defeats! The blood elementalist combat divisions are too powerful for any of us. They boasted so much about the Pagoda Cannons, but they are bloody useless in reality. Five combat divisions were defeated in one day! How are we going to continue fighting? Aren’t we seeking death if we fight? Since the Spear of Heavy Cloud has God-subduing Peaks, who can do a better job defending the front line than them? From the look of it, I don’t think they can defend for long..."

The captive was talking nonstop with excitement. He did not know the elementalists behind him had murderous looks on their faces.

Gu Xuan nodded his head and replied, "Brother, your words hit the nail on the head!"

Then, he patted the captive’s shoulder and continued, "Brother, please wait here for a while more."

The captive looked on blankly as Gu Xuan walked out of the room. When he saw everyone else looking at him fiendishly, he became slightly nervous and did not dare to move at all. Following which, he bowed in a servile manner to everyone, but none of them bothered with him.

Gu Xuan returned to Ai Hui and told him everything that the

captive said.

Ai Hui touched his bandage-covered chin and muttered, "It seems like the situation is running amok."

Gu Xuan did not dare to say anything for the fear of disrupting Ai Hui’s thought process. Even though he had travelled extensively and had a lot of worldly experience, he knew nothing about fighting a war.

After thinking for a short moment, Ai Hui suddenly asked, "He said a lot of combat divisions are retreating?"

"Yes, there are a lot," Gu Xuan replied hastily.

A cold glint flashed across the red crystal chips that covered his eyes. He smiled and said, "Let’s pay a visit to the Yellow Sand Division."

.....

At the Yellow Sand Division.

Hei Yan was listening to a report from his subordinate. When he was told that a unit leader had gone missing, he did not care all. That unit leader might have run away or encountered a dire beast. Even if he encountered bandits, that was normal as well. Even though Hei Yan particularly admired this unit leader, who was very keen-eyed and often took the initiative to share his worries,

he had no time to care about him at this critical moment.

Due to the "righteous speech" he gave at the camp of the Spear of Heavy Cloud Division, he now had a slight reputation.

The division leaders of a few small combat divisions had already paid him a visit.

Hei Yan was actively promoting his plan. "The Spear of Heavy Cloud definitely can’t hold back the blood elementalists. The combat divisions of the Blood of God are too powerful. They are attempting the impossible. Previously, the blood elementalists were not familiar with them and that was why they managed to secure a victory. This time around, the Blood of God has fielded all of their forces, and they are coming forth with invincible might. There is only one Spear of Heavy Cloud, so how would it be possible for them to overturn the situation?"

A worried look appeared on other division leaders’ faces. Hei Yan’s words had hit the nail on the head.

"That’s why we need to make preparations sooner rather than later!" Hei Yan said profoundly.

"Brother Hei Yan is shrewd and insightful. Speak your mind," one of the division leaders said.

Upon seeing that it was the right moment, Hei Yan replied with a glib tongue, "Since Beyond Avalon is bound to be defeated, why

must we hang ourselves on a single tree and wait for our deaths? A shift of environment makes a tree dead, but a person prosperous..."

A division leader's face flushed with anger as he roared, "Brother Hei Yan, don't tell me you want to surrender to the enemy forces? I rather die than to become a blood elementalist!"

Hei Yan was shocked. He replied angrily, "Sir, what kind of person do you think I am! I would be the first one to object to surrendering to the blood elementalists!"

Upon hearing these words, the facial expressions of the others relaxed.

"We definitely can't surrender to the blood elementalists. Elementalists and blood elementalists can't exist together!" Hei Yan declared with righteousness. Then, he changed his tone and continued, "However, has everyone thought about the other side?"

All of them looked at each other. The person who previously chided Hei Yan hesitantly asked, "Is Brother Hei Yan talking about the Jadeite Forest?"

Hei Yan clapped his hands and exclaimed, "That's right! Everyone, Grandmaster Dai was still born in the Avalon of Five Elements at the end of the day. He parted ways with the Elders Guild merely because of ideological differences. From the look of it, Grandmaster Dai was indeed wise. He knew the Elders Guild was decadent and incompetent. He did not want to follow them and established independence for the Jadeite Forest. Grandmaster

Dai is the only Grandmaster left among the elementalists. He is the last hope for our war against the blood elementalists! The Ye Family is incompetent. Right now, Beyond Avalon is on the verge of collapse, but does that mean we have to die with it? Why can't we seek another way out?"

Everyone hated the idea of surrendering to the blood elementalists. Many of them had deep grudges against blood elementalists. However, none of them rejected the idea of surrendering to Grandmaster Dai, unlike before.

Then, someone said hesitantly, "Of course, everyone knows about Grandmaster Dai's greatness. However, he is someone beyond our reach. If we want to surrender to the Jadeite Forest, we must find the right connection."

Hei Yan did not say anything, but merely smiled confidently.

"Brother Hei Yan has the right connection?" Everyone's eyes lit up.

Hei Yan remained silent and kept on smiling.

Immediately, everyone became excited.

Hei Yan saw everyone's reaction and felt pleased with himself. He shook his head and said, "I can't answer your question. I can't answer your question."

Everyone broke into a commotion.

"Brother Hei Yan, don’t be so selfish!"

"Don’t tell me Brother Yan wants to see us die?"

Everyone talked at the same time.

When Hei Yan saw that it was the right opportunity, he began to talk, "It’s not that I don’t want to help all of you. I have to respect all of your opinions as well. Even though I have the right connection, and there won’t be any problem with me going over, I am not willing to stay there as a mere decorative item. After all, two heads are better than one What can I achieve by going there alone? As a matter of fact, I called everyone over to devise an idea together. There is success and safety in numbers. With more people going over together, we have a larger say as well."

Some people nodded their heads while some looked hesitant.

Upon seeing this, Hei Yan continued, "Everyone has to seize the moment and identify where the wind is blowing. We are not the only ones who want to join the Jadeite Forest. If someone else does it first, our value will drop significantly. If you feel that the Spear of Heavy Cloud can stop the blood elementalists, then I have nothing to say."

The few hesitant individuals were convinced by Hei Yan as they looked each other in the eye.

"All right, I will listen to Brother Hei Yan!"

"Since everyone is here, Brother Hei Yan should tell us what's the plan now."

"That's right!"

When Hei Yan heard everyone's words, he knew the matter was half accomplished. He coughed softly and said, "The Pagoda Cannon Alliance is a joke. However, the concept of an alliance is still rather useful. We can create a combat division alliance. Of course, I am too ignorant and uneducated for the position of alliance leader. I don't deserve it..."

He was purposely retreating for the sake of advancing. Therefore, he wasn't worried at all.

At this moment, a soldier suddenly barged into the tent with a look of panic on his face. "Sir... Sir... God... God-subduing Peak..."

Chapter 575: Ai Hui’s Belief

When Hei Yan and his counterparts walked out of the meeting tent, they were stunned momentarily and their facial expressions changed drastically.

The enormous shadow was cast down from the sky and covered their entire camp. A terrifying mountain was hovering about their heads, exuding a powerful aura of pressure that caused their hairs to stand on end. Some people couldn’t even breath. All of them were worried that it might drop down.

It was really a 'God-subduing Peak'!

The radiance released by the God-subduing Peak's glowing surface was being emitted endlessly, preventing the onlookers from clearly seeing what was inside it.

Hei Yan and his counterparts looked at each other in disbelief. Everyone was feeling uncertain.

Some people silently questioned whether or not this was a trap set up by Hei Yan. Not too long ago, they were still talking about seeking refuge with Grandmaster Dai. Minutes later, the God-subduing Peak suddenly appeared. It couldn’t be a coincidence!

An elementalist descended from the God-subduing Peak and said, "Is Division Leader Hei Yan here?"

Hei Yan’s eyelids twitched violently. He summoned his courage and stepped forward and replied, "I’m Hei Yan. May I know who oversees this God-subduing Peak?"

"Who do you think you are to ask about Sir’s identity?" The elementalist chided Hei Yan.

The rest shivered in fear. Who was the overseer of this God-subduing Peak? At this point of time, Surveillance Division was the only powerful combat division. Could it be Sir Nian? Or was it Madam Ye?

Everyone was puzzled. Hei Yan knew that things weren’t going the right way. Clearly, the other party had come with ill intentions. However, there was nothing much he could do now. He could only ask, "How can I be of help to Sir?"

"Sir has given an order. All retreating combat divisions have to leave behind their resources and blacksmiths," the elementalist said sternly with a cold look on his face.

Hey Yan’s face flushed with anger as he replied furiously, "Even Skyheart City has no right to detain our resources and blacksmiths! I want to see who it is that dares to commit such a heinous crime! Division Leaders, who is with me?"

No one said anything. None of them were willing to speak out before they could clarify what was going on.

The elementalist remained emotionless as he said indifferently, "So you are disobeying the order now?"

Deep down, Hei Yan was crying. He had expected at least one person to support him. He clenched his teeth and replied, "This order is really too much for me to accept. Yellowsand Division is willing to offer a portion of our resources but..."

"So you're really disobeying the order," the elementalist said plainly. Suddenly, his tone changed as he roared with a stern voice, "Whoever defies Sir's order will be killed without mercy!"

When he finished his sentence, a snow-white sword gleam streak shot down from the God-subduing Peak and flew towards Hei Yan.

"How dare you..." Hei Yan was furious.

He felt as if he was being locked onto by a terrifying dire beast. All his hairs were standing on end. An extremely strong sense of danger engulfed his entire body.

In the life-or-death situation, he channeled his elemental energy frantically. A deep glow was emitted from his body. His skin became black in color and turned as hard as a rock, giving off a gentle, crystallic luster at the same time.

It was his Path of Master, [Lithification]!

[Lithification] allowed its user to use elemental energy to change

the nature of his flesh into various rock types. In that moment, Hei Yan had changed the nature of his flesh to one of the hardest rock types in the world, Black Crystal Metallic Rock. It was very difficult to create a scratch on the Black Crystal Metallic Rock even with weapons, as it was extremely hard and sturdy. Hei Yan had used this move to escape death countless times before.

As long as he did not die, he had no fear even if he was injured.

The sword gleam was as fast as a lightning bolt. Within seconds, it was in front of Hei Yan.

Pfff.

Hei Yan's body turned stiff while his facial expression froze.

A bowl-sized hole appeared on his chest through to his back. The sword gleam continued on its path and hit the ground. Then, it cleanly pierced through the ground as if it were made of tofu, creating a pit that was of an unfathomable depth.

A dead silence descended upon everyone.

All the division leaders were dumbstruck.

They already knew the other party might use some extreme methods to punish someone as an example to others. However, the scene that had just unfolded still shocked them.

The decisiveness and ruthlessness of the other party had utterly stunned them. The streak of sword gleam was horrifying.

As a division leader, Hei Yan definitely wasn't a weak individual. His [Lithification] was famous for its ultimate defense and ability to ensure survival. Because of his Path of Master, Hei Yan had survived countless bitter battles.

Thump! Hei Yan, whose eyes were wide open with rage, fell to the ground on his back like a wooden stake.

He was dead!

The faces of the division leaders turned deathly pale as their minds buzzed. They were dumbstruck.

The other party had killed Hei Yan...The other party actually killed Hei Yan!

The attack was direct and efficient...And they killed him with one strike...

Was the other party insane?

Wasn't the overseer of the God-subduing Peak scared of infuriating all of them into attacking him from all directions? Doesn't he know that such bandit-like behavior will cause his

reputation to hit rock bottom? Doesn't he...

There was no point for them to ask any more questions now. The ice-cold corpse of Hei Yan on the ground had answered all of their questions.

At this moment, two elementalists flew down from the God-subduing Peak while holding a man in their arms. The man's limbs were trembling and his face was pale-white. When he saw Hei Yan's corpse on the ground, he shivered in fear.

He had witnessed the entire process of how his division leader was killed from inside the God-subduing Peak.

Even now, he still could not believe that they had really killed Division Leader Hei Yan. His mind was completely blank. A strong sense of fear dominated his mind and body. He did not even know how he had arrived on the ground.

"Is that clear?"

The voice seemed to come from a distant place. He stared at the other party with his mouth agape.

The moment the Sword of Lightning's swordsman saw the captive's facial expression, he knew he had forgotten what he said just now. The swordsman snorted and repeated impatiently, "Hand over all of your resources and blacksmiths, is that clear? If you miss anything, you know what the outcome will be!"

He spoke the last sentence with ruthlessness.

The captive shivered and replied incoherently, "Yes, yes, yes. I understand, I understand, I understand!"

"What are you waiting for then?"

The captive scrambled away to carry out his task. He knew his combat division like the back of his hand. He knew clearly what resources they had and who the blacksmiths were. At this point of time, no one from Yellowsand Division dared to step out and say anything.

After witnessing their combat division's most powerful individual, Hei Yan, having been killed by a single strike, who still dared to argue with the other party?

The elementalist who came down first was Gu Xuan. He turned around and looked at the frightened division leaders. Just now, when he'd heard Hei Yan say "Division Leaders", he became excited. An opportunity! Initially, they planned to capture a fat sheep. He didn't expect to capture a flock of fat sheep in the end!

Being an experienced individual who had travelled extensively, Gu Xuan was very good at capitalizing on opportunities. He said, "Whoever hands over the greatest amount of resources and the most number of blacksmiths will be allowed to go back first."

All the division leaders looked at each other. Then, they turned around and gave instructions to their subordinates.

On the Fish Bone, Qiao Meiqi was dumbstruck. He was a businessman, since when had he ever seen such a blatant robbery?

"Is... Is this alright?" Qiao Meiqi looked worried and hesitant.

"What's not alright about it?" Ai Hui replied plainly.

Qiao Meiqi swallowed his saliva with difficulty and replied, "Aren't you scared of infuriating the masses?"

Ai Hui chuckled and replied, "Those who have retreated from the front line have completely lost their fighting spirit and willpower. They are just a mob of cowards. We only asked for their resources and blacksmiths, not their lives. They will not resist us."

"But..."

"Is Beyond Avalon only our home? No, it is everyone's home. Since it is everyone's home, everyone has to put in their effort and resources to defend it. These resources are going to be waste in their hands anyway. They should be used on the combat divisions at the front line. We are making the best use of everything," Ai Hui said lazily.

When Qiao Meiqi saw carts of resources being transported to the Fish Bone, he felt delighted and embarrassed at the same time.

"Doing this will still hurt our reputation."

"Reputation?" Ai Hui sneered, "Let's talk about reputation after we survive this ordeal. If we can't even survive the war, what's the point of having a good reputation? If we succeed in defending Beyond Avalon, we will be known as great heroes and no one will care about what we are doing now. If we fail in defending Beyond Avalon, all of us will be dead. Do you still care about reputation when you're dead?"

Qiao Meiqi was stunned. He suddenly came to a realization, looking as if he was enlightened.

An excited look immediately appeared on his face. He rubbed his palms and said eagerly, "I will go and help them out now."

Ai Hui stood on the peak of Blackfish Mouth Volcano and looked at the camp beneath him. The smile behind the bandages that covered his face disappeared. The information obtained from the captive allowed him to conclude that the situation had worsened. He did not know much about war strategies, but he could tell whether a situation was good or bad and he knew what he should do.

In terms of war-related things, he paled in comparison to Iron Lady.

However, he also knew Iron Lady's weaknesses. Iron Lady was too righteous, too compliant and too honest. In the current time of chaos, someone like Iron Lady was easily taken advantage of.

Unlike her, Ai Hui had experienced the evilness and cruelty of this world. He knew how greedy, cunning and unscrupulous people in this world could be.

All along, he had never cared about his reputation.

Just like how the name "master-killer" did not distress him, or make him feel regretful for his decision back in the day. He did not care about what other people thought of him. All he cared about was his master and mistress.

The feeling of sorrow and yearning for his master and mistress had never left him.

He was silently enduring the sorrow, and silently yearning for them.

Along the way, he had clearly determined what he wanted to achieve in this war. He wanted to lead everyone out of it alive.

Very soon, the resources on Fish Bone were piled up like a mountain. A team of blacksmiths stood on the mountain with fear written all over their faces. They did not know what was awaiting them.

On the contrary, the members of Sword of Lightning were jubilant.

Countless mini Lou Lans were climbing up and down the pile of resources, happily and busily checking the resources.

The resources taken from other combat divisions had been handed over as well. Upon seeing that the amount of resources and number of blacksmiths they'd received was rather plentiful, Gu Xuan did not make things difficult for the division leaders and let them off.

Upon returning to Fish Bone, Qiao Meiqi was ecstatic. When he saw Ai Hui, he yelled at the top of his voice, "We are rich! We are rich! This time around, we are really rich!"

The other members roared with laughter.

Ai Hui chuckled and said with a lazy tone, "This is only the beginning. We will do the same to every combat division that we encounter along the way."

Qiao Meiqi was stunned by Ai Hui's words. He stuttered, "Along... Along the way... We will do... do the same?"

"That's right. Why? You can't bear to do so?" Ai Hui cast a glance at him.

Qiao Meiqi felt a burst of blood gush into his head. He became so emotional that he started to talk incoherently, "We are rich! We are rich! We are really rich!"

He finally calmed himself down after a while. Then, he laughed bitterly, "I feel like the business I have done over the years was all a waste. What kind of business is more profitable than doing this?"

Ai Hui restrained his urge to roll his eyes. Annoyed, Ai Hui replied, "You're considered lucky if you manage to do this kind of thing even once. But you still want to do it everyday? If we do it once in awhile, we'll be thought of as taking a drastic approach in response to a critical situation. If we do it everyday, we are no different from bandits. I have only heard of businessmen becoming rich, I have never heard of bandits becoming rich."

Qiao Meiqi returned to his senses and nodded his head. He looked slightly dejected as he said, "It's such a pity."

Everyone burst into a laughter.

Gu Xuan looked at those combat divisions that were retreating in panic and said, "After what has happened this time around, no one will dare to stay in this area anymore."

"Isn't that good? Don't tell me you feel relieved letting these people watch your back?" Ai Hui said plainly.

Gu Xuan could not help but look at Ai Hui in astonishment.

Had Division Leader done this on purpose?

Chapter 576: Lightning Razor

Majestic, has swagger, pragmatic.

At the start, Ai Hui passed them off as a group from Skyheart City, but his sword ray was quickly seen through by everyone. After all other than Sky Edge Division, where Karakorum Polaris was, only Ai Hui's Sword of Lightning could execute such a powerful sword ray.

So Ai Hui might as well do it openly.

While Fishbone didn't fly very fast, it could cover an extremely wide scope and few combat divisions would be able to escape its radar.

Qiao Meiqi took the front position. He was a businessman and good at dealing with people. When he engaged in extortion and blackmail he could also quickly grasp the secrets among them.

"Safety's the most important. Everyone must be united! See, what's your division plan? To supply man, or power?"

"Don't worry, this isn't embezzlement. Where did it go? Did you swallow it into your stomach?"

"Elders Guild will remember everybody's contributions!"

"That isn’t much, brother. Look, we’ve already worked so hard and you’re giving us so little. Are you trying to chase beggars away? Do you want us to take action?"

...

When finally exiting the battle region, everyone in Yellow Sand Division cried tears of joy upon seeing the closest city after their long and difficult trek. And the citizens who saw these shabby, skinny as bones and haggard looking division members were astonished.

The reporters who came upon hearing the news immediately filled the city up.

Combat divisions arrived one after another and all the soldiers were like beggars, having no money for even a meal.

For a while, Sword of Lightning became notorious for its evilness.

Ai Hui had, too, become the most well-known villain and bandit, an abrupt change in terms of people’s impressions of him. Mirage bean pods containing all kinds of criticisms and condemnation flooded every shop.

"Denouncing blood and tears, lawless lands under heaven – Death of Yellow Sand Division’s leader, Hei Yan!"

"How did the formula for God-subduing Peak fall into the hands of this villain? Skyheart City in collusion with Central Pine Valley?"

"Yet another combat division stopped. Innumerable crimes by the Lightning Razor !"

...

Ai Hui’s conduct had exceeded people’s imaginations and was absurd to them. The name "Lightning Razor" spread like wildfire and left a deep impression on people as they immediately caught onto it. Even Newlight City, which had just formed an alliance with Central Pine Valley, was now involved and people were running to An Chouchou to protest.

The mirage bean pod left An Chouchou dumbstruck. He felt as though his heart had been trampled on by thousands of galloping horses.

"Has this fellow gone mad?" he muttered repeatedly, and the responses he received from people around him carried the same disbelief.

.....

Skyheart City.

"... this is vile and damnable! I’ve never heard of a deed so

preposterous and nasty. Not even in the whole of the Avalon of Five Elements' history! This is a shame to Avalon of Five Elements, a disgrace to us elementalists! Ai Hui is despicable. Through and through a liar, scoundrel, gangster, hoodlum, bandit..."

An impassioned division leader who'd survived shouted himself hoarse in a meeting hall.

When he was done, Madam Ye nodded with an indifferent expression. "Got it."

The division leader was stunned and fell into a long daze. He had come so far to make a complaint against Ai Hui's crime and all he received was a "got it"?

Before he could speak, two guards grabbed onto him on both sides and pushed him out of the hall.

The other officials looked at each other in dismay. They did not know what Madam Ye was thinking. Wasn't she full of hatred toward Ai Hui?

With a gentle laugh Madam Ye said, "Ai Hui's giving it his all. Initially I didn't think much of this battle, but it seems like things are getting interesting. This fellow has his ways and has foresight. He doesn't stick to a pattern. He's stronger than Shi Xueman and Silver Soldier. It really is surprising how that inflexible old man, Wang Shouchuan, could produce such a powerful disciple."

No one else dared to speak.

Madam Ye’s expression turned stern. "In the name of Elders Guild, appoint Ai Hui as the head commander of the front line. He will have the authority to conscript individuals and all divisions must co-operate."

No one could believe their ears.

Someone anxiously advised, "Resentment is surging..."

"Shut it!" Madam Ye berated coldly. She stood up from her seat and swept her gaze across the room. "Short-sighted fools! Our priority now is to guard the defensive line! Don’t talk about cutting off the supplies to these people. If killing all those idiots is what it takes to keep Ai Hui guarding the front line, why not!"

Everyone was stunned and kept quiet out of fear.

She turned to Nian Tingfeng. "Go mediate the situation. Keep the public under control. I don’t wish for anyone to be a drag at this point."

"Yes," replied Nian Tingfeng respectfully.

Madam Ye then asked casually, "How’s the Wind Mail City matter coming along?"

Nian Tingfeng shuddered, clenching his teeth. "Openly disobeyed an order and is to be beheaded on the spot according to military discipline."

"Don’t kill as you please, we’re not Ai Hui. He’s pretty capable, would be a waste to behead him." She said in a light voice, "The front line lacks good players now. Let him go. Heard there are some members from Surveillance asking to be drafted? Loyal and brave. Send them all."

Nian Tingfeng bent his head. "Yes. It is their duty to stay loyal to Elders Guild."

Madam Ye responded amiably, "Sometimes, you can’t expect everyone to understand you. Some will, but some won’t. If you need to cut them off, what’s there to wait for? Look at Ai Hui. He has a small team, little power, an insignificant name, but when he starts working up a storm he does it well. Why? He is not restricted by conventions and regulations. He just wants to win. Does he care about criticism from the masses? Not at all."

Nian Tingfeng replied respectfully, "You’re right, Madam."

Madam Ye sighed. "One must have a steady heart to accomplish things. How else would you get things done? Unable to make demands, but also unable to blindly connive. I’ve seen the hard work you have been putting in these few years and I will not forget."

Nian Tingfeng shed tears of gratitude. "They might not be able to

understand your efforts, but having followed you around everyday, I know how much you've done for Elders Guild! I'll tidy up Surveillance properly when I get back."

.....

Infantry Division.

"This fellow is really reckless, absolutely unrestrained,"said Karakorum Polaris in amazement.

Silver Soldier seemed to be forcing a smile as he shook his head. "I also have no idea what he's been through in these past years for him to become so extreme. I heard that people outside are calling him Lightning Razor, a name that will probably stick for quite some time."

Karakorum Polaris could hear the concern and worry in her senior's tone.

Silver Soldier just shook his head and smiled. "Forget it, we'll talk when this is over."

A sigh followed, then he said, "Spear of Heavy Cloud's formed its own system, there's no need for us to worry about them. These last few days I've been thinking about our cooperative battle tactics and how everyone can train together."

Karakorum Polaris responded simply, "Okay."

Her clear voice carried a tinge of happiness. Being able to train with her senior made her happy.

Spear of Heavy Cloud’s encampment door was shut tight, its security strict.

All the combat division leaders stood outside the entrance.

"Encampment still closed today? Does she not care? Ai Hui’s gone berserk, how disappointing!"

"Care? How could she? Ai Hui’s always been the boss of Central Pine Faction, so even division leader Shi has to listen to him."

"Hush, quieten down. You dare talk bad about him here, are you tired of living? Two days back a fellow was grumbling a little, talking bad about Razor Ai, and got his legs broken by leader Shi."

"Is that true? Why so ruthless?"

"Aye, I also don’t think she can control him. Just give me some discount points and I’ll hand over half!"

"Half? Stop dreaming! ‘Razor’ Ai. Do you know what a razor is? He’s not going to give you even a strand of hair."

Shortly after, the door opened.

Sang Zhijun walked out and said coldly, "Our leader has given orders. Craftmen who hand over seventy percent of supplies on their own accord will be registered and can get one Spear of Heavy Cloud battle flag to ensure a smooth and safe journey back. Those who are dishonest and fraudulent will be punished for concealing military intelligence. Informers will be rewarded with half the earnings!"

A clamor broke out. Concealing intelligence meant instant beheading according to military law. The fact that snitches would be rewarded sent a chill down the spines of those who were interest-driven. The surrounding faces immediately turned grave.

Even more people started yelling.

"Seventy percent! How demanding!"

"Exactly! Fifty! Fifty percent at most!"

"Give us a way out, Leader Shi. We have elderly and young children."

Sang Zhijun remained expressionless. She said coldly, "Those who stay to fight with us will not need to hand anything over and we will return the supplies."

Everyone shut up immediately.

Some time later someone spoke up, albeit weakly, "But seventy percent is simply too harsh."

"Yeah it is."

Sang Zhijun couldn’t be bothered arguing. "Go tell Boss Ai Hui yourselves."

Hearing Ai Hui’s name made their hearts jump.

Someone clenched his teeth, shouting, "I’ll hand it over! But is the flag really useful?"

Sang Zhijun answered, "Our leader has already written a letter about the situation, to Ai Hui. Those who hand over the supplies are considered as contributors who are feeding the front line. As for the effectiveness of the flag, try and you’ll know. But note that Ai Hui has a fiery temper and it wouldn’t be as easy talking to him."

The audience looked at each other in dismay.

"I’ve been admiring Leader Shi for a long time now. It’s only natural that we offer a little something!"

"That’ right! She’s Beyond Avalon’s tower of strength. With our supplies in her hands there’s nothing for us to worry about."

Sang Zhijun kept a cool face and instructed the military materials official to start taking inventory and names.

Returning to the camping ground, Sang Zhijun plopped onto the chair. Having a mental breakdown she cried out, "Don’t make me do something like this again, oh my god. I’ve never said anything so shamelessly and self-righteously before. I almost couldn’t go on."

Without even raising her head Shi Xueman responded, "Now you know how heartless that guy is."

Somewhat puzzled Sang Zhijun asked, "Why are we doing this?"

"Time." Shi Xueman continued staring at the map. "We must make full use of our time. It takes time to cast the pagoda cannons and practicing how to use it takes time too. Getting them to hand over the supplies themselves would save us a lot of time."

"Ai Hui’s heart must be aching. Such a huge loss."

Shi Xueman replied indifferently, "I’m the creditor anyway."

Chapter 577: Camp of the God and Blood Divisions

The whole world had been monitoring Ai Hui's preposterous behavior.

As commander of Sword of Lightning, Ai Hui had become the Lightning Razor and while everyone was raising a storm of protest, no one was really that shocked. Although Ai Hui was a reputable leader in Central Pine Faction, he had always remained low-key and no one knew much about him.

Skyheart City's appointment and attitude had caused a huge commotion, and later on Spear of Heavy Cloud's new tax regulation left the people speechless.

It seemed as though the world had suddenly become incomprehensible. Such perverse events just kept happening one after another. Openly robbing an ally? How was that any different from what bandits do?

Many thought that for such a righteous division leader like Shi Xueman to get involved, she must've been brainwashed by Ai Hui.

Although Skyheart City was trying hard to control the public's opinion, people's interest toward this matter was shocking. Long-standing families and the mayor absolutely abhorred Lightning Razor and were fuming with rage. Citizens at the bottom, on the other hand, clapped their hands in favour.

To them, the combat divisions that had pulled back from the front line were all cowardly and only interested in saving themselves.

While Ai Hui was greedy, he had never stopped advancing toward the front line. Shi Xueman, too, was like a nail, hammering her way to the front without ever retreating.

It was obvious at a glance who the reliable ones really were.

"Razor Ai and his new victim" became the talk of the town as everybody discussed it enthusiastically over food and tea.

Even the blood elementalists combat division was shocked upon receiving the news. However, it also boosted their morale. From what they saw, Elders Guild had already completely decayed and was unable to unite even when the big war was approaching. Basically, they had rotted to the core from punitive expeditions and internal strifes.

There were even blood elementalist officials calling for soldiers and weapons to fight directly against Skyheart City.

The situation was favorable. All that was needed was a spurt of energy to take down the Windy Pearl Bridge defensive line and the rest would be smooth-sailing, like a horse galloping straight across flat land.

However, danger often surged within the shadows cast by the sunlight, just as how thistles and thorns often hid among brightly colored flowers.

In the lush forest people were densely packed. Their faces and disheveled looks revealed the hardships they had been through. Yet, they remained calm. They either leaned on the tree trunks or sat on the ground. Some chewed their food quietly while others sipped on their water.

They moved gently and the enormous camp was dead silent. Only bird chirps could be heard.

The short pine trees planted by the exploring wood elementalists were covered with pine cones that emitted an alluring fragrance, which was effective for attracting birds. The birds happily pecked at the cones as if they didn’t see the figures sitting on the ground.

After surveying the terrain, the explorers would plant a short pine tree. The pine cones had a special attractive force that drew birds to them and the birds would ignore the troops entering the jungle. This way, the birds wouldn’t be alarmed and the patrolling blood elementalists wouldn’t notice anything amiss as well.

Ximen Caijue sat on the moist moss, not minding that her clothes were stained with mud despite having mysophobia. She was like a stubborn, mischievous little girl but only coldness and harshness filled her tender face.

Wan Shenwei sat opposite her while military officers and

powerful players from both divisions surrounded them. Everyone looked apathetic, but occasionally, as they blinked, excitement for the upcoming war could be seen in their eyes.

Between them, amid a ball of gentle light, a camp could be seen clearly.

If blood elementalists were found here they would definitely be shocked since it was their camp.

Wan Shenwei said in a deep voice, "God Spirit Division as well as Dawn and Dusk Blood Divisions are guarding the big camp. When dealing with them, just fight normally."

His tone was very calm, as if he was facing a regional combat division and not God Spirit Division, one of the six god divisions. The rest appeared as usual, not sensing anything strange, as if everything was natural.

"Be it God Spirit Division or the two blood divisions, they’re not our targets. We have two targets: Ye Baiyi and Nangong Wulian."

When mentioning Ye Baiyi, Wan Shenwei’s voice trembled slightly, but only his old subordinate caught it.

He continued, "Ye Baiyi’s still unconscious. He’s been planted with the Heart of God. Beast Venom Temple's master, Nangong Wulian, is also an important target so there must be a specialist in charge. You’ll be in charge, Song Yan."

The middle-aged man, who looked rather feeble, nodded. "Alright."

Song Yan was one of the most outstanding members in Dread Division. He was also one of the most competent assistants of Wan Shenwei.

Ximen Caijue added, "Tie Dao, partner with Song Yan."

A plain looking man, who looked like a blacksmith, nodded his head simply. "Okay, Old Song. I'll listen to your directions."

No one seemed to have any regard for this unremarkable looking person, but he was one of Caijue's three knives. Even Song Yan was quite excited. They had joined hands over twenty years ago and hadn't expected to be able to fight alongside each other once again. Powerful players shared a common sense of understanding, which made them look forward to this upcoming battle.

Wan Shenwei looked at both of them. "Your target is Nangong Wulian. Capture him alive if possible, but otherwise kill him."

"Understood."

"Okay."

Wan Shenwei turned toward Ximen Caijue. "As for Ye Baiyi, are

you going or should I go?"

Ximen Caijue replied mildly, "I'll go, you're busy."

"Alright."

He added, "The plan is simple. We'll kill our way in.. till this point."

His tapped his finger on the north point of the big camp before drawing a straight line down to a tent in the heart of the camp, where security was the tigtest.

Wan Shenwei continued, "Everyone go to rest now and the whole army shall execute a surprise attack in twelve hours."

The rest nodded their heads indifferently before turning around and leaving.

The former Wall of North Sea had long vanished without a trace. Blood of God's camp had also been emptied out and all the blood fiends had disappeared.

God Spirit Division led both Dawn and Dusk Blood Divisions to guard the camp.

Continuous reports of success arrived from the front line, bringing joy, but also restlessness, to the people.

It wasn’t the first time subordinates had tried to persuade He Nanshan to lead the army. What credit could he get by defending the big camp? There was an uncountable number of people who complained everyday. He Nanshan understood how his subordinates felt and this, too, wasn’t his first time considering that proposal.

His Majesty emphasized on contributions. Contributors would get rewarded definitely, no exceptions.

Defending the camp really wasn’t desirable. If anything happened, they would inevitably be held accountable. If nothing happened, that was just a given and when His Majesty gave out rewards the most he would do would be to grace them with words like "reliable" and "wise". It was nothing comparable to the combat divisions that charged out in front.

Yet, He Nanshan forced himself to remain in the camp. He remembered how Dread and Judgement Divisions were nowhere to be found.

Everybody thought it was possible that Dread and Judgement ran off somewhere to become independent, so there was nothing to worry about. Elders Guild had long been corrupted, still obsessed with riches right before the big war. How unbelievable.

Their consecutive victories also made everyone look down on Elders Guild. To the blood elementalists, Spear of Heavy Cloud was the last barrier they had to cross. Once that was done Beyond

Avalon would be a delicate woman, stripped bare.

Only Spear of Heavy Cloud could give them trouble now. But they were only just a little stronger than a blood division. Once god divisions were dispatched, nothing would be too difficult to handle.

But everyone felt more uneasy the more this was so.

How could they feel fairly treated seeing that others could easily gain credit while they weren't able to benefit from anything?

He Nanshan could only continue placating them. No matter what, Handsome Ye's safety was top priority. He Nanshan's coaxing was actually very effective. Not only was Handsome Ye everybody's commander-in-chief, he was their superior. He had a good personality and was capable, hence he was well-liked and respected by people.

As such, people put the blame on Nangong Wulian again, and until now Handsome Ye still hadn't woken up.

Nangong Wulian never was kind toward the soldiers so no one was happy to begin with. If not for the fact that he had a high status and great power, they would've spoken up out of anger. But since they weren't able to do that they could only complain in private.

Although He Nanshan had repeatedly warned everyone to raise

their guard, no one cared. No one believed that anyone would dig their own graves by coming over here. And if they did, even better! As everyone was feeling frustrated over the lack of credit they were getting, anyone who attacked the camp would basically be giving them free credit.

Nangong Wulia's tent was right beside the center tent. Other than making daily trips to Ye Baiyi's tent, he would also hide in his tent to study whenever he had time.

Of course he knew about the general complaints, but he did not care. Heh, even Ye Baiyi had to mind his manners in front of him, so what rights did these lowly soldiers have to whine?

The front line's victory temporarily eased his worry over the destruction of Ardent Flower Blood Division.

What worried him was Ye Baiyi. The Heart of God had obviously wielded together with Ye Baiyi perfectly, so why wasn't he awake yet?

Nangong Wulian was losing patience while staying at the front line. There was nothing there and he couldn't conduct much of his research. It was a complete waste of time, but he couldn't go back unless Ye Baiyi woke up.

It looked like he would have to nourish Ye Baiyi with more nutrients today.

He went into the tent in the middle and Ye Baiyi was still lying unconscious in the ice coffin. Ye Baiyi had an indistinct heartbeat, but it had the power to absorb people's souls. Even Nangong Wulian, the creator of Heart of God, was immersed in the heartbeat that seemed to contain boundless might.

It was as if an enormous dragon was lying in the ice coffin, deep in sleep.

He asked the person beside him, "Whose turn is it today?"

Shortly, a youth, not older than twenty, entered the tent.

Nangong Wulian said with a smile, "I remember you. So it's your turn today, how is it? Prepared well?"

He had a deep impression of this youth. He recalled the youth saying that Ye Baiyi had advised him to leave before he'd made the decision to join God Nation.

The youth did not leave, but instead followed Ye Baiyi and had been ready to offer his life to him.

Looking rather tense, the youth said with much effort, "All prepared."

In these past few days he had seen his companions using fresh blood to feed Boss and it was his turn today. Everyone said he was the youngest and so they placed him right at the end.

Nangong Wulian felt envious that there were actually so many people who were willing to die for Ye Baiyi. How many of his people in Beast Venom Temple would do the same?

His face turned ugly as he said coldly, "You can start now."

The youth plopped his knees onto the ground and made three bows to Ye Baiyi. His forehead was red and tears were falling down his face. He choked, "Sir, I'm unable to follow you any longer. You must live long! I have no regrets left, and will conquer the world with you in my next life!"

He took a deep look at Ye Baiyi and wiped the tears off his face before leaping into the blood pool beside him.

The blood pool glowed brightly and roared like angry waves.

Ye Baiyi's faintly discernible heartbeat became lower and more powerful.

Chapter 578: Set Off

Dawn was approaching and a slight glimmer could be seen through the forest on the azure horizon.

Everyone was done with their preparations and the forest was dead silent.

They were still very far away from their enemies' camp. Even if they were to sprint and fly they would need about a day or so. If they did not fly at full speed and kept stopping, they would need about two to three days. As such, they found no scouts from the enemy's side and even their enemies felt that this region was safe.

No one had ever launched their attack from so far away. A long day of flying would be a rigorous test of the soldiers' physical strength and elemental energy. Ordinary combat divisions would've been too exhausted and unable to battle by then.

But they could do it.

Wan Shenwei swept his gaze across his people, his heart filled with pride. They were the most elite elementalists in the whole of the Avalon of Five Elements. Every single one of them had been carefully selected and had been through the harshest trainings.

People only knew that they were defending Old Territory and other than that felt that they were very mysterious. No one knew what kind of hardships they had been facing. They were fighters. Real fighters that had been through countless close quarter battles.

Everyone was calm and steady, thanks to their experience from being in hundreds of battles.

Wan Shenwei spoke up suddenly, his voice deep, "Glorious footprints, the old man is dead in enemy country. From Shi Beihai's family, the lone girl is fighting on the front line. New soldiers from Infantry and Sky Edge are defending our territory. The so called best of the elite congratulate and celebrate victories!"

The originally quiet forest became exceptionally suffocating as the air seemed to have congealed, leaving no wind at all. The birds in the forest tried effortfully to flap their wings but were confined to their spots and unable to fly.

Wan Shenwei's gaze swept across the stone cold faces, causing them all to blush a deep red, gasp loudly for air and clench their fists tightly while trembling all over.

"The humiliation and shame has settled. If word spreads, it will go down in history for many years."

The red on their faces deepened, as if there was a ball of fire in their chests, unable to be released. They were prideful people, so being nailed onto history's wall of shame was worse than death.

Expressionless, Wan Shenwei said faintly, "Words will continue to spread and historians will remember what the best of the elites are for many years to come."

The suppressed fire exploded in their chests as the fresh blood within their bodies boiled like lava. Everyone started breathing heavily.

It was like the practically frozen forest was hit by a rising windstorm as countless leaves rolled up and branches crackled and rattled. Their fighting spirit and battle lust rushed out of their hearts like flowing fire, able to engulf all. Lightning struck every inch of flesh in their bodies and the blaze made them feel the pain. A satisfying pain. A pain that carried pride.

It felt as if they were going to burst out of their chests, and pierce through their bodies. There was fire, light, a knife, a sword. The blazing fire and lightning was roaring and bellowing. Kill all the enemies! Obstruct them all, burn them to ashes!

The azure wings on Wan Shenwei’s back appeared. They were wide and deep black in color, effectively accentuating his heavily-built body. The agitated soldiers started spreading their azure wings and all kinds of bright colors instantly lit up the forest.

"Dread, set off!"

He took the lead and soared high into the clouds.

"Judgement, set off!"

Ximen Caijue transformed into a green light and flew up into the

sky.

She was resolute, her light ray was like a sword that pierced through the blue dome of heaven.

Countless light rays whizzed up into the sky like rain and illuminated the deep earth and the swaying forest.

A few Rust Plumes could be seen gliding steadily in the sky.

Rust Plumes were standard equipment for God Nation's scouts. They looked like blood eagles, but were in actual fact a hybrid form of blood eagles and blood vultures. Beast Venom Palace had successfully produced them after years of breeding. They were ash-green in color and had a very tactile quality to their bodies. They had a bright red feather at the back of their neck, hence their name.

Their wings stretched over fifteen meters and could fly very well and stable even for long distances. It was like gliding on ice, which allowed the scouts to better conserve their energy. Rust Plumes had another major gift – their eyes. They could see very far away, making it difficult for enemies concealed within the forest to escape them.

This was a small scout team from Dawn Blood Division.

At that point, the Rust Plumes were in pilot mode and the scouts onboard were all lazing around and chatting.

"Have you heard? Yet another fellow offered himself to Commander Ye."

"Yes. What a good fellow! He’s already an old man but people are so devoted to him."

"What a pity. They are all outstanding fellows."

"Could it be that the higher ups want to remove his authority? Do you think they’re all people who stand by Commander Ye’s side?"

The leader was frightened by this statement and hurriedly chided, "Don’t talk drivel! Is His Majesty that kind of person? Is this something we should discuss? Keep in mind not to speak like that anymore or I’m not going to let it go!"

He took out a few jade fruits to feed his own Rust Plume Wings, intimately caressing its solid feathers.

The rest knew that they had taken it too far and quickly diverted the topic.

"When can we go to the front line. It’s so boring to go patrolling every day!"

"Yeah. Not a single soul can be seen in this stupid place."

"Why’s there a need for so many people to defend the big camp? I think one blood division is sufficient."

"Seems like there’s not going to be any credit for us this time. We’re done for. Won’t there only be Jadeite Forest left after Skyheart City is taken down?"

People conversed fervently, all talking at once. They had been patrolling around this district every day and had yet to notice anything. As the scouts in charge of the outermost circle, they covered the furthest distance every day.

Suddenly, the Rust Plume beneath the leader emitted a sharp hiss.

Everyone was stunned and stopped talking. Something’s wrong!

They diligently kept their eyes in front, but it was completely empty and they couldn’t find anything amiss. However, they did not let their guard down since the Rust Plumes’ eyesight was far superior to their own.

The leader was about to speak up, but his pupils shrank suddenly.

An arrow wrapped in green light appeared in his field of vision, its speed quickly accelerating rendering him unable to react.

Clap!

The green light flashed and the leader's brain burst open like a watermelon.

A few arrows landed swiftly and more brains exploded simultaneously.

A wave of arrows rained down and wiped the whole scout team out before they could even get a clear look at the arrows.

The Rust Plumes called out sadly upon realizing that their owners were dead. They were rather intelligent and knew to return to the camp to inform the others. They flapped their wings hard, turned and flew toward the direction of the camp.

The sky buzzed and trilled, as if the air was trembling.

Specks of light rays lit up one after another, filling up the sky like stars.

The specks magnified at an alarming rate and in the blink of an eye they appeared right before them.

A deafening whistle drowned all sounds. The surging air was sharper than the tip of a sword. Without even looking at the Rust Plumes that were flapping their wings with all their might they whizzed overhead. Even though Rust Plumes were known for their speed, amid these light flows they were as slow as tortoises.

The surging airflow was like a very sharp sword.

Though stronger than steel, the Rust Plumes' bodies were sliced into pieces in an instant.

With unspent momentum and power, the air flow whipped onto the ground ruthlessly.

The figures in the sky broke in like lightning, causing the mud to fly up, the forest to shatter and the river to stop flowing. It was as if there was a terrifying and invisible iron plow that was plowing a path over a mile wide. It created a pencil-straight ravine that seemed to have been drawn by a ruler, extending forward unceasingly.

The Three-forked River Camp was a more important defense spot. There were no towns located there and it didn't have a name because it was where the river separated, so guards from Dawn Blood Division had named it the Three-forked River Camp.

Whether it was the god divisions or blood divisions, many of the battle tactics they followed originated from the Avalon of Five Elements.

Ye Baiyi used to be the division leader of Cold Flame Division, so he was very familiar with the combat divisions in Avalon of Five Elements. He knew their weaknesses and flaws, but also their advantages.

Before Ye Baiyi reorganized God Nation's combat divisions, they were inadequate and weak. Outsiders regarded them as mobs.

Other than implementing battle tactics according to the unique characteristics of god elementalists, Ye Baiyi did not avoid the Avalon of Five Elements's combat divisions' areas of strength, but instead integrated them perfectly.

For example, Dawn Blood Division's scouts used equipments which was exactly the same as those of combat divisions in Avalon of Five Elements. In fact, their equipment was even more perfect than those belonging to legitimate combat divisions, like Infantry and Sky Edge.

It wasn't that Dawn Blood Division simply dispatched a few small teams. It was a whole security network constructed with many nodes. These randomly scattered nodes differed in size and Three-forked River Camp was a bigger node. Its scope could reach forty small surrounding nodes to form a big web. There was a total of six big nodes like Three-forked River Camp.

The nodes of different sizes formed a big, tight web that could resist an infiltration by elementalists.

If enemies invaded from the front, they could transmit the information to the base camp at top speed. Ye Baiyi was very clear about the importance of the scouts and guards. Their job wasn't to obstruct and delay the enemies but to report the situation back to base camp as quick as possible in order to give them sufficient time to strategize and react.

The person in charge of the blood elementalist guards was Tang Jingrong. He was a godly blood elementalist, so it was clear how important Three-forked River Camp was to Dawn Blood Division.

Tang Jingrong was experienced, careful, reliable and powerful.

Tang Jingrong started setting up defense perimeters upon arriving at Three-forked River Camp. He also sent full scouts out for daily patrols. He did not feel that enemies would raid the camp because that wasn’t any different from seeking death. However, he knew that he mustn’t let his soldiers slack off or all sorts of incidents would occur. Instead, if they got busy, disturbances were less likely to happen.

He held onto a cup of tea and landed on a floating sentry. He asked the soldier on duty, "What’s the situation?"

The soldier answered helplessly, "Not even a fly, Boss."

Tang Jingrong laughed. "That’s the best. We would be in trouble if there was anything."

Suddenly he crinkled his brows, as if sensing something.

He focused his gaze far away, but noticed nothing. Was it his imagination?

Suddenly an arrow wrapped in green light appeared before his eyes.

His expression changed.

Chapter 579: The Bloody Battle At The God Encampment (1)

"We had been humiliated, and we had been shamed. These words will be passed on through the generations and history will remember them for many years. History will also remember what the strongest elite unit in the world was like."

- Wang Shenwei

Tang Yingrong did not know where this glowing green arrow came from, but he was a blood elementalist that possessed an Ability of God after all. At this critical moment, he was able to activate his terrifying potential. A deep, angry, and beast-like roar was exploded from his throat.

He reached out his right hand abruptly and tried to grab the arrow.

Mysteriously, his right arm was covered with a layer of thick hair as traces of bloody glow twined around his piercingly sharp fingernails.

He caught it!

A look of joy appeared on his face. However, the next moment, the smile on his face froze.

Pop!

A deep pain erupted from his right hand. His palm had exploded into a bloody mess. A huge chunk of minced flesh and blood hit his face and chest, making him look extremely horrifying. His right palm and wrist had completely disappeared, revealing his ghastly white forearm bones.

Tang Yingrong could not bother with the pain. He knew this was the moment to fight for his life.

In front of him, the soldiers' heads were exploding like shattered watermelons.

He turned around and flew into the air. With his body surrounded by a red glow, he flew toward the main camp with all his might. He was overwhelmed with shock. Who was it that attacked them? The enemies were so powerful! He was already severely injured before he could even see their faces! Skyheart City still possessed such formidable experts?

Suddenly, he thought of the two combat divisions that had disappeared, and his face turned deathly pale.

Dread! Judgement!

A feeling of extreme danger engulfed him. All his hair stood on end, making him look like an alarmed cat. Without turning around, he gathered a ball of bloody glow in his left palm and

swung it behind his back!

Pffft. His left palm exploded. His entire left forearm was severed.

It was as if Tang Yingrong knew his death was imminent as he let out a heart-wrenching shriek.

"No!"

An arrow shot into his back, through his body, and flew out from his chest, releasing a burst of bloody mist.

He watched blankly as his body fell from the sky powerlessly. He saw speckles of light spark up in the horizon, resembling the stars of the night sky. Following which, a deafening hiss flooded over him like a tidal wave. With his own eyes, he witnessed the fortifications of his camp being destroyed as if they were made of paper.

The Three-forked River Camp that he had spent a countless amount of effort and time building was annihilated in the blink of an eye.

His vision began to blur. Streaks from glowing figures hurtled past him in the sky above him.

One of them stopped for a while and shot a glance at him. Then, he conveniently swiped the blade in his hand once.

A blade gleam devoured Tang Yingrong's line of sight before darkness descended upon his vision.

.....

Nangong Wulian came early in the morning to check on Ye Baiyi.

He was still not awake!

Nangong Wulian was so angry that he pulled out a few strands of hair from his head. He realized the amount of blood spiritual force that the Heart of God needed was terrifying, so much so that it exceeded what he had expected. Theoretically, this was a good thing.

The only thing that gratified Nangong Wulian was that Ye Baiyi's heart rate had changed.

This proved that he was on the right track.

Should he continue to sacrifice people to provide blood spiritual force him? Nangong Wulian was slightly hesitant. He did not know whether or not Ye Baiyi would find trouble with him after waking up.

All right, maybe not. After all, he was doing this to save his life.

Nangong Wulian was still uncertain. Those sacrificed subordinates of Ye Baiyi seemed to possess a mysterious power that caused Nangong Wulian to feel worried. He had seen many gory scenes before. It was very normal for the Beast Venom Temple to use blood elementalists as ingredients.

For a cold-blooded individual like him, he actually felt scared when he saw Ye Baiyi's subordinates jump into the blood pool to sacrifice themselves. He did not know why he felt this way.

He decided to wait for two more days.

Once Ye Baiyi woke up, there would an incredible change to his strength. Nangong Wulian did not know exactly how much Ye Baiyi's strength would grow, but he was certain that it would be a significant growth. In the Blood of God, strength was status. Ye Baiyi's status in the Blood of God would definitely rise. If Ye Baiyi woke up, became unhappy with Nangong Wulian, and wanted to find trouble with him, His Majesty would protect him. However, Nangong Wulian would definitely still have to undergo some suffering.

He had better be careful...

Nangong Wulian walked out from the tent and saw He Nanshan, who had been keeping watch outside.

"Sir Nangong, has General Ye woken up?" He Nanshan asked with concern.

"Not yet." Nangong Wulian shook his head with an indifferent look on his face.

A disappointed look appeared on He Nanshan's face. Without General Ye, everyone felt that they lacked a pillar to support them. Being the division leader of the God Spirit Division, He Nanshan definitely wasn't an ordinary individual. He clearly knew that the current situation was only this smooth and perfect because the enemy was weak. If things did not turn well at the front line, they would most likely be thrown into an adrift situation.

This was an extremely deadly time bomb.

As long as General Ye was unconscious, this time bomb would continue to exist. The four god divisions were equally ranked, so no one would listen to each other.

Fortunately, the war at the front line had been smooth so far. They had been crushing the enemy combat divisions effortlessly.

From the look of it, the only remaining threat was the defensive line at the Windy Pearl Bridge.

The three deployed God Division leaders had already identified the weakness of the Spear of Heavy Cloud. Therefore, they chose to drive the retreating enemy combat divisions to the Windy Pearl Bridge and use them to crush the defensive line. This was a rather good idea, but the enemy wasn't simple either. They only saw the avaricious appetite of Ai Hui and the Spear of Heavy Cloud. He Nanshan, however, saw something different. The number of

defeated combat divisions that were previously stationed at the Windy Pearl Bridge's defensive line had been reduced greatly.

These defeated combat divisions could be either a helping hand or a time bomb for the Spear of Heavy Cloud.

Due to of this avaricious appetite, those good-for-nothing and weak-willed combat divisions were scared away. Only the determined and fervent combat divisions remained.

He Nanshan wasn't sure whether the enemy forces had really identified the potential time bomb or if it was a fluke. This was because a future sea of trouble had been created using this type of method.

Suddenly, a deafening alarm resounded through the air.

An attack on the camp!

He Nanshan shivered as his facial expression changed drastically. He was enraged. Were all the sentries dead? How could they fail to discover the enemy forces until the enemy had already reached the main camp! He rose up in the air and flew toward the sky.

Vibrating speckles of light appeared in the distant horizon, resembling the stars of the night sky. Even though they were very far away, he could still sense the terrifying aura of death that was coming his way.

He Nanshan lowered his head and looked at the main camp beneath him. Soldiers gushed out of the tents like flowing water while commanders gave out orders clearly and orderly.

He Nanshan heaved a sigh of relief in his heart. It seemed that the daily training sessions had worked. As long as they were calm, the enemy forces had no chance of success.

Even though the enemy forces came with a mighty momentum, they only had around 1,000 soldiers.

He was slightly curious how these elementalists had avoided his tight surveillance network. After a while, his facial expression turned solemn. He saw that the scouts in the sky were killed on the spot before they could even escape.

An incredible idea appeared in his mind.

Were... all the scouts slain like this before they could even escape?

Buzz, buzz, buzz.

A vibrating sound came from the distance. The air seemed to throb at this moment, appearing as if a surging flood was approaching. This terrifying might caused He Nanshan’s facial expression to change.

The enemy forces had already reached the edge of the main

camp.

To protect the main camp, densely-packed fortifications were set up on the perimeter. A huge number of blood fiends were also stationed there defensively

The soldiers in the fortifications hurriedly broke down the fences surrounding the blood fiends to release them.

If one looked down from the sky, hordes of red blood fiends were gathering.

Whoosh!

A sea of avian blood fiends flew up into the sky. The bloody glow around their bodies merged together, seemingly forming a red blood wall that whizzed toward the enemy forces.

[Wall of Bloody Sky]!

This was an unique blood elementalist battle formation. It used the powerful impact of blood fiends to block and disrupt the enemy forces' charge. Those blood fiends were fierce and violent. During peacetime, drugs were used to restrain them. Otherwise, they would fight among themselves until all of them were dead.

The pure elemental energy from an elementalist had a deadly enticement over them. They would recklessly hunt down elementalists and eat them. They did not understand the concept

of fear and would not care about their own lives.

Within the camp, all the blood elementalists had gathered while orders were passed frantically through the chain of command.

He Nanshan calmed himself down. With one god division and two blood divisions stationed in the main camp, he felt rather confident. These divisions were meticulously formed by General Ye, and they knew the weaknesses of elementalist combat divisions like the back of their hands.

From the number of the enemy forces, he knew they were the Dread Division and the Judgement Division.

In reality, blood elementalist combat divisions were afraid of the Dread and Judgement divisions since they were so few in number. The Dread Division only had 500 men total. However, they seldom came out in full force and only had at most 300 men at the moment. The Judgement Division had 1,000 men at full force, but they presently only had 700.

In total, these two combat divisions had at most 1,000d men.

Even if they were very powerful, what impact would they have on the battlefield with so few soldiers?

A god division and a blood division had a standardized strength of 5,000 men each. With one god division and two blood divisions, they currently had a total of 15,000 men! With 15,000 blood

elementalists against 1,000 elementalists, why should he be afraid?

Unless an elementalist could kill 15 blood elementalists?

As long as they did not panic, the enemy forces had no chance of victory. After thinking it through, He Nanshan regained his composure. This was a god-given chance. Not too long ago, he was still worrying about not accumulating enough meritorious services, but now, the enemy forces delivered themselves to him personally. If he missed this opportunity, he would be letting himself down.

He Nanshan made a firm resolution. Not only must he win this battle, he must do it in a stylish manner!

Wang Shenwei was apathetic. He wasn't surprised that he had alarmed the enemy forces. The enemy was no ordinary army after all. It was already very fortunate that they alerted the enemy forces only after reaching the main camp perimeter. It could have been worse.

Even though flying blood wall was still very far away, he could smell a weird, but strong, fragrance coming from it.

He could see the sinister-looking appearances of the blood fiends. Pungent saliva dripped from their deathly white teeth. Their bloodshot eyes were filled with bloodlust and insanity. The closer the blood wall was, the more he could feel a sense of danger and invincibility from it.

The corner of Wan Shenwei's mouth slightly twitched. A cold and disdainful look flashed across his face.

He shifted his gaze to the distant horizon. The rising sun was bright-red in color, exuding liveliness and vitality. They had flown for a day and a night. After setting off at daybreak, flying in the direction of the rising sun, enduring the scorching afternoon heat, saying farewell to the setting sun, finding themselves in the dark night, and immersing themselves in the splendor of the stars, here they were, encountering the rising sun once again.

The beautiful scenery along the way and the despair in the enemy soldiers' eyes before they died were heartwarming and pleasing to his eyes.

The scenery before a great battle took place was the most beautiful.

He gripped the heavy sword in his hand, and his black azure wings erupted with radiance. Following which, his flying speed increased sharply. Behind him, the other soldiers simultaneously increased their speed.

Streaks of brilliance drew an elegant arc in the heavens. They began to rise higher and higher into the sky.

They pierced through the clouds and the metal winds. In the heights of the desolate upper atmosphere, they immersed themselves in the sunshine and suddenly dove down!

Chapter 580: The Bloody Battle At The God Encampment (2)

They were like a gorgeous meteor shower.

Leading the charge, Wan Shenwei smiled silently. Each of his hands grasped a sword raised high above his head. The swords were unusually flashy under the sunlight.

Wan Shenwei, who dual-wielded swords, was relaxed, natural, and looked as if he was performing an ordinary leaping overhead slash.

He swung his swords down vertically.

No sword gleams or sword chimes were produced. Suddenly, the center of the roaring blood wall caved in. Countless fragments of bones and flesh erupted from the blood wall, resembling a torrential rain of gore.

The blood wall was split into two, revealing a gap that was more than 30 meters wide in the middle.

Beside Wan Shenwei, Ximen Caijue was emotionless. She was holding a toy-like miniature bow. The bow was very small, but it was of an unusually excellent quality. Its body was green in color and formed by two green snakes intertwining together. The two snake heads happened to be biting each end of the bowstring. The bowstring glistened red in color.

She followed beside Wan Shenwei and had no intentions of attacking.

Watching from afar, He Nanshan's facial expression changed. He could not believe what he had just seen.

That slash just now...

That person was... Wan Shenwei!

He Nanshan suddenly felt his mouth go dry. He was overwhelmed with shock. Beyond Avalon still had such a powerful expert!

Among all the experts today, the Holy Emperor and Dai Gang were evenly matched. Right beneath them were Le Buleng and Red Devil. Le Buleng's greatness was obvious. Even though he had suffered numerous defeats, His Majesty felt that he was the third strongest individual in the world.

As for Red Devil, General Ye had personally told him that Red Devil's strength was surpassed only by His Majesty's in the God Nation. Hence, he was the second strongest individual in the God Nation. Generally speaking, his strength was most likely beneath Le Buleng's.

However, after He Nanshan witnessed Wan Shenwei's might today, he realized there were a lot more experts in this world than

he had imagined!

He felt slightly uneasy.

No two Masters were exactly the same. Different Masters had different impacts on the battlefield. If that slash from Wan Shenwei was to strike a battle formation, it would deal heavy casualties. A Master was a disruptor on the battlefield. The destructive power of an expert among the Masters was even more terrifying.

He Nanshan suddenly felt that the assembling speed of his troops was slight slow. He could not help but yell, "Faster!"

At this moment, approximately one thousand men who were diving down from the sky with streaks of light trailing behind them collided squarely with the blood wall.

He Nanshan could not help but widen his eyes. He looked at the collision with expectation. The blood wall was very huge and thick. Breaking through the blood wall would not be an easy task even for blood elementalists. Furthermore, the blood birds weren’t afraid of death. As long as they were still alive, they would continue to tangle with their enemies in an insane manner.

More than 200 men at the front of the charge suddenly roared in unison, "Dread!"

The bodies of more than 200 men lit up with a dazzling glow,

resembling over 200 suns. The weapons in their hands buzzed loudly, appearing as if they were echoing each other.

If Ai Hui was to see this sight, he would be astonished because this charge produced the same outcome as his Sword of Lightning Division, but through a different approach. These two hundred plus men used different weapons, but their elemental energies resonated with each other and at the exact same rhythm.

The 200 plus weapons were brandished in a top-down direction at the same time.

The blood wall exploded with a loud bang. Like an enormous burst of blood-colored fireworks, countless torrents of scarlet blood sprayed in all directions. One could see mangled blood birds, numerous broken bones, and dismembered limbs in every torrent of blood.

The blood wall was shattered to smithereens in one hit!

The Dread Division soldiers continued to advance with momentum and landed on the ground like a gigantic hammer.

Boom!

If one looked down from the sky, the ground surrounding the position where the Dread Division had landed undulated like water ripples.

Due to the undulating ground, the blood fiends that were frantically dashing toward the Dread Division lost their balance and fell into chaos.

When the blood fiends picked themselves up from the ground, the sinister looks on their faces had disappeared. Their eyes were filled with fear and dread as they whimpered softly, turned around, and suddenly escaped in all directions. These blood fiends were violent and unintelligent, but their senses were sharp. Instinctively, they could sense the small group of people in front of them was extremely dangerous. These people were a terrifying entity that lived at the top of the food chain.

He Nanshan's facial expression turned extremely ugly. The uneasiness in his heart became stronger, and he could sense an imminent danger.

Inside the main camp, streams of soldiers continued to gush out from the tents. Only 50 percent of the soldiers had been assembled.

They were too slow!

Initially, He Nanshan thought that the blood wall could delay the enemy forces for a while and that they would have enough time to assemble all soldiers. All of his soldiers were well-trained. As long as they had enough time, they could be fully assembled.

There were over 200 men in the Dread Division. To be exact, there were 274 men.

They moved as one and stomped the ground together. A perfect crater was formed in the ground with a diameter of 150 meters, as though an invisible hand had pressed into the ground. It was smooth and impeccable, as though gently stamped from a mold.

274 figures rose into the air at the same time and drew an elegant arc in the sky. Like stone pellets released by a catapult, they flew toward the fortifications at the edge of the main camp.

"Stop them!" He Nanshan blurted out.

Even though the blood elementalists were alarmed, they were able to maintain their composure and order due to their arduous daily training sessions. A blood elementalist captain at the fortifications roared, "Attack!"

Pitch-black spheres were shot out of the fortifications and into the air. Following which, they exploded into clouds of blood mist that gradually diffused in the air. Instantly, the concentrated blood mist engulfed the zone in front of the fortifications.

Blood mist bombs were created by the Beast Venom Temple. The blood mist that diffused in the air contained a deadly poison. Blood elementalists were unaffected by it, but it was extremely deadly to elementalists.

However, the Dread Division shocked the blood elementalists once again. They flew out of the blood mist safe and sound.

Boom!

Just like before, they landed heavily on the fortifications like a mighty hammer.

A breach that was 150 meters long appeared in the continuous line of tall fortifications.

The two ends of the breach were extremely neat, making the breach look like it had been cut out with scissors. A huge pit that was several meters deep was created at the breach. One could see bloodstained tiles and bricks in the pit.

Holding his swords, Wan Shenwei smiled at the fearful blood elementalists. Then, he began to walk toward the inner camp.

He wasn't walking at a very fast pace and looked more like he was strolling through a park.

Absolute silence descended upon the entire camp. It was as if everyone's throat was tightly gripped by an invisible hand.

Indifferent-looking figures followed Wan Shenwei and strolled toward the inner camp.

Ping!

A loud and crisp sound of glass breaking broke the silence. The

glowing bloody screen that covered the sky above the main camp shattered. Countless blood-colored fragments drifted through the air, resembling a heavy snowfall that was dyed crimson.

A cold and somber atmosphere descended upon the main camp.

Their camp had been invaded just like that, and they were scared stiff by the enemy forces just like that. Furthermore, the enemy forces were the Dread and Judgement divisions that they had mocked countless times.

Everyone’s eyes became bloodshot. They did not lack courage, and similarly, they did not lack pride. They weren’t rookies who had just set foot upon the battlefield. The concept of failure had never come across their minds before.

"Kill them!" roared the captain of an unit that had just finished assembling.

He took the lead and charged at the strolling Wan Shenwei. They knew that they were overestimating their abilities, but they still had their comrades who were mustering behind them right now!

They did not have any lofty beliefs. All they had was fighting spirit and a deep sense of pride. They could be defeated or killed, but they definitely could not tolerate being humiliated and trampled on by the enemy forces.

A few other troop units also lunged at the Dread Division at the

same time.

All they could do now was to slow down the enemy forces, even if it was only for a minute!

A look of admiration appeared on Wan Shenwei's face, but he did not stop, continuing to stroll forward. The two elementalists beside him stepped forward to face the incoming blood elementalists.

Side by side, the two elementalists charged toward the blood elementalists like two bulls.

The elementalist on the left used a scythe. Right now, he looked like he was reaping wheat as the self-proclaimed elite blood elementalists collapsed effortlessly before the scythe.

In an instant, the unit was annihilated, leaving corpses and wounded soldiers scattered everywhere on the ground.

The elementalist on the right used a silver spear. Spear gleams appeared and disappeared unpredictably at the blood elementalists' throats and hearts. Even the powerful bodies of the blood elementalists could not stop the deadly attacks from this silver spear.

Wan Shenwei looked as if he couldn't see the corpses around him or the enemy soldiers that were lunging for him.

His gaze was fixated at the distant He Nanshan. With a steady gait, he walked toward He Nanshan.

There were blood elementalist units constantly charging at him from all directions!

The elementalists that surrounded him pounced at the incoming enemy units like tigers released from their cages.

Only the braves would win this battle!

At this point in time, both sides were engaged in close quarters combat. The outcome was unusually devastating. Quickly, Wan Shenwei realized that the surrounding enemy forces were increasing in number nonstop. They had been completely surrounded. The enemy forces had abandoned their battle formations and were simply surging at them like a tidal wave.

Wan Shenwei stopped in his tracks. Then, he raised the two swords in his hands and roared, "Dread!"

The elementalists who were fighting the flood of blood elementalists suddenly withdrew and gathered around Wan Shenwei.

All of them raised their weapons and roared in unison, "Dread!"

Their weapons chimed in unison as the glows around their bodies suddenly intensified. The incoming blood elementalists looked as

if they had collided with an iron wall. Immediately, they felt that they had been struck by an invincible force. Their minds went blank as their bodies flew back in the air.

"Dread!’

Wan Shenwei and his comrades roared in unison as they swung their weapons in a downward vertical motion.

274 streaks of elemental energy gathered and became a terrifying sword gleam that shot forward.

Blood elementalists were everywhere, but the ones in the front were the most densely-packed. By now, everyone knew that Wan Shenwei’s target was Sir He Nanshan!

The densely-packed blood elementalists took the full brunt of this mighty sword gleam.

Boom!

The gigantic, thick, and cold sword gleam crashed into the crowd of blood elementalists.

Along with soil, broken limbs and flesh splattered on both sides of the moving sword gleam. The sword gleam created a deep trench in the ground. Everywhere it passed by, flesh and blood would fly into the air.

A bloody path with a width of more than 15 meters was formed in front of Wan Shenwei.

The sword gleam had pierced through the area in front of them!

All the blood elementalists in the path of the sword gleam were dead. The surrounding blood elementalists were stunned momentarily. However, in the next moment, they frantically lunged at the Dread Division.

Various forms of bloody glow blasted toward the Dread Division like a torrential downpour.

Suddenly, Wan Shenwei slightly bent his knees. His soldiers looked as if they had received an order and slightly bent their knees in unison as well.

They then exhaled together!

When the 274 men exhaled together, it sounded like a deafening thunderclap. Their surging elemental energy undulations gathered and formed a ring-shaped shock wave.

The surrounding blood elementalists froze, looking as if they had been struck heavily by a rod.

Like an ancient dire beast that had broken free from its chains,

Wan Shenwei and the Dread Division rose into the air and surged toward He Nanshan.

Chapter 581: The Bloody Battle At The God Encampment (3)

Before today, He Nanshan was confident that he could defeat any combat division from Beyond Avalon. General Ye had clearly explained to them the characteristics and weaknesses of every combat division from Beyond Avalon. Their daily training sessions were focused on dealing with elementalist combat divisions.

It wasn't a fluke for the god divisions and blood divisions to win so many battles in a row. Other than the physical superiority that blood elementalists had over elementalists, the appropriate adjustments and optimizations made by the god and blood divisions also made them stronger. On the contrary, elementalist combat divisions did not have any substantial improvements and were still stuck with their traditional battle tactics and stratagems.

The only so-called progress they had made was the Spear of Heavy Cloud's pagoda cannon technology.

Due to this "progress," the Spear of Heavy Cloud Division was the only elementalist combat division that could win battles against blood elementalist combat divisions.

The tidal wave of a new era always came silently and without any signs, but in reality, no one could avoid being swept away by it. Those who were sharp would either search for a high mountain and live a life free of worries or drift with the tide and follow the crowd blindly. Those who were stubborn would struggle and drown, eventually disappearing into the depths of the sea.

He Nanshan strongly believed that the blood elementalists were on the right track. He had absolute confidence in dealing with elementalist combat divisions.

However, when he faced the terrifying Dread Division, his confidence wavered.

This was especially the case when Wan Shenwei led the Dread Division into the heavens and surged toward him. He felt as though a mountain was flying toward him and would crush him to smithereens. The terrifying might caused the air around He Nanshan to freeze.

As the division leader of a god division, He Nanshan did not lack strength and courage. Even though he was intimidated by the might of Wan Shenwei and the Dread Division, he was able to regain his composure quickly.

He extended his right palm as his eyes suddenly lit up with a faint red glow. Beneath him, the blood elementalists who had remained motionless all this time immediately erupted with a bloody glow. Following which, their bodies projected streaks of bloody glow.

The faint red glow in He Nanshan’s eyes spun like a whirlpool.

The air around him became distorted abruptly, resembling an inflating air bubble.

The slash attack of the Dread Division landed on the air bubble like a heavy hammer, shattered it, and struck He Nanshan heavily. The attack's momentum carried it all the way to the blood elementalists beneath He Nanshan.

Boom!

An earth-shaking impact caused the soil to fly up more than 30 meters into the air like a fountain.

Wan Shenwei furrowed his eyebrows slightly and let out a soft gasp of surprise. He felt that the slash attack had not hit the right spot. Even though the scene of soil flying up into the air was spectacular, there seemed to be something wrong with it.

Subsequently, the soil fell from the sky like raindrops. Other than a horrifyingly deep trench, there weren't any corpses on the ground.

Torrential attacks subsequently flew at Wan Shenwei and the Dread Division from all directions.

Wan Shenwei looked as if he expected to be attacked. Without any hesitation, he led his soldiers and charged forward. The storm of attacks from the blood elementalists missed their targets. Even though the continuous slash attacks from the Dread Division had produced remarkable results, Wan Shenwei did not indulge in the pleasure of massacring the enemy forces. Even though his actions looked rash, his mind was unusually calm. Having been through countless battles, he was able to maintain his rationality and

composure in any situation.

He had not forgotten the original plan.

He did not care about killing He Nanshan or investigating the odd-looking bubble. Along with the Dread Division, he charged and killed his way toward the central camp like an invincible sword.

In an unremarkable corner of the camp, an enormous blood bubble suddenly rose from a blood pool. Following which, the blood bubble popped and revealed He Nanshan and his subordinates.

A fearful look appeared on all of their faces at the same time. Even though they managed to escape, they felt as if they had just taken a trip to the gates of hell when they were locked on by the Dread Division.

He Nanshan heaved a sigh of relief. They had narrowly escaped.

The Dread Division was unimaginably powerful.

The confidence he had in the God Spirit Division was derived not only from the usual training sessions, but from the unique structure of the God Spirit Division as well. Among the six god divisions, there were two that were slightly special. One was the God Spirit Division, while the other was the God Shaman Division.

A god elementalist's training emphasized an individual's body constitution and innate skills more so than an elementalist's. A person's potential for success could be determined at the start of his or her training. Among god elementalists, there were many god guards. Compared to the number of god guards, there were much fewer god shamans. The rarest type of god elementalist was the god priest.

Therefore, in the God Nation, god priests had the highest status, followed by god shamans. God guards had the lowest status.

He Nanshan was a god priest. His personal escorts were the famous "Lesser Nanshans." The Lesser Nanshans were the only unit in the God Nation that was entirely made up of god priests.

When he saw the Dread Division charge toward the central camp, he felt happy instead of fearful.

The central camp was of the utmost importance and would always be the first target of the enemy forces. Therefore, he had set up a huge number of defensive arrangements around the central camp. There were layers of protection and countless traps set up around it, making it impregnable.

The Dread Division was really too powerful. However, they wouldn't last long. The constant depletion of their strength would cause them to reveal their weaknesses.

God priests were not meant to be sacrificed.

He and the surrounding god priests descended into the blood pool and disappeared.

The entire encampment was like a surging sea of blood. Roars resounded everywhere. Some contained insanity, some contained hysteria, and some contained resentment, but all of them contained zeal. Some faces were sinisters, some were solemn, and some were cold, but none of them were without fear. The splattering blood and the flares from explosions were equally dazzling. No one avoided the collisions between the gorgeous elemental energy glows and the demonic bloody glows.

One by one, the blood elementalists fell like reaped wheat.

Ximen Caijue's childlike face was cold and emotionless. She pulled and released the bowstring of her small bow with lightning speed.

No one could see her movements clearly.

An arrow surrounded by a green glow flew through the densely-packed blood elementalists and appeared at the side of a god priest's forehead.

Pop!

The god priest's head exploded like a shattered watermelon. The blood elementalists around him were stunned. Following which, they frantically looked for the sniper who had assassinated the god

priest.

Ximen Caijue had long since disappeared from the scene.

She was like a swift-moving wisp of mist. No one could track her down. The toy-like bow in her hand was like Death itself. It specifically targeted enemy commanders, blood elementalists with an Ability of God, and god priests. Until now, the number of enemy commanders and blood elementalists with an Ability of God who she had slain totaled more than 20 people.

When an unit of blood elementalists lost their unit leader, their formation would fall into disarray. Even though they still possessed a numerical advantage, the threat they posed was reduced significantly. Blood elementalists with an Ability of God had immense destructive powers, especially when ordinary soldiers were helping them. The most sinister blood elementalists were the seemingly delicate god priests. They were hidden among the crowd, making it very difficult to spot them. Their sudden psychic attacks would cause her soldiers misjudge and make tactical errors. In such an intense battle, where they were severely outnumbered by the enemy forces, tactical errors were enough to cost them their lives.

Ximen Caijue's killing efficiency was terrifying, greatly affecting the enemy forces' operations. Even so, the soldiers of the Judgement Division continued to die one by one. The enemy had far too many men.

Ximen Caijue's face was ice-cold. The Judgement Division had never suffered such heavy casualties before, but she wasn't blinded

by anger or grief. They had not invaded the enemy encampment with great difficulty just to commit murder and arson here.

With her peerless speed and skills, she wasn't at all worried about being targeted by the enemy forces.

Soaring high in the sky, she clearly oversaw the entire battlefield.

The Dread Division was piercing through the enemy forces like an invincible sword while the Judgement Division protected the flanks like "wings." With their flanks protected, the Dread Division was able to push forward with all its might.

The elementalist who was in charge of protecting the Dread Division's left flank was an elemental Master who dual-wielded swords. He was like a high-speed spinning top that destroyed everything in its path.

Meanwhile, the elementalist protecting the Dread Division's right flank was surrounded by light streaks. The light streaks moved so fast that they blurred. They resembled a school of nimble-moving fish that swam around the elementalist. Every now and then, a light streak would shoot out and someone from the enemy forces would collapse to the ground. These people could only see the blurry tail of a light streak before they died.

Ring pommel saber, glabella saber, and iron saber were the three sabers of the Judgement Division.

Looking down from the sky, she could see that the blood elementalists continued to gather in front of the Dread Division. There were also many places illuminated by a faint bloody glow. Nothing could escape Ximen Caijue's sharp eyes. Was it a trap? However, when Ximen Caijue recalled that the enemy leader had hidden himself, her lips curled into a sneer.

Suddenly, she disappeared.

The streaks of bloody glow flitted across the position where she had previously been and missed their target.

The next moment, Ximen Caijue's high-pitched and cold voice suddenly rang out in the sky above the Judgement Division, "Judgement, [Aerial Seal]!"

The Judgement Division soldiers heard Ximen Caijue's order and roared in unison, "Judgement, [Aerial Seal]."

Following which, a spectacular scene appeared on the battlefield.

Countless light beams rose into the air from the left and right sides of the Judgement Division and arced toward the sky above the Dread Division. In a flash, a sharp whistle engulfed the battlefield.

Hiding in one corner of the encampment, a feeling of extreme danger rose in He Nanshan's heart. However, it was now too late for him to react.

A petite figure suddenly appeared at the rear of the Judgement Division.

Twang! Twang! Twang!

The sound of a bowstring being pulled and loosed echoed throughout the encampment.

Three green arrows pierced through the countless light beams in the sky. The chaotic light beams suddenly gave off a buzz before forming an enormous disk. Within the disk, there were complicated-looking veins. The disk, which resembled a gigantic seal that was carved with utmost care, landed on the densely-packed blood elementalists in front of the Dread Division.

At this moment, time seemed to freeze.

Then, intertwining cracks appeared on the bodies of the blood elementalists within the glimmering seal.

Pffff!

There was a very soft sound of blood spurting, yet an extremely horrifying and gory scene unfolded before everyone's eyes. Blood fountained out of the cracks on the blood elementalists' bodies like a water jet. The few thousand people in the glimmering seal were dismembered piecemeal by the razor-sharp elemental energy.

Like statues that had been sundered, the body parts of those few thousand people fell to the ground as a lake of blood began to pool.

This scene, reminiscent of the river Acheron, rendered the surrounding blood elementalists dumbstruck. A momentary dead silence swept across the enormous encampment. The blood elementalists had been through countless battles, but had never seen such a gory, frightening, and hellish scene before.

The Dread Division seized this opportunity and advanced a few hundred meters.

They were getting closer to the central camp!

He Nanshan was stunned. However, his mind jolted, and he quickly yelled, "Protect the camp! Stop them!"

Currently, he no longer wanted to withhold the fact that his plan had been completely foiled by the Dread Division’s earth-shaking offensive. Could he hold back the Dread Division? He was not sure and did not dare to think about it. All he could do was keep on sending soldiers to stop them.

Ximen Caijue locked onto He Nanshan. However, she had expended too much energy to execute the [Aerial Seal] just now. Furthermore, He Nanshan was heavily guarded as well. Her gaze shifted to the battlefield. The [Aerial Seal] had not only expended a huge amount of her energy, it had also caused the Judgement Division to suffer heavy losses. In the blink of an eye, more than 10 soldiers had been sacrificed.

Ximen Caijue remained calm. The merciful couldn’t take command of an army. Deaths were bound to happen on the battlefield. Furthermore, this mission was supposed to be perilous. Dying was considered normal while surviving was considered fortunate.

A good leader, however, had to make sure the sacrifices were meaningful.

When she saw that the blood elementalists who had surrounded the central camp were now surging toward the Dread Division like a tsunami, her eyes lit up.

She had accomplished her goal!

After regaining some of her strength, she entered the battle again.

Chapter 582: Hostage

Everyone's attention was caught by the frantically advancing Dread and Judgement divisions. They had never seen such an unstoppable offensive. He Nanshan had tried various methods, but still could not stop their advance. The central camp was facing imminent danger!

At this point in time, every blood elementalist could only think of one thing. They must not let the enemy forces reach the central camp!

If they could not think of a solution, they had to sacrifice their lives to hinder the Dread and Judgement divisions' progress.

All out!

The immense pressure caused the blood elementalists to make deadly mistakes. The blood elementalists who previously provided strict security at the other end of the central camp were now heading toward the position of the Dread Division to provide reinforcement, leaving only a few units back there to stand guard.

An unnoticeable wisp of black smoke silently drifted into the central camp through an unguarded area.

The central camp did not consist of just one tent. It was a circular area where rows of tents were set up. The central camp was where Ye Baiyi spent his daily life, where meetings took place, etc. Nowadays, many tents were occupied by Nangong Wulian. He had

brought a lot of equipment and various ingredients with him.

In an isolated corner, the wisp of black smoke touched the ground and Song Yan and Tie Dao appeared. Both of them had changed into the attire of a blood elementalist commander.

Both of them looked at each other excitedly.

In the central camp, the Beast Venom Temple's god priests were like a bunch of headless flies that were frightened easily. Their faces were filled with panic and fear. Usually, they lived like kings in the Beast Venom Temple. Since when had they ever been in such a situation? All of their legs became like wet noodles as their faces became pale-white.

Nangong Wulian also felt very anxious, but when he saw his subordinates' behavior, he chided them, "What are all of you panicking for?! Humph, the number of men that the Dread and Judgement Divisions have is so few that they will burn out very soon. As long as they don't break through the defensive line, we are safe."

On the surface, he appeared strong-willed, but deep down he regretted coming to the front line.

However, he could not defy His Majesty's order. After thinking about it, he could only blame himself. He shouldn't have sought credit from His Majesty at that time.

The roars and sounds of battles from outside set off his fear and trepidation.

Suddenly, he discovered that his surroundings were empty. There were no blood elementalist guards around him, which immediately enraged him. "Where is everyone? Where have they gone? How come there is no one protecting me?"

One of his subordinates hesitated for a while before replying, "Sir, you have instructed them not to get close to this tent."

It was at this point that Nangong Wulian remembered what had happened. He felt the patrolling soldiers were too noisy and that they were disturbing him from doing his research. Therefore, he had set this place as forbidden area.

He allowed only a few soldiers to guard the central camp. He Nanshan and his counterparts were allowed to enter the central camp only if they had something urgent to report to Nangong Wulian.

The invasion came too abruptly and too aggressively. He Nanshan and his counterparts had been struggling under the immense pressure that the Dread and Judgement division exerted. They could not execute the usual reactionary plan and had no time to worry about the central camp.

Nangong Wulian felt more and more uneasy. With a stern voice, he said, "Go and find someone to protect me! Tell He Nanshan that if anything happens to me, His Majesty will sentence him and his

family to death!"

The few god priests quickly appeased Nangong Wulian and left the tent in a hurry.

Not far away, Song Yan and Tie Dao were searching the central camp. They were surprised at how empty the central camp was. Previously, they were still worried that the enemy forces had set up a vacant central camp to trick them. However, when they heard the words, "Go and find someone to protect me," their eyes lit up.

The two of them looked each other in eyes. With perfect coordination, they silently crept in the direction of the voice.

Subsequently, they saw Nangong Wulian. Previously, they had already memorized the face of Nangong Wulian. Therefore, they could recognize him with a single glance. Both of them were overjoyed as they had not expected their mission to proceed so smoothly.

Nangong Wulian was panting heavily. The sounds of battles were getting closer to him. The feeling of fear in his heart was growing stronger as well. He felt like he was a fish that had been thrown ashore and was having more and more difficulty breathing properly.

That goddamned He Nanshan!

Nangong Wulian had to survive and teach him a lesson! How

dare He Nanshan fail to send people to protect me!"

Suddenly, the head of his subordinate dropped to the ground in front of him as blood spurted out of the severed neck like a fountain.

Nangong Wulian’s pupils dilated. He wanted to scream, but couldn’t do so as a chilly tinge flowed down his neck. The sharp blade of a sword made of all his hair stand on end. Then, a ghost-like voice came from behind his back, "If I was you, I would keep my mouth shut."

The scream that was about to leave his mouth became a whimper.

Nangong Wulian’s face was pale-white. He feared that a slight movement of the other party’s fingers would cost him his life.

"Where is Ye Baiyi?"

Even though he couldn’t see who the other party was, his voice was so cold that it resembled the voice of a devil from hell.

Nangong Wulian swallowed his saliva with difficulty and pointed shakingly to the largest tent, "He... He is there."

Song Yan held Nangong Wulian at swordpoint and walked toward the tent. Tie Dao grasped a broadsword with a vigilant look on his face.

As they walked into the tent, Song Yan and Tie Dao’s facial expressions changed. Ye Baiyi was lying unconscious in an ice coffin that emitted traces of cold air. However, his deep and terrifying heartbeat made him appear like a huge dragon that was hibernating.

Even if a huge dragon was in a deep slumber, one could not ignore its might.

"What’s the situation with Ye Baiyi? When is he going to wake up?" Song Yan asked.

Nangong Wulian whimpered, "I don’t know when he will wake up either... Grant me amnesty and I am willing to pay any price and will surrender to you. As long as you give me amnesty, I will join Skyheart City. I am the palace master of the Beast Venom Temple. I have conducted a wide range of research, and you will definitely be interested in them..."

Nangong Wulian stopped talking all of a sudden. His eyes were wide open as he couldn’t believe what had just happened. He wanted to talk, but only a muffled and incoherent sound came out of his mouth.

His neck had been sliced open. Blood gushed out of his neck as immense pain flooded him like a tidal wave.

He really couldn’t believe what had just happened. He was the palace master of the Beast Venom Temple and possessed so many

secrets. How could they bear to kill him? Were they not interested in the secrets of the God Nation? He still had so many research results...

Why...

These mad men...

Song Yan casually threw Nangong Wulian's corpse to the ground.

"One hostage is enough," he said emotionlessly.

"All right," Tie Dao replied.

A glass bamboo vial appeared in Song Yan's hand. He crushed it and poured the snow lava over Nangong Wulian's corpse. Flames quickly rose from the snow lava and devoured Nangong Wulian's corpse. In the blink of an eye, his corpse was reduced to nothing but ashes.

Tie Dao then dug up the charred soil and threw it into a blood pool.

This incursion was a perfect start, but it was only the beginning of the entire war. The Beast Venom Temple's countless methods had stricken fear in them. A slight moment of carelessness would result in devastating consequences.

By destroying Nangong Wulian's corpse in this manner, the enemy forces would not know whether he was alive or dead. Plus, Ye Baiyi would be in their hands. Nangong Wulian's value in this war paled in comparison to Ye Baiyi's. Whether Nangong Wulian was dead or alive, his impact on the front line blood elementalists wasn't huge. However, with Ye Baiyi in their hands, the blood elementalists at the front line would definitely descend into chaos.

Ye Baiyi had an unrivaled impact on the blood elementalist combat divisions. He had single-handedly formed the six god divisions and the twelve blood divisions. His prestige among the blood elementalists was matchless. Not even Red Devil's reputation could be compared to his.

As long as they could take down Ye Baiyi, the tides would shift in this lopsided war.

Neither of them let their guard down. Tie Dao swung his broadsword heavily on the ice coffin. The ice coffin shattered with a loud bang, and Ye Baiyi fell to the ground. Tie Dao carefully placed his sword against Ye Baiyi's neck, but Ye Baiyi remained unconscious and motionless.

At this moment, they could hear hurried footsteps getting closer to them. They immediately picked up Ye Baiyi and ran in the opposite direction of the tent.

The blood elementalists who rushed over were Ye Baiyi's personal guards. When they saw the empty tent, their facial expressions changed drastically.

Then, they saw an opening on the other side of the tent.

"Chase them!" the leader of the personal guards yelled anxiously.

He Nanshan was under immense pressure since their defensive line was thinning. There were a few times that Ximen Caijue's cold arrows almost struck him, and it had been the two experts beside him that warded off the arrows. One was dead while the other was severely injured.

Before today, he had never thought that there existed such a terrifying combat division in the world.

Even though the blood elementalists outnumbered the elementalists 15 times over, He Nanshan had never once obtained the upper hand. The enemy forces had taken control of the rhythm of the battle. Whether it was the level of the leadership or the level of the soldiers, they had been completely outclassed by the enemy forces.

Suddenly, the Dread and Judgement divisions changed directions, as if they wanted to attack from another angle.

"Defend!" He Nanshan roared at the top of his lungs.

Countless blood elementalists gathered to form a thick defensive line, preparing to withstand the onslaught of the Dread and Judgement divisions.

However, no one expected for these two divisions to suddenly turn around and retreat.

All the blood elementalists were stunned before cheering at the top of their lungs. They had defeated the enemy forces! Even though the enemy forces barely had 1,000 soldiers, the suffocating pressure they exerted was able to destabilize any defensive line. When the Dread and Judgement divisions retreated, the physically and mentally exhausted blood elementalists felt as if they had won a battle. One could tell how much pressure the Dread and Judgement divisions had given them.

He Nanshan's facial expression changed drastically, however, as he felt a strong sense of unease.

"It's not good! General Ye and Sir Nangong have been kidnapped by the enemy!"

He Nanshan nearly blacked out as he almost fell to the ground. His brain buzzed loudly, resembling someone who had been punched in the temple. His face was deathly pale. The fact that General Ye and Sir Nangong had been kidnapped under his nose would definitely earn him a death sentence!

An intense fear engulfed his mind. Not only him but all the officers around him had their faces turned pale at this moment.

He Nanshan bit the tip of his tongue, causing a sweet bloody taste to pervade his mouth. The pain calmed him down. "Chase them!"

He knew if he didn’t save General Ye and Sir Nangong, they would not need to return to the God Nation anymore. Dying on the battlefield would not implicate their family members, but if they returned to the God Nation now, they would be trialed as sinners and their families would also be charged.

At this point, he threw all his worries to the back of his mind.

Everyone knew that this was the time for them to go all-out. This was the only chance for them to survive. No, it wasn’t a chance for them to survive, but rather, a chance for them to redeem themselves. The fear instilled by the Dread and Judgement division just now had completely vanished. Currently, they were in dire straits.

Chapter 583: Reunion

The Surveillance Division camp.

Xiao Shan was packing his luggage. Suddenly, someone knocked on his door. Without turning around, he answered, "Come in."

It was Xiao Lin. He looked at Xiao Shan with a complicated expression on his face.

The two of them were extremely familiar with each other. Xiao Shan knew it was Xiao Lin without even turning around. He continued to pack his luggage and asked, "Are you here to send me off?"

With a heavy heart, Xiao Lin replied, "You're going to the front line soon, so how could I not send you off?"

After fastening the last rope of his luggage, Xiao Shan turned around and replied plainly, "I am merely going to the front line. It's not like we are never going to see each other again."

Xiao Lin did not reply to Xiao Shan. It was ominous to talk about death when one was packing his or her luggage. He changed the topic and said, "Sir will not be coming to send you off. He said that since all of you have decided to go the front line, fight with all your might and don't be cowards."

Xiao Shan had already expected that the Division Leader

wouldn’t personally send him off. He replied calmly, "Of course we won’t. Tell him that I’m really sorry for implicating him this time around."

The more Xiao Shan appeared calm, the more uneasy Xiao Lin felt. He very much missed the time spent in the Old Territory. Even though they led an arduous life back then, they were like a big family without any barriers between each other.

The current Surveillance Division had become divided. The harmonious and united atmosphere no longer existed.

"How many people are going with you?" Xiao Lin asked.

"352," Xiao Shan replied with an exact number.

Xiao Lin remained speechless. The Surveillance Division had a total of 1,500 troops. Now they were only left with 1148 soldier. Nearly one-third of them chose to follow Xiao Shan to the front line.

They were utterly disappointed in Nian Tingfeng.

Xiao Lin had a lot of words to say, but the moment they reached his mouth, they simply became just one sentence, "Make sure they survive."

When Xiao Shan heard this sentence, the calm look on his face disappeared and was replaced by a solemn look.

"I will try my best. You should know that I am not really good in war-related matters, so I can’t promise you that."

"No one can make any promises now." Xiao Lin shook his head.

"Everyone is well aware of the situation. All of them just want to die at the right place. The best elite unit in the world shouldn’t die at home," Xiao Shan replied.

Xiao Lin felt extremely ashamed. He opened his mouth, but no words came out.

Xiao Shan patted his shoulder.

"I’m leaving now."

.....

The war banner of the Spear of Heavy Cloud Division became the most eye-catching symbol for the combat divisions that had retreated from the front line. Fearing that they would be plundered by the Lightning Razor, all of them carried the war banner of the Spear of Heavy Cloud in every city they traveled through.

The Spear of Heavy Cloud’s war banner became the war banner that everyone was most familiar with.

After entering the Wilderness, the number of combat divisions had been declining. There was no other singular combat division that had its war banner appear in so many cities, and this phenomena was discussed many people.

After receiving Iron Lady's letter, Ai Hui immediately knew her intentions.

He no longer cared about the combat divisions that he encountered along the way and headed for the defensive line at the Windy Pearl Bridge at full speed.

The size of the Fish Bone was too large, so its flying speed wasn't that fast. Besides this, Ai Hui also had to do something with the abundance of resources they now had.

The Fish Bone bustled with activity.

Under Lou Lan's leadership, countless blacksmiths were forging the bases for pagoda cannons, refining snow lava, and making various mechanical components. These components would be used to modify and improve the Fish Bone.

Back in the day, when Ai Hui and Lou Lan were constructing the Fish Bone, they lacked manpower and had to deploy the children living in the Central Pine Valley. Now that they had enough manpower and resources, they could fulfill Ai Hui's original design for the Fish Bone, which had been previously uncompleted.

The current Fish Bone was an ugly and simple prototype. Other than flying and some defensive capabilities, it had no other functions.

These mechanical components would allow the Fish Bone to become more powerful and exquisite.

.....

Nowadays, Ke Ning was extremely busy. After joining the Spear of Heavy Cloud, he had been tasked with an important responsibility. Shi Xueman felt that he was a talent and let him travel around as a new recruit to contact those elementalists who wanted to seek revenge.

Ke Ning was originally a division leader. After his combat division was decimated, he wasn't willing to return and pledged to seek revenge. His background and experience allowed him to bond with the other survivors who wanted to seek revenge as well.

He had contacted a batch of survivors to settle the preparations for the establishment of the Pagoda Cannon Alliance.

Shi Xueman had explicitly told Ke Ning that the Spear of Heavy Cloud had completed its recruiting process and that the newly established Pagoda Cannon Alliance would be entirely led by Ai Hui. Ke Ning's mission was to pave the way first.

However, Ke Ning felt this was the most troublesome issue.

Ke Ning believed that if Shi Xueman had been the one who established the Pagoda Cannon Alliance, the survivors would not hesitate to join. However, when they heard that Ai Hui was the founder, they became hesitant.

Nowadays, Ai Hui was an absolutely infamous individual. "The Lightning Razor" was his new nickname.

It was hard to get people to believe in someone who was plundering innocent people at such a critical moment.

Ke Ning had put in a lot of effort, but the outcome was still undesirable. Those survivors begged him to ask Division Leader Shi for a favor and to let them join the Spear of Heavy Cloud Division.

Ke Ning had mentioned this issue to Division Leader Shi a few times, but was mercilessly rejected by her every time.

He had long heard that Division Leader Shi and Ai Hui were lovers. Now, he was 100 percent certain that this was definitely not a rumor. The thing that stunned him the most was that Division Leader Shi transferred him to the Pagoda Cannon Alliance just so that he could focus on the preparations for the establishment of the Pagoda Cannon Alliance.

This implied that, from now on, Ke Ning no longer belonged to

the Spear of Heavy Cloud, but rather, to the currently empty Pagoda Cannon Alliance!

Ke Ning felt like he had been struck by a lightning bolt.

He finally recovered after being depressed for a few days.

However, this blow had helped him a lot with his task. Those people who begged Ke Ning felt guilty over his transfer to the Pagoda Cannon Alliance and decided to join the alliance. Some people felt that Ke Ning was a loyal and trustworthy individual, so they felt that following Ke Ning to fight against the blood elementalists wasn't a bad idea after all.

Unknowingly, the Pagoda Cannon Alliance that Ke Ning was preparing had grown to around 800 people. Right now, they were waiting for the arrival of Ai Hui, but generally speaking, none of them felt excited.

Suddenly, someone rushed into the room and yelled, "He has arrived, he has arrived! The Lightning Razor is here!"

Everyone, who had been resting, rushed out of the room. No matter what, Ai Hui was directly linked to their future. With regards to Ai Hui's leadership, some were indifferent, some were unhappy, and some were hopeful. However, no matter what attitudes they had, they could not ignore Ai Hui's existence.

As the colossal Fish Bone gradually approached, an absolute

silence descended upon the entire encampment.

Everyone's mouths fell open as they stared at the sky with blank looks on their faces.

Everyone was used to seeing the God-subduing Peaks. After all, the Spear of Heavy Cloud's camp wasn't far away, and they could see the two God-subduing Peaks every day. However, when an enormous mountain that was a few times bigger than a God-subduing Peak approached them, they were awed by its repressing aura.

Every combat division that stood in the path of the Lightning Razor had had all their resources and manpower seized. As such, there had already been many discussions on the oversized God-subduing Peak analog. The blueprints for the God-subduing Peaks were the Elders Guild's absolutely classified information. Given the relationship between Skyheart City and the Central Pine Valley, the former would definitely not give these blueprints to to the latter.

Looking at the Fish Bone, one could tell that Ai Hui had a deep understanding of elemental traces. One could also tell that the Central Pine Valley's wealth was far greater than what everyone had expected. The cost of building a God-subduing Peak was huge. Since it was larger than a God-subduing Peak, the cost of building the Fish Bone was definitely sky-high

After a while, surprised gasps broke out in the encampment.

"It’s really huge!"

"So this is the Fish Bone? I heard the Central Pine Valley is part of it as well!"

"It is a colossus!"

The doubt in everyone’s eyes had disappeared. The Fish Bone, which was even larger than a God-subduing Peak, was a stark symbol of strength. No one who saw it doubted the destructive power that it possessed. Being the person who had designed and built it, Ai Hui’s image in everyone’s heart had improved significantly.

Ke Ning’s eyes lit up. How many pagoda cannons could be deployed on such a gigantic mountain!

When he thought of equipping the Fish Bone with numerous pagoda cannons and transforming it into a pagoda cannon porcupine, his blood raced through his veins.

Things that were massive in size would always give people a sense of power and security. When Ke Ning saw such a gigantic entity hovering above his head, he felt much more at ease.

Shi Xueman and the rest had already reached the Fish Bone.

They examined it and clicked their tongues in wonder. Every now and then, they would touch it to get a feel for it. Previously,

when they heard that Ai Hui was heading to the front line, they were worried about what was going to happen to the Central Pine Valley. They had not expected for him to bring the entire Central Pine Valley and Blackfish Mouth Volcano over.

Everyone tacitly left Ai Hui and Shi Xueman alone.

Both of them sat on a huge boulder at the peak of Blackfish Mouth Volcano as they looked at the soaring wind canopy of the distant Windy Pearl Bridge. This sight was extremely spectacular.

"Your injury hasn’t healed yet?" Shi Xueman glanced at Ai Hui and asked.

"I have no solutions for the time being." Ai Hui glanced back at Shi Xueman. He had an unusually sharp perception, furrowed his eyebrows, grasped Shi Xueman’s hand, and asked, "Are you injured?"

Shi Xueman was slightly panicked when Ai Hui held her hand. She tried to force herself to stay calm.

Humph, what was there to be panicked about?

She quickly regained her composure and felt a warmth coming from the bandages that covered the hand which was holding her palm.

Ai Hui nodded his head and said, "Oh, you can’t get rid of the

impurities that were caused by forcibly absorbing natural elemental energies into your body. This is indeed troublesome."

"I already have a solution. It’s effective, but it will take some time," Shi Xueman replied.

"Let me see if there are any better solutions." Ai Hui then changed the topic, "You have done a great job with the last few battles, especially the one against the Ardent Flower Blood Division. That one is a classic."

"Really? It is difficult to hear praise from your mouth."

"Of course. If you had fought even better, I would not have to come."

"Haha, it’s not good for the debtor to sleep while the creditor is busting her ass off."

"The debtor is always the boss, and a boss gets sleepy easily."

"When are you paying back the money?"

"Wow, the texture of your hand is quite good."

"Why are you still holding my hand?"

"I am checking your injury."

"Have you finished checking?"

"We have to be prudent with injuries. Come, let me see your other hand."

Chapter 584: Treatment

He had not touched her hands in vain.

Both of them sat cross-legged facing each other. With his head lowered, Ai Hui's left hand held Shi Xueman's right hand and his right hand grasped the hilt of his sword. Small, fragmented lightning streaks swam around his body. Every now and then, a cracking sound would pop off.

Opposite him, Shi Xueman's eyes were tightly shut, her face was flushed, and traces of mist rose from her body.

Ai Hui's solution wasn't very complicated. He directed the sword cloud in his body to Shi Xueman's five residences and eight palaces. The lightning attribute of the sword cloud could remove elemental energy.

This solution carried a very huge risk as well as side effects.

First, it required Shi Xueman to be totally relaxed. In such a state, the elemental energy in her body would not reject Ai Hui's sword cloud, allowing the sword cloud to enter her five residences and eight palaces. Second, Ai Hui needed to have precise control over his sword cloud. Only by having meticulous control over his sword cloud could he then remove the impurities without damaging Shi Xueman's five residences and eight palaces.

The side effect was that the lightning from Ai Hui's sword cloud would not only remove the remnant impurities, but would also

remove some of Shi Xueman's water elemental energy. This would cause her five residences and eight palaces to degenerate.

However, at this point in time, such small side effects were insignificant. Shi Xueman was already a Master. It was not very difficult for her to strengthen her five residences and eight palaces. Furthermore, with Lou Lan's customized elemental soup, she could quickly and fully recover after spending some time cultivating.

Like a white wall that was accidentally smeared with other colors, Ai Hui's solution was to remove the entire layer of paint on the wall and repaint it white again.

Even Shi Xueman was surprised by Ai Hui's solution of using a minor injury to heal a major injury. Frequently, she wanted to pry open this fellow's skull to see what was inside. How could he always come up with so many weird ideas? Ai Hui's ideas were always illogical, leaving people flabbergasted. At the same time, they were awe-inspiring.

Without a doubt, this was a good solution.

Of course, other people couldn't think of this solution since they weren't like Ai Hui, who could control the sword cloud and the lightning streaks with great precision.

Shi Xueman was a decisive individual. Without any hesitation, she agreed to this idea.

Even though the remnant impurities were very difficult to remove, the severity of their corrosion on her five residences and eight palaces wasn’t high.

Shi Xueman was very curious about what exactly Ai Hui would do.

Ai Hui’s sword cloud was a soft cloud. It engulfed Shi Xueman’s water elemental energy and caused her to carry out Circulatory Cycle Revolutions automatically.

To Shi Xueman’s surprise, this soft sword cloud did not affect her control over elemental energy. This was the first time she had encountered such a freakish phenomenon.

Ai Hui, this fellow, was simply filled with eccentricity.

As her body carried out Circulatory Cycle Revolutions, the impurities that corroded her five residences and eight palaces were slowly removed. The sword cloud was extremely sharp like a razor. It shaved away Shi Xueman’s corroded elemental energy as well.

To Shi Xueman, this was a test of willpower.

Time silently passed.

"All right, it’s done," Ai Hui’s voice was hoarse.

Shi Xueman opened her eyes. Opposite her, Ai Hui was drenched in sweat with his body on the verge of collapse.

"Are you okay?" Shi Xueman was worried.

"I will be fine after taking a break," Ai Hui’s voice displayed his weariness.

Shi Xueman suddenly stood up, picked up Ai Hui, and carried him in her arms.

The tottering Ai Hui widened his eyes abruptly. With a terrified voice, he said, "Hey, hey, hey, what are you doing! Let me down! Quickly let me down!"

Shi Xueman turned a deaf ear to Ai Hui and replied, "You can’t even move your fingers right now."

Even though Ai Hui was a shameless individual, his face still burned with embarrassment when a girl carried him in her arms. Out of humiliation, he raged, "Hey, hey, hey, you are an ungrateful girl! Quickly let me down! I can walk on my own!"

"Don’t worry, no one is looking," Shi Xueman replied casually.

At that moment, the door flap of the tent suddenly flipped open. Dazzling sunlight shone into the tent.

Shi Xueman froze. Ai Hui froze.

Jiang Wei and Sang Zhijun, who were here to invite Ai Hui and Shi Xueman over for a meeting, stood at the entrance with flabbergasted looks on their faces. They widened their eyes, unable to believe what they were seeing. Time and space seemed to have frozen at this moment.

Sang Zhijun stammered, "What... What are the both of you doing..."

Jiang Wei pulled Sang Zhijun away and left the tent. Without turning around, he said, "Continue what you were doing. We never saw anything."

Shi Xueman felt her face burning. She wished she could find a hole and hide in it. What had just happened?

Ai Hui’s eyes as wide as the eyes of a cow. At this moment, he felt as if 10,000 cows had just trampled over him. He felt like dying!

Thump.

Shi Xueman threw Ai Hui onto the bed like a burlap bag.

Ai Hui felt a wave of pain sweep through his body and blurted out, "Ouch!

The blushing Shi Xueman escaped in a panic.

"Hey, hey, hey, how can you treat your benefactor like this? Hey, hey, hey! Come back! Let's talk about it first. How much money do I owe you this time..."

Ai Hui's yelling almost made Shi Xueman go back to give him a good beating.

With a bright-red face, she gritted her teeth and ran off.

This affection was brief. Of course, whether or not they were affectionate would have to depend on the person who was looking at them. Everyone saw things according to their own perspective. In everyone else's eyes, they were considered affectionate when they were not fighting. Only Jiang Wei and Sang Zhijun knew that there was more to it when they saw them.

The current situation was dire. Everyone had responsibilities and numerous daily tasks.

The next morning, Ai Hui was awakened by Lou Lan's energetic shout.

"Everyone, meal time!"

Ai Hui felt the entire Fish Bone shaking. Cheers could be heard coming from every nook and cranny of the Fish Bone. Lou Lan's cheerful voice made everyone realize how beautiful this world was.

After checking his body, Ai Hui was surprised to find his body wasn’t damaged much.

As for Iron Lady’s injury, she would be fully healed after a few more sessions. When Ai Hui thought of this, he felt slightly pleased with himself. Such a troublesome injury was easily taken care of in his hands!

Nowadays, he was already used to his weak and delicate body. Indeed, he had to face the reality sooner or later.

Crying and whining wouldn’t solve the problem.

As he walked out from his tent, the warm and cozy sunlight shone on his body. Filled with contentment, Ai Hui stretched out. When he saw some people crying piteously for food, he was stunned. Almost all the core members of the Spear of Cloud Division were here, and they were looking blankly at Lou Lan.

When Lou Lan saw Ai Hui, his eyes lit up. Immediately, he took a bowl of elemental soup and dashed over to Ai Hui, "Ai Hui, it’s meal time!"

Under everyone’s jealous gaze, Ai Hui grinned and felt extremely pleased with himself. "Thank you, Lou Lan."

Ai Hui bluntly took the bowl of elemental soup, downed it in one gulp, and wiped his mouth. He still wanted more, but he currently

couldn’t drink that much elemental soup. After his five residences and eight palaces were destroyed, the elemental energy system within his body was completely warped. Without the five residences and eight palaces, he couldn’t absorb the huge amount of elemental energy in the elemental soup.

"Eh, why is everyone here?" Ai Hui asked.

Everyone rolled their eyes at him and continued wolfing down the elemental soup.

"Lou Lan belongs to everyone!" someone yelled.

Immediately, a commotion broke out.

Everyone drooled when they thought of Lou Lan’s elemental soup. None of them could restrain themselves and began to refill their bowls. Currently, the Fish Bone had an abundance of ingredients. They were no longer poverty-stricken like in the past. The elemental soup was now free-flowing. As long as one could digest and absorb the elemental energy in the elemental soup, he or she could drink as much as he or she wanted.

Being unable to absorb the elemental energy in the elemental soup wasn’t as simple as a digestion problem caused by overeating. The accumulated elemental energy would negatively impact one’s body.

Ai Hui chuckled and did not raise any objections. He looked

around and asked, "Where’s Iron Lady?"

"Xueman said she is busy today and will not be coming," Lou Lan replied.

Ai Hui rubbed his chin and thought of the scene yesterday. He felt slightly regretful and sighed. Why had he not flirted with her more when he had the chance to do so yesterday? He really shouldn't have cared so much about losing face. He had to be thick-skinned like Fatty.

"A’hui! A’hui!" Fatty ran toward him excitedly.

Ai Hui shuddered. Had he accidentally spoken out his thoughts? He coughed softly and tried to maintain his composure. Then, he examined Fatty with a melodramatic look on his face and said, "Not bad, Fatty. You have become a Master. I underestimated you in the past."

All along, Fatty wanted to show off to Ai Hui. When he heard Ai Hui’s words, he felt extremely pleased with himself, but did not display it. Instead, he replied with a solemn tone, "I can’t always embarrass you. Come, come, let me show you my Beehive Heavy Cannon! Don’t be surprised when you see it!"

Ai Hui was also filled with curiosity regarding Fatty’s Beehive Heavy Cannon. Even though the Hellfire Pagoda Cannon was created by Ai Hui, it was popularized and brought to greater prominence in Fatty’s hands. Even Ai Hui was shocked by Fatty’s transformation.

Ai Hui was looking forward to the pagoda cannon created by the first ever Pagoda Cannon Master.

When Ai Hui saw the Beehive Heavy Cannon, his eyes lit up. "Interesting, Fatty."

"Of course." Fatty smirked.

As Ai Hui walked around the Beehive Heavy Cannon and examined it, his eyes became increasingly bright. From many aspects of the Beehive Heavy Cannon, he could tell that Fatty's understanding of pagoda cannons had exceeded the original scope of the Hellfire Pagoda Cannons.

Li Houtang stood at one side and looked at Ai Hui with disdain.

He was an old-school individual and wasn't used to seeing Ai Hui's "weird appearance." Li Houtang was someone who valued reputation a lot. The nickname "Lightning Razor Ai" made him dislike Ai Hui even more.

Li Houtang felt that Ai Hui had created the Hellfire Pagoda Cannons through luck.

After completely circling around the Beehive Heavy Cannon, Ai Hui spoke with a pompous tone, "There are no major problems. It looks rather good. The work of a Master is indeed extraordinary."

Getting praised by Ai Hui made Fatty beam involuntarily. He replied joyfully, "How can I not improve after spending so much time with you. Feel free to tell me any areas that need to be improved. I am a humble man. Hahaha!"

The last tinge of apprehension in Fatty's heart disappeared. If Ai Hui had not taken a look at it, Fatty would still be uncertain. Since Ai Hui said there were no major problems, then there definitely were no major problems. Fatty trusted Ai Hui with all his heart. Even if he had become a Master, he still trusted Ai Hui like before.

Speaking of becoming a Pagoda Cannon Master, Fatty still did not understand what happened back then.

Li Houtang was annoyed as he snorted, "There aren't any major problems? So you are saying there are some minor problems then? Sir Ai Hui, please give us one or two pointers."

Ai Hui shot a glance at Li Houtang. He did not remember provoking this old fellow before, but why had he been given such an annoyed look?

He waved his hand at Blind He, who was standing to one side, and said "Old He, come and take a look."

Chapter 585: The Dread Division's Plan

Li Houtang gazed doubtfully at Blind He. From what he could see, the young man before him was very feeble and even blind.

How could a blind person become a weaponsmith?

Li Houtang had been a weaponsmith for many years and had never heard of a blind man becoming one.

Blind He kept quiet. He extended his palm, and the eye in the center opened up suddenly, emitting a beam of light. Like a solid light ray, it swept across the Beehive Heavy Cannons one by one. The light ray disappeared, and the eye on his palm closed.

Li Houtang opened his eyes wide in shock. He had never seen such a strange inheritance.

Blind He's current standard was far beyond that of when Ai Hui first found him. Just by looking at the items he forged, one could feel the power contained within. From the initial Cluster White Flames to the Hellfire Pagoda Cannon, from the Sword Pagoda to the Pinwheel Sword, from Pearblossom Dazzling Silver to the Unity Sword and the Fishbone, his scope of knowledge had only been increasing while his abilities skyrocketed.

Blind He flicked his finger gently, causing a peanut sized speck of light to fly out.

The speck of light flew to the front of the Beehive Heavy Cannon’s tube, transforming into an eye-catching light hoop.

Blind He said faintly, "Cut from here."

While Li Houtang felt that the eye in Blind He’s palm was really strange, Blind He’s words angered him. He had never heard of such a careless and baseless modification suggestion!

His anger turned to laughter. "And why’s that?"

Blind He acted as if he had not heard him. He was an arrogant person to begin with who only smiled when facing Lou Lan. He did obey Ai Hui’s instructions, albeit with a cold face.

As for Li Houtang’s question… who was this fellow?

Fatty had utter confidence in Blind He’s abilities. He hurriedly ask, "How do we cut it, Old He?"

Blind He snorted and flicked his finger.

With a clang like the sound of a chime, the front portion of the cannon barrel fell onto the ground. The incision was smooth and seamless.

Li Houtang’s eyes opened wide once again. The Beehive Heavy Cannon’s barrel wasn’t easy to make. It had to be of extremely

high quality in order to endure the high temperature snow lava. It was a cannon barrel that he had created after racking his brain for a long time.

Yet, it shattered like fragile glass in Blind He’s hands.

Fatty, unable to endure any longer, had already started to prop the Beehive Heavy Cannon up.

The internal beehive chamber was flushed red as it buzzed rapidly.

Bzzzz.

Red light beams sprayed out continuously, agitating Fatty. The Beehive Heavy Cannons he had controlled in the past were always somewhat sluggish, but he just couldn’t identify the cause. Now, the sluggishness had completely disappeared, and the hefty Beehive Heavy Cannon actually felt light and nimble in his hands.

Fatty couldn’t help but shout, "This is great! So amazing!"

Shi Xueman had handed complete responsibility of the pagoda cannons to him, causing him to feel enormous pressure. He had never been under such great stress and feared under-performing the most. When he faced problems with the forging of the Beehive Heavy Cannons, he burned with anxiety, like gunpowder on the verge of exploding.

On the other hand, any improvements to the Beehive Heavy Cannon filled him with wild joy.

Li Houtang was dumbstruck. Of course he could recognize quality goods. He had been involved in the creation of the Beehive Heavy Cannon, hence its success and his familiarity with it. But...

He stuttered, "This... how?"

Blind He snorted. "Why must I tell you?"

At that he walked away, ignoring Li Houtang who was as still as a statue at this point.

Ai Hui waved his hands, expressing his innocence, before leaving as well.

.....

In a valley.

The Dread and Judgement divisions were resting, their members' faces filled with exhaustion from executing a long distance surprise attack, raiding the enemy's central camp, and escaping afterward. The enemies chased closely behind like zealots. Only after two days of continuous retreat had they managed to throw off the pursuers and finally get a chance to take a breather.

Even if they had willpower made out of steel, they were completely spent.

Wan Shenwei promptly decided to stop escaping and let everybody rest instead. They only had a short period of time before the enemies would catch up.

The officers of both combat divisions gathered for a meeting.

"... I feel that Nangong Wulian was very dangerous. Although he looked weak, he was the palace master of the Beast Venom Temple after all. I didn't know what he had with him, so I just killed him. I was worried that he might revive or live in another organism as a parasite, so I burned him to ashes with snow lava."

Song Yan and Tie Dao gave a detailed debriefing of the scene at that time, and it went smoothly. There weren't too many suspicious points.

Wan Shenwei nodded. "It's good that you killed him. We only need Ye Baiyi for the following operation. The Beast Venom Temple is very unpredictable. It's better to be more cautious."

The others nodded their heads in agreement.

In their eyes, Nangong Wulian was completely different from Ye Baiyi. Ye Baiyi used to be their comrade, but had chosen to betray the Avalon of Five Elements, thus angering everyone. Yet, his gift

and talent impressed them greatly.

A person like that had chosen to betray the Avalon of Five Elements.

Everybody looked at Ye Baiyi with complicated gazes. There was anger, hatred, reverence, and doubt.

On the other hand, Nangong Wulian was merely a dangerous enemy to them.

Value wise, the success of their following operation depended on Ye Baiyi. Nangong Wulian had his value of course, but he wasn’t crucial.

Everybody surrounded Ye Baiyi, who was still in a deep sleep, looking at him curiously.

Ximen Caijue asked, "Will he wake up suddenly?"

Wan Shenwei shook his head. "No idea."

Song Yan added, "Should we just get rid of him? He Nanshan and the rest don’t know if he’s dead or alive anyway."

"They might know. Blood elementalists have many strange things." Wan Shenwei added, "Plus, we can’t kill him now."

Can’t kill?

Everyone was stunned.

Song Yan’s dagger appeared out of nowhere as he drove it toward Ye Baiyi’s thigh.

Just as the dagger was about to enter his thigh a red glow appeared with a crisp "ding" sound. Song Yan’s dagger couldn’t actually penetrate his skin.

Everybody’s faces changed.

Tie Dao muttered, "What exactly is the Heart of God?"

No one was able to answer him.

A powerful force was hibernating within Ye Baiyi’s body. The moment he was in danger, this force would explode, effectively protecting him. This force was the Heart of God.

Wan Shenwei and his comrades had fought quite a bit with the blood elementalists. Recently, there were more battles, but the power of the Heart of God seemed to be very different from the blood spiritual force of ordinary blood elementalists.

They could even feel an ancient, boundless aura radiating from the Heart of God.

The pulse of the Heart of God contained an indescribable power that could travel very far. This made them an attractive target, and they had nowhere to hide, which explained why He Nanshan was pursuing behind them so closely and unwilling to let go.

The Dread and Judgement Divisions had to travel at their maximum speed in order to increase the distance from the blood elementalists and gain time to catch their breath.

Wan Shenwei said in a low voice, "To be honest, I had not expected us to succeed. This plan seemed very pessimistic from day one. Now that Ye Baiyi is here, we have already half succeeded. However, everyone should be prepared because our days are only going to become more arduous and dangerous."

The others kept quiet and had solemn looks on their faces.

Attacking the camp was quick and very successful, but they paid a heavy price. More than 100 soldiers had perished.. It was a first in the whole history of the Dread and Judgement divisions.

And this was just the beginning. Everyone knew that Wan Shenwei wasn’t just frightening them.

Wan Shenwei took a deep breath. "Now that Ye Baiyi is in our hands, what’s going to happen next? He Nanshan’s combat division will definitely continue chasing us. Also, the three god divisions attacking the Spear of Heavy Cloud will receive the news and obstruct our path from another direction. No matter what,

they need to rescue Ye Baiyi, but we don’t know how many combat divisions are on their way. Of course, the more the better. That’s our goal."

"We must lead them in circles. Initially, we were afraid that they would not be able to catch up, but there’s no need to worry now. With the Heart of God’s pulse, there’s no way they can’t find us. This is also why I said that things will only become tougher from now on. We will have shorter periods of rest as the number of enemy combat divisions increases. We will feel increasingly tired and worn out, but for each additional day that we persevere, the higher the chances of success for the defensive line."

"This is also why we can’t kill him." He looked at his audience before continuing, "I know that everyone here hates him. I do too. I would like to ask him why he chose to betray the Avalon of Five Elements if he wakes up, but we need him to stay alive at the moment. We can only disorientate the blood elementalist combat divisions, lure them over to us, and effectively lessen the burden on the Spear of Heavy Cloud if he stays alive. A dead Ye Baiyi would only agitate them more, and we don’t need that."

Wan Shenwei said dully, "Comparing strengths, it is very difficult for us to win this battle. Even if we have him as a hostage, everything goes smoothly from now on, and our plan succeeds, I don’t know if we can win this battle. No one knows."

Everyone kept quiet, keeping their gazes on Wan Shenwei.

While Wan Shenwei looked indifferent, his tone was mild like water. "We will fall one by one. Ye Baiyi might also wake up and

kill us. Maybe nothing will change even if all of us are sacrificed."

Nevertheless, a ball of fire burned within his eyes.

He looked around and asked, "Are you all afraid?"

"Hah, are you kidding, Boss?"

"So very afraid. Afraid, that they will lose sight of us!"

"We've earned more than enough. Our attack was beautifully executed. Who could compare with us? Our names are going to go down in history and will be taught in textbooks!"

"Oh gosh, as a future historical figure, should I change my name now? To make it sound more aggressive."

"Heh, in future exams, students will be asked how they would execute a raid, how they would choose their attacking direction, and how to assist their comrades if they were an elementalist from the Dread Division. They will be asked to describe their battle tactics and attacking strategy..."

"Oh my, luckily we're done with exams! I must help you live on so you can become a teacher in the future and create exam questions that would wreck the students, ahaha!"

"Get lost!"

Chapter 586: Do It Thoroughly

"Is this the Pagoda Cannon Alliance? Is Ai Hui here?"

A chilly voice woke Ke Ning up. Drowsy and sleepy, he looked up to see a tall and strong figure in front of him. Standing beside this figure was a tall and thin lady whose eyes also seemed cold. She wore her hair in a high bun with throwing knives inserted into it.

Feeling the pressure from the two people in front of him, Ke Ning swallowed nervously and stood up, "I'm Ke Ning, the manager of the Pagoda Cannon Alliance. May I know who you are?"

He actually felt uncomfortable, as he always associated the word "manager" with something bad.

But what could he do?

When Ai Hui suddenly left everything related to the Pagoda Cannon Alliance to him with an appreciative look, but without any explanation, Ke Ning was dumbfounded and couldn't believe his ears. When he came to his senses, Ai Hui had already disappeared.

Who was the one who had promised righteously to found the Pagoda Cannon Alliance?

Ke Ning felt a bit regretful. He had not expected for Ai Hui to be so irresponsible. It was ironic that he had had some illusions toward the Pagoda Cannon Alliance.

The idea of leaving had occurred to him more than once, but he couldn’t speak it out when facing the hundreds of people who followed him.

Having struggled for two days, he made up his mind. The worst result was death anyway, which was no different from his choice at the very beginning. After he figured this out, he felt like a totally different man who was full of vigor. More surprisingly, although Ai Hui didn’t show up, the spectacular Fish Bone was absolutely convincing.

The elementalists, who had been hesitating and struggling, now flocked to join them.

The Pagoda Cannon Alliance was expanding rapidly, making Ke Ning terribly busy. It was not easy for him to find some time to take a nap.

"Tong Gui."

"Yu Jin."

The man and the lady answered coldly.

Ke Ning was shocked and totally sobered up. The names of the two reputable division leaders from Newlight City struck his ears like a clap of thunder. Although he knew that Newlight City had expressed its full support for the Pagoda Cannon Alliance, it was

beyond his expectation that they sent two of their strongest combat divisions here.

In terms of status and position, Ke Ning was far inferior to them. This made him nervous, but excited at the same time.

As long as Sir Tong Gui and Lady Yu Jin were here, the strength of the Pagoda Cannon Alliance would be far greater than other ordinary combat divisions.

He replied at once, "Please have a seat. Are you looking for Sir Ai Hui? He is surveying the terrain at the moment. I'll call him back now."

Tong Gui said in a rough voice, "We should pay him a visit. Manager Ke, would you please lead the way?"

"Manager Ke" sounded harsh, but Ke Ning was also surprised by the respect the division leaders showed toward Ai Hui. After all, in Ke Ning's mind, Ai Hui was already regarded as unreliable.

He immediately said, "No problem. This way please."

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Ai Hui stood at the side of the Great Rift and watched the howling metal wind. It was like a transparent wind wall with a metallic luster, obscuring the scene on the other side.

This reminded Ai Hui of the Suspending Golden Pagoda outside of Central Pine City.

He was lost in thought.

Everyone was busy preparing for the big battle ahead.

Ai Hui was the only one who looked unoccupied. Having thrown all duties related to the Pagoda Cannon Alliance to Ke Ning, all he did everyday was idly top and go along one side of the canyon, as if enjoying the scenery.

No one knew what he was thinking.

Surveying the terrain was only an excuse Ke Ning found for Ai Hui. Assessing the terrain was completely unnecessary. The metal wind had isolated the two sides, and the other Windy Pearl Bridges had all been destroyed.

Ke Ning led Tong Gui and Yu Jin to Ai Hui.

Tong Gui saluted and said, "Long time no see, Sir Ai Hui."

Yu Jin saluted too, but didn’t say anything.

Their feelings were complicated. Years ago, they looked at Ai Hui like their junior, but now they needed to address him respectfully

as a Sir. On the other hand, however complicated they felt, they were not envious or unconvinced. It was a common rule that strength was the most important. The achievements Ai Hui had accomplished over the years were enough to win their respect.

As for Ai Hui, some appreciated him, some criticized him, but no one would ignore him.

Ai Hui nodded, "It must have been a tough journey. Is Mayor An all right?"

Tong Gui replied reverently, "Yes, everything is fine with the Mayor. He misses you very much, my Sir. Before we left, he asked us to obey your commands. No matter what the task is, and whether it is dangerous or not, Tong Gui and Yu Jin will do the best and never flinch."

Ai Hui smiled. "Thank you for your support."

Tong Gui said, "You are welcome. This is what we should do."

Ai Hui nodded. "I happen to have a task that may require your help."

Tong Gui said, "At your request."

Ai Hui said, "I want to establish the Pagoda Cannon Alliance, which will be our next goal. Currently, I’m fully occupied, so everything is being done by Manager Ke. I now want to ask a favor

from you guys to help him build up the framework of the alliance."

Tong Gui and Yu Jin looked at each other in surprise.

Before they arrived, they both thought that Ai Hui would keep a vigilant watch over them and even marginalize them. They never expected that Ai Hui would entrust them with such an important task at the very beginning.

It was natural that they had these doubts in mind since they had interacted with Ai Hui years ago and were fully aware of his cunning.

Ai Hui could see their doubts, but he simply ignored this and asked, "Any problems?"

Tong Gui couldn’t figure out if Ai Hui was genuine, but for the moment he had to reply, "We will spare no efforts, but what is our strategy for the Pagoda Cannon Alliance?"

Ai Hui touched his jaw and said, "Our time is too limited, so I cannot ask too much. You can organize them and drill with the pagoda cannons. The Spear of Heavy Cloud has forged a new type of pagoda cannon called the Beehive Heavy Cannon, and Old He will find craftsmen too. Your task is to familiarize everyone with the new cannons. I won’t ask for a high standard. It will be fine as long as they can use it proficiently and shoot the shells out."

Hearing what he said, Ke Ning couldn’t help but interject, "But

we don’t have a single Beehive Heavy Cannon yet."

Ai Hui smiled, "We will soon."

Ke Ning was suspicious of what Ai Hui said. He knew Ai Hui even better than Tong Gui and Yu Jin, and he didn’t trust Ai Hui at all.

Ai Hui didn’t explain further.

Tong Gui and Yu Jin looked at each other again. They were also full of doubts. Knowing how to use the pagoda cannon was just the basic requirement. If that was enough, then what fighting capacity would the Pagoda Cannon Alliance have?

Yet, it seemed that Ai Hui had other implications. Besides, they knew that Ai Hui was definitely not a fool.

Tong Gui said solemnly, "We won’t dishonor your commission."

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At the camp of the Spear of Heavy Cloud.

Sang Zhijun was reporting to Shi Xueman, "These days, the goods and materials we are seizing is shrinking sharply. The day before yesterday, we had five combat divisions that passed through, but today there was only one."

Shi Xueman was writing rapidly at the desk. Hearing Sang Zhijun's words, she looked up and asked, "Why?"

Sang Zhijun smiled bitterly. "Because we are too notorious now, even worse than bandits. In their words, we are the worst villains. Many combat divisions are not willing to withdraw through here. They would rather go the long way around and retreat along the rift than pass through our defensive line. We are really infamous now."

Shi Xueman suddenly asked, "You mean they are withdrawing along the rift to get avoid us?"

Sang Zhijun said, "Yes, our scouts found that many combat divisions are marching toward either end of the rift. Although it will be a long march, at least they won't lose their assets and possessions."

She was worried about their bad reputation. It had to be extremely terrible, else they wouldn't be willing to spend several extra months on their way back.

Shi Xueman couldn't help laughing.

Sang Zhijun marveled, "Gosh! Xueman, why are you still laughing?"

The education she had received since she was young required her to stick to the regulations of combat divisions and not commit the

slightest offense against people. What she was doing now was totally different. Not only she, but many others in the Spear of Heavy Cloud had the same feeling.

No one wanted to turn from a hero into a villain.

They would not hesitate to execute Ai Hui’s command, but they felt uncomfortable.

Shi Xueman murmured to herself, "This guy was so cunning to think up of this solution."

Sang Zhijun was confused. "Xueman, what are you talking about?"

Shi Xueman came to her senses and said, "You see, the problem has been solved."

Sang Zhijun was still in confusion. "What problem?"

Shi Xueman explained patiently, "We were worried that our enemy would attack our defenses with the defeated troops as their shield. Now, no such troops are coming toward us. Isn’t this problem solved?"

Sang Zhijun paused for a while and said, "Yes, it seems so. Then the problem has indeed been solved in this way. So this is the real purpose of that guy? Then we have misunderstood him."

Shi Xueman said coldly, "You didn’t. He wanted to make a profit down the road. This guy’s heart is black."

Sang Zhijun coughed lightly and said jokingly, "Yes, his heart is black, but someone just happens to like black-hearted guys..."

Shi Xueman’s face immediately flushed. She pretended to be angry and said, "How dare you be so rude? You definitely need a spanking."

Sang Zhijun was not afraid of her at all. She blinked mischievously, "You two only hugged? Didn’t do anything else? What a pity! Miss Division Head, you cannot lose the good reputation of the Spear of Heavy Cloud. If he is too shy, force him to! If he refuses to obey, beat him! Ah..."

Sang Zhiruo covered her head and crept away to avoid Shi Xueman’s fist.

Now, Shi Xueman was in the tent alone. Her face was red, looking shy and cute.

After a while, the flush gradually faded away as Shi Xueman calmed down and became as cold as she usually was.

Hmmm, Sang Zhijun was right. She was the creditor. Why should she feel guilty? Even if they started a fight, she was not afraid of Ai Hui anyway.

She went out of the camp and walked toward the camp of the Sword of Lightning Division.

On her way, she happened to come across Ai Hui. Both of them became a little embarrassed to see each other.

Soon, however, Shi Xueman returned to normal and said, "Let's go into the camp."

Sang Zhijun, who took Jiang Wei along to peep at the two, gasped with surprised and couldn’t believe her eyes.

They were so direct...

Ai Hui paused for a while and asked, "Why?"

Shi Xueman said, "Last time we did not finished."

Jiang Wei and Sang Zhijun were totally dumbstruck. They couldn’t help remembering the scene last time when Shi Xueman held Ai Hui in her arms and walked toward the bed. What they had not finished...

Ai Hui realized that Shi Xueman was talking about healing her injury.

He nodded. "Then let’s do it thoroughly!"

Jiang Wei and Sang Zhijun looked at each other.

Do it thoroughly...

Chapter 587: Going Steady

Although Ai Hui had promised that there would be enough Beehive Heavy Cannons, Ke Ning didn't believe him. Furthermore, he felt that Sir Tong Gui and Lady Yu Jin seemed to be too respectful toward Ai Hui.

He couldn't understand why a guy who was nicknamed "Razor" was respected.

In Ke Ning's eyes, Ai Hui was greedy, contemptible, and did nothing useful.

The last feature was what he couldn't bear the most!

Why had he stayed to join the Pagoda Cannon Alliance? Because he wanted revenge! But Ai Hui's idleness and irresponsibility made him very disappointed. If it were not for Division Leader Shi who had asked him to handle the alliance, and if it were not for the group of people he had brought into the alliance, he would have left this alliance which was unworthy of the name.

The participation of Sir Tong Gui and Lady Yu Jin cheered Ke Ning up. At least they had reputation. prestige, and were familiar with military life because they had been division leaders for years. They were far better than the amateur Ai Hui.

However, he didn't know that Tong Gui and Yu Jin spoke highly of Ke Ning in private.

Young as he was, he was capable and experienced. He was not bad tempered and could always think logically. Such a person was a talent at any position. Besides, he was particularly familiar with pagoda cannons and would become extremely talkative at the first mention of pagoda cannons.

They marveled in their hearts that Ai Hui was as extraordinary as they had expected. Even his subordinate was so capable.

Their study of pagoda cannons was far inferior compared to Ke Ning.

Ke Ning indulged in studying pagoda cannons. Although he was stationed at the Pagoda Cannon Alliance camp, he could still walk in and out of the other camps. Due to his connection with Li Houtang, he could watch how Master Fatty practiced from a short distance, and sometimes even had the opportunity to communicate with him.

He had his own understanding of pagoda cannons. When organizing the Pagoda Cannon Alliance, he had already begun to think of how to set it up and how to train the elementalists by himself.

This was merely his interest. At that time, he had not thought that he would take on this responsibility.

Therefore, when Tong Gui and Yu Jin finished reading his proposal, they gasped in admiration and planned to follow it. Ke

Ning was dumbstruck. When he came back to his senses, he felt encouraged and perturbed at the same time. He was young, energetic, and eager to earn achievements, so it was unsurprising that he felt excited when his proposal was recognized. However, he didn't have the relevant experience and was unsure whether his ideas were right or wrong.

Tong Gui and Yu Jin didn't think so much.

On one hand, Ke Ning's proposal was thoughtful, detailed, and very practical, which demonstrated that his understanding of this subject was better than theirs.

On the other hand, they had not forgotten Ai Hui's command either. What Ai Hui said was "to help Ke Ning build up the framework of the Pagoda Cannon Alliance." Since they were here to help Ke Ning, Ke Ning should lead the project.

Neither of them was shrewd or sophisticated. They were typical elementalists from combat divisions and highly obedient. Since they had already agreed, then they would follow Ai Hui's command and do their best to execute it.

Their existence made up for Ke Ning's shortcomings, as the latter had ideas, but no experience, while the former were experienced combat division leaders. They could perfectly deal with the any training issues.

"Excuse me. Is Sir Ai Hui here?"

An indifferent voice interrupted Ke Ning. He looked up and saw a nonchalant man standing in front of him. Behind him, there were about two to three hundred men.

Somehow, Ke Ning felt that this crowd of people was dangerous, maybe even more dangerous than Sir Tong Gui and Lady Yu Jin.

He swallowed nervously and asked, "He is in the camp. Who are you?"

The middle-aged man said lightly, "We would like to pay Sir Ai Hui a visit. Can you lead the way?"

This guy’s behavior was very polite, but somehow He Ning was still very alert. He could feel the danger, but could not refuse, so he said subconsciously, "Okay, this way please."

When he came back to his senses, the group of people had entered the camp under his guidance. He suddenly realized that he even didn’t know what these people wanted to do. How could he bring them into the camp so rashly?

On the other hand, there were many experts in the camp. When this thought occurred to him, he was more or less relieved.

Then, he saw Sir Tong Gui and Lady Yu Jin, so he quickly walked toward them.

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In a dim tent.

A man’s gentle voice asked, "Get up now? Lou Lan’s elemental soup is ready."

A girl’s lazy voice responded, "I want to sleep for a while."

The gentle voice, "Then shall I bring the soup here?"

The girl said drowsily, "I want to sleep!"

The man carefully covered her with a quilt. Then, he kissed her gently, put on his clothes, and walked out of the tent. The sun was warm outside, and everything seemed to be different from before.

He walked into the camp of the Sword of Lightning with an unconscious smirk on his face.

The passersby saw his vigor and broad smile, and they began to make fun of him.

"Hey Old Ginger, you finally did what you should have done, huh? As I said, this should have been done long before. We are men of the battlefield. There’s no need to care so much!"

"You see, Old Ginger is now a totally different man."

"Spring is coming!"

"Congratulations! When will Young Ginger be born?"

At times, Jiang Wei was so embarrassed that his face would flush while being teased, but more often he would only smirk. His maturity and composure were all gone.

The amorous glances between Jiang Wei and Sang Zhijun were within the sight of everybody else. They were all happy for this relationship. The ties between comrades-in-arms were always pure and genuine. In the war torn years, all they saw was the aftermath of deaths, massacres, bloodshed, and the fragility of their tiny lives. Under such circumstances, the new couple was like a sprouting green plant in the middle of a desolate desert. Everyone sent their sincere blessings from the bottom of their heart.

As if he was drunk, Jiang Wei hobbled to the camp of the Pagoda Cannon Alliance.

Now, the news about the relationship between the vice division leaders was known to everyone here at the campsite. People came to congratulate Jiang Wei from time to time, making the campsite very tumultuous. Suddenly, someone shouted that they should have a celebration, which immediately gained the support of everyone else.

Ai Hui and Shi Xueman were drinking elemental soup. They glanced at each other and agreed with a smile.

The healing last night was much better than the previous time because Ai Hui had at least not collapsed due to fatigue. After a busy night, they went to have elemental soup together in the morning and learned this unexpected good news.

The whole defensive line, especially the Spear of Heavy Cloud, were immersed in great joy. After the tough battle with the Ardent Flower Blood Division, they experienced victory, but also suffered heavy casualties. Under such depressing circumstances, they sincerely cherished the joy and happiness the new couple brought.

Lou Lan cheered loudly, "Lou Lan will make arrangements!"

Ai Hui looked Jiang Wei up and down and said, "Not bad bro. No wonder they say that a wise head makes a closed mouth. It’s really beyond my expectation that you two went steady so fast on the sly. I thought you were introverted, but it turns out that you are quick enough when doing this."

Jiang Wei was a bit embarrassed, "I should thank you and Xueman."

It was the straightforward communication they overheard between Shi Xueman and Ai Hui that greatly impacted Jiang Wei and Sang Zhijun. Seeing how direct their division leaders were, the two figured that there was no need for them to be shy any longer after seeing each other for such a long time.

No one knew what hardships they would go through in the next

battle or whether they would survive. It was better not to leave regret for tomorrow.

Their division leaders were so wise.

As a result, Jiang Wei and Sang Zhijun, who had already dated each other for so long, no longer had any other concerns.

Ai Hui said casually, "Of course you should thank me and Iron Lady. Otherwise, how would you meet each other? They all say that less talkative guys are the most cunning. I didn't believe it before, but now I do. You are not bad, really."

Shi Xueman nodded too as a smile appeared on her cold face. "Zhijun is a good girl, and you are also outstanding. Congratulations."

No one said anything like "may you two live together until you are old and gray," because they knew that in war time, such blessings were as unrealistic as the flowers in a mirror and the moon's reflection in water.

Suddenly, Ai Hui looked Jiang Wei up and down in surprise.

Seeing Ai Hui's actions, Jiang Wei looked at himself and asked, "What?"

Ai Hui said with surprise in his tone, "It seems that you will achieve a breakthrough soon."

Jiang Wei paused. He closed his eyes to examine the status of his body.

After a while, he opened his eyes, feeling pleasantly surprised.

Last time during the conflict in Wind Mail City and under the great pressure from his enemies, he had felt that he was close to a breakthrough. However, after they returned, he was too busy to notice any changes in his body. It was beyond his expectations that the elemental energy in his body had now become perfectly fused and vigorous. He could feel that the elemental energy was about to gush out at anytime.

Ai Hui was very happy for him. "Good things come in pairs!"

Shi Xueman smiled, stood up, and said, "I'll go to find Zhijun."

When Shi Xueman walked out of the campsite, Jiang Wei suddenly grabbed Ai Hui and asked in a low voice, "Senior, when will you celebrate?"

Ai Hui was a bit confused. "We?"

Seeing Ai Hui's puzzled look, Jiang Wei suddenly became flustered. If the division leaders knew that he and Sang Zhijun had been eavesdropping, would they... beat them?

He immediately changed the topic, "I, I mean Xueman looks very good today!"

Ai Hui understood what he meant and said, "You mean her injury? She has almost recovered. Don’t you know who the healer is? Okay, I’m going out, and you can get to your work."

Then he told him as a superior, "As the saying goes, indulging in your lust is equivalent to hanging a knife above your head. What is a man? A man should be strict on himself. Come on and push yourself! You will soon become a Master!"

Then he patted Jiang Wei’s shoulder and left.

Tong Gui and Yu Jin also came to congratulate him.

Their feelings were complex when they faced Jiang Wei. They had regarded him as a rare talent in the early years, but he was determined to follow Ai Hui, and they had not expected for him to grow so fast. Sometimes, they wondered whether he would be what he was today had he followed them to Newlight City back then.

The conclusion they reached made them disappointed.

Aggressive as they were at the very beginning, the new citizens were gradually worn down, attempting and accomplishing nothing in the end.

Jiang Wei was expressing his gratitude when he noticed a group of people coming toward them behind Ke Ning. The moment he recognized the leader who walked at the front, the smile on his face froze.

Chapter 588: Former Members of the Surveillance Division

"Vice Leader Jiang, how have you been?"

Xiao Shan looked at ease, as if nothing had happened between them.

Tong Gui and Yu Jin didn't know who these newcomers were, but could feel the dangerous atmosphere they carried. They were a bit relieved after they learned that Jiang Wei knew these people.

Jiang Wei had not been afraid of him even when in Wind Mail City, let alone in their own campsite. He said in a deep voice, "After the farewell in the Wind Mail City, I never expected that we would meet again. What are you doing here?"

Xiao Shan looked at Jiang Wei carefully. Then, against everyone's expectation, he burst into laughter and said, "Within such a short period of time, Vice Leader Jiang has made great progress."

Jiang Wei replied emotionlessly, "Thanks to you."

At first, the others only thought that these people and Jiang Wei knew each other. Only now did they realize that something unpleasant must have happened between them. The atmosphere immediately became tense as everyone became vigilant, especially Ke Ning who led them here. Were they here to assassinate Ai Hui?

Although Ke Ning despised Ai Hui, he had to admit that Ai Hui had an enormous influence over the Pagoda Cannon Alliance and the Spear of Heavy Cloud. If Ai Hui was injured or killed now...

Ke Ning didn't dare to think further.

Xiao Shan was not angry. Instead, he smiled and said, "No discord, no concord. I sincerely admire your conduct and strength."

Even Jiang Wei began to feel weird. As the saying went, never hit a smiling face. It appeared that he had not come to look for trouble. To be honest, Jiang Wei was not really angry with him. At least last time Xiao Shan had left when he was at an absolute advantage. From this, Jiang Wei could tell that Xiao Shan should be a righteous gentleman.

Jiang Wei directly asked, "What are you doing here? You can cut to the chase."

Xiao Shan said casually, "We want to join you and fight together against the blood elementalists."

The eyes of Tong Gui and Yu Jin lit up. The strength of this middle-aged man was unfathomable, while the agility and courage of his compatriots also indicated they were an elite force. At first, they thought the newcomers were here to find fault with them and were a bit worried. Now, they were overjoyed to hear that these elites wanted to fight against the blood elementalists.

Ke Ning was also relieved.

Jiang Wei was surprised as well. The identity of this man was a mystery, but he was more influential than ordinary Masters. If these elite were to join, they would be a strong influence that could not be ignored. He looked Xiao Shan in the eyes and asked in a deep voice, "Skyheart City has agreed to this?"

Xiao Shan’s smile disappeared at once upon hearing "Skyheart City" and said with disdain, "We have nothing to do with the Yes."

Tong Gui and Yu Jin had not expected to hear "Skyheart City," and were even more surprised to hear Xiao Shan’s words. Their minds were working fast, trying to figure out who this guy was who dared to call Lady Ye "the Yes."

A smile appeared on Jiang Wei’s face. He stretched out his hand and said, "Welcome! How about joining our Spear of Heavy Cloud? I can resign and leave the position of vice division leader to you!"

Jiang Wei believed that Xiao Shan was a proud man since Xiao Shan had taken the initiative to leave even when holding an advantageous position. Such a proud man would not lie.

Tong Gui and Yu Jin’s eyes opened wide. How had things changed so quickly? A minute ago they were like enemies, but now Jiang Wei was drawing them over to his side and was even willing to give up his position as a vice division leader.

Tong Gui and Yu Jin were anxious. Since Ai Hui was not here, they could not stop Jiang Wei from doing this.

Ke Ning didn’t feel surprised. That guy was not a fool, so of course they would join the Spear of Heavy Cloud. After all, the Spear of Heavy Cloud was an elite squad and far superior to the Pagoda Cannon Alliance that consisted of stragglers and disbanded soldiers. Even in his dreams, Ke Ning wanted to return to the Spear of Heavy Cloud and was very regretful for his decision to join this crap. In the Spear of Heavy Cloud his pagoda cannon expertise was also useful. Plus, Master Fatty was also in their combat division. Why had he made such a stupid decision back then?

Although the combat divisions brought by Tong Gui and Yu Jin greatly increased the level of the Pagoda Cannon Alliance, it was still far inferior to the Spear of Heavy Cloud.

The Spear of Heavy Cloud was a legendary combat division and the only elementalist combat division that had defeated a blood elementalist division.

Xiao Shan shook his head and said, "No,we want to join the Pagoda Cannon Alliance."

Everyone was shocked, especially Ke Ning. He couldn’t believe his ears.

Jiang Wei was surprised too, explaining, "I invited you to the

Spear of Heavy Cloud because our defensive position is closer to the enemies and therefore under greater pressure. Thus, we need an expert to assume overall command.

Xiao Shan still shook his head and said lightly, "We will join the Pagoda Cannon Alliance."

Ke Ning wanted to pry open their skulls and see if their brains were made of tofu. Abandoning the vanguard elite squad to join the rear-guard combat divisions to fight against blood elementalists? Were they here to play around?

Oh, in addition, the head of the rear-guard combat divisions was completely unreliable.

Jiang Wei was curious, "Can you tell me why?"

He had interacted with this man before. If such a proud man decided to fight against blood elementalists, he was definitely not afraid of difficulty or death, sohe had to have a reason for making this decision.

Xiao Shan didn’t want to hide anything, "Because we are more optimistic about Ai Hui and think that he is the key to victory."

What? Ke Ning wondered if his ears were still functioning. More optimistic of that unreliable guy? Currently, he would rather be an onlooker. There was nothing joyous because these newcomer who wanted to join them were only fools.

Tong Gui and Yu Jin’s expression indicated their confusion since this reason was just nonsense.

Jiang Wei, however, didn’t think so. He asked with surprise and solemnity, "What do you mean?"

Xiao Shan seemed to know what Jiang Wei was thinking and said with a smile, "We know the Central Pine Valley well."

A shudder swept over Jiang Wei. His face turned gloomy as what he had just been thinking was that these guys seemed to know them very well, and now his thoughts were laid bare. Actually, although Ai Hui didn’t do much in either the Spear of Heavy Cloud or the Pagoda Cannon Alliance, the key members of the Central Pine Faction firmly believed that Ai Hui was the key to success.

Such confidence was blind, but it was due to their experience accumulated over a long period of time.

However, this was the first time that their blind confidence was exposed by someone else.

Xiao Shan’s smile disappeared as he made a formal salute. "Please let Sir Ai Hui know that Xiao Shan, former member of the Surveillance Division, together with 352 men, applies to join the Pagoda Cannon Alliance to fight against blood elementalists. We wait for assignment at any time."

The Surveillance Division!

Jiang Wei’s eyes widened, as he finally learned where Xiao Shan was from and why he was such a strong opponent. Also, he discovered why Xiao Shan was so familiar with the Central Pine Faction.

Tong Gui and Yu Jin were also struck dumb with amazement.

They knew much more about the Surveillance Division, such as the level of the "Xiao" generation in the division. They also knew that 352 people was about one third of the whole combat division. Were they really that determined to leave?

Ke Ning’s jaw almost dropped to the ground. He was totally dumbstruck.

The personal charisma of Ai Hui was beyond his imagination!

Xiao Shan reamained self-possessed. He was not a fool. Before he left, he told Xiao Lin that he knew he didn’t know how to fight in a war, so he wanted to find someone who did. In others’ eyes, the best strategist in the Central Pine Faction had to be Shi Xueman, but with the Surveillance Division’s powerful information network, they concluded, after careful analysis of the extensive information they had collected, that all the victories were directly connected to Ai Hui.

Shi Xueman’s Spear of Heavy Cloud might be able to confront a

blood division or a god division face to face, but there was no chance of winning when facing the main forces of the blood elementalists who were numerically superior. Even if he joined them with his 352 comrades, it wouldn’t help much.

The only possibility of winning depended on Ai Hui and the Pagoda Cannon Alliance he was setting up.

Although faint, this was the only hope.

Jiang Wei was the first to come back to his senses. No wonder they were familiar with Ai Hui. Whether or not they were willing to join the Spear of Heavy Cloud, having former members of the Surveillance Division on their side was a great boost for them in the fight against blood elementalists.

He smiled and said, "Sir Ai Hui will be glad to know you are here. Please wait for a moment. I’ll inform him of this good news now."

Xiao Shan nodded. "Thank you."

All of a sudden, he looked up and into the distance before calmly saying, "We have a guest."

Just as he finished his words, a point of light appeared in the remote sky with a rumbling sound. Then, they saw a fireball flying at their campsite like a shooting star with trailing black fumes.

The fireball moved extremely fast.

As a former member of the Surveillance Division, Xiao Shan was sensitive to any secret intelligence. Seeing the fireball, he shouted, "Disperse!"

Boom!

The fireball crashed into the open field in front of the campsite, making the earth tremble and lava splash.

When the fire died out, an old man who looked like a drunk appeared in front of everyone.

He murmured to himself, "So tired, so tired! This time I'll ask that boy to give me enough lava to drink."

Seeing the face of the old man, Tong Gui and Yu Jin were greatly shocked and blurted out at the same time, "Venerable Volcano!"

Venerable Volcano shook his head and turned back. After recognizing them, he laughed out loud. "Little Tong Gui and little Yu Jin. Why are you here? Is Old Yuchi all right?"

Tong Gui and Yu Jin hurriedly saluted him.

Tong Gui said reverently, "i am honored to meet you, Venerable Volcano. Elder Yuchi is still secluding himself from the world to train."

Venerable Volcano snorted in contempt and said, "Still in closed door training? Doesn’t he know how old he is? He just doesn’t know how to deal with the inner devils. What a waste of his fighting capacity. He puts too much in his heart, not like me."

Tong Gui smiled and didn’t say anything. The status of Venerable Volcano was high enough to comment on Elder Yuchi.

Venerable Volcano looked around. His pupils contracted when he saw Xiao Shan, "Who are you?"

Xiao Shan saluted and said in a polite and decent tone, "I’m a former member of the Surveillance Division. It’s my honor to meet you."

"A subordinate of Nian?" Venerable Volcano paused for a while. When he came back to his senses, he said with admiration, "Not bad. You are more courageous than him. Doesn’t he feel vexed to have a group of Masters crouching in Skyheart City?"

Hearing his words, even Xiao Shan and the others who had left felt embarrassed.

Venerable Volcano looked around and asked, "Where is Ai Hui? Ask him to meet me. I’ll depend on him from now on. Didn’t he set up some Pagoda Cannon Alliance? I’m in, as long as there’s enough snow lava."

Tong Gui and Yu Jin were shocked.

Ke Ning had not recovered from the previous shock. He used to regard the Pagoda Cannon Alliance as an alliance of cannon fodder. However, all of a sudden, Masters showed up out of nowhere and were actively seeking to join it.

Why couldn’t he understand the world anymore?

Chapter 589: Metal Wind Curtain

The news that former members of the Surveillance Division and Venerable Volcano had joined the Pagoda Cannon Alliance encouraged the elementalists who had been watching and waiting.

They were not afraid to go to war, but they didn't trust Ai Hui's Pagoda Cannon Alliance. Now, however, the enlistment of Masters facilitated the expansion of its reputation and strength.

Ai Hui still had not supervised the Pagoda Cannon Alliance at all, and left everything to Tong Gui, Yu Jin and Ke Ning.

Xiao Shan followed Ai Hui as he walked back and forth along the Great Rift every day.

At last, he couldn't help but ask, "Are you thinking of how to deal with the metal wind curtain? As far as I know, no one can break through it. Even if a Master enters the wind curtain, he or she will only be shredded into pieces. Once upon a time, a Master tried to walk through it, and the result was that not even a single part of his body remained."

Ai Hui smiled, "Human beings cannot break it for sure."

Xiao Shan paused. Ai Hui's words seemed to indicate something else. He asked, "You mean things other than human beings can break it?"

Ai Hui smiled again, but didn’t explain.

Xiao Shan was so eager to understand that he felt as if there was a cat scratching his heart. So had Ai Hui thought up of a solution?

Blind He never thought that one day he would have to manage so many craftsmen.

The Lightning Razor "plundered" over 2,000 craftsmen and over 20 weaponsmiths along the way. Blind He was shocked to hear the number.

Then, when he learned that the number of craftsmen conscripted by the Spear of Heavy Cloud was similar, he didn’t know what to say.

Even the Elders Guild in Skyheart City would yield to such a tremendous amount of craftsmen.

If this number was announced, the rest of the world would be astounded.

The scene of thousands of craftsmen forging weapons at the same time was spectacular. The flames rose up in an endless line and lit up the sky. All the craftsmen were trying their best to make Beehive Heavy Cannons, although not all of them were truly willing to do so because Ai Hui had resorted to extreme methods which were not at all open and aboveboard.

In terms of the remuneration, however, none of them were badly treated. Plus, everyone understood that if this defense was broken, Beyond Avalon would completely fall. By then, even if they and their families didn’t die, they could only convert to blood elementalists.

No one wanted to become a blood elementalist. That was a totally different world to them.

The world of craftsmen was very simple and straightforward. They only trusted the one with the best skills. Since Blind He’s level was high enough to convince the others, no one had any objection to him being their leader.

The White Cluster Flames and snow lava had greatly widened their horizons, while even a glimpse of the mountain-like piles of materials would bring them happiness.

What craftsmen worried about the most was a lack of materials, which would lead to the failure of many of the ideas they conceived. In reality, this used to be a very common problem. Therefore, almost all craftsmen had severe a "supply shortage phobia," especially the higher-level ones.

Now that they had free to use materials, the unprecedented satisfaction made them joyful.

Blind He was totally dumbfounded when he received this task and didn’t know where to start at all. If it had not been Ai Hui who assigned him this task, he would have already fallen out with

whoever appointed him to such a position. Since it was Ai Hui's request, however, he didn't dare to do so.

He wouldn't mind raging at Ai Hui, but as for falling out with him, Blind He didn't have the courage. He didn't want to experience any of Ai Hui's methods.

Fortunately, they had Lou Lan.

Lou Lan was almost omnipotent. The mountain-like piles of materials were sorted out and arranged by Lou Lan alone. It was amazing that Lou Lan finished this vast workload quietly.

During the first cannon forging stage, Lou Lan also played an important role in coordination.

Numerous mini Lou Lan went around busily in the manufacturing district.

"The heating duration has to be a little bit longer."

"Oops, there's an error in its length."

"Keep going! We will succeed soon!"

Soon, every craftsmen became fond of Lou Lan who was always happy. They all wondered how Lou Lan could be so kind-hearted and lovely while Lightning Razor Ai was so wicked and merciless.

Many Beehive Heavy Cannons had been produced. They were lined up neatly, looking majestic and impressive.

When Ke Ning caught sight of so many Beehive Heavy Cannons, his eyes lit up as he almost pounced on them.

Currently, all the important figures were gathered at the Great Rift because Ai Hui said they were going to test the cannons.

Beside the rift, a Beehive Heavy Cannon had been set up with Fatty as the test gunner.

Fatty shot Ai Hui a glance, and Ai Hui nodded. "Try it."

Fatty didn’t reply. He controlled the cannon to fire into the fierce wind curtain.

Streaks of red light exploded on the wind curtain, making a huge roar. Flames were gathered by the wild wind and splashed crazily. A deep hole appeared on the wind curtain after the explosion. It lasted for only one second before it was devoured by the metal wind.

In front of the power of nature, even an elementalist’s strong weapons were so tiny.

Ai Hui stared at the wind curtain attentively and said,

"Continue."

Fatty took a deep breath and fired continuously at the wind curtain. With deafening roars, balls of red light kept hitting the wind curtain, leaving huge holes in it. The scene of metal wind and flames combining was a feast for the eyes, but the holes in the wind curtain disappeared instantly like raindrops falling in the river.

When the Beehive Heavy Cannon stopped firing, the wind curtain had not changed one bit.

Many people were witnessing the power of the Beehive Heavy Cannon for the first time and were shocked. Yet, when faced with the metal wind curtain, it was still not enough.

Silver Soldier asked curiously, "Ai Hui, do you want to attack the enemies across the wind curtain?"

Many people's eyes lit up. If they could do so, then this was definitely a good idea, especially for the Pagoda Cannon Alliance which was advantageous in its number of people.

Xiao Shan shook his head, "It's not powerful enough to pierce the wind curtain."

The depth of the hole left by the cannon was six to ten meters while the narrowest part of the rift was over 100 meters.

Venerable Volcano sighed, "Since the fire restrains metal, I don’t dare to intrude into the wind curtain either. It’s a road that leads to death."

Fatty said while thinking, "Or let me try to see if we can make heavy cannons that can pierce the wind curtain?"

Ai Hui shook his head and said, "No need. Even if we can do so, not much power will remain, so it cannot do much harm to our enemies. Besides, we can’t waste time on this. Hurry up, and teach everyone how to control the Beehive Heavy Cannon."

Then he clapped, "Okay, enough of the flashy part for today. Get back to what you were doing."

The curious crowded dispersed , wondering what Ai Hui’s plan was.

However, Ai Hui called Shi Xueman, Silver Soldier, and some others back, saying, "For several days, not a single combat division has passed through. I believe our enemies are coming. Are you interested in joining me to go and watch?"

Silver Soldier laughed out loud. "I’ve heard that the Pinwheel Sword is as fast as lightning. It’s a rare chance to experience it in person, so I’ll go."

The others also agreed.

Even Shi Xueman had never been on the Pinwheel Sword, and the other division leaders were also curious. Meanwhile, it would indeed be helpful if they could spy on their enemies in person.

Gu Xuan and others never stopped training. As the war drew near, the intensity of their training also increased. The supplies were abundant, so they didn’t need to worry about consumption and just focused themselves on training.

The Pinwheel Sword suddenly rose up into the sky to the exclamation of the riders.

The experience of the unparalleled speed was totally different. Within a limited time, it had conquered everyone.

Silver Soldier marveled, "I guess the Pinwheel Sword is the fastest thing in the world. Is there anything that can compete with it?"

Xiao Shan answered affirmatively, "Definitely not."

The gorgeous eyes of Karakorum Polaris lit up, and she asked, "Can we borrow it? This is a supreme weapon for swordsmen."

Ai Hui smiled bitterly, "This Pinwheel Sword is not hard to make, nor is it expensive, but it’s very hard to control. First of all, there must be a sword operator. So far, we’veonly trained one qualified sword operator, Zhiguang. Secondly, the swordsmen in the Sword Pagodas are totally different from ordinary swordsmen. You will

understand this if we encounter any enemies."

Karakorum Polaris nodded. She didn't feel angry at Ai Hui's refusal. During these days, she got to know Ai Hui better. The more they interacted, the more they trusted each other.

The feeling of flying in the sky while as fast as a flash was fanscinating.

Not a single person could be seen in the wild land.

Their expressions gradually became solemn. This abnormal phenomenon indicated that the enemy was not far away from them.

The members of the Sword of Lightning were on guard for any possible dangers.

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The God Wolf Division was holding a meeting.

The members were in a heated discussion.

"It's so weird. How can Ai Hui be so shameless? Even the Elders Guild didn't say anything?"

"What can they say? The Elders Guild has to yield as long as he agrees to go to the front line. They are willing to give him whatever he needs."

"Okay great. Our plan has completely failed. The defeated combat divisions have not traveled through the the Spear of Heavy Cloud's defensive line at all."

"Then their return will take them months, right?"

"Those people are on their side. Ai Hui is cruel enough to treat them like this."

"Now the elementalists are scared out of their wits when they hear Ai Hui's name."

"Shit! Who on earth are their enemies? Currently, Ai Hui is more like their enemy than us."

Song Xiaoqian, who used to be bright and brave, now looked very gloomy. Those goddamn defeated elementalists would rather face the vast Wilderness and unpredictable dire beasts than withdraw through the Windy Pearl Bridges.

Moreover, the reason was ridiculous–they were afraid to be plundered by their ally.

This meant that her plan was a complete failure.

She had never failed so completely before.

Damn the Sword of Lightning! Damn Ai Hui!

Helian Tianxiao’s face was as peaceful as the surface of water. He wasn’t very angry because he knew it was common for tactics to fail in the actual combat. A war would never go as they expected.

Or it wouldn’t be called a war.

He was still calm because their advantages had not been weakened at all. As long as they were on the superior side, they could win by overwhelming the opponent in a simple and crude way.

Suddenly, someone came and reported, "Sir, there was a letter sent by the God Spirit Division."

Helian Tianxiao was immediately overcome by an uneasy sense of foreboding. The noisy tent became silent at once. They looked at each other in surprise and bewilderment.

In the next moment, their hearts sank when they saw the blood all over the messenger’s body.

The messenger delivered the letter to Helian Tianxiao so quickly that he did not even have time to salute.

Helian Tianxiao’s hand shivered slightly when he took the letter. Then, he tore it open, his face paled, and his dizzy mind spun as he read the contents.

The tent was so quiet that they could even hear the sound of a pin drop. Seeing Helian Tianxiao’s pale face, they all realized something horrible had happened.

In the following instant, a furious and desperate roar from Helian Tianxiao could be heard from inside the tent.

"He Nanshan! You piece of trash!"

Chapter 590: First Confrontation

Silence. Dead silence.

The news was like thunder from a clear sky. Their faces were pale, while their brain buzzed.

Ye Baiyi and Nangong Wulian had been kidnapped by the Judgement and Dread divisions.

Everyone’s hands and feet were cold as the news chilled them to the bone. They felt like they were falling into an abyss without any preparation, and their future suddenly became hopeless.

No one said a word because they hadn’t recovered from the shock.

The messenger from the God Spirit Division knelt on the floor and felt ashamed. This time it had been the God Spirit Division that made a blunder. Even when Division Head Helian shouted abuse at their division, the messenger didn’t dare to refute this.

For half an hour, no one spoke in the command tent. They were all in a trance.

Finally, Helian Tianxiao came to his senses. His face was still gloomy, but his eyes returned to normal. He said coarsely, "Have all the other combat divisions been informed?"

The messenger from the God Spirit Division said, "Yes, messengers were sent to all combat divisions."

Helian Tianxiao then asked, "To His Majesty too?"

"We haven’t had the time to..."

Hearing his words, Helian Tianxiao became furious. He suddenly stood up and said, "You are still thinking of hiding this fact from His Majesty even at this time? Do you think he is a fool?"

The messenger shivered and didn’t dare to speak.

Helian Tianxiao sat back in his seat in disappointment. Suddenly, he felt at a loss. At the very beginning, they were on the advantageous side. How on earth had they fallen into a situation like this? Back then, they were mighty and overwhelming like a tiger. What could the Wall of North Sea do to them? It could only vanish under their feet.

Since when had the state of the war became so unpredictable?

The North Sea Division...

Ever since the explosion of the God-subduing Peak, General Ye had been in a coma due to injuries. His majesty sent Nangong Wulian to help them implant the Heart of God. Even so, they were practically certain that they would win the war. Even after the Ardent Flower Blood Division was destroyed by the Spear of Heavy

Cloud, they still believed it wouldn’t have much influence on the overall situation.

They laughed at the depraved and decadent Elders Guild, but never expected that the Judgement and Dread Divisions, which they had also derided countless times, would kidnap General Ye and Nangong Wulian.

The war situation suddenly changed.

Cornered beasts would put up a desperate fight. Helian Tianxiao suddenly had this thought.

The Elders Guild was corrupt and decayed, but with thousands of years worth of accumulation, its final counterattack was surprisingly impressive and aggressive.

He suddenly became furious. They were strong, powerful army that was braver than anyone else. How could they allow others to lead them by the nose?

"Inform the whole army! Attack the Windy Pearl Bridge at full speed!"

He stood up, looked around, and said in a low voice, "Leave the rescue to the others. As the vanguard, we should initiate the attack."

Seeing the confusion from all the generals and soldiers, he said

coldly, "It’s time for you to put up the most desperate fight. Get ready to die on the battlefield."

.....

On the Pinwheel Sword.

Standing shoulder to shoulder, Ai Hui and others felt the sword’s lightning velocity and watched the ground fly by at such high speed. The Pinwheel Sword was like a sharp blade that could cut the wind and chop the clouds.

Silver Soldier marveled, "I never knew that anything could fly so fast. Previously, I saw in a mirage bean pod clip and already felt shocked. Now, after a firsthand experience, I’m even more certain that this speed is incomparable in the world."

Venerable Volcano added, "Even azure wings will lag behind in comparison."

Xiao Shan looked indifferent, but he was shocked too. The Surveillance Division once analyzed the speed of the Pinwheel Sword and concluded that it was about five times faster than azure wings, but if they were to experience it themselves, they would know just how ridiculous this was.

This terrifying speed was historical!

Would the people in Skyheart City still be able to sleep soundly if

they knew the real speed of the Pinwheel Sword?

Speed was a constant pursuit for humans. Whether it was individuals or combat divisions, they never spared any efforts in such a pursuit. As the saying went, being fast was the only move that couldn’t be dealt with.

Although he hadn’t known the real fighting strength of the Pinwheel Sword, he had a hunch that the appearance of the Pinwheel Sword would profoundly influence modern warfare.

He didn’t know what this influence would be, but his feeling was strong.

With shining eyes, Shi Xueman suddenly turned her head, "In the future, we need Pinwheel Swords in the Spear of Heavy Cloud as well."

Ai Hui coughed slightly and drawled, "The Pinwheel Sword is expensive..."

Suddenly, he caught sight of Iron Lady stretching her wrists and flinched. If he was beaten by her in front of so many people, it would be shameful. Therefore, in the next breath, he immediately said, "But if you want it Iron Lady, it won’t be a problem. After all, we are so poor that we have nothing but money now."

Hearing his words, Ke Ning immediately added, "My lord, we need it in the Pagoda Cannon Alliance too!"

Ke Ning felt like he was in a dream. His biggest nightmare now was that he would suddenly wake up and find out that it was all a fantasy. The current amazing personnel of the Pagoda Cannon Alliance were beyond his wildest imagination. He had previously been worried that they would only be an army of cannon fodder.

Ke Ning was clever. Otherwise, he wouldn't have become so infatuated with pagoda cannons. The experience onboard the Pinwheel Sword not only astounded him, but it also caused him to think further. What if the Pinwheel Sword was equipped with pagoda cannons instead of sword pagodas?

Ai Hui restrained his impulse to kick Ke Ning off of the Pinwheel Sword and said carelessly, "There aren't enough sword operators."

Abruptly, he yelped in surprise and shouted to Shi Zhiguang who was at the tail of the sword, "Turn left!"

The others were intrigued by Ai Hui's behavior and all looked left, but they saw nothing. Even Xiao Shan, who was one of the strongest individuals onboard, didn't feel anything either.

The Pinwheel Sword drew a beautiful arc in the sky.

The atmosphere suddenly became tense.

About 200 miles away from the camp of the God Wolf Division, one of their scout teams was on patrol. They were sitting on the

backs of their Rust Plumes, looking pleased, but alertness flickered across their narrowed eyes now and then.

"I candidly admit my defeat. How can the Lightning Razor be even more scary than us? Look at those fleeing combat divisions. I feel like we are actually saving Skyheart City."

"Haha, yes we are indeed."

Someone suddenly grunted, "What good are elementalists? We god elementalists are definitely superior."

The atmosphere immediately became awkward. Although they were all blood elementalists now, previously almost everyone was an elementalist. It had been long enough for everyone to accept their new identity, but the process was cruel, bloody, and full of miserable memories. The topic was always mentioned accidentally, revealing seemingly long forgotten scars.

The captain noticed the change in atmosphere and said, "There's no difference in levels between elementalists and god elementalists, but there is between the Elders Guild and His Majesty. It's not wrong to say that we are saving them. The Elders Guild is stupid and incompetent and Beyond Avalon is near its end, but our God Nation is thriving. This world should be ruled by someone with the appropriate ability so that everyone can live a happy life. As for the Elders Guild, even the Lightning Razor's combat divisions have become their pillar. You can see how corrupt they are now."

His words boosted the morale of the team.

Willing or not, their identity as blood elementalists couldn’t be changed, just as wounds could be forgotten, but scars would never disappear. They simply needed a reason to live and a reason to fight.

The dazzling brilliance of the thriving God Nation covered up all the scars.

Everyone in the God Nation believed firmly that the world belonged to them, just like the loyal soldiers and generals believed that the appearance of the Blood of God was to create a new world. The growing pains were just an inevitable part of this creation.

The captain was pleased with his encouragement. Suddenly, his Rust Plume quivered abruptly. He looked up and saw a flash of light far away from them and therefore shouted, "Careful!"

The light rushed at them at an astonishing speed.

The pupils of the captain contracted. "It’s a sword ray! Dodge!" he shouted.

His Rust Plume stretched its wings and rolled quickly in the air. The howling sound brushed past him at a shocking speed, causing all of his hair to stand on end from the icy stimulus.

Next, he heard a scream behind him. One soldier couldn’t dodge

and was cut in half together with his mount.

The captain’s eyes immediately became red with anger. Without saying a word, he urged his Rust Plume to fly forward, and the other team members followed him closely. Everyone was furious. They had never encountered any resistance like this before. This was their squad’s the first casualty.

Soon, an oddly shaped object appeared in front of them.

What was this?

While the others were perplexed, the captain suddenly remembered that this thing had appeared in a mirage bean pod they captured before.

He blurted out, "The Sword of Lightning!"

The others paused. They had just been talking about the Sword of Lightning Division and then they encountered it.

Regardless, they had to get revenge for their teammate!

The flying object had a weird shape, but they were not afraid at all. Scout teams consisted only of elites from a combat division. All of them were outstanding and experienced. The previous easy victories had made them confident too. They had once attacked an elementalist combat division and defeated the whole division with just their one team.

The captain said in a deep voice, "Attack separately!"

All the members dispersed at once and approached the Sword of Lightning from different directions.

On the Pinwheel Sword, Gu Xuan was severely scolded by Ai Hui.

"With such a massive strike, you only hit one guy? How on earth did you practice recently?"

With a spur of the moment improvised idea, Ai Hui decided to let Gu Xuan take command of the combat division because this was a perfect opportunity for actual combat training. Although the Sword of Lightning had improved and was much better than before, the members didn't have many chances to experience real combat.

However, seeing that Gu Xuan only hit one guy with the last strike, Ai Hui couldn't bear it.

Cold sweat ran down from Gu Xu's forehead, and other members were nervous too. Ai Hui's prestige was now much higher, and they held him in awe and veneration. They were very afraid to hear him say the word "practice" because this would usually be accompanied with punishment.

Gu Xuan shouted loudly, "Everybody stay focused!"

When Gu Xuan observed Ai Hui commanding, he felt that Ai Hui was doing it easily. On the other hand, when he was in charge, he realized how difficult it was.

If he screwed up and lost face for Ai Hui in front so many people...

Gu Xuan couldn’t help shivering.

Chapter 591: The Sword Aura

The Pinwheel Sword was a brand-new weapon that no one had ever seen before.

No one knew how it fought, what it specialized in, or how powerful it was.

Karakorum Savant had been examining how the sword pagodas worked. Being a swordswoman herself, she was very curious about the Pinwheel Sword. Previously, Ai Hui told her that the Pinwheel Sword's swordsmen were different from conventional swordsmen. This certainly piqued her interest.

Similarly, Shi Xueman was very curious about the Pinwheel Sword as well. When she last left the Central Pine Valley, the Pinwheel Sword was just a bunch of metal frames put together in a hideous manner.

Xiao Shan and Silver Solder had widened their eyes as they waited for Pinwheel Sword's performance.

With everyone's gaze gathered on Gu Xuan's back, the pressure on him gradually increased. At the back of the Pinwheel Sword, Shi Zhiguang was also on high alert and 100 percent focused.

Gu Xuan maintained his composure. When he saw the enemy forces striking at them from all directions, he did not brandish his sword immediately. He merely yelled, "Push forward! Prepare for [Seven Stars]!"

Shi Zhiguang's eyes widened as his sword hand transformed into a flurry of afterimages, dazzling those who were looking at it. Not far away, Huo Da's eyes lit up. This was the only move that he couldn't execute as perfectly as Shi Zhiguang. The difficulty of this move was not due to the speed of the hand movements, but rather, the speed of the change in hand movements. The speed at which the elemental energy was being channeled had to be precise and steady as well.

The most difficult part was channeling the elemental energy steadily while changing the hand signs extremely quickly.

Sometimes, one had no choice but to admit that innate skills were indeed scary. Shi Zhiguang's base level and understanding of elemental energy paled in comparison to Huo Da's, yet his performance as a sword operator was much more outstanding than Huo Da's.

The God Wolf Division's scout captain saw the Pinwheel Sword tremble slightly. Suddenly, it blurred and turned into a light streak that flew at them.

It was really fast!

In the blink of an eye, the glowing Pinwheel Sword appeared right in front of the blood elementalists who were unable to dodge in time.

Bang.

Three blood elementalists were sent flying through the air.

Everyone on the Pinwheel Sword were veterans with rich combat experience. They could tell from the sound of the collision that every bone in those three blood elementalists' bodies had been shattered. They had no chance of surviving.

The Pinwheel Sword was ferocious!

Silver Soldier, who favored the fighting style of meeting force with force, began to fantasize about the Pinwheel Sword bashing through blood elementalists as it sent their flesh and blood flying into the air.

It was a deadly weapon! It was much deadlier than the God-subduing Peak!

The God-subduing Peak was larger in size and had many offensive capabilities, but in terms of force of impact, it paled in comparison to the Pinwheel Sword.

Silver Soldier immediately fell in love with this kind of deadly weapon. He was pondering whether or not he should buy one or two of them from Ai Hui.

The Pinwheel Sword effortlessly cut through the encirclement of blood elementalists. At this moment, Gu Xuan roared, "Raise your swords!"

A buzz rang through the air.

It sounded like countless tuning forks ringing together. The onlookers on the Pinwheel Sword felt their heads become heavier. Despite the fact they were able to recover shortly, their facial expressions still changed involuntarily, displaying shock and amazement.

Buzz!

A electric noise resounded through the air. A thick, irregularly-shaped sword gleam shot out from the Pinwheel Sword's tail.

This was...

The onlookers opened their eyes wide out of the fear of missing out on any detail.

With a thunderous boom, the sword gleam exploded into seven dazzling spots of light that flew in different directions.

Boom.

The seven light spots ruptured into seven bursts of radiance, resembling seven blossoming flowers. Seven different sized nets formed from sword gleams appeared and scattered in the sky,

When the scout captain saw the brilliant burst of white light in the sky, he knew something was wrong.

Before he could react in time, the surging burst of sword gleams had already reached him.

In an instant, his muscular body was ripped into pieces by countless streaks of sword gleam.

When the dazzling burst of white light dissipated, the sky was empty. Every blood elementalist had been annihilated.

Gu Xuan heaved a sigh of relief. He had finally killed all the enemies without screwing up. Even though the [Seven Stars] technique had a very wide attack range, there were still loopholes. If they were unlucky, one or two enemies might be able to dodge the attack and escape.

Fortunately, Lady Luck was smiling upon them today.

He wiped off the beads of sweat from his forehead and stole a glance at Boss. When he saw that Boss did not show any reactions, he heaved a sigh of relief again.

At this moment, everyone on the Pinwheel Sword was silent. The engagement between the Pinwheel Sword and the blood elementalists had dealt a huge blow to them. They needed time to digest what they had just seen.

Ai Hui did not feel anything. What Gu Xuan had just done was nothing out of the ordinary. However, he knew Gu Xuan's progress couldn't be rushed and that Gu Xuan would be more proficient after a few more battles. Ai Hui almost forgot that he, himself, wasn't a battlefield veteran either.

Everyone gradually regained their composure. After all, everybody was an extraordinary individual. Only Karakorum Polaris failed to regain her composure. This time around, she finally understood what Ai Hui meant when he previously said that their concepts of swordsmen were different. She received the most shock out of everyone. Gu Xuan and his counterparts completely defied her understanding of swordsmanship.

Were Gu Xuan and his counterparts still considered swordsmen?

They did not pursue a swordplay style of variations, but rather, a style of synchronization with each other. She had never seen or heard of such swordsmen!

If she had not witnessed the powerful might of the Sword of Lightning's sword gleam with her own eyes, she would think of them as being unorthodox.

Since ancient times, there had been no such swordsmanship!

Since ancient times, there had been no such swordsmen!

"A mere scout unit dared to charge at us. This shows how

unafraid of us they are," said Venerable Volcano while sighing.

"Currently, the blood elementalists are unstoppable. They feel that we can't withstand a single blow. There are several cases where an entire combat division was annihilated by a few blood elementalists," Silver Soldier added.

Everyone felt complicated emotions. Initially, both sides' strengths were balanced. Within a short period of time, the elementalists' strength suffered a devastating decline. Nowadays, few elementalists felt proud of themselves. The marvellous Spear of Heavy Cloud Division only magnified the vulnerability of modern elementalists.

All of them returned to their senses. After the shock they received from the Pinwheel Sword wore off, their hearts became heavy. The Pinwheel Sword was indeed powerful, but sword operators were very hard to train. This limited its usefulness in the war. Could one or two Pinwheel Swords make any fundamental changes to circumstances of the war?

Ai Hui noticed everyone was feeling down, but he couldn't think of any way to cheer them up. This wasn't something that could be resolved with a few words. The difference in mentality between elementalists and blood elementalists was caused by the number of victories and defeats each side went through.

The only way to raise morale was through victories. Other than victories, there were no other methods.

Ai Hui also realized this war was tougher than he expected. If the generals and Masters around him now were so pessimistic, he could imagine how low the morale of the rest of the troops would be.

Ai Hui remembered which direction the enemy scouts came from. He passed down the instruction to continue moving forward.

The fact that they encountered the enemy scouts implied that they were not too far away from the main enemy force.

Indeed, they quickly encountered a second batch of scouts. Ai Hui did not do anything and continued to let Gu Xuan command the Pinwheel Sword.

This time around, Gu Xuan's performance was much better. He did not let a single scout escape.

However, their current location was too close to the enemy encampment, their battle had alarmed the other scouts, and a third squad of scouts arrived shortly, depriving them of any time to catch their breaths.

This time around, Gu Xuan failed to kill every single scout.

Of course, other than the fact that Gu Xuan needed to improve his skills, the enemy scouts also took the initiative to retreat this time around. When they saw that the Pinwheel Sword had reached this area, they knew that the other two scouting forces were most

likely dead. As such, they did not choose to fight to the death and escaped in different directions instead. At this point in time, the most important thing for them to do was to alert the main force.

Wisps of blood-colored signals blossomed in the air.

From these signals, one could tell how professional the blood elementalists were. Compared to elementalist combat divisions, the blood elementalist combat divisions had more combat experience and were better trained.

Everyone had solemn looks on their faces.

This was the first time Xiao Shan, Venerable Volcano, Tong Gui, Yu Jin, and the rest made contact with the blood elementalist combat divisions at the front line. The proficiency of the blood elementalists far exceeded their expectations.

"The main forces of the enemy are coming," Silver Soldier reminded Ai Hui.

"They have already arrived," Ai Hui replied calmly.

Just as he finished his sentence, the distant horizon undulated like rippling water. A faintly discernible boom resounded through the air. Even though they were separated by a vast distance, they could feel an invincible aura coming their way.

Ai Hui turned around and walked toward the sword pagoda.

His pace was neither fast nor slow, resembling an ancient mummy who was taking a stroll. At the beginning, everyone had found his weird mummy costume to be irksome. By now, they were already used to seeing him like this.

What was Ai Hui trying to do?

Everyone felt uncertain.

As Ai Hui walked up the flight of stairs, his body exuded an indescribable aura.

The members of the Sword of Lightning became instantly excited. Boss was going to operate the Pinwheel Sword personally! Ever since the day of the one sided slaughter from the Blackfish Mouth Volcano peak, they all viewed him as a god, but the subsequent training sessions were led by Gu Xuan. Boss seldomly led the training anymore.

Ai Hui’s aura intensified with each passing day. In everyone’s eyes, his aura had become increasingly unfathomable.

Gu Xuan was also very excited. Not only was he the vice division leader of the Sword of Lightning, he was also an expert whose strength was second only to Ai Hui in the combat division. However, he clearly knew how wide the strength disparity between him and Boss was.

Every time Boss displayed his skills, it was an excellent chance for him to observe and learn.

Everyone's gazes were gathered on Ai Hui. Many of the gazes contained a tinge of uncertainty.

This was the first time they had seen such a weird situation.

Ai Hui's body did not emit any elemental energy undulations at all. Nonetheless, for some unknown reason, his body appeared to be unusually pristine and transparent, like... a crystal. An indescribable invisible aura surrounded his body.

Karakorum Polaris's beautiful eyes lit up. She could not believe what she was seeing.

Other people might find that invisible aura unfamiliar, but for Karakorum Polaris, she found it unusually familiar.

It was sword aura! An extremely pure sword aura!

Attaining this realm of swordsmanship was something that she had dreamed about. Such phenomenon could only be found in the swordplay manuals from the Cultivation Era.

Oh god, how did he do it?

From a young age, Karakorum Polaris had always been fascinated

by swordsmanship. Creating a swordsmanship encyclopedia was one of her biggest wishes. She had always thought that she was the strongest swordsman of the present era. Today, she finally realized there was someone ahead of her.

No elemental energy was involved, only a sword was used.

Ai Hui did not realize that everyone felt shocked at this moment. When he took up his position at the sword pagoda and held the hilt of his sword, he devoted all his concentration to his sword, appearing as if he had become an entirely different person.

His sensory perception extended to the heavens. The howling metal winds, clouds, and sunshine rapidly brushed past the Pinwheel Sword's light screen shield. The distant imposing mountain range and the blue dome of heaven above his head seemed to be staring at him.

A heroic spirit was born in the vast earth,

Shiiiiiiing. He unsheathed his sword.

Buzzz. Every Sword of Lightning member's sword chimed in unison, producing a sword chime that cut through the air in all directions.

A tremble came from the sword in his hand. It resembled a fine strand of electric current that flowed through every member's body, causing every strand of hair on their bodies to stand on end.

The blood flowing in their bodies was boiling silently, resembling surging, scorching-red lava.

A cold voice drifted through the howling wind.

"Target the enemy forces! Advance at full speed!"

Chapter 592: Charge!

What Helian Tianxiao said made sense. Now that General Ye and Nangong Wulian had been kidnapped, they were in dire straits. He did not know how to appease His Majesty, neither did he know how to obtain victories. Even his determination was wavering at this point of time.

After he became a blood elementalists and got promoted, there had never been a crisis as dangerous as this time.

He did not dare to think about the outcome. Other than making him scared and worried, thinking about the outcome would not help him in any way. Only by having a do-or-die attitude could he then see a glimpse of hope.

His hawk-like eyes were flickering with a cold glint, displaying a strong killing intent.

Helian Tianxiao exuded the air of an outstanding leader. Whenever he encountered dangers, he could clearly determine the gains and losses within a short period of time. He swept his gaze across his generals. When he saw the despair and fear in their eyes turn into an insane battle fervor, he was extremely gratified.

The current God Wolf Division was like a wolf that had its back to the wall. They were unprecedentedly ferocious and insane.

Helian Tianxiao strongly believed that no one could stop them.

Just as he was going to give the order for his army to set off, a deafening alarm suddenly sounded off.

Helian Tianxiao had been suppressing the blazing flames within him. When he heard the alarm signalling an enemy raid, he wasn't angry. Instead, he smiled, strode out of his tent and said, "Let's see who paid us a visit today. From today onwards, we will kill any elementalist that puts up resistance!"

His ruthless voice sent a cold shudder down every general's spine. They knew their chief was really furious this time around. No one stepped forward to appease him. All of them were filled with a frantic killing intent. The fire in their hearts was lit up by despair. Now that their lives were at stake, why would they still care about comradeship?

Just as Helian Tianxiao stepped out of his tent, his eye pupils dilated abruptly.

It was dazzling outside of the tent. The ground was as bright as snow. The wobbling brilliance was demonic and pierced his eyes. The leg that he extended out of his tent cast a trembling shadow on the ground, resembling a wiggling puddle of ink. Helian Tianxiao had never seen such a weird phenomenon in broad daylight.

He raised his head abruptly and looked at the sky.

A light ball, like a shooting-star, was flying towards them at a terrifying speed. The dazzling brilliance was being released by that

light ball.

The encampment became increasingly bright. Everyone and everything looked as if it were plated with a layer of shiny silver. The light ball was devouring the light from every light source . Helian Tianxiao couldn’t even determine the position of the sun at this point of time.

A premonition arose in his heart. He snarled, "Defend..."

Actually, there was no need for him to remind his subordinates. When the alarm for enemy raid sounded off, the soldiers that were in charge of the encampment’s defense had already set up the defenses. The soldiers of God Wolf Division were very well-trained.

Back in the day, Ye Baiyi had repeatedly adjusted the combat divisions that fought at the front line. Having been through countless battles, the six god divisions and twelve blood divisions were thoroughly sharpened. Furthermore, they had maintained their numbers all this time. Therefore, the overall standard of their combat divisions was very high.

The shooting-star like light ball came very fast. In the blink of an eye, it had reached the encampment.

The blood canopy had just risen up.

The demonic and glaring light collided heavily against the blood

canopy.

Boom!

An enormous explosion erupted. The sound wave devoured everyone's sense of hearing in an instant. The rays of light discharged from the explosion engulfed everyone in whiteness. The ground beneath their feet shook violently, causing them to lose their balance.

Helian Tianxiao shook his head to regain his senses. The impact from the collision was very powerful.

He managed to close his eyes at the moment when the collision took place. As such, he wasn't affected by the outburst of dazzling light. When the dazzling light dissipated, Helian Tianxiao could see that the glow of the blood canopy had dimmed and its thickness had reduced significantly.

Suddenly, his pupils dilated once more.

A shooting-star like light ball shot down from the sky and flew towards them again. The demonic and glaring white light appeared once more.

Helian Tianxiao was overwhelmed with shock. This shooting star seemed to appear out of thin air.

Boom.

Another explosion resounded through the air. There was an outburst of dazzling light once again.

This time around, everyone had learnt their lessons. They closed their eyes and were not affected by the glaring white light.

Clink! A soft, shattering sound rang across Helian Tianxiao's ears. His mind jolted.

Oh no! The blood canopy is going to shatter!

Before he could react in time, a rumbling shock wave crashed on his head like a huge hammer.

Helian Tianxiao's body swayed as he tried to stabilize himself.

When he saw his surroundings, his face had turned ashen. It was as if a hurricane had swept through the encampment. The encampment was in chaos. The tents had been ripped from the ground and the soldiers were lying haphazardly all over the place. Luckily, no one was injured. The blood canopy had absorbed most of the force from the shooting stars. Even though the last shock wave was extremely powerful, its force had been dispersed and it was not enough to injure everyone.

However, since when had God Wolf Division ever suffered such humiliation!

Helian Tianxiao was startled and angry at the same time. Based on the energy undulations from the explosion, he could tell that the shooting star was actually a sword gleam.

Swordsmen!

Could it be Sky Edge Division?

Suddenly, Helian Tianxiao noticed there was a rice-grain-sized speckle of light rising in the distant sky.

It’s there! He widened his eyes and watched on blankly as the speckle of light rose higher and higher... and then suddenly it disappeared!

Almost in an instant, he thought of the shooting stars that appeared out of thin air just now. He roared at the top of his voice, "Defend!"

Even in such a sorry state, God Wolf Division still demonstrated the skills of an elite unit. The soldiers in charge of the encampment’s defense had received the greatest impact just now. Many of them had blood seeping out from the corners of their mouths and their bodies were shaking. However, the moment they came to their senses, they frantically returned to their defensive positions without any instructions given.

The boundary of the encampment lit up with a red glow. The red glow kept on rising and formed a blood canopy. The blood canopy

was drawing closed to a point above the centre of the encampment.

The sword gleam was coming at a speed faster than before!

The shooting-star like sword gleam collided with the blood canopy before it could fully close up.

The defensive power of the partially-closed blood canopy was much lower than when it was fully closed. In an instant, the blood canopy shattered into smithereens. The blade-like fragments fell from the sky like raindrops. Helian Tianxiao and his counterparts had put up a bloody glow to surround their bodies. As such, they weren't hurt by the fragments.

In a moment of desperation, the more ordinary soldiers could only protect their vital body parts. Their bodies were spurting out blood. Meanwhile, the muscular blood elementalists knew how to make use of their physical advantages. Non-deadly injuries would not have too much of an impact on them.

Under the powerful impact, those blood elementalists that were in charge of the encampment's defense were knocked flying back and became unconscious.

Since when had God Wolf Division ever suffered such humiliation?

Everyone's eyes were bloodshot. Roars and snarls could be heard throughout the encampment.

Silverfrost Division’s division leader, Song Xiaoqian, clenched her teeth and said, "Chief, allow me to launch a counterattack!"

However, Helian Tianxiao was unusually calm at this moment. He shook his head and replied, "The enemy is coming!"

The dazzling speckle of light in the distant sky kept on quivering as it increased in size gradually.

On the Pinwheel Sword, everyone was silent. All of them had different facial expressions. Some were bewildered, some were incredulous, and some were terrified, but none of them were calm.

[Blazing Shooting Star]. Ai Hui’s cold voice seemed to linger in the smoke emitted by the shooting star.

His swordsmanship was incredible. No, was this still considered swordsmanship? Karakorum Polaris, who was the most eligible person to answer this question, did not know the answer.

With their own eyes, they witnessed the powerful might of Ai Hui’s swordsmanship and how the blood canopy of the God Wolf Division’s encampment was destroyed.

What aroused them the most was Ai Hui’s willpower and fighting spirit.

Their enemy was a god division. It was the god division that had yet to be defeated. It was the god division that had a few members who dared to attack an entire combat division. It was the fearsome god division that defeated numerous combat divisions like a hot knife slicing through butter.

Pinwheel Sword increased its speed instead of reducing it as it charged towards the enemy's encampment. When everyone had realized Ai Hui really wanted to charge towards the encampment, a thought appeared in all of their minds at the same time. Was he seeking death?

The next thought they had was… he was crazy!

However, the metal wind that was brushing past their ears had reached an incredibly high speed, so much so that it was ear-splitting. The scenery around them had become blurry. The glow that surrounded the Pinwheel Sword had intensified. The Pinwheel Sword was rapidly increasing in size in the fearsome and invincible god division's field of vision!

An unimaginable situation was happening right now.

What they were doing now was insane, reckless, illogical and insufferably arrogant.

All of them had grown out of their reckless teenage youth years and they were obviously used to seeing death. However, at this point of time, why was the blood in their bodies boiling and racing so? And what exactly caused the blazing fire in their hearts?

Shi Xueman was holding Cirrus in her hand tightly as her fingers turned pale. Xiao Shan's face was flushed, lacking the usual indifference. Venerable Volcano's beard was swaying and his lips were trembling. Yu Jin subconsciously grabbed Tong Gui's elbow. She did not realize how tightly she was holding Tong Gui's arm, and she never realized how much Tong Gui's body was trembling. Ke Ning's mind was blank while his mouth was mumbling incoherent words non-stop.

The members of Sword of Heavy Cloud had descended into a state of insanity!

Usually Ai Hui was calm and cool-headed. However, the current Ai Hui was like surging lightning bolts in a cloudy sky, reckless and domineering!

His cold voice rang across everyone's ears once more.

"Shi Zhiguang, prepare for [Heavenly Chime of Sword Vortex]!"

Veins were popping out of Shi Zhiguang's neck. With an intense excitement on his face, he roared, "Yes!"

"The rest, prepare for [Great Sword Gleam]"

No one replied to him. The sword pagodas did not need to reply to Ai Hui's commands. An unusual flush appeared on every member's face. Their backs were slightly bent, their eyes were

widened, and they were holding their breaths, resembling tigers that were waiting to strike at any moment.

The howling of the metal winds was becoming increasingly violent. The Pinwheel Sword was still increasing its speed. The image of the enemy encampment was increasing in size and clarity in their line of sight.

Atop the Pinwheel Sword, everyone was unusually quiet. The air seemed to have frozen at this moment.

Shi Xueman and the rest could not help but hold their breaths. A silent killing intent was brewing in the frozen air.

Shi Zhiguang's eyes were widened while his muscular body remained stationary. However, the palm that he used to hold the sword was still gentle like water. He brandished the sword gently and smoothly without any aggression or urgency.

Shi Xueman, Xiao Shan and Venerable Volcano were the first ones to notice something weird was going on. Something seemed to be moving.

After a while, a rustle that resembled the sound of the tide flowing through the sea rang across their ears.

This was…

Xiao Shan and the rest looked around but didn't notice anything.

However, at this point of time, they could not be bothered with anything else. The enemy encampment was almost within reach!

The chime-like Unity Swords hanging at the bottom of Pinwheel Sword were swaying like water plants. They all pointed in the same directions and their swaying motions were synchronized. A mysterious aura was forming but the rustling sound was becoming unnoticeable. It was as if fragmented lightning bolts were gathering in the depths of the layer of cloud.

Ai Hui’s gaze landed upon Helian Tianxiao, who was standing in the middle of the encampment. Similarly, Helian Tianxiao noticed Ai Hui, who was positioned at the core of the Pinwheel Sword’s aura.

Their eyes met. An unconcealable aura of death swept across the air silently.

Suddenly, a sinister smile appeared on Helian Tianxiao’s face as he roared, "Kill them!"

Behind the layer of bandages, Ai Hui’s lips curled into a cold smile as he slightly turned the sword in his hand.

Angry roars and a sword chime rang through the air at the same time.

Chapter 593: Silver Frost's Resistance

Without any probing attacks, the battle instantly escalated into a climax.

Song Xiaoqian, whose request to launch a counterattack was denied, mysteriously appeared in Silver Frost Blood Division. With an ice-cold face, she sat on the back of a snow white silver frost wolf. Beside her, there was a flagbearer who held the war flag of Silver Frost Blood Division high in the air. Behind her, approximately one thousand soldiers had gathered and they stood in neat and orderly formations. Units of soldiers continued to gather behind her like streams of water.

The enemy had arrived too fast, so fast that they couldn't assemble in time.

One thousand soldiers was enough!

A cold glint flashed across the beautiful eyes of Song Xiaoqian. The silver frost wolf beneath her suddenly raised its front limbs. Behind her, the silver frost wolves beneath every soldier followed suit as well.

When Helian Tianxiao's angry roar resounded through the sky, the one thousand Silver Frost wolves' thick and solid front limbs slammed heavily onto the ground.

A snow white icy mist suddenly pervaded the area.

A thick and gigantic ice wall rose from the ground in front of the encampment. It was right in the way of Pinwheel Sword. After the ice wall was set up, icy mist and frost swept up from the ground and gathered around it.

Helian Tianxiao's God Wolf Division suddenly moved. They separated into two groups and ran adjacent to each other, brushing past the two ends of the ice wall. This entire process was completed in one go without any hesitation.

The sudden appearance of the ice wall did not seem to affect Ai Hui at all. He merely turned the hilt of his sword slightly.

The movement of one sword caused hundreds of swords to move.

Beneath Pinwheel Sword, the chime-like Unity Swords were whirling slowly, resembling water plants that were caught in a vortex. Suddenly, they erupted with a burst of radiance and synchronized sword chimes. Like a fully-filled reservoir with its dam lock opened abruptly, the radiance gushed out like surging floodwater. The deep and low sword chimes converged into one single sword chime. It was loud, clear and melodious, resounding through the sky like the cry of a crane!

[Heavenly Chime of Sword Vortex] was inspired by [Sword Chime], but it was several times more powerful than the latter.

The ice wall trembled and the icy mist rose into the air. Countless straight, crisscrossing sword scars appeared on it.

Song Xiaoqian's facial expression changed, but she couldn't yell in time.

Pinwheel Sword did not try to dodge the ice wall. Instead, it collided into it directly.

The ice wall shattered with a loud bang, causing countless ice fragments to fly in all directions like torrential rain. The charging God Wolf soldiers collapsed like wheatgrass that was being reaped. They looked as if they were hit by a heavy hammer as the glow around their bodies dimmed. The terrifying power from the collision caused them to lose their balance and fly off the backs of their wolves.

Song Xiaoqian reached out her hand and caught one of the ice fragments as it shot out from the icy mist. The fist sized ice fragment had a shiny surface that made it look like a shard of mirror. It appeared as if it had been cut and polished by an extremely sharp sword gleam.

Her face turned solemn.

After it shattered the ice wall, Pinwheel Sword entered the icy mist. Its speed suddenly slowed down. When the icy mist brushed against the glowing screen surrounding Pinwheel Sword, sparks were created and flew in all directions. The glowing screen around Pinwheel Sword was thinning visibly. The icy mist had an odd, corrosive ability that seemed to be effective against Pinwheel Sword's glowing screen.

Ai Hui was unconcerned about this.

Blood elementalists practised blood spiritual force. In the spiritual force system, blood spiritual force was considered a low-tier spiritual force. However, it was still a type of spiritual force nonetheless. Therefore, it was still much more powerful than elemental energy.

However, a battle was never fought on paper.

Pinwheel Sword was as fast as a lightning bolt. The icy mist could not stop it at all. Pinwheel Sword jolted and the hindering mist disappeared.

A snow white combat division stood silently in front of them.

Without any hesitation, Ai Hui moved the sword in his hand. Like a silent command, every member's sword moved at the same time.

Looking down from the sky, one could clearly see the seven sword pagodas erupting with a brilliant radiance at the same time. The radiance was produced by the glow of sword gleams shooting out of the seven sword pagodas. They were scattered uniformly, resembling the seven stars of the Big Dipper.

Song Xiaoqian held her breath. She felt that her heart was being gripped by an invisible hand. An intense feeling of danger engulfed

her body.

Her instincts, which she'd developed from countless battles, allowed her to channel all her blood spiritual force instantly. All of sudden her body emitted an enormous amount of mist.

At this moment a thick, dazzling streak of sword gleam travelled with lightning speed and struck her directly.

Crash!

Ice fragments flew through the air in all directions.

Having a powerful sense of perception and a clear mind, Ai Hui knew that he'd struck an ice statue the moment he unleashed his attack. At the same time, he had already locked onto his target again and he lashed out his sword once more.

Another gigantic streak of sword gleam was unleashed!

Song Xiaoqian, who had just appeared amid the mist, felt an intense sense of danger. She was overwhelmed with shock. How could the other party lock onto her position? However, she had no time to think about it now. She clenched her teeth, channeled all her blood spiritual force and transformed into a cloud of mist once again.

Crash!

Ice fragments flew through the air in all directions again. The spot where she was standing previously was empty now. However, this time around, the ice fragments were stained with blood.

At this point of time, the blood elementalists from Silver Frost Blood Division had already risen into the air and lunged for Pinwheel Sword!

Every one of them was holding an ice spear. As they reached their maximum height in the air, they arched their lower backs, exhaled and hurled the ice spears in their hands.

The ice spears spun at an extreme speed and transformed into streaks of light that whizzed towards Pinwheel Sword.

Each unit of blood elementalists hurled out more than one hundred ice spears. Like a bone shattering rain of ice, the ice spears blasted Pinwheel Sword's glowing screen. The glowing screen vibrated violently. The piercing power of those ice spears was extremely terrifying.

Just as the first wave of blood elementalists hurled the ice spears in their hands, the second wave of blood elementalists was already in the air throwing their ice spears.

One wave after another, the ice spears flew towards Pinwheel sword like a torrential storm!

Pinwheel Sword's glowing screen was on the verge of collapse.

Ai Hui locked onto Song Xiaoqian's figure once more. However, this time around, Pinwheel Sword's glowing screen was facing imminent danger. Admittedly, his attack could hit Song Xiaoqian, but he would put Pinwheel Sword in danger.

In a split second, Ai Hui had made his move.

The seven sword pagodas lit up once again. The sword gleams released a glow and shot out from the seven sword pagodas.

[Seven Stars]!

Seven bursts of sword gleams erupted like fireworks around Pinwheel Sword.

Without any warning, Silver Frost soldiers were caught in the sword gleams from [Seven Stars]. They fell from the sky like dumplings in an instant. However, the icy mist seemed to have a mind of its own. It transformed into a soft mattress and caught the fallen soldiers.

The soldiers weren't severely injured. Other than ten unlucky soldiers who were hit in their vital body parts, the rest were only lightly wounded. They did not care about their injuries at all. Their first reaction after getting hit was to continue lunging for Pinwheel Sword.

The strength of [Seven Stars] did not lie in its power, but rather its attacking radius. Like a huge broom, it swept every blood elementalist down from the air around Pinwheel Sword.

Shi Zhiguang seized the opportunity and pressed the hilt of his sword abruptly. Pinwheel Sword conveniently flew out of Silver Frost Blood Division's encirclement and its glowing screen re-stabilized. Those fallen Silver Frost soldiers that had frantically lunged for Pinwheel Sword missed their target.

Shi Zhiguang clearly understood that Pinwheel Sword's most formidable strength did not lie in its sword gleams, but rather, its speed and maneuverability. Boss had warned them more than once that Pinwheel Sword was not used to fight enemy forces head-on. Fighting head-on was more for weapons like hammers and rods. Swords were used to fight nimbly and swiftly.

Touch and go, attack the enemy's weak spot, strike where it hurts the most.

Shi Zhiguang wasn't confused at all. At this moment, he was unusually excited and yet his brain was extremely calm.

Ai Hui did not stop attacking. His sword continued to fly through the air swiftly.

Swoosh, swoosh, swoosh. More than two hundred sword gleams were dancing in the air.

Like an enormous whip, a huge and thick sword gleam landed on the enemy encampment. Tents were ripped apart and blood and flesh flew in all directions, forming a bloody "road" on the ground.

The blood elementalists who had assembled into their formations were able to withstand the huge sword gleam through various methods. Even if they could not withstand it, they still tried their best to lessen the damage done. However, those blood elementalists that had yet to assemble into their formations did not have the ability to withstand the huge sword gleam. Like a fish on a chopping board, they were readily slaughtered.

A war was as such. Sometimes, blood elementalists with Ability of God or who were Masters were very limited in their usefulness. It was every division leader’s responsibility to give orders and ensure their combat divisions were in order.

Song Xiaoqian’s face turned ashen. Half of her body was drenched in blood. The huge sword gleam had injured her severely. However, even so, she continued to give commands to the soldiers and made sure they finished assembling into their formations.

Pinwheel Sword whizzed through the air and released three more huge sword gleams. Three enormous bloody gouges were left on the ground of the encampment.

More than thirty blood elementalists died on the spot. More than fifty blood elementalists were lying in a pool of blood while groaning in agony.

Helian Tianxiao's facial expression did not change at all. A few hundred casualties was insignificant to Silver Frost Blood Division and God Wolf Division, despite the fact that this was the largest number of casualties they had suffered since they arrived at the battlefield.

Helian Tianxiao already knew who the invader was!

Ai Hui's Sword of Lightning!

Having sharp eyesight, he could see Shi Xueman, Silver Soldier and the rest of the elementalists' core members on Pinwheel Sword.

Disrespect. He could feel that God Wolf Division was being disrespected. All the enemy division leaders had arrived at God Wolf Division's encampment, if they weren't disrespecting them then what else were they doing here?

However, Helian Tianxiao was still able to maintain his composure at this moment. He was thinking of only one thing. He couldn't let the enemy leave this place!

The oddly-shaped weapon and the astonishing fighting tactics had lit up his eyes. All of his defensive tactics had failed because of these unprecedented and odd fighting tactics.

They had been in a disadvantageous position all this time. They

had more than a few hundred casualties and yet the enemy did not even have a single casualty.

Helian Tianxiao, however, was unconcerned.

All of the enemy’s important leaders were atop this weird-looking weapon. As long as he could take down this weapon, he would make up for all the losses he suffered. Even if the whole God Wolf Division was annihilated, this deal was still worth it.

Pinwheel Sword broke through the half raised blood canopy and penetrated the encampment.

"Don’t run!"

"They are escaping!"

The surrounding generals were cursing loudly. Suddenly, Helian Tianxiao yelled, "Get ready, the enemy is coming back!"

The rest were stunned. Soon after, a furious look appeared on their faces.

Helian Tianxiao could maintain his composure, but his generals could not do so. They failed to stop the enemy’s raid. Their encampment was wrecked and the ground was filled with corpses and wounded soldiers from their side. It was as if the enemy had just trampled on their faces.

Every soldier of God Wolf Division was prideful and valiant. How could they take this lying down?

"Every unit split up now and focus on slowing the enemy down. You must entangle the enemy in order to slow it down. Once the enemy's speed is reduced, it will become a fish that is trapped in a net," Helian Tianxiao instructed.

"Yes!" roared everyone in unison.

God Wolf Division scattered into separate units. Every unit had approximately one hundred men and they cruised forward slowly.

Atop Pinwheel Sword, everyone felt like they were dreaming. They could not believe what they had just seen.

Were they... penetrating the enemy encampment?

They actually penetrated the encampment of the enemy forces!

The encampment of God Wolf Division and Silver Frost Blood Division!

Ai Hui's facial expression remained as usual and his mind was calm. He lowered his sword as his cold voice resounded through the air.

"Shi Zhiguang, peeling tactic!"

"Yes!" Shi Zhiguang’s eyes lit up.

Moving the hilt of the sword in his hand, Pinwheel Sword drew an elegant arc in the sky and went back for the blood elementalists!

Chapter 594: Helpless

Helian Tianxiao continuously adjusted his defensive arrangements. The enemy's speed was terrifying. If he did not reduce the enemy's speed, there was absolutely no chance for him to obtain victory. He was very prudent because he did not know whether or not the enemy still had other trump cards.

Previously, the Spear of Heavy Cloud's pagoda cannons had already given then a huge shock. Now, this odd-looking flying machine of the Sword of Lightning gave them another huge shock.

The God Wolf Division felt extremely humiliated after seeing their encampment so easily invaded. Shame and anger arose in their hearts. However, due to the impact of the previous incisive attack, they had no choice but to maintain their composure.

Helian Tianxiao predicted that the Sword of Lightning would charge their encampment once more. Everyone felt infuriated, and all of them were waiting to give the Sword of Lightning a good beating.

Shi Xueman, Silver Soldier, and the rest observed the enemy forces closely.

Soon, they were going to fight the God Wolf Division. A chance to observe them beforehand like this was hard to come by.

The God Wolf Division was like a blood-colored whirlpool. Every unit had over 100 men, and all of them were slowly cruising

around the encampment, looking like routed soldiers. On the surface, their formations looked unorganized, but in reality, they were concealing their killing intent. The distance between each cruising unit was very small and faintly discernible. When a unit was in trouble, the nearest unit would immediately provide reinforcement to it and block the enemy. Meanwhile, the other nearby units would spring into action and outflank the enemy.

Members of the Silver Frost Blood Division were mixed among them. Their feet released surging traces of mist that would not dissipate.

At this moment, the Pinwheel Sword finished making its U-turn and began to increase its speed. Its glowing light screen became bright once again.

Shi Zhiguang's eyes looked as though they were surging with snow-white tidal waves under the sun. Due to exerting too much strength, his facial expression could not help but turn sinister. Coupled with his tall and muscular body, he looked like a furious wild beast that was filled with energy. However, his movements were smooth and gentle like water, looking as if he was afraid to break the sword hilt.

The buzzing produced by the Pinwheel Sword resonated once more. With a long trail of light behind it, it flew toward the enemy encampment.

Even though Helian Tianxiao had seen the Pinwheel Sword in action before, he still could not help but feel surprise when he saw it in action again. Such terrifying speed! Such fearsome might!

The distance between the two parties was reducing rapidly

"Prepare to receive the enemy!" Helian Tianxiao roared.

The mist from the Silver Frost Blood Division shot up into the sky like countless frigid white palms. These white misty palms acted as the first line of defence. Previously, the sound wave attack had left a deep impression on them. This time around, they had prepared a thicker ice wall and frosty mist that possessed a stronger restrictive ability. The members of the God Wolf Division were also prepared. As long as the speed of the Pinwheel Sword was slightly reduced, they would pounce on it like a pack of hungry wolves.

Just as the Pinwheel Sword was about to charge into the encampment, it suddenly changed its direction and flew along the edge of the encampment at an extreme speed.

As it flew along the edge of the encampment, each of the seven sword pagodas lit up with a dazzling radiance. A streak of [Great Sword Gleam] shot out from the Pinwheel Sword. The thick and shining sword gleam landed heavily on the encampment.

The sword gleam traveled at a lightning speed, and its momentum was unstoppable. It almost reached the center of the encampment.

Everyone who stood in its path was ripped into pieces of flesh and blood. The encampment was split into two with blood

elementalists either injured or dead at the line of demarcation. No one could withstand its sharpness. The God Wolf Division's members were scattered, so they did not suffer heavy casualties. Even so, 12 of their members still died on the spot and six of their members were severely injured.

The number of wounded blood elementalists was fewer than the number of dead blood elementalists. This showed how powerful the sword gleam was.

Helian Tianxiao did not care about the casualties. His heart skipped a beat as he realized Ai Hui's intention!

Indeed, the Pinwheel Sword drew another arc in the sky and charged at the encampment again. Halfway through, it suddenly changed its direction and flew at an oblique angle to the encampment.

As it neared the edge of the encampment, it shot out another streak of sword gleam into the encampment!

The previous scene was reenacted, causing more than 10 casualties.

Damn it!

Helian Tianxia's face turned extremely sullen. For a period of time, he did not know what to do either. The Pinwheel Sword was like a sharp fruit knife that pared the encampment bit by bit.

Even though he knew Ai Hui's intention, he could not think of any good solution. The Pinwheel Sword was too fast, too nimble, and it only flew along the edge of the encampment.

Suddenly, Helian Tianxiao found that this battle tactic looked unusually familiar.

Eh? Wasn't this the tactic that the God Wolf Division frequently used? They used speed and maneuvering to cruise around the edge of the enemy forces. Whenever the enemy forces relaxed, the God Wolf Division would pounce and take a bite of them.

By the time Helian Tianxiao realized what was going on, he turned even more sullen.

The Pinwheel Sword was using his favorite tactic against him, yet he was helpless against it. Helian Tianxiao was a shrewd and calm individual, but he was flustered and exasperated by this point in time.

After a while, the other party had already charged them five times. There were almost 100 casualties.

Calm down! Calm down!

He took a deep breath and suppressed the anger within him. "Defend! Raise the defenses! Strengthen the defenses!"

When Helian Tianxiao saw the blood canopy rising up slowly, the veins on his neck popped while his fists were clenched so tightly that they turned pale-white. In the past, the God Wolf Division would always laugh at its enemies for being a tortoise that hid in its shell. He had not expected that he would now be the one who hid in a tortoise shell.

The blood canopy rose and covered the entire encampment once more.

Every blood elementalist heaved a sigh of relief. The Pinwheel Sword's continuous sorties had caused them to bleed. Even the bravest soldiers would feel fear when stuck in a situation where they could get hit, but couldn't retaliate.

The distant Pinwheel Sword stopped in its tracks. Following which, It turned around and looked at the encampment from a distance.

Helian Tianxiao's gaze was fixated on the tallest sword pagoda on the Pinwheel Sword. There was a skinny figure whose body was completely covered in bandages.

Ai Hui!

This name popped up in Helian Tianxiao's mind. A nobody whom he had completely disregarded in the past had become his nemesis now. The killing intent in his eyes was unconcealable. He had to seek revenge for the humiliation he suffered today!

Atop the sword pagoda, Ai Hui stood in front of a pagoda window, seemingly looking at Helian Tianxiao too.

Suddenly, Ai Hui raised the sword in his hand, a sword that was mysteriously covered with cracks. Ai Hui then pointed the sword at Helian Tianxiao.

This provocative action enraged the entire God Wolf Division. All the soldiers flew into a frenzy. Curses, roars, and requests to launch a counterattack flooded the encampment.

Ai Hui suddenly let go of the sword hilt. In the midair, the sword shattered, and its fragments fell all over the ground. Following which, Ai Hui dusted his hands.

This action caused the God Wolf Division to explode. Even the most honest-looking soldier flew into a fury.

Helian Tianxiao suddenly smiled. He raised his voice and said, "Brother Ai is indeed powerful and talented. Furthermore, the Sword of Lightning Division truly deserves the reputation it has. I admire you! However, in the current times of chaos, Brother Ai's effort alone will be futile. Why not join the God Nation and undertake the mission of bringing peace to this world with us?! His Majesty is eager for talents..."

Atop the Pinwheel Sword, Ai Hui did not care about Helian Tianxiao at all. He turned around and said to Shi Zhiguang, "Go back."

Upon hearing these words, Shi Zhiguang quickly operated the Pinwheel Sword. Following which, the Pinwheel Sword drew an arc in the sky and flew toward the Windy Pearl Bridge.

Inside the God Wolf Division’s encampment, Helian Tianxiao gazed at the distant Pinwheel Sword. For a moment, he was dazed.

When he returned to his senses and saw the low morale of his soldiers, he silently shivered in fear. The Sword of Lightning came at a really inopportune time. Just before a win-or-die battle, the Sword of Lightning delivered a devastating blow to them. The momentum that he had gathered for his army disappeared in an instant.

Helian Tianxiao pretended to be calm and laughed, "We are going to win for sure!"

The rest were stunned and looked at their division leader. The fighting capabilities displayed by the Sword of Lightning had just injured them, and they could not do anything about it. They could not understand what their division leader meant by "win for sure."

When Helian Tianxiao saw that he had succeeded in getting everyone’s attention, he said calmly, "The Sword of Lightning is powerful, but what has it achieved today other than revealing its weaknesses? If the Sword of Lightning Division was my trump card, I would keep it a secret and use it only at the critical moment to obtain victory. I would definitely not use it to scout my enemy and alert them against me. Do you all think that this makes sense?"

The voice of a woman rang through the air, "Sir, you're right!"

The voice belonged to the Silver Frost Blood Division's Song Xiaoqian. She continued, "By revealing his trump card, Ai Hui clearly knows that he can't use it to obtain victory!"

The other generals weren't fools. They were merely shocked by the might of the Sword of Lightning Division. Now that the two division leaders had unravelled the reason behind Ai Hui's raid, they returned to their senses and nodded their heads.

When Helian Tianxiao saw that the dejected looks on everyone's faces disappeared, he felt at ease. Then, he turned around and asked Song Xiaoqian, "How's your injury?"

Half of Song Xiaoqian's body was covered in frost. One could see some bloodstains within the frost. She shook her head and replied, "I will be fine after resting for a few days."

A blood elementalist had a very strong body. As long as the injury was not deadly, he or she would recover rapidly.

Helian Tianxiao nodded his head and continued, "Since Ai Hui already knows our position, there's no need for us to hurry. We can advance at normal speed while taking this opportunity to let your injury heal as well."

"Yes," Song Xiaoqian replied.

She turned around and left.

Helian Tianxiao looked around him. The soldiers were repairing the encampment and tending to the wounded. Deep down, he wasn't as optimistic as he portrayed. Previously, he had felt that the defensive line at the Windy Pearl Bridge would be unable to withstand a single blow. He had not expected for Ai Hui's Sword of Lightning Division to deal him a head-on blow.

How could he not understand Ai Hui's intention?

Ai Hui was doing this to raise the morale of the elementalists. He wanted to prove that blood elementalist combat divisions weren't invincible.

And Ai Hui had succeeded.

No matter what, this was a successful raid by the elementalists. The Sword of Lightning Division had pierced through the encampment of the God Wolf Division, able to come and go as they pleased. Meanwhile, the God Wolf Division was helpless against them. This raid would boost the morale of Ai Hui's subordinates greatly.

However, what Helian Tianxiao told his soldiers wasn't a lie either. A mere Sword of Lightning Division wasn't really scary.

Helian Tianxiao did not tell them the full story. He did not tell them that Ai Hui was using this raid to boost the morale of the

elementalists.

This was a most troublesome issue.

From this day forward, not only did he need to face the Sword of Lightning, he also needed to face tenacious combat divisions which had their morale boosted. Defensively, the enemy forces had a new-found willpower and fighting spirit that would significantly impact the future battles as well.

Previously, Helian Tianxiao only knew of Ai Hui as "Lightning Razor Ai." Ai Hui was supposed to prove the Elders Guild's decadence.

Now, he knew how unreliable those rumors were. They had made an extremely huge mistake.

This fellow, whom everyone felt was merely avaricious, was able to create such a significant impact the moment he set foot on the battlefield.

Such a formidable individual!

Helian Tianxiao exclaimed in admiration in his heart. He knew he, himself, wouldn't be able to pull off such an earth-shaking move. If Ai Hui's means weren't so weak, he might have been able to overturn the situation.

It was a pity both sides had nowhere to retreat to. In terms of

determination and willpower, both sides were evenly matched.

The upcoming battle was destined to be a tough one, but victory would ultimately belong to them.

Chapter 595: “The morale of an army is important.”

"I really couldn’t imagine Ai Hui would choose to assault the enemy encampment at that point in time. Even now, when I think about it, I still can’t believe the Sword of Lightning assaulted the encampment of the God Wolf Division and the Silver Frost Division. I have to admit that my mind was blank at the instant he charged the encampment. I feel really ashamed. All along, I felt that I was braver than anyone else, but now I know that I am a coward deep down. Before we charged into the enemy encampment, I still did not understand why Ai Hui became the leader of the Central Pine Faction. Now, I think I know why. One is always willing to follow a person who can bring confidence and courage to everyone in a hopeless situation."

The writing brush in Tong Gui’s hand stopped in its tracks. He was in somewhat of a daze. He was writing this letter to An Chouchou. After a while, he returned to his senses and continued writing the letter.

"The Pinwheel Sword is a miraculous masterpiece. It has peerless speed and terrifying offensive capabilities. The only thing that limits it is the position of sword operator. I heard that one needs talent and a unique training system to become a sword operator. Even so, the profession of sword operator has potential and a bright future. The skies of the future belong to the Pinwheel Sword. The combat tactics of the sword pagodas will also redefine the combat styles of elementalists."

"A bunch of second-rate swordsmen were able to unleash a first-

rate attack. Even Karakorum Polaris was surprised. I named the Central Pine Valley's unique combat style as the Pagoda Style. Pagoda cannons and sword pagodas follow this style. Ai Hui has found the answer to the question of how to use a group of low-level elementalists on the battlefield. The Pagoda Style is innovative and defies conventional battle stratagems.

"It will even affect the training methods of elementalists in the future. The need for individual technique and absolute arts will reduce gradually. There will be a greater need for elementalists to have compatibility, synchronization, and endurance. This is the beginning of a new era. It's my honor to be able to witness and participate in this mission. Newlight City must increase it research on Pagoda Style military strategies. You have an acute foresight. I believe you have already understood what I am saying, and there's no need for me to give you more details."

Tong Gui's writing brush stopped in its tracks again. Countless thoughts appeared in his mind. He sighed with sorrow, but felt hopeful and optimistic.

"Logically speaking, the strength of both sides did not change much. The enemy's strength still far surpasses ours. Even so, our side is filled with optimism and fighting spirit. Compared to the dead atmosphere of the past, even though our sky is still covered by dark clouds, we can now see a silver lining. This silver lining is not enough to illuminate the path in front of us, but it's enough to motivate everyone.

"Everyone has begun to believe that Ai Hui's arrival will bring some changes to the current situation."

"Even though victories are not guaranteed, no one is scared of fighting blood elementalists anymore."

Tong Gui carefully sealed up the letter and instructed someone to send it to Newlight City.

When he walked out of his tent, he saw a group of people surrounding Ke Ning. They were listening attentively to Ke Ning's narration of the Sword of Lightning's raid at the enemy encampment. This incident had become the hottest discussion topic of the entire defensive line.

Initially, no one believed it. Fortunately, there were many witnesses. When everyone discovered that it was true, the whole Pagoda Cannon Alliance exploded.

Due to this incident, the number of elementalists who joined the Pagoda Cannon Alliance increased significantly.

When Ke Ning discovered this trend, he exaggerated the incident without restraint and recruited a huge number of elementalists.

Along the way, there were people occasionally greeting Tong Gui, and he returned their greetings. As he walked through the encampment, he could sense the obvious change in atmosphere. Previously, the encampment had a lifeless atmosphere that was rife with pessimism. Nowadays, he would see burly and tough men smile with exultation, looking as if they had excess energy.

"Good job! We have to let those blood elementalists know that we are not a bunch of weaklings!"

"It’s a pity I didn’t go along. If I could have seen it with my own eyes, I would die with no regrets!"

"Sir Ai Hui might really be able to overturn the situation."

"Sir is a true man! Unparalleled courage!"

Upon hearing these words, Tong Gui could not help but smile.

However, when his smile disappeared, he scolded them, "What are all of you doing here? The Pagoda Cannon Alliance doesn’t need useless people. The blood elementalists are coming and all of you are still slacking here? Go and train now!"

Everyone scurried away in panic. Even Ke Ning had a look of embarrassment on his face.

Tong Gui strode forward and bowed solemnly, "Sir Ke Ning, time is precious, and the enemies might arrive at any moment. We need to speed up the training process and make sure everyone is accustomed to using the pagoda cannons."

In terms of strength and experience, Tong Gui far surpassed Ke Ning. However, since Ai Hui assigned him and Yu Jin to assist Ke

Ning, he could not complain about anything and considered himself as the subordinate of Ke Ning.

Ke Ning broke into an embarrassed smile. Just as he was about to say something, a blacksmith walked over and asked, "Who is Ke Ning?"

"I am," Ke Ning replied.

"12 Beehive Heavy Cannons. Please sign the receipt," the blacksmith said.

In an instant, Ke Ning’s embarrassment disappeared. He asked joyfully, "Where are the Beehive Heavy Cannons?"

When Ke Ning saw the 12 Beehive Heavy Cannons, he almost drooled. Previously, the forging process of the Beehive Heavy Cannons had encountered a hitch. After the arrival of Li Houtang, the problem was solved. Furthermore, because of the team of blacksmiths led by Blind He, the production speed of the Beehive Heavy Cannons began to increase.

The newly-produced Beehive Heavy Cannons needed to be supplied to the Spear of Heavy Cloud first. The Spear of Heavy Cloud’s defensive line was closer to the enemy, and the pressure they faced was larger. Therefore, they needed the Beehive Heavy Cannons more urgently.

The daily training sessions of the Pagoda Cannon Alliance

involved training with the pagoda cannons that were phased out by the Spear of Heavy Cloud.

This was also why Ke Ning only now saw the Beehive Heavy Cannons.

The thick bodies of the heavy cannons were bright-red in color. They looked unusually eye-catching and were filled with an aura of might.

"Blind He has made some modifications to the Beehive Heavy Cannons. The length of the barrel was reduced, the amount of snow lava that can be delivered was increased. and the capacity of the fire reservoir has been augmented. Overall, its power has been boosted. This is the first batch of Beehive Heavy Cannons, and they will be replenished in the future. I am here to to build the fire reservoirs. Where should we set up the pagoda cannons?"

Ke Ning returned to his senses and quickly replied, "I will go and ask Sir."

He did not know Ai Hui’s exact plan. Where the pagoda cannons were set up was directly linked to their next battle. He did not know what Ai Hui’s arrangements were for the alliance for the next battle. As such, he did not dare to make decisions for such matters.

"Ouch!"

Ai Hui’s scream could be heard even from the tent next to his.

After Lou Lan examined Ai Hui, he said, "Ai Hui, you have to be more careful next time. Now, the elemental soup is no longer effective for you. Luckily, your body possesses the life force from the Vitality Branches. Otherwise, you would be in danger."

Ai Hui laid on the bed and whispered, "Next time? Is there still a next time? Since I have done my best, the rest is up to them. Lou Lan, help me up and bring me out to bask in the sunlight. Lying on this bed makes me feel like I am becoming moldy."

"No problem, Ai Hui," Lou Lan nodded his head and yelled cheerfully.

With a bang, Lou Lan transformed into a ball of soft sand and carried Ai Hui out of his tent.

When Ai Hui left his tent, the dazzling sunlight caused him to squint his eyes. Compared to the tent, he preferred to be under the sun. Lou Lan moved very carefully. He placed Ai Hui in a comfortable position before leaving to do his work.

The warm and cozy sunlight shone on Ai Hui’s body. It was a form of pleasure for him.

Previously, after they had returned to their encampment, he looked as if he was going to collapse after he stepped out of the sword pagoda. During the raid on the enemy encampment, he was

overly focused and forgot about his condition. Why did he regret acting like a hero only when he was at his last breath?

Sigh, one has to think before acting...

Drowsiness crept over Ai Hui.

"Sir! Sir!"

Ke Ning's voice disrupted Ai Hui's nap. He could not help but open his eyes and ask," What's wrong now?"

Ke Ning arrived beside Ai Hui like a gust of wind. With a fawning look on his face, he said, "Sir, the Beehive Heavy Cannons have arrived. Where should we deploy them?"

The Sword of Lightning's raid on the enemy encampment had completely changed Ke Ning's impression of Ai Hui. In the past, Ke Ning was the one who badmouthed Ai Hui the most behind his back. Ke Ning used to yearn to return to the Spear of Heavy Cloud day and night because he had not wanted to join this bullsh*t Pagoda Cannon Alliance.

In contrast, he worshipped Ai Hui nowadays, and his loyalty was unswerving. Whatever Ai Hui said was definitely right!

Ai Hui's insane actions and the miraculous battle had established a divine position in Ke Ning's heart.

Some people might ask, wasn’t it just a raid? What? Was that a joke? Had anyone done it before? Who could do it? No, no one could do it. Other people wouldn’t even think about it. Initially, Ke Ning thought Ai Hui was crazy and felt he was going to die. Subsequently, he was so nervous that his mind blanked. Eventually, after leaving the enemy encampment safe and sound, he felt incredulous, fearful, and emotional.

Ke Ning behaved respectfully toward the sick and lazy-looking mummy in front of him, like how a student faced his teacher.

"Oh, the Beehive Heavy Cannons," Ai Hui casually replied, feeling slightly sleepy.

Ke Ning nodded his head and said, "Yes, Sir. Once the Beehive Heavy Cannons are set up, it will be very hard for us to move them again in the future. Should we decide on the defensive positions first before we set them up?"

"Just set them up anywhere you want and train with them first. Given the Pagoda Cannon Alliance’s current level, none of you can go to the front line yet," Ai Hui replied lazily.

With his face flushed in embarrassment, Ke Ning said, "I’m sorry for not doing a good job. I will definitely supervise and urge everyone to train with the pagoda cannons."

If it had been in the past, he would think that Ai Hui was intentionally nitpicking and trying to shirk responsibility.

However, he now believed in everything Ai Hui said. He felt that he, himself, never really did a good job. He was determined to properly train the Pagoda Cannon Alliance and not implicate Ai Hui.

Ai Hui acknowledged him and continued, "Don’t scrimp on the snow lava. Train as though you’re in a real battle."

"Yes! Subordinate will not let Sir down!" Ke Ning said solemnly.

After finishing this sentence, Ke Ning left with his head held high.

Ai Hui was stunned by Ke Ning’s behavior, staring blanking as Ke Ning left. He did not know what had happened to this fellow. It looked as if he had become another person.

"The morale of an army is important," Xiao Shan appeared out of nowhere beside him and said plainly.

Ai Hui returned to his senses. All this time, he was annoyed by Xiao Shan’s mysterious behavior and the know-it-all look on his face. He curled his lips and retorted, "We must have a practical solution. What’s the point of solely depending on morale?"

"That’s true," Xiao Shan nodded his head.

Then, he turned around and walked away.

Ai Hui was stunned. He... he walked away just like that? What kind of reaction was this? Why didn’t you ask me what solution I have come up with?"

Suddenly, a mournful alarm echoed through the encampment.

Ai Hui sat up straight and looked at the defensive line near the metal wind curtain.

The most brutal battle was about to begin.

Chapter 596: Pearl Defensive Line

Atop the God-subduing Peak, everyone gazed into the distance.

The God Wolf Division had stopped 25 kilometers away from them and started to pitch camp.

"It seems we really scared Helian Tianxiao last time," Silver Soldier said while laughing.

The rest could not help but laugh as well.

The God Wolf Division was no longer as cocky as they were in the past. Now, they were very prudent. Not only did they set up defenses outside of their encampment, they also had several units patrolling the sky. The defensive structures in their encampment were built with diligence as well. Compared to last time, there was a significant increase in the number of defensive structures they built.

One could tell that the Sword of Lightning's raid on their former encampment had greatly impacted them.

However, the smiles on everyone's faces disappeared rapidly. The more prudent the enemy, the harder the battle would be.

The elementalists possessed an absolute numerical advantage. There were the Spear of Heavy Cloud, the Infantry Division, the Sky Edge Division, the Sword of Lightning, and the Pagoda Cannon

Alliance. Furthermore, with the defensive line behind their backs, they could keep on replenishing their manpower. Meanwhile, the God Wolf Division and the Silver Frost Blood Division only had a total of 10,000 troops.

It was a pity that a battle did not solely depend on the number of soldiers.

The blood elementalists' strength far surpassed theirs.

The Sword of Lighting was rather powerful, but there was only one Pinwheel Sword, and they only had a few hundred men. The most powerful combat division was the Spear of Heavy Cloud. Its strength was comparable to the blood elementalists, but it had suffered heavy casualties during the last battle and had to replenish their manpower with many rookies. Their offensive strength had decreased significantly. Then again, when one considered the fact that they had God-subduing Peaks and were fighting a defensive battle, they should be able to contend with the blood elementalists.

The Sky Edge Division and the Infantry Division were traditional combat divisions. Their strength paled in comparison to the Spear of Heavy Cloud. Nonetheless, since they had God-subduing Peaks and were fighting a defensive battle this time around, they could definitely put up a good fight against the blood elementalists as well.

As for the Pagoda Cannon Alliance, its members were not even proficient in using the pagoda cannons yet. They simply would not be of any help in the battle.

Of course, the terrain was still advantageous for the elementalists, consisting of a narrow passageway. If it weren't for the Windy Pearl Bridge's unique terrain, Ai Hui felt that they should just forsake this battlefield and escape.

Jiang Wei furrowed his eyebrows and said, "They are waiting for the other two god division forces."

Everyone felt distressed. The more cautious and prepared the enemy was, the more stress they felt.

The God Wolf Division and the Silver Frost Blood Division had a total of 10,000 men. The God Tiger Division army and the God Devil Division army had 15,000 men each. If the other two god division forces arrived in time, they would have a total of 40,000 men.

The feeling of facing 10,000 men and the feeling of facing 40,000 men were completely different. The former made them feel confident in winning the defensive battle. The latter, however, made them feel despair, especially when the enemy's strength far surpassed theirs.

"At this stage, we shouldn't expect the other party to make any mistakes. They need time, and we need time," Ai Hui said.

The rest nodded their heads. Once the Pagoda Cannon Alliance members could operate the pagoda cannons proficiently, they would definitely be a great asset for the elementalists. This was the

advantage of being on the defensive. The difficulty of operating the pagoda cannons on the God-subduing Peaks was much lower than having to engage in close quarters combat.

Everyone was heavy-hearted. No one felt confident that they could win this defensive battle.

Even though none of them were confident in victory, their morale wasn't as low as it was in the past. The Sword of Lightning's raid on the God Wolf Division's encampment had debunked the myth of invincible blood elementalist combat divisions and had a significant positive impact on the elementalists' morale. Nothing was more devastating to an army's morale than being unable to deal any damage to the enemy.

Nowadays, even though the elementalists at the front line knew their probability of winning the battle was very low, they still could make the blood elementalists pay a devastating price.

The atmosphere suddenly became tense.

While Ai Hui and his counterparts were observing the encampment of the God Wolf Division, Helian Tianxiao, Song Xiaoqian, and their counterparts were observing the elementalists' defensive line as well.

The magnificent metal wind curtain was a colossal wall that linked the heaven and earth together, blocking their line of sight. In the middle of the wind curtain, there was a small air tunnel. In the past, there were many such tunnels created by the naturally

formed bridges. They used to resemble a string of pearls, which was how the Windy Pearl Bridges got their name. Eventually, the other bridges were destroyed and this air tunnel was the only one left.

The bridge had a width of 2.5 kilometers. The metal winds rose from the rift below to the two sides of the bridge and then converged at a point 1.5 kilometers above the bridge. This was how the 2.5 kilometers wide and 1.5 kilometers tall tunnel was formed above the bridge.

There were three God-subduing Peaks hovering above this bridge. Every now and then, the God-subduing Peaks would flicker and glow.

"It’s so spectacular. The Elders Guild is incompetent and feckless. Only their God-subduing Peaks can be considered a peerless invention," Song Xiaoqian exclaimed in admiration.

"Not only the God-subduing Peaks, but the arrangement of their defensive line is at a high standard as well," Helian Tianxiao said with a wary look on his face.

The generals around Helian Tianxiao were veterans who had rich war experience. At this point in time, all of them had solemn looks on their faces.

When they saw the elementalists’ defensive line, they felt vexed. These three God-subduing Peaks formed a balanced inverted triangle.

The Spear of Heavy Cloud was positioned at the top left and furthest back. Hellfire Pagoda Cannons could unleash powerful long-range attacks from this position.

The Infantry Division was situated below at the position closest to the ground and most forward. They would be the first line of defense. Their soldiers specialized in close quarters combat, and their main task was to withstand enemy soldiers who broke through the defensive line.

The Sky Edge Division was situated on the right side. They were positioned higher than the Infantry Division and lower than the Spear of Heavy Cloud. They were also closer to the Infantry Division so that they could provide reinforcement to the latter if needed.

In the center of these three God-subduing Peaks, there was nothing but darkness, resembling a gateway to hell.

Everyone knew that a huge number of pagoda cannons were certainly stationed in the darkness. Attacking this area would cause them to face a devastating retaliation.

The three God-subduing Peaks had sealed the small air tunnel tightly.

What would happen if they attacked the God-subduing Peaks head-on? After the Battle of the Wall of the North Sea, they knew how terrible this decision would be. However, the unique terrain

of the Windy Pearl Bridge only allowed them to attack the God-subduing Peaks.

For the past few days, they had been thinking about how to break through the defensive line, but every plan required a hefty price.

"Should we wait for the God Tiger Division army and the God Devil Division army to arrive?" a general spoke up.

"The God Tiger Division army and the God Devil Division army are hunting down the Judgement and Dread divisions. Right now, the most important thing to do is to save General Ye. The rest aren't important," Helian Tianxiao explained.

"So we are the only ones?" Even Song Xiaoqian was overwhelmed with shock.

The other generals froze.

"That's right. The situation will be terrible if we can't save General Ye. However, if the Dread and Judgement divisions bring General Ye back to Skyheart City, the situation will be even worse. It will be completely over for us then. We can't solely depend on bum known as He Nanshan. The God Tiger Division army and the God Devil Division army have to go and save General Ye. If it weren't for the fact that we are far away from them, we would have reinforced them as well."

"But we only have 10,000 men..."

Everyone’s face turned extremely ugly. With only 10,000 men, no one had the confidence to break through the horrifying defensive line.

"Don’t worry, when I received the news from He Nanshan, I immediately sent for the beast battalions," Helian Tianxiao assured them.

Upon hearing these words, the tense faces loosened up. Every god division had four beast battalions. Every beast battalion had 10,000 men, and all of them were reserves for the god divisions and the blood divisions. The soldiers of a beast battalion weren’t powerful, but they could bolster the numbers. They were very suitable for sieging defensive positions.

With the 40,000 men from the beast battalions, everyone felt confident regarding the future battle.

Helian Tianxiao saw the facial expressions of every general and sighed in his heart. He wasn’t worried about this siege battle, but was instead worried about why His Majesty had not reacted to this incident yet.

Compared to His Majesty getting angry, Helian Tianxiao was more scared when His Majesty did not have any reactions.

However, Helian Tianxiao’s face remained calm. He snorted, "No matter how costly the price we have to pay, we have to overrun the Windy Pearl Bridge and invade Skyheart City!"

This was their only chance.

To survive, everyone else had placed their hopes on saving General Ye. Helian Tianxiao, however, placed his hopes on obtaining a victory in this battle. As long as they could take down this defensive line, they would have a smooth road ahead. Beyond Avalon had no other powerful combat divisions except for the Surveillance Division.

Once he reached Skyheart City and forced the Ye family to submit to him, he might be able to avert disaster with this merit.

Helian Tianxiao’s decision was to try to atone for his mistake with a meritorious deed.

He wasn’t sure whether or not this would work. No one knew what His Majesty was thinking, but this was his only chance.

The probability of successfully razing Skyheart City to the ground was higher than the probability of successfully saving General Ye.

The generals knew that this was the only way. All of them replied solemnly, "Yes!"

"By sunset, our encampment should be completed. Have a good rest tonight. From tomorrow onward, we will attack them in small waves to get a feel for their defenses," Helian Tianxiao instructed.

"Yes!"

.....

The next morning.

Ai Hui was roused awake by the sounds of battle. He was slightly surprised. Had the enemy's reinforcements arrived?

After a while, he saw Iron Lady, so he asked shockingly, "Aren't you guys fighting? Why are you here?"

Shi Xueman shook her head and replied, "It's just a small attack wave. They are trying to probe our defenses."

A look of realization dawned upon Ai Hui's face. What the enemy did made perfect sense.

Shi Xueman blinked her eyes and said, "I let Fatty use the old Hellfire Pagoda Cannons."

Ai Hui acted as if he was resigned, "Haaah, even our Iron Lady knows how to deceive people. This world is really hopeless."

He was looking forward to seeing the enemy forces face the Beehive Heavy Cannons when they attacked the defensive line head-on. They would been in for a huge surprise.

When Shi Xueman saw Ai Hui reclining on the bed, she said, "I don’t think it’s right for the Commander-in-chief to lie in bed right now."

"I am injured, and the most important mission for the injured is to rest and recover. Is the sun out? Basking in sun helps the body to recover faster," Ai Hui replied lazily.

"That’s true."

Shi Xueman nodded her head and walked toward the Ai Hui’s bed.

Ai Hui froze. After a while, he returned to his senses as a premonition arose in his heart. "Hey, hey, hey, what are you doing? What are you trying to do?"

Shi Xueman picked Ai Hui up from his bed and carried him in her arms. As she walked toward tent exit, she said, "I am bringing you out to bask in the sunlight."

"Let me down! Let me down!" Ai Hui’s voice was filled with fear. To him, the exit of the tent resembled the gateway to hell. He tried to struggle, but his weak and frail body lacked the strength to escape from Iron Lady’s evil clutches.

"Let me down! I can walk on my own!"

"Big Sister, Big Sister, Iron Lady... No, no, no... Xueman..."

"Both of us are notable individuals. If there's anything you're unhappy with, we can talk about it. Don't just resort to violence!"

"Hey, hey, hey, I still owe you money. Do you still want me to pay you the money or not?"

"All right! All right! All right! I will pay you back the money! That's not what I really meant. Do you really think I am that kind of person? Hey, hey, hey, put me down first..."

Shi Xueman turned a deaf ear to Ai Hui and continued to stride toward the exit of the tent with him in her arms.

The sunlight was dazzling. Ai Hui's exceptional sensory perception allowed him to sense that his surroundings were quickly becoming silent.

He shut his eyes, completely disheartened.

It was over!

Chapter 597: The Sick Tiger And The Red-dressed Girl

No matter what time it was, the Cold Palace would always look icy and unwelcoming. Even the scorching afternoon sunlight seemed to turn pale-white when it shone into the palace. The palace seemed to contain the chill of winter. Towering statues stood silently in various corners in the palace. Layers of vermillion doors separated the majestic inner palace from the outside world.

She Yu felt anxious.

Her relationship with Bei Shuisheng was rather good, so she could visit and leave the Cold Palace as she wished. Bei Shuisheng seldom meet visitors. Without his permission, no one could get near the Cold Palace.

Even so, every time she came to the Cold Palace, she still could not help but feel nervous. The sick and frail Bei Shuisheng had a pair of eyes that looked as if they could see through the world.

After She Yu passed through the vermillion doors, she came to the huge and spacious inner palace that was devoid of people.

In the face of the imposing palace, her petite body made her look insignificant.

Bei Shuisheng sat beside a door basking in the sunlight. Only sunlight from the midday sun could shine into the palace. Every

day at this time, Bei Shuisheng would put down all his work and bask in the sunlight while sipping tea.

"You have come."

Bei Shuisheng's voice was always so comforting, like a breeze blowing in her face.

"Sir, good afternoon," She Yu replied as she kneeled on a praying mat outside the inner palace.

She did not know why she had been summoned to the Cold Palace.

Bei Shuisheng smiled. His face was sickly white. Furthermore, since he stayed in the Cold Palace for such a long period of time, it was very hard for him to see the sun, causing his entire body to look pale and weak. One would not be able to link this person to the "Sick Tiger of the God Nation."

"It has been a very long since I last chatted with you." Bei Shuisheng took an empty cup and poured some tea into it. Following which, he pushed the cup of tea through the doorway to She Yu. "So how are you? How have you been recently?"

She Yu respectfully took the teacup and replied, "I'm still the same. Nothing much has changed."

"Time passes really fast. So many years have passed unwittingly.

If my memory serves me right, you belonged to the first batch of seeds." Bei Shuisheng sighed.

She Yu did not understand what Bei Shusheng was trying to say. Therefore, she replied with prudence, "Yes."

"Then we started serving His Majesty at around the same time. When His Majesty found me, he initially wanted me to join the seeds. It’s a pity my body was too weak, and His Majesty dropped the subject." Bei Shuisheng continued, "You are the only one left from the first batch of seeds, right?"

"Yes," She Yu’s hands froze.

These so-called "seeds" were a group of elites who were cultivated by the Blood of God from a young age. Most of them were orphans, and they began to practice blood spiritual force at an early age. At that time, the Blood of God’s training system for blood spiritual force was still at the initial stage. They had tried various training methods and even passed the task to the Beast Venom Temple. Eventually, the Beast Venom Temple developed a mature training system for blood spiritual force.

The competition among the seeds was extremely brutal and devastating.

The Holy Emperor valued the seeds very much. He felt that they were the cornerstones of the Blood of God. They had done a lot for the Blood of God, and their loyalty for their nation was unparalleled.

When the Blood of God was just starting out, the seeds were used as soldiers, they fought at the front line, and they did not let the Holy Emperor down.

Due to this, the death rate of the seeds was terrifying. She Yu was the only survivor of the first batch of seeds.

She Yu’s position in the Blood of God was a special one. She was viewed as the princess of the God Nation, which was why she was addressed as "Her Highness."

However, that period of time wasn’t exactly a beautiful memory for She Yu. All of her companions and rivals were gone, and she was the only one left.

She Yu did not know why Bei Shuisheng would talk about this matter.

Bei Shuisheng’s gaze was fixated on She Yu’s face. Even though she had put a lot of effort on her make-up, Bei Shuisheng could still tell that she looked wan and sallow. He sighed in his heart and asked, "When was the [Life and Death Flower Sacrificial Art] cast on you?"

She Yu was overwhelmed with shock as her petite body trembled violently. With a pale-white face, she asked, "How…. how did you know?"

"Previously, when you came and asked me about the Heart of God, I knew there was something up with you. However, I was still not too sure at that time. The [Life and Death Flower Sacrificial Art] is a profound spell that not many people know about. I only recalled the details after reading about it when I was bored. I didn't expect that I would witness it with my own eyes. If you were the flower master, why would you ask me about the Heart of God? You were so anxious only because you're the flower slave," Bei Shuisheng replied calmly.

Bei Shuisheng's voice was calm like water, but it was able to stupify She Yu. However, she was able to calm down very soon, feeling as if she had been relieved of a burden.

She was not fearful, but rather, bitter. Even if His Majesty knew about it and wanted to punish her, so what? She had been searching for solutions to release herself from the [Life and Death Flower Sacrificial Art], but to no avail until now.

She had no more hope left in her heart.

Bei Shuisheng continued, "Initially, I thought it was done by His Majesty. However, after I asked His Majesty, I realized he had not studied the [Life and Death Flower Sacrificial Art] before. War God Ye and Red Devil joined the Blood of God not too long ago, so they definitely don't know anything about it. Was it Palace Master Nangong?"

At this point in time, She Yu had already calmed down. She shook her head and replied, "Sir, thank you for your concern. The [Life and Death Flower Sacrificial Art] was not cast by someone

else. I am just reaping what I have sowed."

"You did it to yourself?" Bei Shuisheng was startled.

He thought of something, and his dull eyes lit up abruptly as he asked, "The flower master and the flower slave have swapped positions?"

"Yes." She Yu's eyes dimmed.

"I see..." A look of realization dawned upon Bei Shuisheng's face.

He was amazed by She Yu's talents. The [Life and Death Flower Sacrificial Art] was profound and unpredictable. Out of the many spells of the God Nation, it was one of the most mysterious ones. He had not expected She Yu to be able to learn it. He certainly also had not expected her to encounter the rare event of the flower slave and flower master swapping positions.

Bei Shuisheng slowly digested the shock he felt. After a while, he asked, "May I know who the other party is?"

She Yu hesitated for a while and blurted out two words, "Ai Hui."

Bei Shuisheng's face was filled with astonishment. His body froze, looking as if someone had cast a freezing spell on him. After a long while, he exhaled deeply. There was still a remnant of shock in his eyes. He then muttered, "So it's him, so it's him..."

He absolutely had not expected the other party to be Ai Hui.

"When did you cast the [Life and Death Flower Sacrificial Art] on him?"

"In Central Pine City."

The last tinge of doubt that Bei Shuisheng had disappeared. He recalled that when the blood catastrophe first broke out, She Yu was near Central Pine City. He was slightly amazed at She Yu's foresight and courage. To be able to see Ai Hui's potential and cast the [Life and Death Flower Sacrificial Art] on him without any hesitation at that time was not something that ordinary people could do.

Bei Shuisheng was even more surprised that Ai Hi could swap positions with She Yu even though he was the one whom the [Life and Death Flower Sacrificial Art] had been cast on.

This incident verified one idiom, which was that only a powerful dragon was capable of crossing the river!

When Bei Shuisheng raised his head, his facial expression had already regained its composure. "There might be hope for you."

She Yu's mind jolted as she cried out in alarm. She could no longer maintain her composure. With a trembling voice, she said, "Sir, enlighten me."

However, Bei Shuisheng turned silent once more. After a while, he replied with a solemn tone, "There is a chance that this solution might fail. I can’t promise you anything."

"At this point in time, even if the solution has only one percent chance of success, I’m still willing to try it." She Yu smiled sadly.

Sorrow arose in Bei Shuisheng’s mind. He definitely knew how tragic the fate of a flower slave would be. He understood what She Yu was feeling now. Suddenly, he changed the topic and said, "General Ye and Palace Master Nangong have been kidnapped by the Dread and Judgement divisions."

She Yu, who was unprepared for the news, was dumbstruck. After a while, she returned to her senses and cried out in alarm, "What happened?"

She was utterly shocked by this extreme news that suddenly came to her. Ye Baiyi and Nangong Wulian’s importance to the God Nation was second only to Bei Shuisheng’s. Ye Baiyi had trained six god divisions and 12 blood divisions by himself. Nangong Wulian’s Beast Venom Temple affected various aspects of the God Nation. Other than the miraculous Heart of God and the research on Blood refinement, Beast Venom Temple also cultivated various species of blood fiends and blood plants.

These two important figures had been kidnapped!

She did not dare to imagine how devastating this news would be

for the God Nation!

The situation at the front line was going so well, yet how had they committed such a foolish mistake?

Upon hearing this news, She Yu was dumbstruck. For a period of time, she fell into a stupor.

"His Majesty can’t accept such heavy losses. After his battle with An Muda, His Majesty has yet to recover from his injuries, so he can’t save the two of them personally. Red Devil is stationed at the border of the Jadeite Forest and can’t leave his post to save them. When His Majesty asked me for my opinion, I thought about it and recommended you," Bei Shuisheng muttered.

She Yu was stunned and thought she had heard Bei Shuisheng wrongly. She shook her head and replied, "Sir, you should know about my strength. This matter is of utmost importance, and I am incapable of handling it even though I really want to offer my help..."

Bei Shuisheng smiled. "We will talk about your strength later. Initially, I thought that Palace Master Nangong was the one who cast the [Life and Death Flower Sacrificial Art] on you and that if you saved him, he would release you from the spell. However, now that I know the other party is Ai Hui, I feel truly surprised, but that does not mean you have no chance of surviving."

She Yu looked as if she was listening to a story. Bei Shuisheng seemed to be certain that she could save Ye Baiyi and Nangong

Wulian. If the one in front of her wasn't Bei Shuisheng, she would have stormed off in a huff after hearing such absurd words. The Dread Division and the Judgement Division were filled with experts, and Wan Shenwei and Ximen Caijue were powerful entities. Her strength paled in comparison to theirs.

With a relaxed tone, Bei Shuisheng said, "Just like what I previously said, I don't know whether or not this method will work."

A magnificent golden box, cast entirely out of gold, appeared in his hand. Beautiful decorative designs were engraved on it. Clearly, it had been forged by a reputable blacksmith.

Bei Shuisheng pushed the golden box through the doorway.

Countless doubts ran through She Yu's mind. She did not know what Bei Shuisheng was up to. She took the golden box and carefully opened it. The interior of the golden box was lined with a black silk fabric that resembled flowing water. A resplendent piece of transparent crystal laid inside.

Inside the crystal, there was a drop of golden liquid.

She Yu seemed to have thought of something as her brain buzzed and went into a daze.

"His Majesty has bestowed you with a drop of God's blood. The Heart of God, which was inspired by God's blood, has yet to be

completed, and there are still many flaws with it. You will develop a telepathic connection with the Heart of God. Perhaps you can rouse Ye Baiyi? All our combat divisions will be under your command. I believe you can bring Ye Baiyi and Nangong Wulian back. As for how God's blood will affect the [Life and Death Flower Sacrificial Art], I currently don't know. However, I am really looking forward to see what will happen."

Bei Shuisheng smiled at She Yu with a warm look in his eyes.

Chapter 598: Training During Real Battles

In the sky in front of the God-subduing Peak, there were more than blood elementalists wearing Rust Plumes. They gathered and dispersed in an extremely nimble and random manner, looking as if they were cruising around the defensive line. However, if one did not pay attention to them, they would suddenly pierce through the defensive line from odd angles like sharp knives. When they were close to the defensive line, they would throw various weird weapons, such as rupture bombs that released blood poison smoke or blood arrows that possessed terrifying penetrative power.

In the beginning, they caused the soldiers on the God-subduing Peak to panic. However, everyone soon got used to them and were now able to maintain their composure.

Atop the God-subduing Peak, Fatty's roars were like thunderclaps that exploded through the air every now and then.

"What are all of you shooting at?"

"Li Kui, Ma Xiao, what is going on with your units? Why are you so weak?"

"Bums! How many times have I told all of you: don't panic, don't be anxious, observe their rhythm, and don't be deceived by their rhythm! Look at all of you! What are you shooting at? You have missed every single target!"

"Unit C! Extra training! No food for any of you until you have

finished this training!"

A wave of groans swept across the God-subduing Peak immediately. The members coming down from the pagoda cannons had an ashen look on their faces. Fatty did not care about them at all. He continued to bellow, "Unit D, take up your positions! Wake up! Shoot properly!"

Unit D's members looked as if they were about to face a formidable beast. Their facial expressions were tense. The previous three units were punished with extra training sessions, hence the pressure on Unit D was enormous.

The captain of Unit D was Wu Feng. He was the fire elementalist who had almost burned to ashes in the fire reservoir at Lemon Camping Ground without uttering a word and went into a coma afterward. After Lou Lan treated him, he was able to recover promptly. However, horrible scars were left on his body. His left cheek was bright-red, resembling a ball of flames.

Lou Lan told Wu Feng that he could help him remove the scars, but Wu Feng refused because he wanted to keep the scars to remind himself of his past every now and then.

Among the fire elementalists in the Spear of Heavy Cloud, Wu Feng was one of the most hardworking ones. Even though he wasn't gifted, he was extremely meticulous with the duties given to him. He had never disappointed anyone who gave him a task.

After the pagoda cannon crews were handed over to Fatty, he

quickly got into Fatty's good graces. Eventually, he was promoted to the position of captain.

After his promotion, he worked even harder. Whether it was his training sessions or his daily responsibilities, he would put in all his effort to carry them out without slacking off at all.

Wu Feng had observed the previous three units during their combat mission and had developed some ideas. The previous units missed their targets because their skill level while operating the pagoda cannons was too low. Plus, the enemy units were elites. Although the enemies looked as if they were flying around aimlessly, they maintained a very precise distance between each other in reality. Their Rust Plumes were very nimble as well, making it difficult for the pagoda cannon gunners to predict their flight paths. As a result, the previous three units had missed their targets.

Before taking up their positions, Wu Feng had already discussed with his members about what to do. In the end, they came with an idea that was not the best, but it all they could come up with. All of them would aim at a single target and engulf its potential escape directions with their shots.

Even though this idea was somewhat foolish and inefficient, Wu Feng felt that it was a rather good one. They had also discussed the many small details regarding this idea. Now was the time for them to see if their idea worked or not.

Wu Feng licked his lips and instructed his unit, "All pagoda cannons, target the third from the left."

Whirrr. All the pagoda cannons pointed at a single target in an instant.

The target could sense that he was being targeted. He began to change his aerial direction repeatedly. His flight path was very weird and unpredictable.

Wu Feng's pagoda cannon started to move up and down accordingly. The rest of the pagoda cannon gunners could not see the target in the sky at all. All of them were just staring at Wu Feng's pagoda cannon. They tried to make sure their pagoda cannons were pointing at the same direction as Wu Feng's at all times.

Snow lava poured into Wu Feng's pagoda cannon, and the cannon barrel turned bright-red. However, he did not fire his pagoda cannon immediately. He realized there were two pagoda cannons which were not ready yet. The cannoneers for these two pagoda cannons were rookies who were not skilled enough.

They couldn't fire their pagoda cannons yet!

If a pagoda cannon was filled with fire elemental energy, but was not fired, the pagoda cannon gunner for that pagoda cannon had to direct the fire elemental energy into his or her hands. Otherwise, the pagoda cannon would explode.

Wu Feng's face twitched, but he remained unconcerned. A red flush extended from his shoulders to the rest of his body, making

him look like he was being boiled.

He did not utter a single word or move his body at all.

Fatty did not roars this time around. He stared at Wu Feng with an amazed look on his face. This fellow had high endurance! Previously, he promoted Wu Feng because he was cautious and conscientious. Fatty had not expected this fellow to have such outstanding endurance. This was a pleasant surprise for Fatty.

The conventional training system for elementalists seldom focused on endurance. On the contrary, the new training system valued endurance a lot.

Back in the day, Ai Hui used the sword pagodas to select swordsmen for his combat division because he wanted to test their endurance. The Pinwheel Sword had clearly shown that endurance was an important factor in the Pagoda Style combat system.

After Fatty became a Master, his understanding toward endurance became deeper.

Finally, the last two pagoda cannons were ready.

Wu Feng roared, "Fire!"

Boom!

The six pagoda cannons thundered in unison. Six beams of light swiftly engulfed the target in the sky.

The targeted blood elementalist had already sensed something wasn't right and tried his best to dodge the incoming attacks. However, the incoming attacks covered such a wide radius, so how could he possibly dodge them all?

A beam of light brushed past his left chest.

The left side of his body disappeared, revealing charred flesh and internal organs. He lowered his head and looked blankly at his body. Following which, he let out a blood-curdling scream and fell from the sky.

"Good job! One more time!" Fatty's roar rang through the air.

Wu Feng's blood was racing. He replied loudly with excitement, "Yes!"

Everyone was encouraged by the success of their first salvo, and they became more confident and adept when they fired their second one. Once again, they shot down another enemy.

After seeing that two of their comrades were shot down in a row, the rest of the blood elementalists dispersed and escaped in a panic. A wave of cheers erupted from the God-subduing Peak.

Fatty was very excited. His thunderous voice resounded through

the air, "Unit D, you will have twice the usual amount of elemental soup!"

Wu Feng and his unit let out an earth-shaking cheer while the other units looked at them with envy in their eyes.

Next to Fatty, Zu Yan said in a low voice, "There are two pagoda cannons that are more powerful than the rest."

"You realized it too?" Fatty was slightly surprised.

"Yes, they have achieved elemental energy resonation, which caused their power to increase significantly." Zu Yan's eyes brightened. "However, only two pagoda cannons achieved elemental energy resonation. The others just barely failed to do so."

"How can we make sure they are completely synchronized? It's already pretty good that two pagoda cannons resonated." Fatty looked slightly vexed.

Elemental energy resonation could increase the power of pagoda cannons. Fatty was extremely interested in this discovery, but it was very difficult to achieve elemental energy resonation. To do so, he would need all the pagoda cannons to be completely synchronized. Wasn't this logic the same as the principle behind the sword pagodas on the Pinwheel Sword?

A look of realization flashed across Fatty's face, but then he

furrowed his eyebrows again.

There were three factors as to why the seven sword pagodas on the Pinwheel Sword could be synchronized completely. First, the members wielded Unity Swords which could react to each other simultaneously. Second, the seven sword pagodas were built on the seven unique star positions. Third, the members simplified their sword moves and repeatedly trained these moves.

Fatty and the pagoda cannon gunners could only achieve the third factor. They had no way of pulling off the other two factors.

Seven cannon positions? Different elemental energies had different characteristics. The seven star positions were suitable for sword gleams and could combine seven swords into one. On the other hand, pagoda cannons used another type of elemental energy. The sword method might not work for pagoda cannons.

"I might have a solution," Zu Yan said hesitantly.

"You have a solution? You better not lie to me!" Fatty looked at Zu Yan with a face full of doubt.

"If we want them to be synchronized, we need to have an unifying command system. My [Earth Fire Heavenly Spider Transformation] technique can set up a huge spider web of earth fire. As long as the pagoda cannons are set up on the nodes of the spiderweb, I should be able to transmit commands to them," Zu Yan replied to Fatty after thinking for a while.

Fatty briefly froze before responding, "That seems like it would work."

"Do you want to give it a try?" Zu Yan asked.

"We have to give it a try! We have to give it a try!" Fatty nodded his head repeatedly.

Then, he continued, "But we can’t try here. We have to try it behind the defense line."

Zu Yan did not understand why Fatty did not want to try from their forward position..

"What if it succeeds? We can’t alert the enemies. We have to give them a surprise," Fatty said while chuckling.

A look of realization dawned upon Zu Yan’s face.

Atop the God-subduing Peak, at the highest point, Shi Xueman looked at the incensed Fatty and smiled.

No one would expect this impatient and irascible fatty used to be a coward in the past. Nowadays, one could no longer see the old shadow of the original Fatty. As time passed and one experienced more things, he or she would keep on growing. Everyone grew old, but they went through different experiences. Due to these diverse experiences, they improved themselves differently and succeeded in variety of ways.

"Fatty said that since the enemies are trying get a feel for our defensive line, we might as well treat them as target practice. He has been commanding pagoda cannon units one after another to shoot at the enemies. There are many rookies, and it’s a good opportunity for them to experience the atmosphere of real combat," Jiang Wei said.

"Fatty is like that fellow and never wants to lose out on anything. They are like mosquitoes that will suck every ounce of your blood until you have dried up," Shi Xueman said.

Sang Zhijun knew Shi Xueman was talking about Ai Hui and smiled. Besides her, Jiang Wei was smiling as well.

Ever since Jiang Wei became a Master, he became more reserved and unfathomable, like an abyss.

He continued, "Helian Tianxiao does not seem anxious, he might be waiting for God Tiger Division forces and God Devil Division forces to arrive. Logically speaking, they should have arrived by now, but why have we not detected their presence?"

The rest did not know the answer either and came up with various speculations.

"Perhaps they encountered other enemies on the way here? No, that can’t be. After all, who is capable of hindering them?"

"Perhaps they are lost?"

"Or maybe they had a change of plan?"

"Who knows? It’s better for them to come later! I think Grandpa Fatty’s idea of training during real battles is very effective. The enemies aren’t anxious and neither are we!"

"Haha, that’s right."

Everyone broke into a lively discussion, but they still could not come up with a proper conclusion.

Before the God Wolf Division arrived, the atmosphere at the defensive line was very tense. Now that they were here, everyone threw their worries to the back of their minds and focused on the present battle instead. As such, the atmosphere had lightened up significantly.

Shi Xueman also did not know what the enemies were up to. She muttered, "We will wait and see."

Suddenly, she asked Sang Zhijun, "Isn’t today the day that the selection process for sword operators is taking place?"

"Yes, it’s today, but I am not sure what’s going on. I did not send any combat elementalists over and only sent the reserves," Sang Zhijun nodded her head and replied.

"They are still very young and have a lot of potential. We must seize the opportunity to train more sword operators. Pinwheel Swords are the future," Shi Xueman said.

"Yes!" Sang Zhijun quickly nodded her head and replied.

Both of them were familiar with warfare. After raiding the enemy encampment with a single Pinwheel Sword, they immediately realized its colossal value. They also understood the importance of sword operators.

Sang Zhijun shot a glance at the enemy encampment. She felt that the enemies most likely wouldn’t attack them for the time being. Then, she said, "Let’s go and take a look at the selection process."

The others felt curious as well and followed her.

Chapter 599: Selection of Sword Operators

He Min stood among a crowd of youngsters who were about his age. When selecting new blood to replenish its forces, the Spear of Heavy Cloud emphasized its desire to recruit youngsters with potential. These youngsters were like sheets of blank paper, free from bad habits and able to quickly get used to the Spear of Heavy Cloud's style. As long as they were properly nurtured, they would definitely serve as the backbone of the future.

Regarding talent, the Spear of Heavy Cloud could care less. It focused more on the candidates' nature. The Central Pine Faction was now reputable and famous, but in the past, they had been very ordinary students. Jiang Wei, Wang Xiaoshan, and the rest were all average students and the Central Pine Institution was also an average and secluded academy. Who would've thought that they would gain such fame and recognition?

As for the replenishment of combat strength, they could select the elites from the defeated troops at the front line. Plus, they had already established and prepared reserves.

Although Shi Xueman did not have much expectation in terms of talent, youngsters yearned to join the Spear of Heavy Cloud due to its prestige. Whenever Jiang Wei went to recruit from the students, there would always be a huge commotion as the youths were all eager to join. As such, the members they had recruited were all intrinsically outstanding.

Hearing the ongoing chatter, He Min felt fidgety. He had absolutely no interest in the sword operators. He wanted to be a

pagoda cannon gunner. Unfortunately, he wasn't a fire elementalist. All right, even if he couldn't be a pagoda cannon gunner he didn't mind joining one of the other small combat teams.

With a determined heart, he had come to the Spear of Heavy Cloud and hadn't been disappointed!

The Spear of Heavy Cloud had countless powerful experts, and its practice sessions were strict. No one was even the slightest bit defiant. Wind Mail City's combat division wasn't even worthy to be compared to the Spear of Heavy Cloud.

This was a first class combat division!

"If I can become a sword operator, I could dash into enemy camp on a Pinwheel Sword!"

"I heard that the Pinwheel Sword is as fast as lightning. I'm looking forward to it!"

...

Hearing his companions' discussion, He Min felt even more frustrated. Pinwheel Sword, Pinwheel Sword. These fellows only talked about the Pinwheel Sword!

Of course, He Min had heard about the battle where the Pinwheel Sword charged directly into the enemy camp, but he didn't care for

it. Ever since Sir Jiang Wei insisted on bringing him back and ever since he had heard those passionate cries "We were born with a belief, and we will die by it," he had determined that this was the combat division for him and that there were no other heroes.

He would only fight for the Spear of Heavy Cloud.

Even if he knew that the Spear of Heavy Cloud and the Pagoda Cannon Alliance were a family, that Ai Hui was the leader of the Central Pine Faction, and that his perseverance seemed ridiculous, it was still how he felt and thought!

Hmph, he was different from those who groveled before the powerful figures!

He Min kept silent.

A tall and sturdy fellow who looked like an iron tower appeared, and everybody immediately closed their mouths.

This was Shi Zhiguang's first time facing so many kids, so he was rather awkward. He greeted them lightly, "Hi everyone, I'm Shi Zhiguang, a sword operator of the Pinwheel Sword. We're here today to test if you guys have what it takes to be a sword operator."

Someone raised his hand and asked, "Sir, what does it take?"

This was the first time anyone had called him "sir." Shi Zhiguang blushed, feeling somewhat pleased, yet at a loss. Nevertheless, he

was a sword operator and even Master Huo Da asked him for guidance, so how could he lose his cool in front of a young boy?

He forced himself to remain calm, puffing his chest out. "A keen sense of speed and meticulous control of elemental energy."

Seeing that Shi Zhiguang was rather friendly, the other students started raising their hands.

"Sir, how does it feel to fly while piloting the Pinwheel Sword?"

"Sir, what were you thinking when you were charging toward the camp?"

"Sir, were you afraid at that moment?"

He Min's eyelids drooped as he sighed inwardly at this bunch of novice kids. How embarrassing.

Shi Zhiguang was a very tolerant person to begin with, so he smiled and answered all the questions, quickly getting familiar with the students.

Out of the corner of his eye He Min noticed the division leader and her officers approaching and instantly stood up straight in a flash. He searched through the crowd, quickly spotted Jiang Wei, and received a jolt.

Jiang Wei also noticed He Min's glance. He had a deep impression of the young lad. With a slight smile he called out, "Work hard, He Min!"

He Min only felt a gush of hot blood rush to his brain. He shouted loudly, "Yes!"

Shi Zhiguang hurriedly bowed to Shi Xueman and called out, "Madam!"

He was an honest, straightforward person and had seen Division Leader Shi walking out of the tent while carrying Boss. At that point, everyone had started to discuss how they had done what they were supposed to do and how Shi Xueman would definitely be Boss's wife in the future. Shi Zhiguang felt that their conclusion was correct, so calling her Division Leader Shi seemed too formal. "Madam" sounded more friendly.

Shi Zhiguang had been under Ai Hui's care and guidance, hence he was devoted and loyal toward Ai Hui.

Shi Xueman blushed a deep red.

The surroundings became quiet as Jiang Wei, Sang Zhijun, and the rest looked on, somewhat embarrassed. They were impressed by Shi Zhiguang and shocked that he had actually dared to call her that. A sword operator indeed.

Shi Xueman only felt her face burning. Even her neck and ears

were red. If there was a hole in the ground, she would be more than glad to stuff her head inside. Shi Zhiguang's seriousness and genuine expression caused her to be at a loss.

She bit her lips and forced herself to calm down. "We are just spectators and curious about how you guys select sword operators. Ignore us, Zhiguang."

Shi Zhiguang hurriedly responded, "Then I'll continue."

Shi Xueman acted as if nothing had happened. What was the big deal about being called "Madam?" Why was her heart beating so fast?

Out of the corner of Shi Xueman's eye, she caught a glimpse of Sang Zhijun giggling while covering her mouth and couldn't help but glare at her. Yet, she did not realize that she hadn't actually refuted Shi Zhiguang.

Shi Zhiguang's attention was placed onto the kids once again. He said seriously, "Come, let's start the test."

Everybody became alert. He Min, especially, had his eyes wide open.

Initially, he had not been interested in becoming a sword operator, but having been encouraged by Sir Jiang, he felt his blood racing. He had to perform well and not let Sir Jiang Wei down!

Shi Zhiguang took out a rolled up cloth bag and spread it open in front of everyone. "The test is very simple."

Everyone pricked up their ears. Even Shi Xueman, Jiang Wei, and the others looked on curiously with their full attention.

Shi Zhiguang threw a word at them, "Embroidery!"

The opened bag revealed rows glistening silver needles that were neatly arranged.

Everyone had a sluggish expression on their faces. The word "embroidery" had taken them aback.

He Min stared blankly at the shiny needles, his jaw dropped so wide that an egg could fit inside.

Shi Zhiguang spoke sincerely, "An outstanding sword operator is inevitably an outstanding elemental embroidery expert. Both have a lot in common, and one has to be proficient in embroidery in order to be a good sword operator. Embroidery can test the precision of your elemental energy control and your ability to maintain focus over a long period of time. Only those with excellent embroidery skills are fit to become sword operators!"

Everybody was speechless and silence fell over the field. Only Shi Zhiguang's voice echoed.

Shi Zhiguang looked very serious. "Don't think I'm over exaggerating the effectiveness of embroidery. Master Huo Da is trying hard to study the techniques of embroidery so as to pilot a Pinwheel Sword soon. If even a Master is doing so, all of you should work hard too. All right, come try. It's simple. There are three sections. Controlling the needle to make it fly straight, to fly in circles, and finally to fly slowly. The slower the better."

"First person!"

Already in a working state of mind, Shi Zhiguang operated strictly and meticulously. He had even dared to guide a Master, so of course he wouldn't have stage fright.

He Min was muddleheaded. He never would've thought that the aptitude test for aspiring sword operators was actually embroidery. Furthermore, from what Shi Zhiguang had said, a sword operator's daily training would most definitely include embroidery!

Oh god, how terrifying!

Just the thought of holding an embroidery needle and making the woven cloth fly made him feel cold all over. He would definitely become a target for ridicule. A man doing embroidery was simply too...

He had never heard of a male embroidery master!

"Your turn, He Min."

With an "oh," the muddleheaded He Min walked forward subconsciously.

An embroidery needle was brought to him.

"Come try to make it fly straight."

Seeing that He Min wasn't in the right state of mind, Jiang Wei felt rather worried. He didn't know what He Min was thinking. For people with rich combat experience, they might be shocked and surprised by embroidery, but definitely would not be repulsed.

Any method of increasing their combat abilities was a good method!

He Min hadn't regained his senses. He grasped the needle blankly and started channeling his elemental energy subconsciously.

Shi Zhiguang's voice sounded from the side. "Not bad! Try making it fly in circles. It's simple, just add a little spin while channeling your elemental energy."

Add a little spin... He Min moved the elemental energy in his hands.

"Not bad, not bad!" Shi Zhiguang's voice carried a tinge of

excitement. "Now try to make it fly slowly. It's very simple, just contain and hold your elemental energy. Cram it forward slowly like how you would with an awl. Slower. That's right, even slower. Good. Excellent!"

Shi Zhiguang was full of smiles. "You've passed! You're selected!"

A good seedling!

He Min's performance was the best out of all students so far!

Jiang Wei felt happy for He Min. "Nicely done, He Min!"

Still unaware of the situation, He Min instantly became happy upon hearing Sir Jiang Wei's praise.

"You're He Min aye?" Shi Zhiguang smiled while patting his shoulder. "Report to the sword operator department tomorrow. I'll bring you around later. All right, next."

Shi Zhiguang had a lot of strength. His shoulder pat made He Min's body sway and brought him back to his senses.

Wait. Report to the sword operator department tomorrow?

He panicked.

An image of him waving and directing an embroidery needle floated in his mind...

Chapter 600: Judgement, Step Forward

The thick metal wind curtain blocked the line of sight of the blood elementalists. They could not find out what was happening behind it. If they could see what was happening behind the defensive line, they definitely would not be so calm.

An endless blaze of light in the camp made it as bright as daylight, and voices could be heard everywhere. Even the lights coming from the sky filled with stars were overshadowed by it. It was late at night, but the camp was bustling and full of life.

The blacksmiths were restless with bloodshot eyes. Everybody knew that battle was imminent and that the enemy had reached the defensive line. There was no need to supervise because everyone was motivated to work.

Each smelting furnace produced infernos which soared to the skies. With each slogan shouted by the blacksmiths, flowing flames and red hot molten metal discharged dazzling sparks.

Ai Hui looked down at the radiant scene from the top of the Fish Bone. He was a little lost in thought. The supplies were piled up like a continuous mountain range, and the blacksmiths shuttling to and fro looked like hard-working ants.

He could not help but laughed at himself. This was probably his most rewarding moment.

So many blacksmiths, so much supplies, and so many people.

This scene just gave Ai Hui some confidence to face the next battle.

Bring it on. Since we cannot retreat, let's fight!

Use up all the supplies, and fight to the last man for this battle.

This was Ai Hui's decision.

There was no other choice.

Piece by piece, the newly forged and still warm Beehive Heavy Cannons were sent to the Pagoda Cannon Alliance and set up within the first hour. The pagoda cannon crews, which were well prepared, immediately swarmed in and learned how to operate these Beehive Heavy Cannons.

This was probably the world's craziest and extravagant training because it involved only Beehive Heavy Cannons and live ammunition.

In another corner of the camp, the Beehive Heavy Cannons were bellowing endlessly.

Ke Ning patrolled back and forth between the different teams. His throat was already hoarse, while his hair and entire body were messy and dirty. He seemed as if he was surrounded by flames and smoke, yet he exuded a indescribable aura.

Even Li Houtang would be surprised by Ke Ning at this moment.

Back then, he was seen as rich and spoiled, but now, it was as if he had completely changed.

Ke Ning was not the only one who changed. Tong Gui and Yu Jin were also quietly changing. They had served in combat divisions for many years and experienced many events which gradually honed their characters. Although both of them were capable and well versed in the art of war, their passion had long since disappeared.

The Pagoda Cannon Alliance was a fledgling alliance, and the circumstances they faced may have forced them to be more focused. Deep inside, there might have been certain overlooked areas, and they were quietly developing new ideas.

Even their subordinates had a bright, new outlook.

The majority of the soldiers in the Pagoda Cannon Alliance came from the routed troops from previous battles. They refused to leave and had revenge on their minds, hoping to have a good fight with the blood elementalists. They were most worried about being recruited into the official combat divisions because they discovered that the officers did not sincerely want to fight with the blood elementalists. Instead, these leaders were just doing perfunctory duties and secretly preparing to escape or planning to fight for power and status.

These vengeful soldiers held a wait-and-see attitude toward Ai

Hui at the beginning for this reason.

Later, they found that Ai Hui sincerely wanted to fight this next battle. Moreover, the raid on the enemy's encampment had changed their opinion about him.

Their emotions also unknowingly influenced the rest.

Venerable Volcano said emotionally, "Initially, I thought the Pagoda Cannon Alliance was only a temporary coalition. Morale was low and expectations were not great. In contrast, morale is pretty good now!"

His experience was rich and diverse, but a unique combat division like the Pagoda Cannon Alliance was a first for him. It was a makeshift combat division which consisted of mostly routed troops, but was fearless and consequently had great fighting spirit.

Xiao Shan said plainly, "How could the Avalon of Five Elements exist for thousands of years if its people were simply willing to be slaughtered?"

Venerable Volcano nodded. "It is rare for a defeated army to still be extremely brave. If everyone else can do so, what is there to fear about the blood elementalists?"

Ai Hui responded with a sneer, "Everyone can do so? What a beautiful thought! Some people say that the Avalon of Five Elements was a piece of rotten wood, but these people are part of

the last bit that is not rotten. However, it is wishful thinking to depend on this small piece of good wood. Furthermore, people are not hoping for resurrection, but just hoping to linger on."

Xiao Shan felt Ai Hui's words were harsh and said, "It is not as hopeless as you think, and the Elders have to consider the whole situation."

He felt guilty about what he had just said and promptly shut up.

Ai Hui stopped arguing since he was not the type to quibble. The reason he had said these words was due to the fact that he felt everyone still saw the glimmer of an illusion, but it was only a fig leaf that covered their embarrassment.

Besides, it had nothing to do with him, and he was not fighting for the sake of the Elders Guild.

He turned toward Venerable Volcano. "The results of the Pagoda Cannon Alliance's live ammunition practices are pretty good, but because the consumption of snow lava is too large, we need to prepare in advance."

Venerable Volcano was feeling the pinch. "I was just going to remind you, How can you train your combat division this way ? Goodness, how much snow lava is going down the drain in a day? All that money! I used to think you were stingy, but now I realize I have misjudged you. You are actually a spendthrift!"

Ai Hui said, "The lava inside the Fish Bone is certainly not enough. To replenish the snow lava, we are going to need lava of earth fire!"

Ai Hui eagerly asked, "Can it be done?"

"Not a big problem." Venerable Volcano gloated, "Many people think only volcanoes have earth fire. In fact, there is earth fire deep underground. However, it is usually buried relatively deep down, but this is not a problem for me."

Ai Hui replied with admiration, "In that case, thank you for your trouble, Venerable! "

The reason he was looking for Venerable Volcano was because he had heard in Thunder City that Venerable Volcano could summon a volcano. This left a deep impression on him. He had not expected that Venerable Volcano could actually solve the problem and felt relieved.

All of a sudden, he felt a sharp pain from his left arm. It was like a scalding iron was burning him.

He could not restrain a cry of pain.

An extremely strange and overbearing force came out from the blood plum blossom on his arm and drilled into Ai Hui body.

He could not control his body, and all of it tensely locked up..

Xiao Shan and Venerable Volcano, who were beside Ai Hui, saw him acting strangely and their expressions changed.

The exclamations from Xiao Shan and Venerable Volcano had become very distant and vague, as if coming from the clouds. The sword cloud in his body sensed danger, exploded like a covered wok, and spontaneously circulated while roaring like thunder.

Ai Hui felt several strands of power in his body separating, and his body felt like it was being torn to pieces.

A never before experienced pain made him blackout. He fell down to the ground and lapsed into a coma.

In all corners of the blacksmith camp, the tiny mini Lou Lans who commanded and coordinated all materials suddenly stopped. They all made the same move—looking up at the top of the Fish Bone as their small eyes flashed with a red gleam.

They dashed away as if by mutual consent and gravitated toward the Fish Bone like the tide. Countless mini Lou Lans ran while shouting uniformly.

"Ai Hui, there is danger!"

"Lou Lan is coming!"

.....

At a temporary camp.

The soldiers of the Dread and Judgement divisions were gasping after experiencing a painful battle and finally getting rid of the enemy.

No one talked. Everybody snatched whatever time there was to rest and restore their physical strength.

Their situation was getting tougher, as could be seen from the frequency of the fights. In a short span of three days, they fought with blood elementalists about a dozen times. Such high intensity battles were taking a toll on them.

The deterioration of the situation could be seen from the casualties.

Their casualties were constantly increasing, especially in the Judgement Division, which had lost almost half their manpower.

Of course, the casualties inflicted on the enemy were even greater, and they had killed at least five times more than their own casualty count. However, the advantage of the enemy forces was far too great. The losses suffered by the God Spirit Division were devastating and its two supporting blood divisions were hit even harder. Nevertheless, emergency reinforcements–in the form of two more god divisions and four more blood divisions–were

enough to form a large net that surrounded them in all directions.

In such a difficult situation, the Dread and Judgement divisions showed their toughness to the fullest. They seemed to be tireless and unaware of despair. The blood elementalists failed in entrap them.

From that point forward, no one from the blood elementalist combat divisions dared to mock the Dread and Judgement divisions.

If not for the Heart of God constantly releasing energy waves that exposed the position of Dread and Judgement divisions, even with a task force of three god divisions and the six blood divisions, the blood elementalists were not certain that they could overtake the Dread and Judgement divisions.

Ximen Caijue said, "We can't go on like this."

Wan Shenwei looked at her, "We can't give up halfway."

"Of course not." Ximen Caijue raised her young, feminine, apple-shaped face and looked icily arrogant. "These days, I have been studying the energy waves released by the Heart of God and thinking of ways to suppress them."

The weather beaten face of Wan Shenwei was full of surprise, "Suppress the Heart of God's energy waves? You have a way?"

Ximen Caijue said, "I have to try it to know."

Wan Shenwei was impatient. "Let's try?"

They were now in such a passive position due to the energy waves of the Heart of God which actively exposed their position. If these waves could be sealed, then their concealment would be greatly improved, and the enemy would find it more difficult to discover them.

They could delay the enemy for a longer time by playing hide-and-seek with them in the mountains.

Ximen Caijue looked calmly at Wan Shenwei. "If anyone can survive, leave some seeds for the Judgement Division."

She stood up after speaking.

Wan Shenwei's body shivered. He opened his mouth, but did not make any sound.

Ximen Caijue looked at the decimated and injured Judgement soldiers. A trace of unbearable sadness flashed in her eyes, but it was immediately replaced by a firm and determined look. At this stage, what was there to hesitate about?

In any case, she had never felt regret, but hoped that this was something worth sacrificing for.

With her petite body floating in the air, she unslung the delicate small bow from her back and coldly said, "Judgement Division, step forward."

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