



UPGRADE SPECIALIST IN ANOTHER WORLD

BOOK 07

Endless Sea Of Clouds

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Upgrade Specialist in Another World

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by

Endless Sea Of Clouds

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Synopsis

Just as a gamer found an overpowered skill book called ‘Item Upgrade’ in the hottest virtual reality role-playing game on Earth, something happened to the game’s system, causing his soul to leave his body and go to another dimension. Common sense dictates that he would be born anew then become the greatest overlord of this world by making use of his advanced knowledge. Not in this case! He was already dead. Only some fragments of his soul and that skill book managed to get into that dimension and merge with an ordinary common youngster called Bai Yunfei.

This was the enormous Tianhun continent, where humans could be said to have no limits. There was a group of humans here who could cultivate the power of their own souls then control their bodies, the natural elements and even other people’s souls with that power! These special beings were called — soul cultivators. Come witness how the several fragments of the dead inter-dimensional traveler’s soul and that skill book, which was not governed by the laws of this plane, were going to help Bai Yunfei become a legendary soul cultivator and craftsman!

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Chapter 601: An Unexpected Situation

Baishan City.

Several hours had already transpired since the battle between the Cao and Bai Yunfei. The skies was only getting darker and darker as the sun setted beyond the horizon. All that was left now was the ruins of the Cao and a sparse few ray of sunshine to shine over it.

In the current moment, the men of the lord-mayor of Baishan City was scouring the place in hopes for clues of some sort. With how squashed the area was, even the remnants of the people there were hard to distinguish, let alone their affiliations. As such, the searchers were stumped....

Up in the air, a group of people was standing around in silence as everyone around them moved about to fulfill their orders.

Wu Ren was the first to speak, “You are saying two Soul Kings appeared on the side of the house of Cao as well as multiple Soul Exalts. And that there was a traveling Soul King helping them too?”

Zhang Mo nodded. “Yes, we were unable to look into the matrix earlier due to that third Soul King, and neither were we able to find out who they were. It’s impossible that the Cao could have a force like this, they have only a single early-stage Soul King and barely ten Soul Exalts. The numbers fighting here today exceeded that by double the amount, and that Lu Fang is strong enough to beat the Cao’s Soul King, there’d be no way he’d willingly help them of his own accord....”

“Where is the rest of the Cao then?” Wu Ren asked, “You said most of them escaped before the aftermath, don’t they know anything?”

Zhang Mo looked behind to where one of the late-stage Soul Exalts stood. The man in question strode forward to answer, “If I

may report, First Prince, I and a few others went to do some preliminary questioning, but we came up empty. Most of the people that fled said the battle took place without warning and escaped as soon as it started...but there were a few that did mention how strange it felt beforehand. They said that the head of the house hadn't been around for quite some time and many Soul Exalt guests began to appear out from nowhere. There were also a few other Soul Exalt guests that disappeared around that time....”

“Oh? They said that?” Wu Ren narrowed his eyes in suspicion. “Don't let them go so easily. Continue the questioning and report any suspicion things back to me. Other than that, increase the security and investigations here. I want to know about anything new in regards of the Cao or those who tried to attack Bai Yunfei.”

Wu Ren dipped his head low to think after the others left. “Mysterious individuals in Baishan City...the ice-type Soul King from the Soul Refining School was here as well....does the Cao have a connection to the Soul Refining School then? But why would they try to trap Bai Yunfei? And in their own homes no less, that doesn't make sense. It's an act of suicide—even if they killed Bai Yunfei, their own homes would be essentially destroyed. Why would they do that?”

His head snapped back up, “Were they sacrificial pawns?! The masterminds of this didn't even plan for the Cao's survival, or the return of that other Soul King?! What...what kind of group has that kind of power...is it really the Soul Refining School? What are they up to...”

.....

“Ugh....”

A groan broke the silence of the area. Everyone turned towards the source where they saw Bai Yunfei stirring awake!

“Yunfei! Are you alright?!” Zheng Kai cried out in relieved concern.

Bai Yunfei didn't respond right away. He was only just waking up from his slumber and was still at a loss of what was happening around him.

There was another grunt from Bai Yunfei before he spat out another mouthful of blood! His eyes were still unfocused and his face was squirming with pain—blood was still continuing to drip from his mouth!

“Wha—uncle! What's wrong with Yunfei?! Why's he still like this?!” Zheng Kai yelled at once for Zheng Shisong to reply.

“Be quiet!” His uncle snapped, “He's still heavily wounded and in danger—if you want me to save him, I have to concentrate on healing him!”

Zheng Kai snapped his lips closed after that.

The furious nature Bai Yunfei had been exuding during his battle was long since gone now. He was like a deflating balloon with his energy rapidly escaping from him within the bubble of elemental water he was in. Like a flickering candle, Bai Yunfei's vitality was slowly dying out...

“Bang!”

Just as everyone was paying attention to Bai Yunfei, the loud trill of a bird came forth from the skies above and startled them all. Looking up, they saw a sight that befuddled them....

A brilliant rainbow was pouring forth everywhere into the skies along with an indomitable energy. From the source, a tremendous being was ascending into the skies!

“Chirp!!!!”

A joyful trill came out from the being, sounding both carefree and majestic like a phoenix!

Xiao Qi!

Previously cocooned in a strange bubble of energy, Xiao Qi had at

some point exploded out from it!

Everyone watched as it flew five kilometers into the sky with its wings stretched out wide. Like a multi-colored sun, rays of every color flew out from the bird's wings to illuminate the sky as it raised its head up to pierce through the clouds!

A strange energy accompanied its trill as it ascended through the skies, and then....the clouds began to swirl!!

A giant whirlpool was starting to form in the clouds five kilometers above. The center of the whirlpool was touching down on top of Xiao Qi's head while the rest of the whirlpool continued to pick up speed. The light from Xiao Qi's body entered the whirlpool, seemingly staining it with prismatic light. It dyed the clouds and skies with increasing area, and before long, the entire whirlpool was completely dyed with that prismatic light!!

All around the whirlpool, countless rays of energy was starting to be absorbed from the surrounding area. In just seconds, four colors of red, violet, blue, and green were forming at the center!

These four colors shined the most prominently at the center of the whirlpool before slowly spinning downwards onto Xiao Qi!

And throughout the entire time, Xiao Qi's aura was....rapidly increasing!

Even though it was five kilometers high into the sky, everyone could clearly see what was going on! This was a sight that felt like the world itself was being shaped! With a sight like this, everyone that saw it was stunned!

Chapter 602: Xiao Qi's Breakthrough!

The things that were happening in the skies above Baishan City stunned everyone there, including Wu Dijian and the other Soul Kings.

He was the first one to speak after a moment of being spellbound by the sight. “Are you kidding me?! This....this is a breakthrough?! It’s becoming a class seven!?”

Everyone gasped at his words in shock. Xiao Qi at this moment was making the breakthrough to become a class seven!

A being on the level of a Soul King!

“Ah!!”

A cry of erupted from Zheng Kai, snapping everyone’s eyes to him. They saw him holding his left shoulder in pain and a very sheepish looking Wu Dijian, “Why’d you go and pinch me for, old man?!”

Everyone noticed Wu Dijian’s fingers had been pinching onto Zheng Kai’s shoulder.

“Only seeing if we were dreaming...hehe.” Wu Dijian laughed it off before saying, “But it is what it is, this is reality....”

Zheng Kai said nothing.

In a soliloquy to himself almost, Wu Dijian thought to himself, “But....this is unbelievable really!! How is it making a breakthrough now?! It’s a joke—the bird was nearly on the verge of death an hour ago, so how is it making a breakthrough despite the injuries it got?!”

“I remember that bird was also a.....prismatic oriole, wasn’t it?!” Wu Dijian’s hand scratched at his white disheveled hair, “Were they always able to become a class seven? That’s a little outlandish, even for a variant....what in the world did that Bai Yunfei feed it?”

It's advancing far too fast.....far too fast....”

Everyone else was thinking of similar things to what Wu Dijian was saying. The fact that Xiao Qi was making a breakthrough was extremely unusual.

Xiao Qi's body was like a bottomless black hole up in the skies. Countless streams of elemental fire, lightning, wind, and wood flowed into its body to be gathered and absorbed.

With each passing moment another stream of energy was absorbed into it, Xiao Qi's aura spiked like a rocket. Surpassing the limits of a peak late-stage class six, it continued to climb higher and higher....

At last when the bird's aura reached a limit of what it could increase to, the light around Xiao Qi's body 'froze' for a moment. It remained there in the sky where it was. Even the tumultuous light up in the whirlpool with its swirling multi-colored winds and clouds had stopped!

Everyone's eyes bugged out at the sight, their hearts feeling as though it had stopped mid-beat as well.

A moment after everything had stopped, the light from Xiao Qi's body exploded to ten times its previous intensity!

Everyone gasped. Wu Dijian was the first to voice out his thoughts, “It succeeded! It actually became a class seven!!”

But the light around Xiao Qi didn't fade away. Its aura was clearly at the level of an early-stage class seven, but the elemental energy around it continued to flow into Xiao Qi's body to be absorbed, further increasing its strength!!

“It's....it's....” Wu Dijian's eyes were nearly as wide as dinner plates when he realized what was going on. “It's still trying to power up?! Is it trying to become a mid-stage class seven?!”

For both soul cultivators and soulbeasts, Soul Kings and class sevens would immediately stop and try to consolidate their

strength before they continued training. It was imperative to get used to their new energy since trying to do what Xiao Qi was doing now would almost always negatively affect their future training.

But Xiao Qi didn't have these same misgivings as the others. Still absorbing the energy around it, Xiao Qi allowed for the elemental energy to be absorbed into itself and have its aura slowly increase in strength!!

Becoming a mid-stage class seven soulbeast in one straight go was very unlikely. The normal early-stage class seven would definitely need more time, but Xiao Qi was different, it could improve at speeds far faster than the others....

Xiao Qi had been egregiously injured a moment ago, but now it was a class seven soulbeast with an abundant amount of energy. The people gathered here were by no means untalented in their training, but even they couldn't help but sigh in admiration of Xiao Qi.

But something else took place to startle them....

“Ah!!!”

A miserable cry came forth from Bai Yunfei, who was still in the bubble of elemental water. There was a loud bang as elemental fire came out from his body, forcing itself against the elemental water and wrapping himself inside a layer of it. Furthermore, there was also a strange pulse from his soul coming out!

At the same time, the elemental fire was starting to churn and boil with a tremendous amount of heat and energy!

Under the still-amazed eyes of everyone there, the weak vitality of Bai Yunfei was suddenly starting to make a quick comeback!

When they looked closely, they realized that the pulses coming from his soul was....very similar to what Xiao Qi was radiating!

Everyone was once again startled by this revelation. None of them looked very sure of what was going on with him.

But then the white-haired elder behind Wu Ren inhaled with a sharp breath when the answer hit him, “Could....could this be....a soul contract....this is Symbiosis!!”

“A soul contract?! Symbiosis?!”

Everyone there turned to look at the old man, some of them unable to stop themselves from repeating the words he said.

“Then....this is the soulbeast Bai Yunfei bonded with?!”

Wu Dijian asked in alarm, his eyes flickering back and forth between Bai Yunfei and Xiao Qi. Like the others, he was unable to believe his eyes.

Even Zheng Kai was astonished. Bai Yunfei first came to the Capital with three soulbeasts, and that in itself had been a very unique matter. Anyone would be equally surprised if they saw that. Zheng Kai had only figured two of the three soulbeasts were ‘raised’ like pets, thus their willingness to follow Bai Yunfei and felt slightly jealous. Of those three, Zheng Kai thought it had been the permafrost mastiff who Bai Yunfei had contracted with due to its strength, and Xiao Qi and the blue-eyes wurm were those two aforementioned pets.

No matter if it was Zheng Kai or anyone else, it was ‘normal’ to think that Bai Yunfei’s contracted soulbeast was the permafrost mastiff, so Zheng Kai never asked, and Bai Yunfei never told him. So now that it was revealed that it was Xiao Qi that was the actual soulbeast contracted with Bai Yunfei, Zheng Kai found himself speechless.

But then that brought up another question. They all stared to the permafrost mastiff who was currently wrapped up in a ball of white light.

Was this class seven soulbeast following Bai Yunfei of its own will then?!

That.....that a class seven soulbeast without without a soul

contract would be willing to follow around a human like that....it was hard to believe.

But that moment of disbelief lasted only for a moment. There was something else that was even more incredulous than that.....

The matter that was....Symbiosis!!

Chapter 603: Symbiosis

When a soulbeast and soul cultivator contracted with one another, they would both be able to communicate their thoughts with one another. They became partners that trained and fought together. To lend the other a helping hand that was always reliable, like family.

Soul contracts, as it were, had varying 'degrees' of separations as well.

Though a soul contract normally had both partners being able to communicate their thoughts with one another, there were always a few people with differing ideas. They could in a way be considered to be 'selfish' and would not be willing to fully bare their souls to the other. In this case, it could be said to be an example of their personal character or nature.

The cooperation between a contracted soulbeast and soul cultivator had always been a process many people documented heavily. But if there was one thing everyone could agree about, it was that the 'relationship' between the two would have a deeper bond if their relationship was better.

And thus why there was a type of 'soul compatibility' between the two parties of a soul contract.

The most basic of soul contracts normally had both parties being able to roughly sense the emotions or thoughts of the other party. This type of depth was normally seen in those who forced a soul contract.

Better ones only needed a look or word between the two for their thoughts to be understood by the other. Soul contracts that were even better than that could have a connection between the two so that both parties could essentially communicate with their minds. This was a method of communication that relied on emotion and thought.

The ability to be able to infer said thoughts between the unfiltered minds of the other party was an extremely rare feat that required a very deep bond with one another. Soulbeasts and soul cultivators of this type would require a great deal of time before they could manage this.

And above this was practically just shy of the pinnacle of what soul contracts could attain. When the 'soul compatibility' reached an extremely high level, an especially rare connection would be made.

This connection is known as....Symbiosis!!

A feat like this was essentially beyond the scope of a 'soul contract'. Not only would the souls of both parties be linked together, their very 'lives' would be joined together!

In the case one party was close to death, they could potentially survive by borrowing the 'vitality' of the other party....they would in nature be sharing lifeforce!

It was something that was only talked about in legends, but it was actually taking place today between Bai Yunfei and Xiao Qi!

When Bai Yunfei was in extreme danger, he had managed to get in contact with Xiao Qi's vitality and was able to continue 'fighting' for his life!

For the sake of argumentation, if Xiao Qi didn't share its vitality with Bai Yunfei, there was still a chance Bai Yunfei would've survived, albeit there'd definitely be plenty of dangers that might take place. But with Xiao Qi making the breakthrough to become a class seven, its soulforce had exploded exponentially almost and affected the bond between it and Bai Yunfei largely enough for 'Symbiosis' to take place between the two. No hesitation was to be had as Xiao Qi shared its vitality with Bai Yunfei, meaning Bai Yunfei was able to heal with an extremely decreased chance of any danger befalling him. And not only that, the near-fatal wounds he had all over his body was starting to regenerate over itself at

astounding speeds!

But this came at a price. Even if Xiao Qi had only just become a class seven, it'd go into a weak state after this event was done. And the price of helping Bai Yunfei through this crisis may or may not affect his future cultivation....

.....

Wrapped in a layer of elemental fire as he floated in the air, Bai Yunfei could be seen quickly recovering inside of it while everyone gathered around him in shock.

“Symbiosis....so this really is Symbiosis.....such a thing like this existed?” Wu Dijian sighed when he looked at Xiao Qi, “It had the chance to keep going, but it gave up the chance of becoming a mid-stage class seven to feed that energy into saving Bai Yunfei.....”

“I wonder....” Wu Dijian sighed to himself, “What kind of bond do they have for such an act to take place between them?”

As Bai Yunfei was undergoing this turn for the better, the skies above Xiao Qi came to a sudden halt along with the energy in Xiao Qi. Its soulforce stopped rising for a moment before starting to drip downwards as if being drained away. Even the whirlpool around Xiao Qi was slowly starting to dissipate now.

The giant whirlpool rotated several revolutions longer before it fully scattered apart, redepositing the elemental energy inside of it back into the world for it to disappear.

The four rays of elemental energy dimmed in light before ultimately disappearing away into the world. That left Xiao Qi's folded figure still up in the air with its aura slowly calming into a lull, its breathing somehow conforming with Bai Yunfei's.

Not at all understanding what Symbiosis was, Zheng Kai worriedly stared at Bai Yunfei first before asking his uncle, “Uncle, how is Yunfei now? Aren't you going to keep on healing him? He's....”

Zheng Shisong shook his head before looking at Bai Yunfei strangely, “There’s no need anymore. He’s no longer in danger. What a completely surprising recovery—I’m sure that he’ll just need some time before he’s back to normal now.”

“Really?” Zheng Kai’s face brightened in relief, “That’s good....”

In his short time with Bai Yunfei, Zheng Kai had already felt like Bai Yunfei was a proper and true friend of his. The fact that Bai Yunfei was so injured now made him worried and regretful that he couldn’t himself help Bai Yunfei. So it was fortunate that Bai Yunfei was safe now, else Zheng Kai wouldn’t have been able to live with himself.

.....

It took another half hour before everyone heard Xiao Qi trill again, this time a little more quiet. Unfolding its wings as if coming out from a cocoon again, the bird had a faint shimmer of light exude from it. The light was comparatively weaker than before. Beating its wings, Xiao Qi dove down to return to Bai Yunfei’s side.

At that moment, Bai Yunfei’s body was still surrounded by a rich wave of elemental fire. It flickered softly as Xiao Qi approached and then was reabsorbed back into Bai Yunfei’s body through his pores. In a flash, Zheng Shisong caught Bai Yunfei in a bubble of elemental water to keep him suspended in air.

Zheng Shisong’s right hand pressed against Bai Yunfei’s chest, his eyes concentrating for a moment to diagnose Bai Yunfei’s current state. “He’s fine. He’s healed far more in this one hour than I would’ve been able to do in ten. All his ruptured arteries and veins are back to normal and his soul doesn’t seem any more injured than what it was before. Right now, it’s his physical wounds on his flesh that are the worst. His elemental fire practically scorched most of it before, so recovery should be slightly slower in that regard. But other than that, he doesn’t seem

like he'll be in anyway impacted in the future.”

Bai Yunfei's condition was stabilized, and Xiao Qi's condition was also far better than before. It didn't take long before the permafrost mastiff finish its initial healing and come over to Xiao Qi to stand protectively over Bai Yunfei.

By now, the skies was already very dark, and after some consideration and Zhang Mo's initiative, they all returned to his mansion to rest for the night. They would return to the Capital the next day even if Bai Yunfei was still unconscious.

As such, Bai Yunfei's affairs in Baishan City was at a end, and Bai Yunfei had escaped from yet another crisis. But this time, another problem had opened itself up to potentially trouble him even more in the future....

Chapter 604: Awakening

Five days had already passed since Bai Yunfei's fight in Baishan City. In those five days, both the Zheng and the Royal Family had their people investigate the matter with the Cao. After their group returned to the Capital, Bai Yunfei had been brought back to the Zheng so that they could treat and take care of his wounds.

His wounds had stabilized for the most part in thanks to the Symbiosis, but he wasn't back to full health. There was still wounds to heal, and the most egregious ones was the damage done to his internal organs from the spike of elemental energy during his Berserk Mode. The suicidal nature in which he fought the Soul King had exacerbated his wounds even more.

At that time, he had been fighting as if those wounds didn't even exist, but a reality like that couldn't be so easily ignored. By the time the battle ended, the wounds he sustained had accumulated to a terrifying degree. If not for Xiao Qi there to offer up its soulforce, Bai Yunfei would have needed more than three to five days to stabilize himself.

Activity within Zheng manor increased by a certain amount in the following days as people came and went in large numbers. Bai Yunfei's students took up most of those days with Fang Tianmeng refusing to leave Bai Yunfei's side due to her guilt. Spending practically two days and nights to take care of Bai Yunfei, the only reason she went back to her place to rest was because of the forceful recommendations of the other students.

Even the chairman of Tianhun Academy came to visit Bai Yunfei. The first and second prince did come by twice to check up on Bai Yunfei or give Zheng manor several precious medicines to help Bai Yunfei recuperate.

News of Bai Yunfei's events and injuries made its way to the more influential families in the Capital, such as the other three

major houses. Each one of them sent a representative with ‘presents’, that was astonishingly quantitative for being called such. If Bai Yunfei was injured for a hundred days, then the presents given to him would’ve been enough to last him throughout that entire time span.

What Bai Yunfei did in Baishan City was later made known to the rest of the Capital. From the information propagated, people heard that the more important and stronger members of the house had been wiped out without a trace, but not many people knew if it was because they were killed by Bai Yunfei’s hand or if they fled before the battle even begun. But whichever the case or whatever the reason, one thing was for certain.

The house of Cao was no longer.

Not only were the key figures of the house gone, their place of residence was utterly destroyed. Not even a single tile was left untouched....

Rumors had it that it took over a dozen earth-type Soul Exalts from the Tianhun School several days before the crater was filled up and the place sufficiently patched together.....

It was known to the more well-informed powers that Bai Yunfei was heavily involved in what happened to the Cao. From them, they spread the news that ‘the Cao had angered Bai Yunfei and was subsequently destroyed by him’. In time, Bai Yunfei became even more high profile than before. Before, he was known as the instructor who started the crafting class and the one who crafted that heaven-tier soul armament. But now, he was known as a major figure in the Capital’s world of cultivators as a ‘hegemonic’ soul cultivator, earning him plenty of respect.

There were a few that took the rumors with a grain of salt. The Cao was after all, just a minor family and not a power that others would pay attention to. They also felt that Bai Yunfei’s actions were a little excessive and that he was a person who didn’t know

his own boundaries.

While people knew that about Bai Yunfei, what they didn't know about him was the fact that he was currently bed-ridden and in an extremely weak and delirious state.

The room Bai Yunfei was in had an internal temperature far higher than what it was outside, making it unbearable for most people to stay in his room. It was as if Bai Yunfei's entire body was steaming where he laid on his bed. If not for the occasional rise and fall of his chest from breathing and the very faint amount of soulforce, it would've been thought that Bai Yunfei had been burnt to death.

Bai Yunfei regained consciousness on the noon of the sixth day.

He was startled the moment he opened his eyes—one of his students had at that moment conveniently been staring at him. A large group of his students were gathered there, each of them crying out with relieved joy when he woke.

The room devolved into a chaotic squabble for a moment with Bai Yunfei still at a loss for what was happening. When the room finally settled down and he was cognizant enough to speak, Bai Yunfei spoke with them for a while before the group left. They all knew that while Bai Yunfei had finally woken up, he'd still need some time to rest. Just the fact that he woke up had been a great deal of relief for them.

With everyone gone, that left Bai Yunfei to be the only person left in his room. First inspecting the state of his body, Bai Yunfei could see that his soulforce was nice and full, though his physical body felt numbish and slightly weak. Trying several times, Bai Yunfei managed to upright himself up against the walls of his bed to look around.

The permafrost mastiff was laying down in a corner of the room in a sleeplike fashion as if to either train or heal. The blue-eyes wurm was staring at Bai Yunfei from the corner of his bed as if to

ask if Bai Yunfei was alright.

He replied with a nod to the wyrm before he noticed a small spark of prismatic light come flying towards him.

“Yunfei, you okay?”

The prismatic light came to a stop in front of him, revealing it to be Xiao Qi inside. It was slowly hovering in the air with its wings flapping gently to stare at Bai Yunfei in concern.

“Haha, I’m fine, just a little weak.” Bai Yunfei laughed. “There doesn’t seem to be anything wrong with me, I’m sure it wo—”

He trailed off here to stare at Xiao Qi with wide-opened eyes. His mouth hung wide open like if he had just seen a ghost. Bai Yunfei tried to leap up from his bed, but the weakness of his body only resulted in him giving a small kick from the bed onto the wall behind him. The back of his head slammed into the wall before bouncing back in a hiss of pain.

“Eh? Yunfei, what’s wrong?”

A curious voice asked him as he rubbed his head. Again, Bai Yunfei looked back up at the voice, uncaring for the bump now on his head. In front of him was Xiao Qi, but Bai Yunfei couldn’t help but stutter, “Xi—Xiao Qi. You.....you can talk now?!”

Correct! Xiao Qi was ‘speaking’ with him now!!

They weren’t communicating with their souls or thoughts like before, they were having a conversation with words!

He rarely used words to speak with Xiao Qi since he had the bond between him and the bird. Added with the mental link the Charm Bracelet offered him to talk via their minds, Bai Yunfei would even use it to communicate with the blue-eyes wyrm.

But right now, this ‘mental link’ wasn’t established. Xiao Qi was speaking to him with the words of the human tongue!

Chapter 605: Xiao Qi Speaks...

Before, the only sounds that'd come out from Xiao Qi would be the chirps. So now that Xiao Qi could speak the human tongue, how could Bai Yunfei not feel surprised?

Xiao Qi looked seemingly pleased at the stunned expression on Bai Yunfei's face. Flapping his wings to fly twice in rotation around the room, he spoke, "Haha, how about it?! I don't need to use that mental link to talk anymore! I can speak now!! Haha...I can actually speak!"

His voice grew happier and happier as he flew faster and faster. But he soon returned to Bai Yunfei's side with a slightly dejected trill, "But even though I can speak, I can't turn into a human!! Aya—how annoying! It took me a lot of effort to get to class seven, and I still can't turn into a human! Where did I go wrong?! Aren't even the most senseless of beasts able to transform when they become a class seven?! Why can't the handsome I be able to do it then? This is annoying!!"

Xiao Qi flapped his wings in annoyance as he spoke while Bai Yunfei listened in surprise. Rather unsatisfied, the bird came to a perch in front of Bai Yunfei who was holding one hand to his head and the other hand out for Xiao Qi to stop speaking, "Hold on hold on....let me get my bearings straight....you can't transform into a human? What do you mean? Wait...hold on!!"

His eyes flew open as if he had realized something. Like last time, his head snapped back to look up, only to have his head slam against the wall behind him again. Hissing once more, Bai Yunfei ignored the bump on his head to speak to Xiao Qi, "Are...are you saying you're a class seven now?!"

Bai Yunfei gave Xiao Qi a quick scan with his soulsense. He could sense the abundant amount of soulforce from Xiao Qi, and combined with the energy he felt from their bond, everything was

pointing to him that Xiao Qi was an early-stage class seven soulbeast now!!

“You...you actually broke through?!” Bai Yunfei asked in disbelief. “Xiao Qi, how’d you do that? How’d you breakthrough?”

“How I did it?” Xiao Qi flapped his wings once in pensive thought. Hopping around Bai Yunfei’s head, the bird tilted his head to think. “Uwah, I’m not very sure. I just remember killing so many people and feeling my strength grow in that battle. After killing that lightning-type mid-stage Soul King, I felt like I was about to drop dead. But then when that Wu Dijian came and stopped you, I started to heal my wounds right away....

“After that, I felt a large amount of energy enter my body. Not only did my wounds heal up, I...I felt my strength increase again. I began to see a lot of things like the elemental energy that entered my body. I...after that, I felt like something in me broke, and then my energy started to skyrocket after that. Then I broke through.”

“.....”

Bai Yunfei’s own memories of the battle was a little hazy, but from what he heard from Xiao Qi, the reason why he broke through was due to his ‘hidden attribute’.

Xiao Qi’s hidden ability to gain experience after killing was something Bai Yunfei was already aware of. But ever since he became a peak late-stage class six, Bai Yunfei felt like this ability had either faded away or had become ‘weaker’. Xiao Qi didn’t seem to grow substantially after killing the early-stage Soul King that ambushed Bai Yunfei outside Casino Jin either.

But now that Xiao Qi made the breakthrough after killing the mid-stage Soul King, Bai Yunfei had to guess that the experience Xiao Qi was getting beforehand hadn’t been enough. It was only after this kill that Xiao Qi was able to amass enough experience to break the limits and become a class seven.

All things considered still, Xiao Qi's advancement was...a little too simple. So simple it was hard to believe.

A class seven! That was the soulbeast equivalent to a Soul King!!

Many soul cultivators and soulbeasts wouldn't even have the chance to attain such a level no matter how hard they try. But Xiao Qi was able to do so without consideration and without preparation.

With all the Soul Kings in this world, which one of them aside from the obscenely talented ones didn't work hard to reach the heights they were at? Soulbeasts especially had it a lot harder than soul cultivators. As blessed as they were with their longer lifespans, most soulbeasts lacked the ability to train under the many imparted styles of cultivation (aside from a select few). Soulbeasts had to work hard and rely on their own experiences—many would need at least a hundred to two hundred or even three hundred years in order to become a class seven.

But Xiao Qi? If he had to count his age, Xiao Qi would be about... five years old at most...

Xiao Qi popped out from his egg shell just four or five years ago. What kind of storm would brew up on the continent of the world heard about that?

.....

Despite the sigh Bai Yunfei gave, he was quite happy that Xiao Qi became a class seven. It was truly a beneficial event for the both of them.

“You said you weren't able to transform into a human?” He asked.

Class seven soulbeasts undergo a drastic transformation at the time of their breakthrough. Even those with sub-par intelligence would become as sharp as humans when they became class sevens, and many of them could take on human form. This didn't mean to

say that soulbeasts preferred to do such, but with humans being the predominant race on the continent, it was prudent to do so. Many soulbeasts were curious about the human world, and so taking human form to travel to their world allowed them to do so without much harm. There were a few soulbeasts though that held disdain for humanity and preferred to stay in their soulbeast form.

According to logic, the ability to humanize should be something that a class seven soulbeast should be capable of. It wasn't some sort of esoteric secret or skill that one had to learn. It was merely just an inherited ability that came with the breakthrough and normally wouldn't be limited from certain soulbeasts...

This was of course, the general rule. Each rule had their exceptions, and in this case, there were definitely a few exceptions to this rule. The more primalistic 'beasts' were generally incapable of humanizing along with soulbeasts that were generally inferior to others in talent. They couldn't even become class sevens due to their inability, let alone try to take human form.

In Xiao Qi's case...

"Is it because Xiao Qi's a prisma oriole?" Bai Yunfei thought to himself. According to what he knew, there hadn't ever been a recorded case in history of a prisma oriole becoming a class seven. There were no records, and even for the myriad of years soulbeasts were alive, a class seven prisma oriole hadn't been known to humans, and neither could they claim to know anything about one...

Perhaps it was exactly because Xiao Qi was a prisma oriole it wasn't capable of humanizing. Because of the genetic limits of his race, Xiao Qi was only capable of human speech, but not taking human form?

Noticing the dejected look on Xiao Qi's face, Bai Yunfei decided to not think about it any more in favor of cheering him up. "Haha, there's nothing you can change about that. If you can't transform,

you can't transform. Maybe it's because of your 'age'? Maybe you'll have to wait a bit before you become strong and old enough to transform.”

He thought about it for a second longer before adding onto that, “This alone is already pretty good.”

In truth, Bai Yunfei would've had a hard time accepting the fact that Xiao Qi was capable of turning into a human. After these five years of being with Xiao Qi, Bai Yunfei was very used to having him as a bird. If he could suddenly turn into a human....Bai Yunfei thought it to be quite awkward just thinking about it.

Probably because he rarely spoke with humanized soulbeasts before.

“Hope I can turn into a human soon—that'll be more fun for me....” Xiao Qi chirped once to sigh, “But that's that. Just being able to speak is nice enough, hehe...”

“.....” Bai Yunfei was speechless. Did Xiao Qi really take being able to humanize was something that could potentially be fun?

The fact that Xiao Qi was able to talk now gave Bai Yunfei quite the strange feeling. Xiao Qi had grown quite fast. He had absorbed all the knowledge of the world it was given exorbitantly fast. Despite being only five years old, its maturity was that of a twelve year old human boy around. Like a child, Xiao Qi was a soulbeast that loved to play and was inherently very curious about any new thing he experienced. He was also more carefree about the world and more calm.

But that wasn't anything bad. That was just Xiao Qi.

Author Note: Xiao Qi is a male as I've mentioned before. So for some of you readers, please don't start dreaming of some sort of dream that Xiao Qi will turn into a young girl or something...

TL Note: Prior to this point, Xiao Qi was referred to with a gender-neutral pronoun meant for animals/non-human entities.

Xiao Qi is now being referred to with the male pronoun character.

“Grr....”

A rather pitiful sounding growl came from the side of the bed next, prompting Bai Yunfei to turn his head. He saw Xiao Lan standing there, its eyes staring at Xiao Qi with a look of envy and hope.

At its glance, Xiao Qi laughed and flew around the blue-eyes wyrm's head. “Haha, how about it? Jealous? I can talk now! Haha, you were bragging that you beat me to the peak late-stage class six level, but look at me now! Haha...”

Bai Yunfei couldn't help but sweat drop at the bragging going on. As if to console the blue-eyes wyrm, he spoke, “Haha, don't worry. You'll breakthrough soon enough, Xiao Lan. Wait until you become a class seven and you'll be able to talk. Maybe you'll be able to humanize?”

Its eyes lit up expectantly at that. Nodding, it gave Xiao Qi a quick glance before growling several times. With a flick of its tail, it stalked back to its corner and proceeded to train by itself.

The wyrm must've jabbed at a sore point of Xiao Qi, as the bird immediately retorted, “Hmph! Wait until you actually breakthrough before you start talking like that! Maybe you won't be able to humanize like me!? Let's see if you'll eat your words you annoyance...”

Xiao Qi flew up after that, but not before speaking to Bai Yunfei, “You should rest now, I'll stop bothering you.”

Bai Yunfei smiled at the small banter taking place between the human tongue speaking Xiao Qi and the soulbeast tongue speaking Xiao Lan. Shaking his head, Bai Yunfei sat back to try and do a more in depth study of his current state.

A great battle came with great wounds. Bai Yunfei was very curious to see the full extent of his body and its present state...

Chapter 606: His Own Condition

Bai Yunfei slowly exhaled, drawing the breath out from his body to calm down. In an introspective state of meditation, Bai Yunfei began to use his soulsense to scan his own body.

Second by second, time went by with Bai Yunfei sitting there in silence. The only change that took place on a noticeable level was the fact his eyebrows grew more and more furrowed...

If he had to describe the state his physical body was with the physical wounds, Bai Yunfei had only a few words to say: everything's an appalling mess.

His body could be compared to a strip of land on earth. In the vein of that comparison, Bai Yunfei's body was as if a drought and natural disaster had struck it. It was dry and cracked. Miserable and left unchecked, the place reeked with the scent of death.

His muscles used to bulge outwards with power, but now it was a withered mess of weak flesh. His previously steel-like bones were now decadent almost, and his veins and arteries were no longer flush with vitality, they were dry and constrained together.

Dread ran through Bai Yunfei's mind at the sight. Opening his eyes to stare at his right fist, he tried to clench his hand. But then that action only resulted in him unable to even crack his knuckles...

It was as if he had lost all sense of power in his muscles. His body was virtually powerless. All it took was a slight movement for the rest of his body to feel the pain and weakness.

“How did this happen...”

Bai Yunfei despaired. Trying again to clench his fist, Bai Yunfei tried his best to summon whatever last traces of his strength existed, but he failed.

“If my body's this weak, what am I going to do...”

The soul was the main aspect a soul cultivator trained, but before they could start on that, soul cultivators needed to hone the body. Mastery of control over the body was essential, and so soul cultivators worked their bodies as hard as they could to make it grow stronger. Even Soul Exalts had bodies that were essentially at the limits of what could be reached. They could tear apart leopards with their arms and crack steel or cliffs with a punch in ease. Even their muscle tolerance and regeneration was extremely high. What would normally be a fatal wound on a commoner would be nothing more but just a flesh wound. Even if their arms or legs were broken, they could fix those types of injuries relatively quick. The only way to hamper their regenerative ability was to have the soulforce of another be transmitted into their bodies and deliberately hamper it. But in general, it was safe to say that the physical wounds of a Soul Exalt could be easily healed.

Bai Yunfei's current situation was a little special. His wounds had been extremely severe prior to his healing with his muscles and bones being broken in more places than they hadn't been. Even his internal organs had been injured. While his body used to have cracks and such all over it, they were healed by now.

So...where did this feeling of powerlessness come from?

There were no physical 'wounds' on his body to be seen, but it felt like every cell in his body had been injured. He could circulate his soulforce and elemental fire through his body, but...it wasn't doing a thing to his body?!

Bai Yunfei had never had such a situation like this before. If he excluded his soulforce, Bai Yunfei's body was like that of a commoner, and barely even that.

This feeling of powerlessness, Bai Yunfei remembered, had been experienced once before when he was extremely young. It had been when he first started working at the rice shop and moved a dozen of rice bags that he felt like his muscles were on fire.

“How did it get like this...what should I even do?”

He panicked a bit in his mind. Fear gripped at his mind and lingered in his heart as he tried to slap his head to wake himself up. Diving again with his soulsense, Bai Yunfei tried to send his soulforce through his body again.

Bai Yunfei opened his eyes again after a very long time in relief. Exhaling a drawn out breath, he sighed, “I can still heal, that’s good...”

In that second observational round, Bai Yunfei had his soulforce scrub at his body. It had worked, much to his relief, the feeling of weakness in his body dissipating by a small margin.

It was only a margin just like how a drop of water in a bucket would only be a drop. Seemingly insignificant on the quantitative level, this still meant that his body could still receive soulforce to heal it, meaning he wasn’t crippled.

“As long as I can heal, everything’s fine...” Bai Yunfei consoled himself. A feeling of worry still lingered on his mind though—while he could heal, the scan of his body and the efficacy of his healing would still require a huge amount of time. He couldn’t even estimate just how many days it’d take!

.....

Bai Yunfei shook his head. He couldn’t worry about that now. He had other matters to take care of.

The other thing he noticed when he was circulating his soulforce had been large enough to surprise him.

It was his essence fireseed!

He was still in Berserk Mode when he was knocked out, so it was canceled out during a time he wasn’t even in control of his thoughts, let alone his mind. This meant that he was unable to control his essence fireseed, and that the ‘coil’ form was canceled out as well. While he was in danger of dying, the Dual Flame Arts

was somehow still running in his body so that both fireseeds continued to co-exist without a problem!

For five whole days!

When Bai Yunfei was knocked out by the Soul Refining Palm, he had been knocked out for two whole days with the fireseeds managing to co-exist. It had been unbelievable at the time that happened, but now the fireseeds managed to more than double the previous length!

And the more important thing was the fact that both fireseeds hadn't yet split apart from one another in his origin acupoint!

Not only did they not split, they were 'fused' together!

Both fireseeds were connected with one another by more than half their size!

This was clearly the result of the 'Berserk Mode' (The Berserk Mode is essentially the 'Fusion' Form), but right now, his fireseeds were stuck together as if it was 'regular'!

In its present state, the two fireseeds were not in a 'coil' form, or in a 'fusion' form. It was in the state of 'cultivation' as denoted by the earlier part of the Dual Flame Art manual.

When Bai Yunfei tried to split the two fireseeds apart, he realized that he couldn't!

The two fireseeds were stuck together and unable to split apart!

It was an immensely strange situation. The two fireseeds would always try to devour one another whenever they made contact with one another. It was only when Bai Yunfei activated the Dual Flame Arts that the two fireseeds would calm down and co-exist with one another to either increase his strength in either the 'coil' form or the 'fusion' form. Either way, Bai Yunfei relied on the Dual Flame Arts for an 'explosive' increase in strength for a good period of time, though the fireseeds would have to be split apart at the end in order to avoid a fight between the two.

But right now, the two fireseeds looked as though they had ‘shook hands’ to agree not to fight and ‘fuse’ together!

Neither of the two were trying to eat the other. Bai Yunfei could tell that both the fireseeds were still distributing different waves of elemental fire, but the halves where they connected with one another were distributing separate waves of elemental fire that were slowly synchronizing in waveform the closer they got to one another!

As such, the two fireseeds were in a state of being fused and not fused.

As such, Bai Yunfei was then also able to discover that aside from his body, Bai Yunfei’s soulforce was at the level of a...

Chapter 607: Mixed Feelings

Late-stage Soul Exalt!

Bai Yunfei's soulforce had reached the level of a late-stage Soul Exalt!

"I powered up?!"

Bai Yunfei's eyes shined with incredulous surprise. Had he really become a late-stage Soul Exalt?

Prior to this entire affair with Fang Tianmeng, Bai Yunfei had estimated that it'd take him another hundred days or so before he could become a late-stage Soul Exalt. How had he managed to do it in such a short amount of time?

He was similar to Xiao Qi in a way with how they both got stronger after fighting.....but his situation wasn't as absurd as Xiao Qi's. But still. It was a good thing....

However. This 'pleasant surprise' wasn't large enough to counteract against Bai Yunfei's concerns. Though he was a late-stage Soul Exalt in soulforce, his present predicament made him far weaker than before!

He couldn't even walk steadily by himself right now, let alone fight. If he was stuck like this for a long time, then advancing a stage would be completely useless....

Bai Yunfei casted his worries away. It was time for him to focus on the issue with his two fireseeds.

"I can't split them, but they don't seem to be trying to devour or fuse with one another anymore. What's going on?" With his soulsense, Bai Yunfei was able to look deeply at the two essence fireseeds and how his soulforce would circulate around the two. There didn't seem to be any problems with how calm the two fireseeds took the soulforce, but Bai Yunfei did have the feeling like he was in a state not unlike when he normally practiced the

Dual Flame Arts.

That line of thought brought an idea to Bai Yunfei. In accordance to what was taught to him, Bai Yunfei immediately activated the Dual Flame Arts. The two fireseeds shivered slightly before ushering Bai Yunfei into a meditational trance for training.

This time, the feeling he had was....much better than before!

Bai Yunfei stopped after a while. He was satisfied with what he was feeling. With another thought, he had the two fireseeds tremble again before the elemental fire from the two of them started to explode, bringing him to the level of a peak late-stage Soul Exalt.

Dual Flame Arts: 'coil' form!

Rather than needing to use hand seals like before, all it took Bai Yunfei to activate the 'coil' form was a single thought!

But the second after his strength skyrocketed, Bai Yunfei's eyes flew open and his face started to twitch. Straight away, his energy died down and the 'coil' form was deactivated.

“Huff.....huffff....huff.....”

Bai Yunfei gasped for breath, his back bent over to have his head facing his sheets. Beads of sweat dripped from his pained face, his mouth looking like it was ready to grunt in pain.

“Yunfei, what's wrong?!”

Xiao Qi had been comfortably resting on top of the laid down permafrost mastiff when he felt Bai Yunfei's energy spike up. He flew over straight away when Bai Yunfei doubled up in pain.

“It's nothing, just an experiment. Don't worry....” Bai Yunfei waved his hand. Straightening his back to rest against the wall, Bai Yunfei sucked in a deep breath to try and regain his bearings.

He wiped the sweat off his face while the other hand touched at his chest in trepidation, “Damn it, has my body really gotten that

weak?”

In the moment when he activated the ‘coil’ form, Bai Yunfei felt an extreme pain coming from his body like if a sword was slicing apart at it and then countless ants were biting at every cell in him with such pain that he felt like fainting almost.

Now that a good amount of time had transpired, the pain running through Bai Yunfei’s body had abated somewhat. Resting weakly against the wall, Bai Yunfei’s eyes shined pensively.

“My body might not be able to take it, but I can still use the ‘coil’ form without any hand seals. That’s a lot better than before.” Bai Yunfei thought to himself after the pain was fully gone.

“I’m a late-stage Soul Exalt now, and the ‘coil’ form brings me to the peak late-stage. Then....if I go into Berserk Mode, how strong do I get then? If I surpass the peak late-stage Soul Exalt level, that only leaves one option.....I gain the strength capable to fighting a Soul King?

“Whether it’s in strength in the body or soulforce, going into Berserk Mode allows me to surpass the limits of a peak late-stage Soul Exalt. Combined with the Charm Bracelet’s pseudo spirit attack, doesn’t....doesn’t that mean I’m basically able to fight on the same level as a Soul King?” Bai Yunfei had used Berserk Mode to its limits back in Baishan City to fight the mid-stage Soul King to a standstill. He didn’t have any clear memories of it, but he did remember using the imitation of a spirit attack with his mental link to attack. And when he thought about that, his guesses felt a lot less like guesses and more like facts.

Indeed. If Bai Yunfei were to go into Berserk Mode, he could fight an early-stage Soul King on equal grounds. This was what he could call....the False Soul King realm!

Bai Yunfei had been fighting under irregular conditions during the battle in Baishan City. Without his rationality there to keep him in check, Bai Yunfei did several things he normally would

never do, and although they were extremely dangerous, some of those things did have a decent amount of use.

“I wonder how long the two fireseeds will stay like this. If they can’t split apart then the Cataclysmic Seal will be much weaker....I won’t be able to control the flames in the Lightningfire Cauldron when crafting either....” Bai Yunfei muttered. “Though this is much better for me in terms of training. There’s some benefit, but there’s also some detriments....”

With the current weakness of his body, the aberration of his two fireseeds wasn’t something he could study completely right now. There were some good benefits to it, but Bai Yunfei had mixed feelings about it still....

“My body will heal sooner or later. I should take advantage of this time to try my best to train. Maybe I’ll become a peak late-stage Soul Exalt, or maybe I’ll have the chance to go even higher from there....” Bai Yunfei thought. “If I can become a Soul King, then I’ll really have made it. Becoming one of the elites of this world would mean no more dangers every day. I don’t have to fight for my life all the time.

“In the end, strength is all that matters!!”

Bai Yunfei lifted his head to stare at the ceiling, his eyes shining with reluctance. His pursuit for power was a never ending one. Each time Bai Yunfei grew stronger, he’d come into contact with people even stronger and brought even more pressure onto Bai Yunfei to train. Many a times Bai Yunfei grew stronger, and many a times someone stronger came forward to kick him down. Though Bai Yunfei was able to pull out a hidden ace from his sleeves to escape from the troubles, the fact that he had to go through these iterations so many time left an unpleasant taste in his mouth.

Bai Yunfei fought every fight with his life on the line. All it’d take was for him to lose just once for him to fall off that line and into the depths of no return.

The only way to change this fate was to get stronger. Stronger and stronger until he was stronger than everyone else!

“I don’t know why the Cao would’ve gone through such lengths to kill me, but there’ll be a day when I find out. Whomever it was that put them up to it, I’ll make sure they pay for it dearly!!”

He had not expected for them to use one of his students a bait for him to come into their trap. A furious glint of ice entered his eyes, an urge to kill leaking from them as well....

Bai Yunfei’s hand flew up to rub at his temples the moment he felt his murderous intent appear. “Tch!! Still can’t control my emotions....dammit, I nearly forgot about this. Not only am I weaker, my soul fell into a relapse!”

Now that he had a good idea of what kind of state his body was in, Bai Yunfei felt it to be very annoying. His soul had been more than halfway healed prior to him going to Baishan City, but now that this battle happened, all that time spent healing his soul was a waste now. It’d take him even longer than before to heal now....

“My body’s weak and my self-control’s even worse. How can I even start to feel optimistic about this....” Bai Yunfei shook his head. “The first thing I have to do first is heal my body to at least being able to do basic motions. I can find uncle Dan Teng and have him prescribe me some more Soul Consolidating Tea to heal my soul.

“Step by step. I don’t need to rush. Once I heal up, I’ll be even stronger than before!”

Chapter 608: Recuperation

When Bai Yunfei woke up the next day, he immediately started to train in his room. Due to the weakness of his body, he had to have people come in to support him up. Rather than go out, Bai Yunfei practically secluded himself in his room for five straight days before he regained enough motor strength in his body to be able to walk around like normal. It took another five day for him to have enough motor ability to move like a commoner would.

The keyword here being ‘like a commoner would’. His current strength was still immensely low compared to what it was before, and he could hardly be classified as being as strong as the average commoner his age, let alone being quite robust.

In terms of the available soulforce for his body to use, Bai Yunfei couldn’t even said to be on the same level as a soul cultivator.

Because of the change in his two essence fireseeds, the usage of his soulforce was very hard to distinguish. Even a Soul King would be hard-pressed to sense Bai Yunfei’s soulforce.

It was like Bai Yunfei had completely lost his strength and was now a commoner.

The fact that he was able to regain enough bodily strength to move like a commoner had been gratifying enough. The horrifying thing was the fact that he found out that he....couldn’t progress from there after.

Or well, it wasn’t as though he ‘couldn’t heal. It was just that healing was taking ten times slower than before.

According to the trend he was going at, returning to his peak level of strength would take an obscenely long amount of time.....

Bai Yunfei was worried about it at first, but he soon came to the conclusion that he had to accept what life was giving him. If he had to heal slowly, then he wouldn’t force the issue. He’d put his

effort to more meaningful tasks.

Like....upgrading.

With Bai Yunfei regaining a certain amount of his strength back, Bai Yunfei was free to further deepen his research on the Upgrade Technique. Him upgrading the Critical Glove before had Bai Yunfei upgrading several more equipment he had, but he had unfortunately failed more often than not. Now that he was a stage stronger in soulforce though, Bai Yunfei was pleased to find out that manually upgrading the equipment was easier than using the Upgrade Technique. Because of that, Bai Yunfei spent most of his time using that method to pass the time.

Aside from that, Bai Yunfei had a few other things he could do now that he could walk around.

.....

One early morning on North Seventh Street.

With Zheng Kai as his companion, Bai Yunfei and his three soulbeasts walked towards the Soothing Heart.

Due to the relative earliness of that morning, there weren't many people inside the Soothing Heart. Bai Yunfei and Zheng Kai's entrance into the building was met with Dan Teng coming down from the second floor to greet them.

"You're finally back, Yunfei." He greeted them with concern, "I heard about what happened to you in Baishan City, are you alright?"

As small as the Soothing Heart was, the soul cultivators he had as patrons were by no means minor. They were people who traveled in certain circles and were thus privy to more knowledge over the rumors than others. By extension, Dan Teng was able to hear about the circumstances behind Bai Yunfei, and it wasn't as if the rumors were small in any case.

Grateful for his concern, Bai Yunfei smiled, "Thank you for your

concern, uncle Dan. There's a slight problem with my body that exacerbated the damage to my soul, if I could have uncle Dan help me out....”

Dang Teng blinked once before he honed his eyes onto Bai Yunfei, who felt a faint ripple of soulsense wash over him. The scanning took a while before Dan Teng sighed, “As I thought....the damage to your soul is worse than before. We can't even call this a side-effect anymore, but rather a full blown tear in your soul again. Fortunately, it's not incurable. It'll take a little longer with the Soul Consolidating Tea, but I guarantee you that you'll be fully healed!”

“Really?” Bai Yunfei smiled. “I feel reassured then. Thank you very much, uncle Dan....”

“No need. Shouldn't I be the one to thank you for your patronage? Haha....come up to the second floor with me. Yi Shu, prepare a teapot of some Soul Consolidating Tea.”

Bai Yunfei, Zheng Kai, and Dan Teng all enjoyed a cup of tea with each other before the former two left the Soothing Heart. How extraordinary the Soul Consolidating Tea felt to Bai Yunfei; the vexations in his heart felt like they had been drained away with each time he took a sip of that tea. And by the time he left the Soothing Heart, Bai Yunfei felt like he was gliding.

He was truly thankful for the Soothing Heart of Dan Teng and the Soul Consolidating Tea offered by them. If not for those, Bai Yunfei wouldn't even know where to begin with how to deal with his current predicament.

Life soon fell back into an ordinary cycle. In the morning, Bai Yunfei would head to the Soothing Heart for some tea and return to his place to meditate and practice manually upgrading. He'd return later in the day for another pot of Soul Consolidating Tea and return to his usual training. If not for the wounds he was trying to heal, it would be a very comfortable and relaxing lifestyle

Bai Yunfei was living.

Early one morning almost ten days later....

Bai Yunfei had only just stepped out from the Soothing Heart after finishing his tea. Rather than walk home, he took another path and headed for Tianhun Academy.

Now that he was feeling much more manageable than before, Bai Yunfei wanted to resume teaching. As an instructor, he didn't want to ignore the students he was in charge of.

Having been notified earlier, his students were already waiting for him at the top of the mountain. In regards to what happened to Bai Yunfei in Baishan City, the students were far more knowledgeable than others. It was only natural in any case with them all working hard to find Fang Tianmeng the day before her rescue. Though they didn't go to Baishan City to save her, what they heard from Fang Tianmeng astounded them all, and their respect for Bai Yunfei grew immensely.

Bai Yunfei wasn't the only one getting some measure of newfound respect; Wu Yang was being received quite well with the other students now. The matter in which the fourth prince had stuck up for Fang Tianmeng in the dining hall and his efforts in utilizing the Royal Family—namely the First Prince to go help save Fang Tianmeng in Baishan City—had left its mark onto the other students. To them, Wu Yang wasn't as hedonistic as the rumors claimed him to be. He wasn't a bad character at all.

As such, even Mo Wanxia seemed to be treating him better than before, much to Wu Yang's secret satisfaction.

The students and instructor spoke warmly with one another for a while before class started in earnest. "It's been almost a month since our last class, I hope everyone has been practicing. How far have you all gotten?"

Mo Chen spoke up first, "Haha, of course we have! We've already

starting crafting our own soul armaments, and....hehe, it's not so bad!"

He shook his hand to retrieve a strange triple-tipped weapon and presented it graciously to Bai Yunfei.

Bai Yunfei took the weapon into his hand to observe it. "This is...a mid-human tier soul armament! Did you craft this?!"

"Ah, instructor Bai's amazing, you knew the tier of it with a single glance!" Mo Chen laughed, "Yeah, it's the soul armament I crafted yesterday. How is it? Is it passable, instructor Bai?"

He could already craft a mid-human tier soul armament?

Bai Yunfei was surprised with Mo Chen's progression. Nodding his head, he praised him, "Haha, not bad. Not bad at all. You've really exceeded my expectations."

"Hehe, it was nothing. Aside from Fang Tianmeng and her circumstances, everyone else beat me in crafting a mid-human tier soul armament." Mo Chen laughed in embarrassment. "Big brother Ye Ming's even more amazing, he was able to craft a high-human soul armament."

"Oh?" The surprise in Bai Yunfei grew even larger as he regarded Ye Ming. "Ye Ming, you've....become a Soul Exalt?!"

Previously a Soul Exalt when he destroyed his essence lightningseed, Ye Ming had dropped himself down to a peak late-stage Soul Ancestor. But now that Bai Yunfei looked at him, Ye Ming was back to being an early-stage Soul Exalt!

Ye Ming nodded. "It happened two days ago when I crafted my high-human tier soul armament. Somehow I managed to breakthrough."

The art of crafting was another style of training that could help a person improve their strength. Unlike other methods of cultivation, crafting didn't prioritize the elevation of soulforce. But if a crafter were to have success in their crafting attempt, there

would be a great deal of energy that'd transfer from their attempt to themselves and benefit them greatly. Many crafters as a result took crafting to be a great chance to break the bottleneck they were at.

It was just unbelievable how Ye Ming was able to craft a high-human tier soul armament so quickly after being introduced to the art. Talent this high was comparable to the disciples of the Crafting School.

The students showed Bai Yunfei the fruits of their training one by one after that. Because of her kidnapping, Fang Tianmeng was slightly behind in terms of success, but even she was able to craft a low-human tier soul armament. The others were all able to craft a mid-human tier soul armament which gave Bai Yunfei no small amount of surprise.

While he was giving them quite high praise, their average rate of progression wasn't at the same level as the students accepted into the Crafting School.

“Haha, the fact that you've all managed to get this far in such a small amount of time is very good.” Bai Yunfei praised them all with a nod and smile, “Let's return to our crafting caves then. I'll look over how you all craft and then teach you some of the more specific ways to use certain materials when crafting....”

The students all entered their own caves and soon enough, red light began to shine out from their respective caves. The heat in the area grew as well, and before long, the entire mountain peak was washed with a red glow.

.....

As Bai Yunfei was teaching his class, a brown-robed figure stood high up in the clouds somewhere in the Training Forest. Peering through the clouds and over the countless distance away onto the mountain, the figure hummed to himself....

“A class seven permafrost mastiff, a class seven prisma oriole variant, and a peak late-stage class six blue-eyes wvorm variant. How interesting....”

Chapter 609: Nighttime

Bai Yunfei finished up the class with instructions for the next week's lecture before announcing the end of today. And with that, they adjourned for the day and left.

Zheng Kai, Huang Bin, and the others were all off doing their own thing when Bai Yunfei was teaching his class, so Bai Yunfei left Tianhun Academy by himself to head for the Soothing Heart.

Feeling thoroughly refreshed a pot of Soul Consolidating Tea later, Bai Yunfei stepped back out onto the streets to find a place to eat. Having not the desire to go back home and train, Bai Yunfei opted to go meander around the Capital after his meal.

Well acquaintanced with the Capital by now, Bai Yunfei had a decent grasp of which direction was which. As a result, Bai Yunfei could take a nice stroll around the place without getting lost.

In the Capital, the northern streets were separated into fourteen streets with North Seventh Street being the middlemost and closest street to Tianhun Academy. Though the streets were so categorically divided as such, each street wasn't limited to having just one linear street. North Seventh Street alone covered a wide strip of land and had many smaller streets run perpendicular to it in a way that it was rather complicated almost. But on the bright side, many types of shops could be found here.

With how aimlessly Bai Yunfei was wandering around, he soon found himself back at the gates of Tianhun Academy. Looking up at the massive sign that hung overhead and was slightly red with the setting sun, Bai Yunfei hesitated for a moment before striding in.

If he had to be honest with himself, Bai Yunfei had never seen Tianhun Academy at night before, so he decided that he might as well do so today.

The sun was barely setting right now, but the streets were filled with multiple lightstones fashioned like lanterns so that whenever the students came walking past them, the streets looked as busy as it would in the day.

Actually, the daytime hadn't many students walking on them since they were all in class. It was in night that the students had some free time to themselves, so they usually chose then to walk around the campus.

Bai Yunfei walked through the streets from the first year area to the third year area. Plenty of students hardly in their double digits could be seen walking and talking. The very liveliness of their faces had Bai Yunfei sighing to himself. These students were carefree almost with very few concerns to worry over. Their path to becoming strong was almost without any bumps, and all they had to do was stay here in the comforting presence of the academy and listen to the guidance of their instructors. Through the academy, the students could quickly become strong....

Bai Yunfei compared their lives to his own. Back in Talus City, Bai Yunfei had to struggle deeply in order to live. He lived day by day, earning enough money to keep him alive with only the basic necessities by moving heavy sacks of rice one after another in an ordinary rice shop....

Those days had felt so long ago to Bai Yunfei....it was as if that had simply been another life he had lived.

When he looked at the youngsters walking towards and past him, Bai Yunfei suddenly realized he himself had grown noticeably larger.

He had been eighteen when he left Talus City. Today, Bai Yunfei was somehow twenty-five already....

Seven years had passed since then, and it was like he was living a whole different life. It was an explosion of spectrum of colors whereas the first eighteen years of his life was spent in a

monotonous world.

At some point, Bai Yunfei walked to the fourth year area without him being aware of it.

Not many students were here in comparison to the others, as the students here were all Soul Sprites. They were in their twenties, so they looked more mature than the other students, but also a lot more lively.

It was here that Bai Yunfei began to see the students coupled in pairs.

When he looked at the pairs walking shoulder to shoulder and their hands intertwined with each other, Bai Yunfei suddenly grew pensive. Lifting his left hand to stare at the milky-white ring on his finger, Bai Yunfei looked a little contemplative.

How—how was she doing?

A figure popped into Bai Yunfei's mind then, a feeling of longing filling Bai Yunfei's heart and mind. At the thought of her, Bai Yunfei wanted nothing more than to throw down his Tempest Sword and return to the Crafting School at once.

For a long moment, Bai Yunfei stood there. Several students were staring strangely at him, but he didn't seem to notice as he rubbed at his temples forlornly.

“I forgot myself for a moment....that's not a good omen.”

Gingerly shaking his head, Bai Yunfei continued onwards. He didn't want to pay attention to those thoughts and so he raised his head to the starry canopus overhead. His eyes shined as if retracting old memories, his mouth curling up in a smile as if to think about happier times.

“Maybe I should go back to the Crafting School for a while....”

Bai Yunfei wistfully thought to both himself and a shooting star in the sky.

With how he wasn't paying attention to where he was walking, Bai Yunfei soon found himself at the sixth year area near the entrance to the Back Mountain.

It was already eleven at night, how long had he been walking?

The thought came to him in surprise. Bai Yunfei hadn't even been paying attention to the passage of time. Looking around, Bai Yunfei was prepared to turn back and head home when he saw a glimmer of light.

“Eh? Someone's up there?”

The place he was looking at was the top of the Back Mountain where he held his class.

He noticed a glimmer of light in the dark skies coming from the Back Mountain. Something was shining red there.

“Is someone crafting?”

Bai Yunfei thought to himself in surprise. Was someone really trying to craft this late at night?

Curious, Bai Yunfei decided to head up the mountain rather than go back home.

.....

At the top of the mountain where it seemed almost possible to grab at the stars in the skies, ten pitch-black crafting caves were embedded in the cliff wall.

Ah, no. Nine of the ten crafting caves were pitch-black. The tenth one was shining with red light.

Waves of heat flooded out from the cave in droves, counteracting against the chilly night air and making the area warm. Every so often, there'd be a spike of elemental fire that'd drive up the temperature even more.

“Bang!!”

Suddenly, an explosion of red light came out from the crafting cave with an intensity many times greater than the before ones. The light shimmered intensely for a few minutes before another explosion of sound echoed from within the cave along with a pillar of fire to come spitting out from the depths.

“A failure?”

Bai Yunfei had been close enough to sense the influx of elemental fire and wondered to himself on the situation. He knew someone was inside in the cave, but because he was worried about disturbing the person, Bai Yunfei didn't want to use his soulsense. Prior to this explosion, the crafting attempt seemed to be going quite well, so Bai Yunfei was surprised to see the attempt suddenly become a failure at the end.

He released his soulsense then to inspect who it was. “Him?”

Chapter 610: Guidance

Bai Yunfei watched as the person in the cave stared absentmindedly at the ashen materials in the cauldron in front of him for a moment. A bitter look entered the person's eyes before he waved away the useless materials in impatience. Several more materials appeared out from his ring before depositing themselves neatly into the cauldron for him to try again.

“In cases like this....it's best to stop and think about why it went wrong. You have to wait for the anger and impatience in your heart to go away before you try again.”

He calmly spoke out to the male, causing the person to start and turn around to look at him.

“Instructor Bai, what are you doing here?”

Bai Yunfei smiled. “I was going to ask you that question, Ye Ming. It's quite late, what are you doing crafting still?”

The person in question was Ye Ming.

Ye Ming stood up to give Bai Yunfei a respectful bow in greeting, “After listening to your lecture today, instructor Bai, I felt like I was beginning to understand a few things I didn't get before. So I decided to take the chance and try tonight. I'm an early-stage Soul Exalt anyways, I wanted to see if I'd be able to craft a low-earth tier soul armament.”

“Oh? So you were trying to craft an earth-tier soul armament?” Bai Yunfei remarked. It was no wonder why Ye Ming's attempted failed so suddenly then. If Ye Ming was trying to craft a soul armament higher in tier, the chances of success would be a lot smaller compared to a high-human tier.

And the fact that Ye Ming stood a decent enough chance to even attempt crafting an earth-tier soul armament was a slightly rushed one, but it was because of his jaw-dropping talent that he could

even think about it.

Bai Yunfei stepped into the cave and sat down on a nearby boulder. “You trying to craft a low-earth tier soul armament is a little rash right now. You may be able to craft a high-human tier soul armament, but your crafting experience is limited. There’s many aspects you still need to consider, so I recommend that you don’t pursue that notion for the time being. Wait until you have a seventy percent chance of success when crafting a high-human tier before you try again.”

“Seventy percent?” Ye Ming looked crestfallen. His own personal record for crafting high-human tier soul armaments was only fifty percent. Reaching an additional twenty percent would take more time than he wanted to take.

“You’ve only been learning the art of crafting for two months.” Bai Yunfei smiled, “It’s impressive that you’re able to do this much, especially since you ‘switched’ over to my class compared to the other students. You haven’t crafted a soulbound armament yet, but with your talent, you’d be considered a genius in the Crafting School. Have you taken the aptitude exams for the Crafting School before?”

Ye Ming shook his head, “I never been to the Crafting School....

“But I did hear Mo Chen say before that they took a few of the fire division students over three years ago. They talked about a strange cave that got harder to walk in the further they walked. The ones in the crafting class are the ones who walked the farthest that time.”

“That’s what I thought....” Bai Yunfei muttered to himself. He had his guesses before, but this confirmed it.

But three years ago? That was when he left the Crafting School to enter the Soulbeast Forest.

In that case though, Wu Yang must not have taken the aptitude

exams for the Crafting School. But the fact that his ‘achievements’ weren’t any less than the others...was a rather surprising and unexpected success.

Bai Yunfei’s eyes flickered to the floating materials next to Ye Ming. From the ones he saw, Bai Yunfei had to acquiesce that they were the normal materials one would use to craft an earth-tier soul armament. “As I said before, Ye Ming, you shouldn’t think about crafting any earth-tier soul armaments right now. The worst thing you can do while crafting is be impatient and force your way ahead. You might be more talented than others and have more success right now, but crafting an earth-tier soul armament is different than crafting a human-tier soul armament. Master the basics first and your future path will be smoother than before. Furthermore....”

Bai Yunfei paused here to take a breath, “I only briefly touched upon the topic about how to craft low-earth tier soul armaments today. And as you recall, I did say it was hugely different than the method to craft a human-tier soul armament. If you try to use what little information I said today to attempt crafting one, it’ll be impossible.....I wanted to wait for you all to reach a substantial degree of mastery before I start teaching about how to craft earth-tier soul armaments, but since your aptitude is much higher than that of your classmates, I promise you that if you can reach a seventy percent success rate in crafting high-human tier soul armaments, I’ll teach you how to craft earth-tier soul armaments earlier.”

Ye Ming’s eyes lit up as he nodded. “I understand.”

As Ye Ming went about to collect the materials, Bai Yunfei watched as the faint elemental fire around his body flickered away, “Ah, Ye Ming, I recall that you were a fire and lighting type?”

“Ah?” Ye Ming blinked, unsure why Bai Yunfei was asking a question he already knew the answer to, “I am.”

Bai Yunfei's eyes flickered strangely as he pressed on, "Have you tried training in elemental lightning again?"

"Training in elemental lightning again?" Ye Ming grew even more baffled at Bai Yunfei's question. "My essence lightningseed is already gone, and I've already focused on training with elemental fire to help me craft. I haven't spent any time trying to reform a essence lightningseed, and even if I tried, it'd probably not work...."

"That may be the case, but you are still gifted with those two affinities. To waste them here would be a bit of a waste."

"What?" Ye Ming replied, "Instructor Bai, are you saying...."

"I've a suggestion that'll make use of your background in elemental lightning and won't take up too much of your effort. Even better, it'll help you improve yourself by quite a bit."

"What suggestion? Please say it, instructor Bai."

"Form a companion lightningseed."

"Companion lightningseed? What is that?"

"It's a more inferior version of an essence lightningseed, but the benefit in this is that your essence fireseed will remain there and will gain a boost in strength from it."

Bai Yunfei held his palm out as he spoke. With a bang, a small fireball appeared over his palmtop.

Ye Ming stared at the fireball with slight confusion, but then something strange caught his eye. "There's....lightning in the fire?"

He saw that within the flames Bai Yunfei was creating, there was a small spark of lightning that was boosting the intensity and heat of the fire!

Ye Ming knew quite a lot about training in elemental fire and lightning at the same time, and the 'compatibility' between the

two elements. However, despite that information, he wasn't able of reaching a point of synchronicity between the two elements, and neither was he able to make use of both the fireseed and lightningseed at the same time.

“Indeed. This is the effect of a companion lightningseed. It's not like a standalone essence lightningseed and cannot produce a large amount of power by itself. But. When elemental fire is used as a catalyst, the ensuing elemental fire becomes a lot stronger and is imbued with a sliver of elemental lightning.”

“Something like that can be done?” Ye Ming asked in surprise. This was a first for him.

“Yes, however it isn't an easy task I'm afraid. For the normal soul cultivator with high aptitude for lightning would be better off forming an essence lightningseed. For someone who didn't, they might as well not try. This companion lightningseed of mine was formed after unordinary circumstances. I don't know if another person will be able to do it, but for someone like you used to train in elemental lightning and changed to fire, you might as well give it a try. If it works, you'll see plenty of benefit.”

He turned to look at Ye Ming, “So how about it, want to learn?”

“Of course!” Ye Ming nodded his head emphatically, “Please lend me your guidance, instructor Bai!”

.....

An hour later after midnight, Bai Yunfei walked out from the crafting cave to leave Ye Ming there to train.

Bai Yunfei had given a detailed explanation on the feeling of forming an essence lightningseed, and how long it took for himself to form one. Ye Ming listened carefully, but whether he was able to form one or not was up to him.

Since it seemed like Ye Ming was going to spend the night training, Bai Yunfei didn't want to stay and bother him. He leapt

up to the peak of the mountain on top of a large boulder to enjoy the night breeze. He stared first off into the distance where the shining lights of the Capital was and remarked how lively it looked.

Just as Bai Yunfei was enjoying the peace and quiet of the night, a warm voice called out to him from behind.

“Young one, this old one has a few words to speak with you....”

Chapter 611: Long Zhen

The abruptness of this voice scared Bai Yunfei, who leapt up into the skies in fright. Darting away as he turned, Bai Yunfei took out his Cataclysmic Seal and had it protect him from the direction in which the voice spoke to him from.

His reaction had been quick. Xiao Qi and the blue-eyes wurm hadn't even moved when Bai Yunfei was already in the sky.

When Bai Yunfei came to a stop, he saw that just twenty meters away, an elderly white-haired man in orange was standing right there.

Bai Yunfei didn't know when the elder appeared, but he hadn't noticed him at all!!

The elder smiled at Bai Yunfei, presumably because of the extreme reaction of Bai Yunfei to his presence. "Haha, what an energetic young man. Don't be worried, this old one won't hurt you."

As he spoke, his eye glanced over at the three soulbeasts, each one of them ready to attack the old man at any moment. But when his eye fell on the three, the soulbeasts immediately shivered and their auras dropped rapidly.

"Senior, who are you? And what reason are you here?" Bai Yunfei asked. He was prudent in his caution, but Bai Yunfei wanted to know just who this person was.

"Why am I here?" The elder asked in surprise, "I live here. Why can I not come out here? Haha....young one, this old one poses no danger to you. Would one as old as several hundred years old like this one bother to trick a youngster like you?"

"Uh...." Bai Yunfei looked embarrassed. It was true, the old man had been behind Bai Yunfei before he even knew it. If the old man wanted to kill him, Bai Yunfei would've died a lot earlier without

him knowing.

But then something from the elder's words surprised him, "Se— several hundred years?!"

If he had heard right, then this elder said he was 'several hundred years old'!

The very first thing Bai Yunfei could assume about this person was that the elder was a Soul King, one that was a mid-stage or even late-stage. Xiao Qi hadn't been able to sense his arrival, meaning he was stronger than the bird. And the fact that he was 'several hundred years old' was something very few humans were capable of, meaning that this person was most likely....

Bai Yunfei turned his head to look at Xiao Qi, his question already being sent to his companion's mind.

Xiao Qi flew up to Bai Yunfei's side with a confused look at the elder. "Grandfather....are...are you a...."

The old man smiled at Xiao Qi, "Haha, you've a keen eye, youngster. Correct, you and I are the 'same'."

That confirmed it! This elder was a....soulbeast!

Flapping its wings in awe, Xiao Qi stared at the elder, "Are you really a soulbeast, grandfather?! A soulbeast that can humanize! How amazing...you're even more amazing than I am....are you really several hundred years old? What are you doing here? Oh oh, what soulbeast are you? Could you teach me how to humanize? I can't humanize..."

Xiao Qi grew more and more excited like a young child admiring after an elderly figure.

Surprised by the excitement coming from Xiao Qi, the elderly man gave him a strange glance, "Youngster, you are a class seven, but you act like a child, it bears poorly on the regal dignity you should have." He smiled.

He was looking at Xiao Qi like an old man would stare affectionately at any young child. His words were spoken kindly as he continued, “The person contracted with this old man is in the Capital, as such, this forest is my home. This old one has already lived for....four hundred years, perhaps five hundred. I am not clear.

“As for what kind of soulbeast I am....” The elder stroked at the long braid of hair resting against his chest, “there’s no harm in telling you I suppose. This old one is a ‘seismic wyrm’.”

“Seismic wyrm?” Xiao Qi cocked its head curiously, “I’ve never heard of one before....but, ‘wyrm’? Isn’t that the same as Xiao Lan? He’s a blue-eyes wyrm! No wonder your auras are so similar!”

The elder couldn’t help but smile at that, glancing at the blue-eyes wyrm with a strange look.

Bai Yunfei was still standing there in shock as Xiao Qi and the elder spoke with one another—this elder really was a soulbeast!

A seismic wyrm?! Bai Yunfei hadn’t a clue on what that was. The ‘soulbeast compendium’ given to him by his master hadn’t a single thing about a soulbeast like that. Was he a....very rare type of soulbeast?

He was further shocked by what the elder said, his contracted soul cultivator was living in the Capital?! Was it Tianhun Academy? He had heard from other students that there were a few old contracted soulbeasts that lived in the Training Forest, and this old man did seem to have come from that direction. Who was he contracted to? With strength like that....could it be the chairman?!

Trying his best to concentrate, Bai Yunfei started to speak respectfully, “Might this one ask how to address you, senior?”

“Address? This old one goes by the name ‘Long Zhen’.”

“What can this junior do for you senior Long?” Bai Yunfei asked the most important question on his mind.

“Ah, yes. This old one has a matter to discuss with you. But before that, tell me. Who are you?”

“Who am I?” Bai Yunfei asked, thinking for a moment how to answer. “This junior is named Bai Yunfei. I am currently the instructor of the crafting class. This junior is a student of the Crafting School and disciple of Zi Jin.”

Long Zhen’s eyebrow raised at the latter half of Bai Yunfei’s introduction. “Student of the Crafting School?! You say you’re the disciple of Zi Jin?!”

“Correct.”

The look on Long Zhen’s face continued for a moment before he smiled, “I had heard before that Zi Jin took on a new disciple....ah, very good. No wonder you are so well achieved for your age.”

Bai Yunfei was surprised, it seemed that this old man and his master knew each other. The circles his master traveled in was surely an extensive one.

Now that he knew Bai Yunfei’s identity, Long Zhen seemed to look a little friendlier than before. “Youngster Bai, I’d like to ask you, which one of these three soulbeasts is your contracted one?”

Bai Yunfei blinked, not sure why he was being asked this question. Before he could answer, Xiao Qi answer it for him, “It’s me, it’s me! Grandfather, I’m Yunfei’s contracted soulbeast.”

“Oh? It’s you?” Long Zheng replied with a quirked eyebrow and smile, “Does this mean to say that the blue-eyes wyrm and permafrost mastiff are traveling with you willingly? I see the blue-eyes wyrm is an easier one to travel with, but the permafrost mastiff....does your Crafting School have a tradition of raising soulbeasts as pets? It....”

Long Zhen turned its eyes to the permafrost mastiff to look at it. As he did, the smile on his face froze. His eyes dilated for a moment as if he saw something shocking, and the words he was about to

say died in his mouth.

Bai Yunfei's heart immediately skipped a beat at that, "Crap!!"

Chapter 612: Xiao Lan's Apprenticeship

“Bz!!”

A cracking sound exploded into the air, the bright moonlight in the area shimmering visibly as if it was a reflection over a rippling body of water. Power like none other emanated from the old man to encapsulate everyone inside, stifling them at once.

This powerful aura was coming from Long Zhen!

In the moment he inspected the permafrost mastiff, his entire aura altered from that of a kindly old man to a soulbeast ready to let loose.

Sweat pooled over Bai Yunfei's forehead as he cursed to himself. The fury Long Zhen was feeling was very noticeable to Bai Yunfei and so he quickly intervened. “Please don't misunderstand, senior Long! This junior isn't from the Beast Taming School! This permafrost mastiff was a soulbeast puppet from an elder of the Beast Taming School. This junior killed that man and came into possession of this soulbeast!”

It was clear to Bai Yunfei what Long Zhen was thinking, so he immediately told the truth of the matter to him straight away. He knew what exactly the Beast Taming School meant to soulbeasts and why they would wish for their complete and utter destruction. So when Bai Yunfei explained the circumstances behind the permafrost mastiff, he didn't hesitate to mention that he killed one of their elders.

Long Zhen's head snapped to Bai Yunfei as he listened. The anger rising in him seem to subside a bit when he processed Bai Yunfei's words before he blinked once. Continuing to stare coldly at Bai Yunfei, he spoke, “Do you speak the truth?”

Bai Yunfei felt like his soul was being stabbed the moment their eyes connected. But he knew that the look he was being given was

a great deal less angrier than before, and that he was getting close to being 'safe'. Unwilling to avert his eyes in fear of being labeled guilty, Bai Yunfei replied at once, "This junior's words are true. This junior has a grudge with the Beast Taming School. They've already injured this one thrice before. This permafrost mastiff was obtained by me after I killed one of their elders, and because I have a soul armament that can control a soulbeast puppet, I took it with me. But I did it without the intentions like that of the Beast Taming School, I've treated the permafrost mastiff as I would any other soulbeast. This junior speaks the truth and without a single lie!"

The look of calmness and sincerity on Bai Yunfei's face was taken into consideration by Long Zhen. Evaluating Bai Yunfei's words, Long Zhen's eyes began to warm up a bit.

"Grandfather, what are you doing! Yunfei isn't from the Beast Taming School, he's already killed many of their beast tamers! We really did come across the mastiff from someone in Beast Taming School when we left the Soulbeast Forest. He wanted to kill us, but we killed him instead and took the mastiff with us."

Xiao Qi chirped up in a hurry to explain for Bai Yunfei.

Long Zhen looked at Xiao Qi first before turning his head to look at the blue-eyes wyrm. "I ask you, do they speak the truth?"

The blue-eyes wyrm didn't respond for a moment, still stunned by what was happening. Then it nodded its head repeatedly and start to growl, its two claws waving in the air as if trying to describe the story.

"Oh? Is that right?" Long Zhen looked surprise, but it did seem that ultimately, he did believe in what the blue-eyes wyrm was saying. The hostile light in his eyes disappeared and returned to its normally gentle look. Even the normally stifling pressure was gone as if it never even existed in the first place.

Long Zhen smiled at Bai Yunfei with an apologetic look.

“Haha....so that was the case. This old one was a little rash, please pay it no mind, youngster.”

“Whew....” Bai Yunfei let out a mental sigh of relief. “This junior understands. As long as senior believes in this junior’s words.”

“However, what a surprise it is that you killed a Soul King from the Beast Taming School....if the permafrost mastiff has been traveling with you for so long, then let him stay with you. I hope you treat him well.” Long Zhen mused after a while.

Generally speaking, the strongest members of the soulbeast world would want to ‘take’ back any of the soulbeast puppets from the Beast Taming School. Though they had no way to revert them back to normal soulbeasts, they just didn’t want to see their fellow kin suffer and be used as tools by the beast tamers. But Bai Yunfei’s case was special, if Long Zhen tried to ‘take’ the permafrost mastiff, that would simply be a degrading his status. As it were, the permafrost mastiff wasn’t doing too badly with Bai Yunfei, so Long Zhen decided to let it be.

The area descended into a brief moment of silence as Bai Yunfei waited for Long Zhen to finish speaking. But after some time, he couldn’t help but ask, “Senior Long, this junior still doesn’t understand what I am needed for....”

Long Zhen looked up with a smile, “Ah, haha....actually, I didn’t come for you.”

“.....”

Long Zhen pointed a finger to the nearby blue-eyes wyrm, “The one I came for is him....I just wasn’t sure if he was your contracted soulbeast and was going to discuss some matters with you, but since he is traveling ‘freely’, then I’ll simply ask him myself.”

“Xiao Lan?!” Bai Yunfei spoke in surprise—what was a person as strong as Long Zhen wanting with the blue-eyes wyrm?

As if to soliloquize to himself, Long Zhen slowly spoke, “The

wyrm race is fading away. The blood of the dragons have long since become close to extinct, there's only a few of them left. Even the variant wyrms are practically none. This old one has lived for a hundred years since I last saw a wyrm. This blue-eyes wyrm is especially special. It's a peak late-stage class six, but if it makes a breakthrough, it may very well just awaken its dragon blood and become powerful.”

Bai Yunfei's eyes flickered with the light of shock at Long Zhen's words. From the way Long Zhen was speaking, he was going to...

Long Zhen turned and smiled at the blue-eyes wyrm next. “Young one, this old one wishes to take you in as my student and teach you the path to becoming strong. Will you accept?”

There it was!!

Bai Yunfei's heart skipped a beat—Long Zhen was trying to take the blue-eyes wyrm in as a student!

“While you might not be too far away from becoming a class seven with how you're currently progressing, you will see that time cut in half if you study under this old man. There is a special training method this old man has honed and perfected for several hundred years for we of the wyrm race. It will help your future cultivation and make you stronger than your peers. I have also noticed that there is a strange energy in you that you've yet to absorb. This is the reason behind your being a variant. It must be fate for us to meet here, this old man merely wishes to help you take that fate and put it to good use.”

Long Zhen allowed himself a break to let the wyrm take in everything. “Well then, young one. Do you accept?”

The blue-eyes wyrm just stood there on top of the mountain to stare gobsmacked at Long Zhen. Its eyes were wide open as if it was in shock.

Bai Yunfei felt worried—“This idiot!” Bai Yunfei screamed to

himself. “This is an unbelievable chance right in front of you, what are you hesitating for? An extremely powerful person is knocking on your doorsteps to take you in, that’s your biggest miracle in a lifetime!”

Unable to help himself, Bai Yunfei activated the Charm Bracelet on his left hand to connect to the wyrm’s mind.

The connection jolted the blue-eyes wyrm right away. Its eyes focused with a great amount of joy, and without any further hesitation it knelt down onto the ground like a human would to bow its head to Long Zhen in acceptance of him as its teacher!

The sight of the wyrm doing that was slightly comical with how its claws were hardly able to press together in the formal bowing gesture, but its actions were being absolutely sincere. Even Long Zhen was surprised by it.

He hadn’t expected the blue-eyes wyrm to have as high of an intelligence it did, but he was pleased. Nodding and smiling, he laughed, “Haha, very good, very good. Rise up then. Now that you’ve agreed, you may come with me to the Training Forest and train. As your teacher, this one promises you you will soon step into the world of the strong.”

The blue-eyes wyrm rose to its feet excitedly before leaping up to stand behind Long Zhen.

Long Zhen gave a slight nod to Bai Yunfei, “We’ll be leaving now then.”

Hearing that it’d have to part ways with his ‘master’ made the blue-eyes wyrm reluctant. It gave a look to Bai Yunfei as if looking to him for permission.

Long Zhen looked surprised once again.

“Go with your master, Xiao Lan.” Bai Yunfei laughed, “Train hard and become a class seven. There’s no need to be sad, since you’re in the Training Forest, we can see each other as usual.”

Xiao Qi piped up next, “That’s right! Don’t worry. I’ll come for you to play like before. But you need to hurry up and train or else you’ll be left behind by us, hehe....”

The blue-eyes wyrm let loose a heavy snort of ‘disdain’. Several growls later, it was arguing with Xiao Qi.

“Che, you blowhard. Talk like that after you become a class seven! Hehe. The way I see it, you won’t be able to humanize even after you become a class seven!”

It seemed that being unable to humanize was a bit of a sore spot for Xiao Qi and so he was ‘cursing’ at the wyrm to try and worry it into sharing his concern.

Long Zhen took the blue-eyes wyrm away into the Training Forest. As they disappeared, a white streak of light flew back over to Bai Yunfei for him to catch into his hand.

At the same time, Long Zhen’s voice spoke out to him, “Young one, since you are from the Crafting School, allow this to be a welcoming gift from this old one to you.”

Chapter 613: Studying the Slave Seal

It wasn't until Long Zhen and the blue-eyes wyrm was gone from sight that Bai Yunfei opened up his palm to look at the white object inside.

“Hehe, so he gave us a welcoming gift....”

The object in his hand was amazing to Bai Yunfei, his eyes widening as soon as he realized object it was.

“This is....”

In his hand was a fist-sized chunk of white stone. This wasn't the first time he had seen a stone like this before, for it was a....an upgrade stone!

He would've been surprised enough that it was an upgrade stone, but this particular one had something different to its stats....

Equipment Grade: Low Heaven

Elemental Affinity: None

Equipment Effect 1: Allow the successful upgrade of any equipment +11 and under once.

Equipment Effect 2: Increase the tier of an equipment when crafting by one (Low Heaven tier being the highest).

Cannot be upgraded.

This was a Guaranteed Upgrade Stone, a +11 Guaranteed Upgrade Stone!

Bai Yunfei didn't speak for ten seconds. His eyes glistened at the stone in his hand as he realized something. Something important....

“Guaranteed Upgrade Stones exist still!”

He screamed to himself. All of the Guaranteed Upgrade Stones he had before was from the broken fragments of the Nephrite Throne. The one he held in his hands right now was exceedingly smooth, as

if it had been sanded and smoothed down into a circular fashion after years and years of wear. There was no way Long Zhen would've picked up one of the fragments of the Nephrite Throne all the way in the Training Forest. This meant....that aside from the Nephrite Throne fragments, the continent still had other 'natural' Guaranteed Upgrade Stones!

This was an exceptionally great boon for Bai Yunfei.

The Guaranteed Upgrade Stone Bai Yunfei had in his hand was worth just as much as a heaven-tier soul armament. For a crafter like him, this meant he could craft another heaven-tier soul armament. Who knew that Long Zhen would 'give' him such a great gift as a 'welcoming present'.

Perhaps he was grateful to Bai Yunfei for bringing the wyrm here. Or perhaps it was a sort of amend for the misunderstanding earlier.

.....

Sleep didn't come easy to Bai Yunfei when he came home. He sat up on his bed to look at the slumbering permafrost mastiff.

Things with the permafrost mastiff was getting a little troublesome now. Bai Yunfei worried before that the Beast Taming School would find out about it, but the actual trouble was with the stronger soulbeasts. He'd incur misunderstandings like with Long Zhen if this kept going, and that was far too much of a hassle for Bai Yunfei to explain each time. What would he do if he came across a soulbeast that didn't particularly wanted to listen to Bai Yunfei's explanations before attempting to kill him?

So....Bai Yunfei decided to have the permafrost mastiff stored away.

The only reason the permafrost mastiff was with him out in the open was in fear of a class seven or Soul King threat. Now that Xiao Qi was a class seven, Bai Yunfei didn't need the permafrost mastiff

to be on the outside. If he could have the permafrost mastiff stored inside a space ring, he could use it as a surprise attack in battle to help him.

It was a bit grievous to the mastiff to do such a thing to it, but it was a temporary measure. Perhaps when Bai Yunfei had enough strength to no longer worry about any external threats the permafrost mastiff could walk outside like before.

Following Bai Yunfei's command, the Beast Taming Ring detached itself from the permafrost mastiff's neck and returned to Bai Yunfei's hand. In direct response, the mastiff froze still like a statue.

The Violet Soul Ring flashed once with light before a black space ring appeared on Bai Yunfei's palm. This was a customized space ring that could contain soulbeast puppets inside. With a wave of his hand, the permafrost mastiff was stored inside the space ring. Bai Yunfei paused for a moment to think if he should store the ring away before ultimately deciding to wear the ring on his right index finger.

The reason why Bai Yunfei took off the Beast Taming Ring was because of something else he thought about and was ready to put into practice.

Retrieving a black sack from his robes, Bai Yunfei opened the drawstrings and took out several space rings strung together with a piece of rope.

These particular space rings were the ones worn by the beast tamers he had killed and collected over the years. Inside, many different types of soulbeast puppets were contained.

Several of the rings contained ten soulbeast puppets, each of them in a type of 'suspended animation'. Every so often, Bai Yunfei would feed them some food so that they wouldn't die. They could live inside the space ring for extended periods of time, but they still needed to eat.

Bai Yunfei's eyes hovered over several space rings for a moment before he took out one of them. With a wave of his hand, a brown python appeared right in front of him.

A late-stage class three crag python.

This python was coiled up on itself and was decently long at about twenty to thirty meters long. It took up almost half of the room Bai Yunfei was in and looked quite dreadful. But its eyes were dull and its body stiff like a statue.

The Beast Taming Ring in Bai Yunfei's hand flew out and attached itself over the 'neck' of the python.

In the next moment, Bai Yunfei issued a command to the python. A flicker of light appeared in the python's eyes as its body shook. In a flash of light, the python began to shrink in size before ultimately ending up the size of a small garden snake of about a third of a meter. Now smaller than before, the python slinked over to on top of Bai Yunfei's bed.

Allowing the small snake to coil around his right arm, Bai Yunfei watched as it paused on his palm. Exhaling, Bai Yunfei stared at it, the Beast Taming Ring shining as Bai Yunfei's soulsense probed at the python's mindspace.

'Meandering' around in the hazy mindspace that belonged to the python, Bai Yunfei slowly made his way deeper in until he came across a small soulgem. And around the soulgem was....the slave seal!!

Bai Yunfei was going to start studying the Beast Taming School's slave seal!

Because of his rash decision to study the lightningfire wolf's slave seal, the wolf had nearly been killed and so did Bai Yunfei almost. If not for the intervention of Xiao Qi and some help from fate itself, Bai Yunfei wouldn't have been able to escape from that situation as well as he did. It had been luck that he managed to

form a companion lightningseed, destroyed the slave seal, and return the wolf back to normal.

But all of those were just that. Luck. Bai Yunfei didn't think he'd be so lucky as to have that event repeat multiple times, so he decided not to study the slave seal so rashly.

But today, Bai Yunfei felt himself feeling strong enough to re-engage in the topic. Xiao Qi was a class seven soulbeast, and meeting Long Zhen gave Bai Yunfei more than enough to think about. It was time to restart his study!

Thanks to the magical Beast Taming Ring, Bai Yunfei could do more than just control a soulbeast. And with the Charm Bracelet to connect their minds, Bai Yunfei could use the two soul armaments in conjunction for specific tasks.

For example....removing the slave seal!

Chapter 614: Success? (First)

Bai Yunfei had been thinking of a plan ever since he unraveled the slave seal of the lightningfire wolf. His meeting with Hong Yin had endeared Bai Yunfei to the plight of a soulbeast puppet to the point of sympathy. He felt that the fates of these said soulbeasts were rather tragic. So if he could find a way to ‘save’ these soulbeast puppets, it would be an incredibly virtuous ‘achievement’.

It was said that even the Beast Taming School didn’t know how to unravel their own slave seal, as it never had been done before in the hundred thousand years or so. But Bai Yunfei knew of two different occasions in which that was proved wrong.

The first example was when he came across that eagle back in Gaoyi City. Back then, the Soul Ancestor beast tamer had ordered the self-destruction of the soulbeast, but Bai Yunfei was able to prevent it when it was halfway through the process. From there, a miracle appeared in the form that the eagle didn’t self-destruct and the eagle was free of the slave seal. It regained its ‘freedom’ and contracted with Ye Tianming’s father.

The second example was the lightningfire wolf. The methodology was slightly similar, but the circumstances were devastatingly different. Bai Yunfei had wanted to study the slave seal and had thus activated the self-destruction sequence of the seal. The lightningfire wolf had nearly self-destructed if not for the Beast Taming Ring and the other factors of Bai Yunfei and Xiao Qi preventing it. In the end, the slave seal was the only thing that was destroyed while the lightningfire wolf was able to completely regain its memories of before it became a soulbeast puppet.

These two examples were very ‘special’. The first one was due to a timely coincidence. A repeat of those circumstances wouldn’t even happen for another thousand years perhaps. The second example was also just as timely and special, but no hints were left

behind for Bai Yunfei to follow.

Bai Yunfei could however, confirm one thing from these two examples. To save a soulbeast puppet, the slave seal had to be destroyed.

—But that was easier said than done. Anyone that wanted to do such a thing had to pay attention to a vital step, the step on ‘how’ to destroy the slave seal.

From the lightningfire wolf, it could be inferred that anyone that tried to ‘touch’ the slave seal would result in the activation of its self-destruction sequence. And with that, the soulgem would be destroyed as well.

In other words, there was a single order that took precedence over everything else in the slave seal: destroy the slave seal and explode the soulgem!

The next logical step was to do as such then. Let the slave seal be destroyed, but prevent the soulgem from exploding!

A step that sounded simple in theory, but impossible in reality. The self-destruction of a slave seal was something anyone could do, but the prevention of the soulgem from exploding wasn’t something even the beast tamers could do. Once the slave seal started to self-destruct, control over the soulbeast was gone. Who could stop the soulgem from exploding then?

And for that reason, no one had been able to find a way for the last several thousand years. As a result, the slave seal gained the notorious reputation as being ‘uncrackable’.

But this reputation was about to be broken by a single man and a soul armament.

Bai Yunfei and the Beast Taming Ring!!

His control over soulbeasts wasn’t dependent on the slave seal, but the Beast Taming Ring. And in this situation, the Beast Taming Ring had a far better use than anything else.

Because of that important distinction, Bai Yunfei could devise a very delicate plan: activate the self-destruction of the slave seal and use the Beast Taming Ring to stop the soulgem from exploding!

It was a simple plan, but it took Bai Yunfei the better part of two years to devise after the lightningfire wolf had healed before Bai Yunfei felt comfortable testing it.

Prior to that, Bai Yunfei simply didn't feel confident in this plan.

Back with the lightningfire wolf's self-destruction, Bai Yunfei knew it was mostly in part due to his soulforce and mental strength that he managed to succeed. If not for his control, then not only would his life be in danger, but also the life of the soulbeast puppet.

Right now, his soulforce was at the level of a late-stage Soul Exalt, and Xiao Qi's was at the class seven level. There was a huge leeway for Bai Yunfei to attempt trying his plan.

But no matter what the case, Bai Yunfei didn't want to try it on the permafrost mastiff. That's why he chose the weakest soulbeast puppet, the class three soulbeast to try it out.

In the case that his experiment failed and the class three soulbeast blew up, Bai Yunfei would be able to take it.

.....

Honing his mind onto the soulbeast in front of him, he approached the soulgem of the little python. On his shoulder, Xiao Qi stared anxiously at the snake in preparation to use the Beast Taming Ring.

Finally, Bai Yunfei was ready to put his plan into action. Touching the soulgem, Bai Yunfei reached the slave seal around it.

The slave seal activated at that moment. But unlike the time with the lightningfire wolf, none of the complicated runic markings appeared over the soulgem.

At the moment his soulsense touched the slave seal and the soulgem, the dim slave seal immediately started to shine brightly with 'light'!

“Bzzzz.....”

The soulsense of Bai Yunfei felt a buzzing sound in the mindspace of the snake, as if the slave seal was starting to tremble. Simultaneously, Bai Yunfei felt a shrill hissing sound. Coiled around his arm, the small snake was suddenly larger in size to constrict around his arm with a brilliant glow of orange light.

A second later, the slave seal started to disintegrate!

“It's here!”

Bai Yunfei's eyes narrowed in preparation. Not taking the chance to relax, Bai Yunfei activated the Beast Taming Ring and directed it towards the inside of the snake's body to the soulgem.

Already the soulgem looked like it was going to burst!

Another second later under the destruction of the slave seal, the soulforce within the snake's body was starting to grow chaotic and explosive. Its soulgem was trembling violently as energy poured out from it. In the blink of an eye, the power was already enough to match with a class four soulbeast!

“Stop! Stop! Stoppp!!!”

Panic flickered across Bai Yunfei's eyes. Even with him trying his best....there was no way he could stop the explosion! He did make the process slower, but....he hadn't exactly 'stopped' it!

“Xiao Qi!”

He called out to Xiao Qi. The bird chirped once in response before its aura as a class seven soulbeast came into play. The light coming from the Beast Taming Ring grew even brighter now and covered the entirety of the snake with orange light. A source of soulsense stronger than Bai Yunfei entered the snake's mindspace and

immediately enveloped the cracking soulgem....

Bright light covered the entirety of Bai Yunfei's right arm. Soulforce lashed out wildly from the snake as its body started to go out of control. Though it seemed like Xiao Qi's strength was enough to stop the soulgem, Bai Yunfei's forehead was still slick with sweat from his anxiety.

Would they succeed?

Chapter 615: Disappointment (Second)

Bai Yunfei had already forgotten about everything else but the Beast Taming Ring and the task in front of him. All he could do was concentrate on the late-stage class three snake to try and stop the ‘self-destruct’ order.

The little soulbeast was like a machine operating under a single command. But at the moment, it was operating under two completely different ones. The first was from the slave seal, telling it to have its soulgem explode. The second was from the Beast Taming Ring, telling it to stop the self-destruction process.

Under two conflicting orders like this, the snake’s soul was being torn apart due to its inability to follow either.

The chaotic energy in the room only grew larger from there on out. The snake’s soulforce had only been a late-stage class three, but the energy it was outputting now was at the level of an early-stage class four and close to being on par with a mid-stage class four.

With its current strength, unleashing this much energy would be reaching the limits of what it could handle. If it continued and reached an output corresponding to the strength of a mid-stage class four, then its body would ultimately explode and the snake would be killed.

.....

“Just a little more, we’re nearly done!”

Bai Yunfei could feel the slave seal of the snake’s soulgem nearing the final part of its self-destruction process. Because of Xiao Qi’s assistance, the explosion of the soulgem had stopped for a moment. Right now, it was looking a little plump and was ‘shaking’ somewhat.

Finally, the slave seal turned into blue smoke that wafted

upwards and out from the soulgem without a trace....

“Bang!!”

In that instant, Bai Yunfei heard a shattering sound somewhere in the mindspace.

Startled, Bai Yunfei first thought it was soulgem that had exploded. But when he looked, the soulgem was still there, albeit shaking somewhat as the soulgem tried to stabilize itself. With the help of Xiao Qi, the rampant energy was being quelled like water onto a fire to restore the calm.

Did it work?!

But what was with this unsettling feeling?

Bai Yunfei felt suspicious. Something was gnawing at his heart that unsettled him. Exhaling slowly, he wiped the sweat off his forehead to look at the snake.

The snake was back to its normally brown color, though its eyes were still unfocused.....like it hadn't changed at all prior to this. If Bai Yunfei had to point his finger on it, he'd have to say that the snake was in an extremely weak state now that the slave seal was gone. This was further hinted at with how weakly the snake clung to his arm.

Impatient to satisfy this growing curiosity in him, Bai Yunfei probed the snake's mindspace again with his soulsense.

Upon investigation, Bai Yunfei was pleased to find out that....the slave seal was gone!!

A pleased look of triumph etched itself on Bai Yunfei's face at his achievement. But then when he looked a little deeper, the smirk was wiped from his face to be replaced with a look of shock.

“Wha—what's this?!”

All of the air deflated from Bai Yunfei as he stared at the snake on his palm in surprise and sorrow.

While the slave seal was gone and the snake was no longer a soulbeast puppet, something else had disappeared along with the slave seal.

That something else was....the soul!!

Though the soulgem was still inside the snake, there was no 'soul' in it!

The snake was without sentience and stood still like a statue. Soulforce was still inside the snake's body, but it was like stagnant water.

The soul was clearly gone.

The strange thing was that its body was still 'alive' in a sense with its blood still flowing through it.

A live but soulless body. In other words, the snake was a vegetable. Or....perhaps it'd be better to say it was a 'vegetable snake'.

But in every other sense but the truest, the snake was 'dead'.

.....

"Was this experiment....a failure?"

Bai Yunfei looked forlorned as he stared disappointedly at the snake.

Suddenly, the snake reared its head up to swivel its eyes at him and snake out its tongue.

Bai Yunfei's heart filled with glee for a moment before he deflated again. "Xiao Qi, stop playing around." He sighed.

Xiao Qi had been using the Beast Taming Ring to pretend the snake was alive and with a soul.

The snake shook its head and slithered down from Bai Yunfei's arm to reach Xiao Qi's side. "Yunfei," Xiao Qi chirped, "don't feel bad. The soul might be gone, but so is the slave seal at least. It's not

blown up either, so it's not a complete failure.”

“Even if the soulgem didn't explode, the soul's gone. How can that be a success....” Bai Yunfei shook his head with a bitter smile. “But don't worry, I won't feel too beat up with just one failure. I didn't expect to succeed the first time.”

Shaking the disappointment from his head, Bai Yunfei looked back to the snake on the ground. It was to his surprise that using the Beast Taming Ring was still effective on it.

Even without a soul, the soulbeast could still be controlled?

How strange. Soulforce still existed in the snake's body even without a soul there to produce anymore.

Then....

Did that mean the snake right now was an empty shell filled with the soulforce of a late-stage class three soulbeast?

Thinking back to what he did to the snake, Bai Yunfei came to a conjecture of sorts. Though the slave seal was gone, the soulgem had been prevented from blowing up. But under the tremendous pressure, the soul within the soulgem was unable to handle it and perished.

“Was it because its soul was too weak? Or...was my soulforce not strong enough to protect it....?”

Bai Yunfei thought. He felt like he was back at square one with the fact that his strength wasn't fully there yet. He could at the very least have Xiao Qi help him prevent the soulgem from blowing up though.

But if the slave seal of a late-stage class three soulbeast was this hard to unravel, what did that mean for stronger soulbeast puppets? That perfect success with the lightningfire wolf was surely a stroke of good fortune then.

After a lengthy period of silence, Bai Yunfei decided to take the

Beast Taming Ring off the snake and back into his hand.

The moment the Beast Taming Ring was detached from the snake, it immediately went stiff like a statue.

As he was preparing to wrap up his experimentation and put away the small snake, a bubble of his soulsense wrapped around the snake for a moment before Bai Yunfei's eyes lit up.

“Eh?? You can do that?!”

Chapter 616: Conflict in the Teahouse

(Third)

When Bai Yunfei's soulsense enveloped the snake's body, Bai Yunfei suddenly realized that the snake was moving in accordance to how he shifted his soulsense inside it!

The snake wasn't moving by itself, but rather by...

"I can control it this way?!"

Both of Bai Yunfei's eyebrows flew up.

He could...control the little snake still!

Just by relying on his soulsense rather than the Beast Taming Ring, Bai Yunfei could control the snake!

"Weird...this is really weird—how does this work?" Bai Yunfei brought the snake to his palm for a closer look. He looked around the inside of the snake again with his soulsense, but he found nothing out of the ordinary.

The snake was still a shell without a soul. But...did the addition of his soulsense turn into a replacement for the soul?

Did that work?

Having never heard of a case like this, Bai Yunfei was deeply curious. Was this yet another special 'exception'?

What happened to this snake was a rather rare event. Its soul was gone, but the body still lived on. In most regular situations, like when a Soul King used a soul attack onto a weaker opponent, the soul attack would extinguish the soul, and the body would die straight afterwards. But in this case, the snake's body was still alive.

As hard as he might, Bai Yunfei couldn't figure out the reason behind this case and gave up for the timebeing. Though he could

control the snake, it was still far too weak and had thus no meaning to even bother. No longer caring, Bai Yunfei stored the snake away and laid back on his bed to rest.

Studying the slave seal, as Bai Yunfei thought, wouldn't be an easy matter. It'd be best if he took this one step at a time...

.....

Early morning the next day, Bai Yunfei stepped into the Soothing Heart for his morning tea.

“What do you mean ‘sold out’?! I wanted some tea and you say there's none left?! Have you not realized a regular patron like myself comes every second day of the week to drink some tea? How have you not prepared for such a case?!”

A loud and grumpy voice assaulted the ears of Bai Yunfei in the first moments of him stepping in the Soothing Heart, causing him to pause.

“My humblest of apologies, lord Xu, but we are truly sold out on Soul Consolidating Tea. The Soothing Heart has announced since three days ago that we will be out of it starting today. Please forgive us for this inconvenience. If you would like, this humble servant can offer some high-grade Soothing Tea, it is not a bad choice.”

An apologetic but calm voice spoke out in response to this rowdy patron. It was the shop assistant of the Soothing Heart, Tian Yishu.

Now that Bai Yunfei was in the hall, he could see just who was making all that commotion. Standing at the front counter were three men; two of them were guards, and the young man in the middle wore a richly robe, marking him to be someone of importance. Right now, his face was twisted in anger at the suggestion he was given. “‘Not a bad choice’?! Is that not more water than it is tea? Your patron wants some Soul Consolidating

Tea, so hurry up and find a way to serve me some!”

All of the other patrons in the teahouse looked up at the belligerent man in surprise. But when they saw who it was, they quickly turned back around as if afraid of starting anything with this man.

Even Tian Yishu had a crinkled look on his face, but even he made sure to still speak politely to the man. “Lord Xu, please forgive this small teahouse. We’ve already stopped selling Soul Consolidating Tea for the meanwhile. If you still wish to drink some, please come back in a month.”

“What?!” The man’s eyes flew wide open on his face. “You want me to wait a month?! Preposterous! Your patron here is feeling unwell, and so I demand to drink some Soul Consolidating Tea! I don’t care what reason you have, hurry up and serve me some or else I’ll have your teahouse shut down!”

This time, Tian Yishu’s eyes had a cold gleam in them. The smile faded away as his face hardened like steel. There had never been anyone that threatened the Soothing Heart before. It was a place for the unwell soul cultivators to come and recuperate in peace. So never had a person so unreasonable and brutish like this lord come threaten that peace.

“Our apologies, but we’ve no Soul Consolidating Tea to sell to you. Please come back another day.”

“You—”

“Brother Tian, what’s going on?” A voice suddenly interrupted the conversation as Bai Yunfei came striding in to stand next to Tian Yishu.

Tian Yishu smiled at Bai Yunfei’s arrival. “Haha, Yunfei, welcome.”

He explained the situation to him as an aside, “This is lord Xu. He came here to drink some Soul Consolidating Tea but became

unhappy when he found out we had none left to sell...”

“What?!” Bai Yunfei spoke, “No more Soul Consolidating Tea? Then what will I...”

“Haha, relax. There’s of course some for you. Please head up to the second floor and I’ll have some boiled for you.”

“Ah, that’s good. Thank you brother Tian.” Bai Yunfei sighed in relief. He was a little panicked when he heard there was none left. But for someone like him, it seemed there was still a little bit left. With a nod, Bai Yunfei headed up to the second floor.

The young man stood there as Bai Yunfei and Tian Yishu spoke with one another, a look of bewilderment on his face. The fact that he was being so blatantly ignored was humiliating, and if he was hearing things right, then...

“Hold on!!!”

The man exploded in anger to stop Bai Yunfei. “Kid, did you or did you not just say you wanted some Soul Consolidating Tea as well?!”

Bai Yunfei lazily glanced over to him with a single eye, “And why do you care?”

Furious, the man gave a brilliant glare at Tian Yishu next to Bai Yunfei. “You said there was none left, and yet you’re serving this kid here some Soul Consolidating Tea as soon as he asked, are you f*cking with me?!”

Unable to bear with the man any longer, Tian Yishu snapped back, “He ordered his tea in advance. Aside from him, the Soothing Heart has no more Soul Consolidating Tea left to sell on orders of the proprietor. I am not lying to you, so please stop making trouble out of nothing.”

“In advance?!” The young man looked even more incensed, “I tried to order in advance last time and you said your teahouse didn’t accept that—and now you’re telling me this kid here

ordered in advance? How is that anything but a lie?! How dare you, do you really want your teahouse shut down? Do you not know who I am?!”

Tian Yishu was starting to grow angry as well. “There isn’t anyone that doesn’t know your name, lord Xu. But please do not take this teahouse to be any ordinary one. We—”

“Pah!! A teahouse is a teahouse, yours is merely just one that happens to get my patronage. What else is there to it?! Let me tell you, my patience has its limits. You serve me some Soul Consolidating Tea or I’ll flatten your little teahouse!”

Tian Yishu looked a little taken aback, but his lips curled into a sneer. There had never been someone that dared speak like that to them ever since they opened up the teahouse...

“Sir. This is a teahouse, please follow the rules of this establishment. If you wish to drink some Soul Consolidating Tea, then...”

Bai Yunfei stepped in next to help mediate for Tian Yishu, but before he could even finish the rest of his sentence, the man snapped at him, “What kind of f*cking mother did you have? Stay out of this! I...”

“.....”

The teahouse descended into silence at the young man’s words. Even the young man himself stopped himself halfway through to stare oddly at Bai Yunfei.

The calm and polite expression was gone from Bai Yunfei’s face. In their place, a bone-chilling aura exuded from him.

“Apologize....or I’ll break your jaw instead.”

Chapter 617: Son of A Minister (Fourth)

Bai Yunfei hadn't wanted to pay any attention to this second generational whatever and instead wanted to drink his tea in peace. But then the words he said angered Bai Yunfei.

Say what you want about him, but Bai Yunfei wouldn't accept any disrespect to his mother!!

“Apologize...or I'll break your jaw instead.”

Bai Yunfei spoke, a chill in his voice.

The young man was immediately spooked. His heart felt like it was being grasped by a cold hand, though he managed to look furiously back at Bai Yunfei—would he really let himself be ‘intimidated’ by this nameless wonder?!

From the looks of things, this person was a weak Soul Ancestor with holes everywhere in his defenses. It'd just take a single punch for the man to be knocked down. He was a mid-stage Soul Exalt, there was no need for him to take this humiliation from someone weaker than him.

“Kid, what did you say?!” The man roared at Bai Yunfei in anger. “Kid, are you tired of living?”

“I don't want to repeat myself. I'll give you ten seconds to apologize or you'll bear the consequences of your words.”

The sudden switch in Bai Yunfei's attitude startled even Tian Yishu, he had never seen Bai Yunfei in such anger before. Hurrying to him, he whispered, “Yunfei, this is the fourth son of the Minister of the Left. His name is Xu Sihan and is famous for his hedonistic ways here in the Capital. I don't think it's a good idea to anger him...”

Bai Yunfei held a hand up to stop him, “Thank you for the warning, but I've confidence in my ability.”

The son of one of the empire's ministers? No wonder he was acting so arrogantly.

But Bai Yunfei didn't care. Anyone that disrespects his mother would find themselves eating their words.

Without a care for the status of the man, Bai Yunfei spoke, "You've five seconds to apologize still."

"....."

Xu Sihan stared incredulously at Bai Yunfei. He was still acting that arrogantly?!

Under the wilting glare of Bai Yunfei, Xu Sihan exploded with anger. Blue light came out from his body as he flew forward to punch Bai Yunfei with a mighty right punch!

"I'll apologize to your mom, die!!"

Xu Sihan was a hedonist that was used to getting his way in the Capital. Very few people dared offend him in his day-to-day affair. He had heard about this teahouse from a friend and was astonished to feel the effects of Soul Consolidating Tea the first time he had it. He also heard many upper-class soul cultivators enjoyed coming here for drink, and so as a way to flaunt his status, he began to come here at 'fixed' intervals to drink the high quality tea the Soothing Heart offered.

So the fact that there was no Soul Consolidating Tea for him today made him feel extremely moody. And now that there was an impudent kid who had 'booked' some Soul Consolidating Tea made him feel like he had been played for a fool. The kid fueled his anger even more by daring to challenge his station, and that was why he decided to attack the kid out of his anger.

He had never seen this kid before, and there didn't seem to be anybody guarding him. His dress marked him as a commoner as well, so he shouldn't have any status to speak of.

This meant Xu Sihan could 'teach' this person a lesson by beating

him half to death and face no repercussions for it. An easy matter to start and resolve.

Tian Yishan's eyes narrowed at the actions of Xu Sihan. His previous strength of a Soul Ancestor began to rise rapidly as he prepared to protect Bai Yunfei, but then Bai Yunfei took action first.

Xu Sihan's first plan of action was to simply land a punch onto Bai Yunfei's arm and break it. But with how Bai Yunfei's physical strength was still sorely lacking so he didn't want to take on the blow head-on. Or rather, Bai Yunfei didn't even have to take on the blow himself.

The Violet Soul Ring pulsed with light once as the Cataclysmic Seal popped out from it. Without any flash of light, the brick flew out at Xu Sihan.

“Bang!!”

The brick and Xu Sihan's fist made contact with each other with a loud bang, but the results shocked everyone there.

As if struck by a thousand pound weight, Xu Sihan was sent flying back!

The +13 additional effect of the brick, hurl!

Hurled over several tables and sent crashing into another two, Xu Sihan fell to the ground and remained there motionless as if stunned.

“Young master!!”

The two guards leapt to his side in an instant. One made sure Xu Sihan was okay while the other flew at Bai Yunfei with his right hand to grab at Bai Yunfei's throat.

This man was a mid-stage Soul Exalt.

But strength like that wasn't much in Bai Yunfei's eyes. The Cataclysmic Seal let loose a burst of elemental fire before

slamming itself into the mid-stage Soul Exalt's chest.

“Bang!!”

Like Xu Sihan, the Soul Exalt was flung backwards. But unlike Xu Sihan, this time was simply due to the overwhelming strength of the brick.

The other guard had already lifted Xu Sihan to his feet when his fellow guard flew at him. Startled, the guard raised his elemental water infused hands to catch the other man.

Bai Yunfei ignored him to look at the now standing Xu Sihan.

“Bastard!!” Xu Sihan's face grew red as he pointed a finger at him, “Punish him! Teach him a lesson!”

Given their orders, the two guards reorientated themselves to then leap at Bai Yunfei again.

“Scram!!”

Bai Yunfei yelled at the two, his Charm Bracelet glowing with light to target the two soldiers with a strange light. And then...the two guards came to an immediate stop!

At the same time, a red streak of light flitted past the two guards to get behind them!

Even Xu Sihan had been briefly stopped by Bai Yunfei's word. By the time he regained his bearings, the red streak of light was already in front of him!

“Bang!!”

There was a cracking sound as the red brick slammed straight across his face.

Once again, his body was sent flying out the teahouse and right in front of the legs of a person about to walk into it.

Chapter 618: A Fight (Fifth)

The newcomer was startled to see someone come flying at his feet. Blinking a few times when he recognized the face of Xu Sihan, he looked to Bai Yunfei next.

“Xu Sihan? Bai Yunfei?” He muttered in surprise.

“Stop!”

Blood was flowing from Xu Sihan’s face. His nose was caved in and his lips were cracked in multiple places for blood to spill out. His eyes were wide open with fear, but the orange light surrounding those areas quickly staunched the wounds and returned to normal.

Xu Sihan was only just picking himself up when he heard the voice. At the same time as Bai Yunfei, the two of them turned around to look at who it was.

“Xiao Nan?!”

One of the two people cried out when they saw who it was, but it wasn’t Bai Yunfei who cried out, but Xu Sihan.

Bai Yunfei came to realize him too as the instructor he had a decent opinion of, Xiao Nan.

So he was acquainted with Xu Sihan?

Xiao Nan gave a quick look at Xu Sihan and then to Bai Yunfei. Although he didn’t understand what was going on between the two, it was obvious that there was a conflict happening between them. Quickly standing between Bai Yunfei and Xu Sihan, Xiao Nan held his hands up to stop the two. “Yunfei, what’s going on here?”

“Big brother Xiao Nan?” Bai Yunfei spoke, “You know him?”

Xu Sihan spoke far more angrily. “Xiao Nan!! Stand clear—I’m going to kill him!!”

Xiao Nan gave the man a cold look, “Xu Sihan, if you keep going on with your hedonistic ways and claiming to kill him or her, you’ll meet your doom one of these days!”

“Xiao Nan!! Don’t speak to me in such a way! You might be the husband of my cousin, but that doesn’t make you invincible! Mind your business or I’ll teach you a lesson too!” Xu Sihan cried out in a demeanor that seemed to broker no exceptions.

“You....” Xiao Nan’s face darkened with disgust. “Even if you’re the cousin of little Xiao Jie, I’m far too lazy to bother with you. I’m just warning you to calm yourself or else you’ll end up biting off more than you can chew.”

But Xu Sihan spat out in disdain at his words, “Pah! Spare me your ‘holier-than-thou’ theatrics! How amazing can your little friend be? It’s impossible to save him! I’ll make sure to instill in him just how terrifying I can be!!”

Xiao Nan sighed to himself at those words. Of the four sons of Minister Xu, the first three were all fine and mighty gentlemen. So why was it that the fourth one was so unbearable?

Bai Yunfei was experiencing some strong emotions of his own. Xiao Nan was actually related to Xu Sihan in some way?!

Seeing that Xiao Nan was trying to mediate this, Bai Yunfei gave Xu Sihan a final look. The man had already been taught some degree, so Bai Yunfei decided to call it there. “Since you know him, big brother Xiao Nan, I’ll call it there.”

But Xu Sihan only looked angry at that, “Calling it there?! Kid, do you think you have a say whether we’re done or not?! You dare attack me—I’m telling you, you’re finished! I’ll—”

“Xu Sihan!!”

Xiao Nan barked out a furious command, shutting up Xu Sihan almost immediately. “Don’t humiliate the house of Xu any longer or else I’ll teach you a lesson in your cousin’s place! Leave at

once!!”

“You—I’ll...!” Xu Sihan wanted to speak out against Xiao Nan, but he found himself lacking the words to offer up any resistance. A flash of fear spread across his face for a moment before he gave one final glower at Bai Yunfei. “We’re leaving!!” He spat to his two guards.

Though he was giving up, anyone could tell that giving up was the very last thing he really wanted to do.

Inside to himself, Xiao Nan was thinking that it served Xu Sihan right for him being embarrassed like this. In fact, Xiao Nan was starting to regret that he stepped in to mediate. He should’ve let Bai Yunfei enforce his lesson before he tried to mediate.

Xiao Nan spun around to apologize to Bai Yunfei, “Yunfei, I’ve let you see something embarrassing. He’s nothing but an unworthy hedonist. I hope you won’t take this matter to heart.”

Bai Yunfei smiled. “No need to apologize on his behalf, big brother Xiao Nan. I’m not one to take grudges, as long as he doesn’t bother me anymore, I won’t do a thing.”

The matter with Xu Sihan was already thrown far back to the far recesses of his mind. “Big brother Xiao Nan, are you here to drink some tea too? I’ve never seen you here before.”

“Haha, I come every so often, but generally in the noon. I happened to come by a little earlier today, that’s all.”

“I see.” Bai Yunfei spoke. Since he himself came every morning and night, there’d be no way he’d see Xiao Nan who came in the afternoon.

The fact that Bai Yunfei was here to drink some Soul Consolidating Tea was a little surprising, but Xiao Nan took it in stride. He and Bai Yunfei both walked up to the second floor so that the two of them could have their own tea and talk.

.....

The two of them left the teahouse an hour later.

“Haha, how amazing the Soul Consolidating Tea is! Thanks to your generosity, Yunfei, I’ve experienced just how good it is for myself, haha!”

“It’s nothing much, big brother Xiao Nan. The Soothing Heart is a very special teahouse, and its owner, uncle Dan Teng, is a great person. Just drinking some Soul Consolidating Tea has done wonders for me.”

“Oh? You happen to know the proprietor? I’ve heard he’s quite the mysterious person.”

“Mysterious? I didn’t quite think so. He’s unfortunately not here today, but maybe in the future you’ll meet him. He’s a really decent person.”

“That’s fine. In any case, I have to get back to the academy, so we’ll be splitting ways here. Please come by my house in the future, I’ll show you the amazing cooking of my wife. It’s quite a delicious meal.”

“Really? Haha, alright. I’ll be your guest in the future then, big brother Xiao Nan!”

The two parted ways at the teahouse with Xiao Nan heading for the academy and Bai Yunfei towards his own home.

“Yunfei, I know you’re here, haha. Did you come and drink yet another high-grade primal stone away?”

Just a few steps later, another person came forward to greet Bai Yunfei. It was Zheng Kai.

“Ah, yeah, I just came from the Soothing Heart.” Bai Yunfei smiled and nodded his head. “Ah’Zheng, you seem to be pretty happy? Did something good happen to you?”

Zheng Kai smiled. “Haha, you could tell? Something good did happen actually. I saw the fourth son of Minister Xu on my way

here. I don't know what happened, but his face looked as if it was slapped, haha!! I nearly busted a gut laughing, that guy's always an pompous ass. I always wanted to teach him a lesson, but this works, haha..."

"Ah...." Bai Yunfei's lips twitched. "Anyways, did something happen if you came to find me so early?"

Zheng Kai's smile grew even wider. "Ah, I nearly forgot about it. Yunfei, come with me, there's something good to watch."

"What are you up to now?"

"We're going to fight!" Zheng Kai laughed merrily.

Chapter 619: A Consensual Fight (Sixth)

“A fight?!”

Bai Yunfei was surprised by Zheng Kai’s answer.

“Hehe, exactly. Brother Huang and the others will be there. How about it, interested?”

Bai Yunfei didn’t respond.

He didn’t understand it, what was so ‘interesting’ about that?

“Even Huang Bin is going to be fighting?” Bai Yunfei repeated, “Who are you fighting, exactly?”

“No idea.”

Again, Bai Yunfei said nothing.

“What I mean is that we don’t know who those people are. They’re new faces, but probably people with some semblance of status. They’re probably new to the Capital and are trying to make it their stomping grounds by disregarding us Four Lords of the Capital. They even challenged brother Chen so we’re going there as backup. They’ve picked today to be the day to fight.”

“Chen Qiantan? What happened to him?”

“Ah, he’s fine. It was just yesterday night we were at South Twelfth Street. You weren’t there, but there was a ‘drinking party’ that brother Chen wanted to go to, so we went with him. There was some trouble there, but with so many experts and such there, both parties decided to settle it in another place with less people today.”

He chuckled. “So? How do you feel about it now?” Zheng Kai asked.

“You all must be really bored.” Replied Bai Yunfei in earnest.

Was that not the case? The sons of wealthy families were all very

strong soul cultivators in their own right. The fact that they were duking it out with a bunch of hedonist was surely a pain to everyone involved.

“Bored?” Zheng Kai cried out as if hurt by such an accusation.

“We are, actually. We’re always so bored, so we have to find some sort of fun thing to do.” Zheng Kai nodded. “There’s no fun in spending every day training!”

“....” Bai Yunfei was speechless, “Are you making fun of me?!”

“Haha! I can see that you’re doing pretty well now, so I decided to come seek you out. Don’t stay cooped up in your room all the time, taking in the sights isn’t all that bad.”

If Bai Yunfei had to think about it, he was startled when he realized just when the last time he went out and did something was. All of his time was practically spent recuperating and upgrading.

“So? Want to come?” Zheng Kai asked again.

“Fine.” Bai Yunfei relented. “I’ll come watch with you. I don’t have anything to do anyways.”

.....

Together with Zheng Kai, Bai Yunfei walked down North Street to gather with Huang Bin and the others at the Hundred Aliments. It was there that Bai Yunfei heard the full story. The ‘agreed fight’ between the two parties was between the four of them and a few rather important guests of the ‘King of Troublemakers’ in the Capital. Many of these guests were outsiders of the Capital and people that usually ran amok in their own respective cities with unrelenting arrogance. This time, they didn’t even bother to take note of the ‘Four Lords of the Capital’ and challenged them to a fight at once.

And the one who was the ‘King of Troublemakers’ turned out to be the third son of the Minister of the Left, someone from the

house of Cheng.

Bai Yunfei found himself rather speechless. He'd be meeting with the sons of both ministers today, and both of these sons were problem children. Did every single family in the Capital have a hedonist as a child?

“Won't there...be any problems if you fight? What if an accident happens?”

Bai Yunfei couldn't help but ask Zheng Kai as the five of them talked about the upcoming fight.

“An accident? What kind of accident?” Zheng Kai asked. “It's just a fight, not a battle to the death, what kind of accident would even happen? We normally do stuff like this anyways. Relax. We're all confident in our strengths, and neither are we going to cripple them.”

“.....”

Bai Yunfei sweatdropped. Was a gang fight like this the secret technique of every young master in the Capital?? He simply couldn't comprehend this.

Aside from Jin Manlou, the other three were all late-stage Soul Exalts. What kind of fight would it be then for them? From what Bai Yunfei later found out, fights like this weren't at all rare in the circles of the young men of the Capital. There were a few guidelines on how these fights should be fought, such as no fatal strikes or relying on the strength of their family. A scuffle between the younger generation should stay as such. Everyone that fought in these fights had confidence in their strength and would rarely bother to have the elders of their family try to help them. In any case, the elders tended to turn a lazy eye towards what the younger generation did.

In a way, these fights tended to be a learning experience for most. As soul cultivators, the best way to learn was through experience,

and experience could be easily had through an actual fight. And when they lived peaceful lives in the Capital, how could they get that experience in battles to the death? Thus, fights were established as a way to ‘gain experience’, and according to what Zheng Kai said, his strong and robust body was tempered as a result of fighting through so many years of fights.

“.....”

Bai Yunfei was thoroughly defeated by Zheng Kai’s logic. He’d never understand the lifestyles of the young masters of the Capital.

“Who are the people you’re fighting then?”

“We’ll find out in a moment. They’re pretty strong I’m sure though. I saw a few of them were late-stage Soul Exalts.”

“Where’d you pick to fight at?”

“There’s a villa to the south that’s both big and has few people coming and going. Plenty of people choose there to fight.”

“When?”

“This afternoon at four. It’s a little early, so let’s eat first and slowly make our way afterwards.”

.....

The five of them ate a nice afternoon meal before making their way over to the established battleground.

In the southern parts of the Capital stood a place many called the ‘Villa Park’. Bai Yunfei could see a mountain forest a little far away from the villa, and a large mountain standing behind the large villa.

The guards standing near the villa seemed to know Zheng Kai, as none of them seemed to stop him as he lead the group through the pathway on the right towards a small lake.

A small lake about five hundred meters in circumference met the gaze of the five with a decently large piece of land to the right. A

bunch of people was already gathered there.

At a glance, there were over ten people gathered here, each one of them wearing rich robes and having auras of considerable strength. Their soulforce had also marked them all to be someone strong.

When they felt Zheng Kai and the others arrive, they all perked their heads up to look at them.

A thin-lipped and pointy-chinned young man took the initiative to speak to them when the group drew near. “Lord Huang, lord Zheng, your arrival is a little late.”

“What do you mean?” Zheng Kai’s lip curled upwards, “We came at the scheduled time, didn’t we? Eager for a beating? Cheng Xin, I heard that you made some new breakthroughs with your Thirty-six Flashes, care to try it out against me?”

“Er...” Cheng Xin forced a smile to his lips. “Surely you jest, lord Zheng. My Thirty-six Flashes is nothing compared to your teleportation. I was bedridden for an entire week the last time we fought. I couldn’t possibly want a rematch. My friends here have heard of the reputation of the Four Lords of the Capital and wish to compare notes with you. I am only the one that referred them to you, that’s all, haha...”

He was smiling, but Bai Yunfei was perceptive enough to see a very quick gleam of hatred flash across his face before he turned to the people behind him. “We didn’t seem to introduce everyone well enough yesterday. Allow me to introduce you all then, these four gentleman are the ‘famous’ Four Lords of the Capital. This is Huang Bin, this is Zheng Kai, this is...”

The third person he started to introduce was Bai Yunfei, someone he didn’t know. “Eh? And you are...?”

“A friend.” Zheng Kai spoke up. “He came to watch only. He’s not fighting.”

“Oh...” Cheng Xin nodded in disinterest. “Then let me introduce the others. These are the heroic figures from the Black River Province. They are...”

A tall-standing young man in purple strode forward to clasp his hands together and bow towards Zheng Kai and the others. “The Four Lords of the Capital is well known to us. It is our honor to meet you four today. This one is a student of the Wind Lightning School, Du Shaokong!”

Chapter 620: Chen Qiantan's Drunken Fist (Seventh)

“Wind Lightning School?!”

Huang Bin and the others spoke aloud.

They were from the Wind Lightning School?

Bai Yunfei was surprised as well. Didn't Zheng Kai say they were the children of an influential family? How did it become the students of one of the Ten Great Schools?

Cheng Xin spoke up to continue his introduction, “Brother Du is an outstanding student of the Wind Lightning School. He's also the heir to the house of Du in Copsol City.”

The Wind Lightning School was based in the Black River Province, that much Bai Yunfei knew. He didn't know who the house of Du was in Copsol City, but surely they had to be a relatively major house, and that much could be inferred with Du Shaokong being a late-stage Soul Exalt.

“A student of the Wind Lightning School....” Huang Bin tasted the words before returning the bow. “A pleasure.”

There were another four males and three females after Du Shaokong. Of the seven, two of them were late-stage Soul Exalts and the rest were either early-stage or mid-stage Soul Exalts. From each of their introductions, they were all young prodigies from Copsol City.

They all looked like they were in their twenties, some of them maybe being a bit older but still every bit a strong fighter compared to the younger ones and potentially even the prodigies in the Capital.

Every single one of them looked proud of their own strength and not at all afraid of the status of Huang Bin and the others. In fact,

some of them looked like they were raring to go.

They were eager to win just as anyone else would be. These people looked both rich and powerful.

Of the entire group, Zhao Jianzhang looked like he had a bone to pick with Chen Qiantan the very moment they saw one another. When he saw one of his female companions stare a little in admiration at Chen Qiantan, the look of hostility in him grew even more.

It looked more like a social gathering with how everyone was talking and chatting with one another, though Cheng Xin had a very dark look in his eyes every once in a while. Zhao Jianzhang didn't quite seem to like this development either, much to his secret enjoyment, and it didn't take long before he leapt into the middle of the crowd to address Chen Qiantan. "We're not finished yet from yesterday night, Chen Qiantan! I challenge you, let's see who's stronger than one another!"

In Chen Qiantan's hand was a jug of wine in which he took a swig from. Wiping the excess wine from the corners of his lips, he spoke, "I was actually feeling the same way. Meeting someone who's strong in close combat like you is rare. I'd have ask for a match even if you didn't challenge me."

Though the two were ready to fight, they both had a contrasting look on their faces. Zhao Jianzhang looked like he wanted to vent off his anger while Chen Qiantan simply wanted to enjoy a good fight and compare notes.

The rest of the crowd backed off. Now that both persons were ready to fight, the audience gave them both a hundred meters of empty space for them to fight in. Standing ten meters away from Chen Qiantan, Zhao Jianzhang held both of his hands forward and had his soulforce circulate slowly in his body. Chen Qiantan simply took another swig of his wine, his eyes starting to give away a hint of intoxication.

Bai Yunfei was a little surprised. Was this really a fight? Why did it turn into a duel?

But that was neither here nor there. He was actually extremely interested in Chen Qiantan's 'Drunken Fist', the martial art that gave him the nickname of being undefeatable in close combat. To have the opportunity to observe that was a very good thing.

“Ha!!”

Zhao Jianzhang cried out after ten seconds of silence. The orange light around his body swirled to his hands as if forming a protective layering over them like gloves. At the same time, elemental earth covered his body like armor.

Zhao Jianzhang was a earth-type late-stage Soul Exalt.

In the blink of an eye, Zhao Jianzhang disappeared as he pushed off in a flurry of dust to leap towards Chen Qiantan.

His arms were crossed over one another like an 'X' with his fingers bent inwards to attack Chen Qiantan's heart.

His actions were neither sloppy in its initialization or superfluous in motion. On the inverse, he was very fast and precise. With all the wind blowing rapidly at his actions, anyone could tell this one move of his was very strong.

Chen Qiantan had only been taking one final swig of his wine when Zhao Jianzhang approached. The wine gourd disappeared as his legs 'gave out' beneath him. Giving a half collapsing stagger to the side, Chen Qiantan managed to just barely dodge Zhao Jianzhang's attack.

Then he bent over with his arms spread out as if hugging a huge jar of wine. Swinging to the side, his arms moved to slam into whatever it was in his path.

And it just so happened that Zhao Jianzhang's waist was in his path!

“Bang!!”

It was a mighty blow and had Zhao Jianzhang stumbling three steps away with a grunt. Chen Qiantan himself was sent stumbling back two steps in a very clearly drunk matter before he reorientated himself. His thumb and forefinger linked with one another before he came after Zhao Jianzhang again in a flash of green light.

His fingers traveled for Zhao Jianzhang's throat. Crossing his arms over that area, Zhao Jianzhang tried to protect himself from Chen Qiantan's attack.

But then Chen Qiantan 'stumbled', falling face first forwards for the attack to instead aim down at the abdomen of Zhao Jianzhang instead of his throat!

“Hngh!”

A grunt of pain escaped Zhao Jianzhang's mouth as he took yet another step back. Despite the armor of elemental earth he wore, there was still a dent from where Chen Qiantan's hand had attacked. And judging by how large the dent was, Chen Qiantan's attack had been considerably strong.

Chen Qiantan flopped onto the ground after he stumbled. But like a carp, he flipped back up onto his feet. Smiling at the pained look on Zhao Jianzhang's face, he shot forward like an arrow for a follow-up!

“Bang! Bang! Bang....”

Blow by blow, orange light mixed with green light as the two combatants exchanged both hand and leg against one another. Neither of the two were ever more than two steps away from one another, and neither of the two ever took out a weapon to fight. Each blow had light sloughing off their appropriate body parts and kicked up dust and stone. Sometimes, one of their blows would create a crater.

The tempo of Zhao Jianzhang's increased with each blow, but he could never land a solid hit on the 'erratic' moving Chen Qiantan. Like a drunkard, Chen Qiantan was moving in ways completely unexpected to his opponent. And sometimes, he'd 'waken' from his drunken stupor to attack Zhao Jianzhang viciously.

For ten whole minutes, the battle progressed in this manner....

And Chen Qiantan was winning!!

Despite being of the same level of strength, anyone could see that it was Chen Qiantan who had the upper hand!!

Bai Yunfei had to admit he was shocked by this level of display. Even a close combat match like this could be had! In his eyes, the footwork of Chen Qiantan was better than his own when he used the Wave Treading Steps. It was....even more refined than it even!

Every time he struck back, his hands moved in miraculous and strange ways that Bai Yunfei could only sigh in admiration for.

“So this is the Drunken Fist of the house of Chen? It's amazing....”

Bai Yunfei sighed to himself. There was an explosion of orange light as Zhao Jianzhang finally decided to break the mold and unleash his strongest move!

Chapter 621: Making Friends Through Battle (Eighth)

The elemental earth around Zhao Jianzhang's body exploded in intensity by several degrees of magnitude. With a heavy slam of his foot, Zhao Jianzhang sent a tremor through the ground hard enough to allow even the audience to experience it!

Chen Qiantan was the closest one to the epicenter of the tremors and so he found himself unsteady for a small moment of time.

Zhao Jianzhang leapt up into the air like a graceful athlete. His arms were spread out and his legs snapped together as he started to rotate in the air. Picking up speed, he quickly turned into a high-speed drill to come flying down onto Chen Qiantan!

A glimmer of light entered Chen Qiantan's eyes, for once he didn't look as drunk as he did before and looked instead rather happy. Grunting, his entire body was washed with green light as elemental wind coiled around his arms much like how Bai Yunfei would when he was about to unleash the Dual Dragon Burst. But rather than have the elemental wind unleash from his hands, Chen Qiantan had them stick around them as he made a quick back flip.

Zhao Jianzhang was quick on the uptake and closed the distance quickly. Chen Qiantan held his fists up in a boxing stance before immediately launching in a hurricane-like blow of punches one after another!

His fists looked like they were rather spring-like due to how his hands were moving so strangely fast. But each blow was trying to attack at the strong point of Zhao Jianzhang's attack!

But Zhao Jianzhang didn't seem to slow down. All Chen Qiantan managed to do in his back flip and hurricane like blows was offload Zhao Jianzhang's drill move a bit to the side!

The 'drill' glowed intensely orange with light before sending

Chen Qiantan back twenty meters. Grunting a bit, Chen Qiantan's body flashed with green light before he spun his arms around!

His arms glowed green with light as they spun around him. But rather than spin in the same direction as Zhao Jianzhang, they spun in the complete opposite direction to counteract it!

“Bang!!”

There was a banging sound as the space in front of Chen Qiantan exploded with light. Orange and green light swallowed the entire area, preventing anyone from seeing what was going on.

“Bang!!”

Another bang was heard from within the light along with a yelp of pain. From there, a person could be seen flying out from the light before crashing to the ground. It took the man another ten meters and a huge ditch from when he landed on the ground before he could orientate himself.

This person was Zhao Jianzhang!

His face was red and his right hand was holding onto his abdomen. His face was twisted in the utmost pain. The elemental earth around his body was more than half than its original strength, and it didn't look like he was able to stand!

He was staring at Chen Qiantan in the light with an awestruck expression.

The sound of footsteps could be heard from within as Chen Qiantan slowly made his way out from the light. In his hand was a wine gourd somehow. Taking another swig, he smiled at Zhao Jianzhang. “I haven't fought like that in a while. Haha, thank you for a good match.”

There was a stringent look on Zhao Jianzhang's face. Managing to make his way up onto his feet, he gave a reluctant but admirable smile to Chen Qiantan. A loss was a loss.

“I’ve nothing to say for my defeat.”

He walked back to the others after he lost. Though he still held a grudge for Chen Qiantan, he wasn’t a man that wouldn’t stubbornly deny his defeat.

Likewise, Chen Qiantan walked back to Zheng Kai’s group. “You’ve gotten a lot stronger it seems!” Zheng Kai laughed.

Chen Qiantan gave a wry smile as he stretched his numb arm, “It wasn’t an easy win.”

The fight was over, but both sides seemed quite restrained with their words and actions. Neither sides were trying to stir up any more trouble, much to Bai Yunfei’s relief, and it seemed that things were going back to normal. As things would appear, this was just a calm fight where ‘friends’ could compare notes.

But then the normally stone-faced Huang Bin finally spoke with a smile. “Haha, this won’t die. I’m itching for a fight. I’ve been wanting to go the wrestling rings to fight, but now that there’s this chance today, I want to fight!”

His voice was loud enough for the other side to hear it. When they turned their heads, Huang Bin spoke out again. “Du Shaokong, I’ve long since heard of the illustrious name of your Wind Lightning School’s Wind Lightning Battle Artes and wished to experience it for myself. Since you are here, will you do me the honor of comparing notes with me?”

Du Shaokong looked slightly surprised, but he covered it out with a small smile. “If lord Huang is so gracious to invite me, who am I to refuse? Likewise, I’ve heard of the house of Huang’s ability to use elemental earth both offensively and defensively. Let us compare notes then!”

The two laughed and leapt out from their groups. In two separate streaks of light, they landed in the empty space in the middle before quickly fighting against one another.

Huang Bin's entire body was enveloped in an orange light before it turned into armor, making him seem like he was a decent bit taller than before. His arms and legs had a rumbling sound similar to that of stone as they crashed against his opponent. Du Shaokong's body was glowing in both green and purple light as he moved, elemental wind and lightning striking back against Huang Bin's body intensely.

The Wind Lightning School was separated into the 'Wind Hall' and 'Lighting Hall'. Students and instructors were generally separated between the two depending on their affinity. The more special students that were blessed with both wind and lightning affinities were honored in the school and could learn the art of that allowed them usage of both elements at once. In the school, they were known as the elite.

Du Shaokong was one of those said elites.

His position in the Wind Lightning School wasn't low either as the disciple of one of the elders.

He flew all around Huang Bin in a series of mirror images as he unleashed blow after blow onto him. In the air now, Huang Bin was as steady as a rock, but he'd turn around to block each blow that came at him. Though he looked weary with all the attempts to defend himself, he was actually trying to find the right time to strike back.

It was as though fireworks were being set off one after another each time Du Shaokong landed a blow onto Huang Bin's armor. From time to time, Huang Bin could be heard laughing. From their battles, it felt like both fighters were having the time of their lives.

Everyone watching seemed to be caught up in their fight as well. Even Zheng Kai couldn't help but get in the mood for a fight. Before a winner could even be decided from Huang Bin and Du Shaokong, he and a wood-type late-stage Soul Exalt took battle straight away.

Not yet fully satisfied, Chen Qiantan invited Zhao Jianzhang, who seemed to have completely forgotten about his grudge for the drunkard, to another battle. Knowing that he wasn't a match for Chen Qiantan though, he invited a mid-stage Soul Exalt to take part in the battle against him.

In the end, even the late-stage Soul Ancestor Jin Manlou recklessly challenged an early-stage Soul Exalt.

In no time at all, people were flying about in the skies and ground to fight noisily.

The only ones that didn't take part in the battle were the three females and Bai Yunfei.

Ah, there was also one more person, Cheng Xin. He was still standing far away from where the others were. He looked a little angry at the fact that these people should've been fighting angrily against each other were now being friendly with one another. The dark look on his face intensified when he looked at the merry-looking Zheng Kai and his group, the hatred and jealousy in his eyes now very much noticeable....

Chapter 622: A Shadow (Ninth)

Later that night on South Eleventh Street.

Bai Yunfei took Xiao Qi with them as he walked down the hustling street. The exciting things on the sides of the roads took his interest with how several stores were selling strange things he had never seen before.

He had just been eating from a restaurant not too long ago. Since he never explored this part of the city before, Bai Yunfei was surprisingly expectant to see what it offered.

As for Zheng Kai and the others, they were all still in that restaurant drinking and eating with Du Shaokong and his group.

The fight had ended a little unexpectedly earlier that afternoon. Everyone had ended up becoming friends with one another, laughing and chatting with great excitement. Even the one with the most hostility towards Chen Qiantan, Zhao Jianzhang, had forgotten completely about his grudge when he found out Chen Qiantan had a fiancée. After that was cleared up, the two of them became as thick as thieves.

Their cravings to fight had been filled, so the group adjourned for the day to have supper with everyone that night to get to know each other better.

Cheng Xin had some matters to take care of and left earlier than the others. When he left, Bai Yunfei was very sure that Zheng Kai had a cold smirk on his face.

He hadn't been able to fit into the conversations everyone was having and decided to stick out from it. In the end, Bai Yunfei figured it best to leave the restaurant first since he couldn't take part. Telling Zheng Kai that he was going for a stroll, Bai Yunfei left for his home.

Zheng Kai knew that it wasn't in Bai Yunfei's nature to enjoy

these type of social gatherings and didn't try to convince him otherwise.

Now that he was out from the restaurant, Bai Yunfei strolled aimlessly around the Capital. Since he was acquaintance with the southern parts, Bai Yunfei simply walked where many people were walking towards through several streets to get to one of the night markets.

But how was he going to return home? If worse came to shove....he could fly home since the air had no complicated terrain to take care of....

He bought several accessories to be upgraded later from a jewelry store on the way.

.....

Bai Yunfei reached the dead end of the street he was on and turned the corner onto a small alleyway when he raised an eyebrow. At the same time, he felt a streak of wind fly overhead.

“Whoosh!!”

A cat-like shadow came tumbling down the nearby alleyway wall and landed gracefully onto the ground. Two moments later, it disappeared down the intersection and to the right side of the street.

His movements had been swift, almost swift enough for Bai Yunfei to not clearly see it move. But with his soulsense, he was able to see that the motions had been very cat like and almost impossible to see who it was.

Another two moments later, Bai Yunfei perked his ears as he realized the shadow had been a Soul Warrior in strength. But his movements were beyond anything a Soul Warrior could do, even his soulforce was similar to that of a Soul Sprite.

But his aura was a little frantic. It seemed as though he was...trying to escape?

As suspicious Bai Yunfei was, he wasn't suspicious enough to chase after the shadow. With a small quirk of his lips, Bai Yunfei walked onto the intersection and perked his head right.

It was only a good ten meters before this road would meet a dead end. Furthermore, the dead end looked extremely dirty as though no one had bothered cleaning it for a very long time with all the junk that was laid there.

Bai Yunfei had only wanted to look once over, but then he gave a double-take in confusion at what he saw.

From the dark parts of the alleyway in the jumble of junk, Bai Yunfei saw...a pair of eyes.

When Bai Yunfei looked over, the pair of eyes hidden in the junk looked back at Bai Yunfei. The owner of the pair of eyes looked startled and frantic for a moment before looking down to disappear in the pile of junk.

This person had to be the shadow that passed by him before. Bai Yunfei was surprised—not by the fact that someone was hiding in the pile of trash—but the fact that he couldn't sense him!

He hadn't been intentionally looking for the person, but Bai Yunfei's soulsense shouldn't have been unable to sense him!

He had the perception of a late-stage Soul Exalt. So how could he not be surprised at the fact that he couldn't sense a Soul Warrior?

It was only after Bai Yunfei focused his soulsense that he realized the soulforce of the hiding person was extremely stealthy, but not through ordinary means. It was like hiding one's presence by holding one's breath rather than using a hiding technique, so that in itself was very surprising to see.

This type of hiding was extremely dependent on the person's individual skill and being able to blend in with their environment. Neither a commoner nor person stronger than this person would be able to sense the person in hiding. And perhaps it was more

appropriate to say that his presence was extremely low enough to have people ignore him entirely.

This type of situation wasn't unlike that of the Walk-on Strawhat....

While Bai Yunfei was feeling confused about the situation, several hurried footsteps soon came rushing down the alleyway and interrupted his thoughts. Turning around, he felt four distinctive auras come close to him.

“F*ck, how fast can that brat run! I didn't even see him move!”

“He has to be close! He can't have run far—just keep running, we'll find him!”

“Of course we'll find him! The vice-boss was killed by him, but we'll be dead too if we don't bring him back!”

“F*ck! That brat was only a late-stage Soul Warrior, how the f*ck did he kill an early-stage Soul Sprite like the vice-boss?! What an evil brat, we can't split up, or we'll never find him!”

Their words had snapped Bai Yunfei out from his thoughts. As he turned around, he saw four people come racing towards him and come to a stop at the intersection.

“F*ck! Where'd he go!?”

One of the men cried out as he scanned the area. When he saw Bai Yunfei, he immediately spoke, “Hey kid! Did you see a small kid in black robes come running by here? Where'd he go?!”

Bai Yunfei raised an eyebrow, his eyes wandering secretively to the right for a moment. A pair of pleading eyes looked back at him.

This interaction was unnoticed by the four men as Bai Yunfei looked back to the four. “Oh, are you talking about a frail but cat-like kid in black?”

The eyes of the four men widened with delight. “That's him!! Tell me, where'd he run off to? I'm warning you, we're from the

Sand Wolves, if you lie to us, we'll skin you!"

Chapter 623: The 'Killer' Yi Zi (Tenth)

Bai Yunfei's soulsense could feel the soulforce of the hidden person spike up for a moment nervously. Fortunately for him, the four men chasing after him were Soul Warriors and were unable to notice the presence or fluctuation in it.

“Oh.” Bai Yunfei nodded pleasantly. He pointed a finger to the north, “I saw a person like that fly over from the walls where you came from. He ran ahead and then turned to the left, I think.”

Without sparing even a second glance at Bai Yunfei, the four men immediately ran off to where he was pointing to in chase of their person.

“How easy they are to trick....”

Bai Yunfei smirked, though he was also slightly surprised that it was that easy to trick them. What he didn't know was that the four men thought he was a commoner, and in their eyes, a commoner wouldn't dare lie to the Sand Wolves.

It wasn't until the group left until Bai Yunfei looked back to where the pile of trash was. “You can come out now.”

“.....”

There wasn't any movement for ten seconds from the trash pile.

Bai Yunfei couldn't help but smile. “I'll call them back if you don't come out.”

His words weren't very truthful. Those men were already far away now, how would they come back? But that was more than enough to scare the other person. A scant few hesitant seconds later, the sound of rustling could be heard before a small person came crawling out from the trash pile.

He looked a little filthy, and Bai Yunfei was very shocked at his appearance.

It was a young boy!

A frail cloth robe, short brown hair, frail stature, rather childish aura, and a rather delicate face--this was the look of a fourteen or fifteen year old boy.

It was with a nervous look that the boy came up to Bai Yunfei. Only when he realized no one else was there did he sigh in relief and bow to Bai Yunfei. "Thank you for helping me."

"It was nothing much, no need for your thanks."

"No! My grandpa said before to pay back both kindness and revenge appropriately." The young boy shook his head vehemently. "You helped me, so I'll repay you. I can help you kill a person to repay the favor."

His words were slightly alarming, even to him. Thinking for a moment, he appended, "But only if they're bad people. I don't kill good people."

Bai Yunfei nearly face planted into the ground, "What did you say?! What...what kind of person are you?"

The boy retrieved a still bloody dagger from the side of his waist, "I'm Yi Zi, a killer."

"....."

Yi Zi fingered the dagger as if to try to make himself look slightly more impressive with his words. But to Bai Yunfei, it looked slightly appalling.

"You're an....a killer?!" Bai Yunfei asked.

Yi Zi nodded. "I am. From today onward, I'm a killer."

From today onward....

The corners of Bai Yunfei's lips curled as he stared at the young boy. It seemed as though he met with a little child that knew nothing but destruction.

“Why do you want to be a killer?” He probed carefully.

Yi Zi’s eyes narrowed in on themselves, sorrow and hatred filling them as he spoke, “I want to kill the bad guys with my own hands to pass on punishment for them!”

Bai Yunfei was a little taken aback at the two emotions showing on the little boy’s face. What kind of pains had this little boy gone through?

“Those men just now....said you killed the vice-boss of the ‘Sand Wolves’?”

Yi Zi nodded. “I did! He was my first victim since he deserved to die!”

“Those men said the vice-boss was an early-stage Soul Sprite? How’d you kill him?” Bai Yunfei was very curious to know just how Yi Zi did it.

“How I killed him?” Yi Zi repeated. “I just paid attention to his regular route and hid there until he showed up. Then I popped up and slit his throat to kill him.”

“.....”

That was how he killed him? A late-stage Soul Warrior was able to hide from the soulsense of a Soul Sprite and kill him!? That was....

But then he remembered just how easily Yi Zi hid his soulsense and how Bai Yunfei had nearly missed him. If he had missed Yi Zi, then an early-stage Soul Sprite would have no way of sensing him.

Yi Zi looked a little uncomfortable under Bai Yunfei’s gaze. “Hey, do you have anyone you want to kill or not? Tell me, and as long as they’re a bad guy, I’ll kill them for you!”

For...for someone who was only starting to be a killer, he was quite enthusiastic about it!

Sweat dropping to himself, Bai Yunfei answered, “That...won’t

be needed. I have no one I want to kill.”

“There’s no one you want to kill?! What a good life you must live...” Yi Zi blinked, trying to look ‘mature’. “I tried to repay you, but you gave that up. I’ll be off then.”

In one fluid movement, he leapt onto a nearby wall. With one final look to Bai Yunfei, he said, “Fine then. If you have anyone you want to kill, find me in the future and I’ll help you kill them. I live under the first bridge on South Third Street.”

And with that, he was gone from sight.

“.....”

Bai Yunfei had nearly stumbled into the nearby wall at those words--was there really a ‘killer’ like that?! Just randomly giving out where he lived so easily like that....

For a brief period of time, Bai Yunfei stood there to think to himself. “This Yi Zi...feels a little weird. His aura is quite strange. But....I wonder what kind of terrifying killer he’ll become....”

“The first bridge on South Third Street, was it? Should I find him later then? But what would I even do then? Turn him into a better killer?”

Bai Yunfei muttered to himself as he left the alleyway.

.....

Continuing down the street, Bai Yunfei couldn’t help but think of the killer ‘Yi Zi’. By that point, he was already down two more streets and the skies were quite dark with less and less people walking on them.

Finally, as Bai Yunfei was considering to himself if he should return home or not, something unexpected happened....

Chapter 624: Kidnapped? (First)

Bai Yunfei stood in the middle of an isolated corner, thinking to himself if he should go back home via the skies when he suddenly realized....he was surrounded.

A group of cold-looking middle-aged men had him surrounded from every direction he could look at.

There were plenty of soul cultivators in the crowd, though that was nothing strange to Bai Yunfei. The Capital had a great number of soul cultivators, Bai Yunfei just never expected to have five to six of them surround him right now.

“Am I being mugged?”

Bai Yunfei thought at first, but that thought was dashed rather quickly. There were two early-stage Soul Exalts and three late-stage Soul Exalts here. They wouldn't bother doing a group shakedown like this.

“What matter is this? Have you the wrong person?” Bai Yunfei asked the group bluntly.

The leader of the group seemed a little surprised that Bai Yunfei didn't look panicked, but he covered it up with a cold snort afterwards. “Kid, come quietly with us if you know what's good for you!”

“Come with you?” Bai Yunfei asked. “Are you sure you didn't get the wrong person?” He repeated, “I don't know you.”

“The one we're looking for is you, so shut your yammering!” The scarred man barked, “If you keep resisting then I'll just knock you out!”

His body flashed purple with light to show his 'powerful' strength as a Soul Exalt to try to intimidate Bai Yunfei.

Bai Yunfei was floored.

Was this....a kidnapping?!

But wasn't it a little laughable, this 'kidnapping'? Did they not know just who Bai Yunfei was and how strong he was?

Did these guys really want to try to kidnap him? Just who were they?

The scarred man leading the group didn't take kindly to the baffled look on Bai Yunfei's face, "Take him!"

Three Soul Ancestors came forward at once to knock out Bai Yunfei.

"Hold on." Bai Yunfei suddenly spoke up, "I'll go with you."

Then he took a step towards the scarred man to follow him.

"....."

The scarred man had to admit, this was a surprising reaction from Bai Yunfei. How was a Soul Ancestor (As far as the man could tell) able to remain so calm in a case like this? Still, whatever reaction Bai Yunfei had didn't really matter to him. He had his orders to carry out. It'd save him some trouble if Bai Yunfei was being cooperative anyways. Three of the Soul Ancestors stepped behind Bai Yunfei so that he wouldn't be able to run away. Together, the group walked out from the alleyway onto the main streets.

Bai Yunfei walked with them, a curious expression still on his face--just who in the world was 'kidnapping' him?

One thing was for sure, they didn't know who exactly Bai Yunfei was. If they did, there'd be no way they'd have sent these people to get him. There would've been a slaughter if Bai Yunfei felt disinclined to go with them.

That should also mean there probably wasn't any Soul Kings lying in wait for him either.

He had the class seven Xiao Qi with him and the permafrost

mastiff in its ring. If there was any trouble in the Capital, Bai Yunfei was confident that he could run away to safety.

Hence why Bai Yunfei decided to go with them rather than tell them to go away. He was curious to see just who was looking for him.

.....

Walking with the group, Bai Yunfei was led this way and that around several corners and turns. Soon enough, he was thoroughly confused which way was where.

Around twenty minutes later, they came to a relatively quiet area and entered a medium-sized manor.

Several lesser commoners and servants were walking in and out from this place, and Bai Yunfei himself was led to the right side of the manor into a rather large room.

The scarred man had a reverent look on his face when he entered the room. Bowing to the young man sipping tea at the table in front, he spoke, “Young master, we’ve brought the person back.”

“Very good. You may go.”

The young man dismissed him and turned to Bai Yunfei.

From there, Bai Yunfei saw just who it was, “Cheng Xin? It was you?!” He blurted out.

He had just seen this person this afternoon! The one known as the ‘King of Troublemakers’, the hedonistic third son of the Minister of the Right Cheng Bowen, Cheng Xin!

Never had Bai Yunfei imagined that the person who was ‘kidnapping’ him was this person.

“That’s right, it’s me.” Cheng Xin had a disparaging look in his eyes. “You don’t feel scared, do you?”

“Scared?” Bai Yunfei quirked his lips. He shook his head, “We’re not well acquaintanced with each other, so what business have you

with me?”

As things would have it, Zheng Kai never really introduced Cheng Xin to Bai Yunfei, so the two of them were never really ‘acquainted’ with one another and thus didn’t say a word to one another. So what was Cheng Xin playing at now trying to ‘kidnap’ him?

There was a ‘profound’ smile on his face as Cheng Xin asked, “Let me ask you, are you friends with Zheng Kai?”

“Zheng Kai?” Bai Yunfei blinked once, “We’re decent friends, what makes you ask that?”

He wanted to see just what kind of game Cheng Xin was trying to play.

“What benefits has he given you?” Cheng Xin asked.

“Benefits?” Bai Yunfei was mystified now. “We are friends, not master and servant.”

“Pft!!” Cheng Xin snorted derisively, “Friends? You’re nothing more but an attendant. Do you really think Zheng Kai thinks of you as a friend? You’re nothing but an insignificant Soul Ancestor with no status, do you really think he treats you as a true friend?”

Bai Yunfei didn’t know how to respond to Cheng Xin, this wasn’t how he expected the conversation would go. “What are you talking about?”

‘Kindly’, Cheng Xin gave him a ‘heartfelt’ smile. “The Four Lords of the Capital have always been a group of four. They’re great friends with one another, and never has anyone ever been able to join in their group. Even though you might think you’ve it good with them, you’re nothing more but an insignificant attendant, that’s all. If you want to get more out of life, you’d be better off choosing other companions than those four.”

The final puzzle piece landed in its place. Unsure if he should laugh or cry, Bai Yunfei asked, “Meaning?”

“Meaning you should find an even better patron to support.” Cheng Xin offered ‘magnanimously’. “Follow me and have all your desires met. Riches, women, land, cultivation needs....I can get them all for you, how about it?”

A part of Bai Yunfei’s smile twitched at the look of absolute confidence on Cheng Xin’s face. “What would you have me do then?”

Even Cheng Xin found himself smiling even more at the sight of Bai Yunfei’s expression. He had him now. “You’ll be my eyes and ears. Continue by Zheng Kai’s side and report back to me on whatever they do.”

“He wants me to be a ‘spy’!”

Bai Yunfei was amazed, “And if I choose to decline?” He smiled.

“Decline?” The smile on Cheng Xin’s face grew icy. “If you decline, then do you really think you’ll be able to leave from this room alive?”

Chapter 625: Kill Him! (Second)

Bai Yunfei was surprised by the sudden iciness in Cheng Xin's words.

It wasn't as though he was scared, he was just surprised that it happened.

Up until this point, Bai Yunfei thought this was merely just one of those small 'enticements' between those young masters with power in the Capital and those with less. So when Cheng Xin suddenly started to speak a message so obviously meant to be bear ill-will towards Zheng Kai and his group, Bai Yunfei was stunned. Was the man not afraid he'd go back and 'report' to Zheng Kai of what transpired in this room?

But then Cheng Xin went and made this a deal where Bai Yunfei would be killed to keep the secret a secret!

Could the death of a person be so easily done over something as silly as this?

The truth of the matter was that Bai Yunfei's life didn't amount to anything in the eyes of Cheng Xin. He was a mere Soul Ancestor with no background. If a person like that was killed and the body hidden, who would know?

Still, Bai Yunfei wouldn't be cowered by such a situation. "And even if I agreed? Are you not afraid that I'd 'betray' you?" His eyes grew noticeably colder.

"Betray?" Cheng Xin laughed at the notion. His right hand shook once to retrieve a black colored pill. "This is a Spirit Seizing Pill, formed by synthesizing the toxins of sixty-six poisonous soulbeasts. You'll feel an indescribable amount of pain as your soul starts to tear up in ten days. Your soul will be ripped apart in a month if you don't eat the antidote. Even a Soul King will have to expend a great deal of effort to expunge it from their bodies. Do

you think that the Soul King of the house of Zheng will even bother to help you?”

The sinister smile on his face was bone-chilling to say the least.

What an absolutely vile means of doing things!

Cheng Xin looked pleased at the shocked expression on Bai Yunfei's face. “You don't need to worry. I won't treat you badly as long as you serve me faithfully. You'll see plenty of good benefits in the future....”

Confident that he had Bai Yunfei now, he tossed the pill towards Bai Yunfei. “Eat it then and I'll show you just how well it is to serve me.”

Bai Yunfei studied the pill in his hand for a moment, his eyes later turning back to Cheng Xin. “My apologies, but I'll have to decline.”

“What?!”

Cheng Xin cried out in disbelief. “What did you say!? Repeat yourself!”

Bai Yunfei shrugged, “I said I'll have to decline. My apologies. I'll be leaving now. Please find someone else to play the spying game with you, lord Cheng.”

He turned around abruptly, much to the shock of everyone else there in the room. When Bai Yunfei took several steps away from the room, Cheng Xin snapped in anger, “Brat, do you want to die?! I'll give you one last chance or you'll die here today!”

Bai Yunfei turned around for one brief moment to smile mockingly at him. “Are you not afraid of the trouble killing me will have?”

“You talk big game,” Cheng Xin sneered, “but you're a nameless pawn trying to act like a king. Do you really think I'd fall for that? I could have you disappeared and killed in a single night! There'd

be no one that'd pay attention to a nobody like you!"

A nobody?!

Cheng Xin was still looking at Bai Yunfei like an ordinary Soul Ancestor. He had lived in the Capital his entire life, there wasn't anybody of any importance he didn't know. Bai Yunfei didn't look like anyone he should know, and his power was far too low to even be a guard for anyone important. And the fact that Zheng Kai had failed to introduce them only reinforced this misconception, hence why Cheng Xin was treating Bai Yunfei as such.

The indifference on Bai Yunfei's face infuriated Cheng Xin. Feeling that his goodwill had been taken for as a joke, Cheng Xin barked, "If you want to die, then I'll give it to you! Kill him and feed his carcass to the dogs!"

Spoken like an overlord of death, Cheng Xin signed off on the death of Bai Yunfei.

A cold light entered Bai Yunfei's eyes. The actions of Cheng Xin were laughable to Bai Yunfei and not at all something he felt like trying to resolve. Taking one final look at the clownish expression on Cheng Xin's face, Bai Yunfei left the room.

But the fact that Cheng Xin was really intent on killing him meant that Bai Yunfei couldn't leave things lying like that....

Two late-stage Soul Ancestors flew forward as soon as they were given the order as if they had been prepared to do so long before.

One man had a dagger in his hand and the other had a metallic claw equipped on his hand. From both sides, the two rushed at Bai Yunfei in a pincer attack. They weren't too fast, but they managed to get to Bai Yunfei quick enough with their weapons aimed at his throat and heart.

Bai Yunfei stopped Xiao Qi from moving from his shoulder and stood there. His hands flashed crimson and violet before the two Desert Eagles appeared in them.

“Bang! Bang!”

Gunfire ran through the air as a red and violet bullet fired out from the guns to pierce through the thighs of the two Soul Ancestors before they could dodge!

The two men immediately crashed to the ground by Bai Yunfei. Clutching at their legs, they howled in pain and confusion at what had happened.

Hardly anyone had even noticed what Bai Yunfei had done with how fast he moved. All they could see were two mists of blood as two of their own fell to the ground.

“Protect the young master!”

Someone cried out, spurring everyone else into action. The strongest, a late-stage Soul Exalt elder behind Cheng Xin, was the first to act. Stepping in front of Cheng Xin, the elder exploded in a layer of orange light.

With his warning, everyone else was able to respond as well. Yelling aloud, nearly ten more figures came rushing at Bai Yunfei.

Bai Yunfei’s legs remained where they stood, but his hands were a blur as his Desert Eagles fired repeatedly. Bullet after bullet was fired to strike down anyone that drew close to Bai Yunfei, and some of the soul cultivators were hit with at least five of them!

In no time at all, four Soul Ancestors came crashing down to the ground with howls of pain. Two of the early-stage Soul Exalts were able to dodge half of the bullets before being forced back while the two mid-stage Soul Exalts were able to dodge them all. But like the others, they drew back in fear of trying to press their luck.

“Wha—what kind of soul armament is that?!”

Everyone had the same question on their minds.

A peculiar light came over Cheng Xin’s eyes as they fell upon the Desert Eagles in Bai Yunfei’s hands. From behind the elder, he

cried out, “Kill him! Thirty mid-grade primal stones to whomever kills him!”

The two mid-stage Soul Exalts immediately went forward at that along with one of the slightly injured early-stage Soul Exalts. Biting their lips, they clutched their weapons and charged at Bai Yunfei.

Chapter 626: To Kill or Not? (Third)

The weapons Bai Yunfei was wielding were definitely powerful, but that was the extent of it. To the eyes of the Soul Exalts, Bai Yunfei was relying on the two powerful soul armaments to make his stand. The bullets could be dodged if the mid-stage Soul Exalts focused, and as long as they got close enough to Bai Yunfei, they'd be able to kill him quite easily.

Bai Yunfei's eyes grew colder when he saw the three Soul Exalts come at him again. Lifting his right hand, the Fire Eagle in it fired a single bullet.

His hands shook slightly when he fired the Fire Eagle, prompting Bai Yunfei to store both Desert Eagles away. He hadn't been using any of his gun-fu earlier since he felt like his arms were already close to their physical limits. Doing this much was more than enough and had already numbed his arms more than he'd like. His body right now wasn't in the proper shape to use the Desert Eagles.

If it wasn't necessary, Bai Yunfei didn't want to tax his already extremely beaten body any more than it should be.

The final bullet sped towards the early-stage Soul Exalt rather than either of the two mid-stage Soul Exalts closer to Bai Yunfei. The early-stage Soul Exalt looked panicked when he saw the bullet fired at him, but then he sighed in relief. He had enough confidence in his strength to dodge just one bullet.

Green light flooded the area beneath his feet before he leapt to the left to dodge. This way, he'd be able to dodge the bullet.

But then something unexpected happened.

The bullet flew past his shoulder after he dodged, but before the Soul Exalt could do anything else, he saw the bullet make sharp turn and enter his chest from the right!!

It had entered the right side of his chest, meaning his heart was

safe, but the bullet then immediately detonated in his chest! In an explosion of blood and gore, the person fell to the ground and died at once.

The Fire Eagle had fired a homing bullet!

On the other side, Bai Yunfei didn't bother to see if the bullet even hit the early-stage Soul Exalt or not. As soon as the Desert Eagles were placed away, Bai Yunfei retrieved the Cataclysmic Seal and had it protect his body in a layer of elemental earth. The brick then glowed red before flying out from the shield!

“Bang! Bang!!”

The two mid-stage Soul Exalts flew in the opposite direction of Bai Yunfei before unceremoniously crashing into several pieces of furniture and then to the ground.

Silence descended upon the area instantly. The only ones left standing now was Bai Yunfei, Cheng Xin, and the elder protecting him.

“Who....who are you?!”

The elder cried out. When Bai Yunfei used the Cataclysmic Seal to protect himself, he had leaked out a bit of his soulforce to tell the elder that Bai Yunfei was a late-stage Soul Exalt! In that moment, the elder realized that his young charge had angered someone he shouldn't have.

It was too late to back out from this situation peacefully however, and neither did it seem like Bai Yunfei would answer his question. When Bai Yunfei pointed his finger to direct the strange soul armament again, the elder blanched. “Young master, you must flee!!” He cried out to Cheng Xin before summoning his elemental earth to him.

Both of his hands pressed against each other in front of him as he converged all of his elemental earth in front of him, erecting a two-meter thick tortoise-shell shield to stop the Cataclysmic Seal from

crashing into them.

Cheng Xin had been stunned into non action ever since the other Soul Exalts had been knocked out. The elder's cry had snapped him out from his shock, and without further ado he began to flee in panic!

“Bang!!!”

Cheng Xin had barely even turned around to flee when he heard an explosive sound from right behind him. It was so loud and close that it hurt his ears, and then he saw the figure of a person go flying past him faster than he was running!

It was the elder that was meant to protect him! Blood was spilling out from the now pale-faced elder, and his arms were both bent at an awkward angle. The elder flew for a short moment before crashing through the wall of a room and onto the stone ground behind it!

A terrifyingly strong amount of soulforce crept up behind Cheng Xin right afterwards. As strong as he was as a mid-stage Soul Exalt, his strength was useless as he felt something smash heavily into his spine. Crashing into the ground, he spat out a mouthful of blood onto the spot beneath him.

Pained, Cheng Xin hurried to turn onto his back when he heard footsteps approach him. Right now, Bai Yunfei was walking towards him, much to Cheng Xin's fright.

“Do—don't come over!! Who are you?! How are you this strong?!”

Bai Yunfei bent his head down to look at Cheng Xin. “Who am I?” He laughed, “I'm just a ‘nobody’ that lord Cheng wouldn't even bother to pay attention to, aren't I? You...tried to kill me just now, didn't you?”

Cheng Xin was filled with fear as Bai Yunfei drew closer to him, “What...what are you going to do?! I'm warning you, I'm...I'm the

son of a minister!! If you dare hurt me, you'll die a dog's death! Let me go and I'll allow you to leave in one piece!"

Bai Yunfei closed his eyes. Even now, Cheng Xin wasn't very willing to admit his wrongs. "The son of a minister? That is indeed a huge status, but....you did try to kill me just now...."

Killing intent flooded from Bai Yunfei's eyes—he was already marking Cheng Xin down for death.

However, Bai Yunfei did have a sliver of hesitation. Cheng Xin was indeed who he said he was, killing such a person would bring him some troubles. If people were to find out just who killed Cheng Xin, Bai Yunfei would definitely suffer.

If he were to kill Cheng Xin, then he'd have to do it without leaving behind a trace. This by extension meant....he'd have to kill every single person here! Even those ordinary men who saw Bai Yunfei walk in would have to die, else Cheng Xin's death would still be linked back to him.....

Either way, Bai Yunfei wouldn't even bother doing that. Killing others didn't really rank highly on Bai Yunfei's list, and neither did Bai Yunfei enjoy taking away the lives of another....

After a moment's hesitation, Bai Yunfei sighed.

He'd let them go. Or at least....they'd live for now.

But even if he was sparing their lives, some reparation was still in store. Bai Yunfei stepped towards Cheng Xin.

Cheng Xin was nervous when Bai Yunfei approached. His only saving grace was the fact that Bai Yunfei didn't seem like he'd kill him now, but he was still terrified and shivering all over. "What....what are you doing?!"

"Teaching you a lesson to remember. In the future, you shouldn't call for the life of another so easily. And from now on, don't bother me or else the punishment will be ten times worse than this!"

As he spoke, Bai Yunfei's right foot stamped down onto Cheng Xin's right hand!!

Chapter 627: The Start of a Feud (Fourth)

Cheng Xin wanted to run. He really did. He was completely terrified by Bai Yunfei, but no matter how much he wanted to, his spine remained motionless where he laid on the ground. All he could do was watch in horror as Bai Yunfei's foot drew close.

“Stop!!”

An enraged voice called out before showering the area in a tremendous amount of soulforce!

This was....the soulforce of a Soul King!

Cheng Xin's eyes lit up with great relief when he felt the aura. “Second uncle!” He cried out, “Save me uncle! Sa—aahh!!!”

Before he could finish, a sickening crack and a pained scream interrupted his pleas for rescue....

While Bai Yunfei was surprised to feel a Soul King come into the area, that didn't stop him from what he was doing. Without a pause in his step, Bai Yunfei ignored the Soul King and stamped down with his right foot!

His foot came into contact with Cheng Xin's left wrist and snapped it!

It was fortunate for Cheng Xin that Bai Yunfei's physical strength wasn't what it was before, else his left hand would've been reduced to a pulp....

The wall to Bai Yunfei's right collapsed into pieces as a streak of dark green crashed through it. Murderous in its flight, the light coiled around Bai Yunfei's throat like a snake!

The strength of this whiplike wasn't weak enough to just strangle Bai Yunfei to death, it was trying to snap his neck!

“Chirp!!”

Xiao Qi finally took action. Still in its tiny form, he flew off in a

flash of purple light to strike at the whip!

“Pow!!”

Xiao Qi collided with the whip and was sent flying back, but not without success. The whip fell apart when it was hit and turned into fragments of elemental energy.

At a detailed look, the green whip had been the vine of a tree and strengthened with elemental energy!

Xiao Qi flew back to Bai Yunfei's side and shook its wings in annoyance, “That hurt!”

“A class seven soulbeast!!”

A figure in dark green suddenly called out in shock.

The figure took a step closer to be just ten meters away from Bai Yunfei. Staring him down, the figure looked closely at Xiao Qi.

And now Bai Yunfei could see who that figure was. A forty-something year old middle-aged man stood there, the aura of a Soul King radiating from his person. The look on his face looked especially terrifying.

Bai Yunfei hadn't thought a Soul King would come, but one did. Thankfully, this one was an early-stage Soul King and wasn't all too terrifying to fight.

“Ah—ah!! It hurts!! It hurts!! Save me, uncle!!”

Cheng Xin cried out again. At his cry, the Soul King immediately leapt towards Bai Yunfei to try and save Cheng Xin.

At the same time, Bai Yunfei leapt away from Cheng Xin to land twenty meters away.

As surprised as the Soul King was, he couldn't care for Bai Yunfei at the current moment. He reached Cheng Xin's side and immediately covered him in a bubble of green light. The pained look on Cheng Xin's face alleviated a bit before his eyes rolled to the back of his head and fainted.

The Soul King allowed himself a single breath of relief now that Cheng Xin wasn't in danger anymore, though Cheng Xin had still been hurt quite heavily. His glare at Bai Yunfei darkened by a notch.

“Who are you and why have you harmed my nephew?!”

The Soul King really wanted to first beat Bai Yunfei half to death before he interrogated him, but the presence of Xiao Qi on his shoulder made it more prudent that he asked before he did anything.

Bai Yunfei gave him a cold smile. “Your nephew was the first to kidnap me and try to treat me unwell. The fact that I didn't kill him is an act of mercy already. As for what happened, perhaps you should hear it from your own nephew first.”

“Kidnapped?!” The elder cried out to himself. With how strong Bai Yunfei was, how could Cheng Xin possibly kidnap him?!

Not wishing to stay or try to explain himself to the Soul King, Bai Yunfei turned to leave the place without at all caring.

But the Soul King barked at him to stay still, “Stay where you are!”

“Roar!!”

A giant golden streak of light leapt from behind the Soul King to rush onwards to Bai Yunfei and hold him in place!

At a detailed glance, this was a giant tiger the size of a bison!

This was the soulbeast contracted with the Soul King. It wasn't a class seven yet, but it was still a peak late-stage class six in strength!

The Soul King himself could deal with Xiao Qi, so that left his tiger soulbeast to deal with Bai Yunfei. Since the tiger was a peak late-stage class six and Bai Yunfei only a late-stage, the Soul King figured it wouldn't be too hard for him to have Bai Yunfei remain

here.

But even when he was planning to subjugate Bai Yunfei, he realized that Bai Yunfei had already turned around to stare at the tiger. “Scram!”

The moment he spoke, there was a pulse of light as the Cataclysmic Seal grew to the size of a wall and slammed into the tiger with a sickening thud!

Unable to even properly respond in time to the sudden embiggening of the Cataclysmic Seal, the tiger wailed loudly before being struck backwards!

As the tiger flew away, the Soul King stood there, one foot outwards from the other to stare at Bai Yunfei in shock.

“That....that was a soul attack!!”

It wasn't the fact that the tiger had been struck back that alarmed the Soul King. It was the fact that Bai Yunfei had unleashed a soul attack when he spoke up!

That had been the reason why the tiger didn't look like it had enough time to respond to the brick before the brick sent it flying away.

As such, the Soul King was forced to re-evaluate Bai Yunfei before he could do anything else.

Bai Yunfei gave the Soul King a single cold look. “I'm going to leave. You'd best not stop me.”

And with that, Bai Yunfei leapt into the air with his legs shining red.

There was some hesitation from the Soul King, but he could only stand there and watch as Bai Yunfei grew farther and farther away from sight.

He hadn't the confidence in stopping Bai Yunfei. The Soul King was starting to doubt if even he could stop Bai Yunfei from leaving,

let alone his soulbeast. That Bai Yunfei had a strength that was surely beyond that of a late-stage Soul Exalt....

“Blast!!”

The elder cursed aloud before turning his attention back to Cheng Xin and his wounds.

.....

In the night sky above, Bai Yunfei slowly made his way over the Capital before finding a familiar landmark to descend back down and make his way back to his home from there.

Xiao Qi had been scanning the area beforehand to see if anyone was following them, but after his scans revealed nothing, Bai Yunfei sighed in relief.

But there was still a helpless look on his face.

“Sigh....looks like I’ve become enemies with the house of Cheng. If only that Cheng Xin wasn’t so stupid in trying to start trouble with me, otherwise....”

Bai Yunfei sighed, his eyes shining with a cold light.

He didn’t want to cause trouble, but he wasn’t scared of it either. If there were people wanting to die, then he’d all too happy in helping them do so.

Chapter 628: The Attention From the House of Cheng (Fifth)

It was with a heavy heart that the Soul King let Bai Yunfei leave the area. He couldn't stop Bai Yunfei from doing so. All he could do was stand next to Cheng Xin and try to heal him as much as he could.

The room they were in was already in a tragic state. It was shattered into two pieces with the walls hardly standing and not even a single tile there in one whole piece. Aside from Cheng Xin who was being healed by the Soul King, Cheng Changlin, there were also the other ten or so members Bai Yunfei injured healing their own injuries.

Of the ten was one of the elders initially there to protect Cheng Xin. He was bowing to Cheng Changlin apologetically, but his apologies were only replied to with Cheng Changlin saying, "Heal your wounds first. We'll speak about this later."

.....

Several long moments would go by before Cheng Xin's face was back to normal levels in coloration and a rosy red hue in his cheeks. At the same time, Cheng Changlin heard four separate individuals come flying on over to this area.

Soon enough, these four people came to a stop by the ground not too far away and strode over to him.

At the head of this group was a white-haired elder. Right besides him was a middle-aged man who looked rather similar to Cheng Changlin in appearance. The two men behind them were only guards.

"Second uncle, third brother, you've arrived." Cheng Chanlin greeted them.

This elderly man was Cheng Xin's grandfather, Cheng

Chaochuan, a mid-stage Soul King. The middle-aged man next to him was the third uncle of Cheng Xin, Cheng Changshan and a peak late-stage Soul Exalt.

Cheng Chaochuan's eyes swept the area before looking to Cheng Xin on the ground, "How is little Xin?"

"His spine is cracked and his carpal bones are broken, but he's not in danger of dying and the wounds aren't unhealable. They aren't light either, I've already applied first aid to him, but he'll need to rest for a good amount of time."

"Who was it that hurt little Xin? Who?" Cheng Changshan spat angrily.

"I'm not sure myself," Cheng Changlin sighed, "The person who did already left...."

"Left?!" Cheng Changshan's eyes flew open, "Brother, how could you let that person leave?!"

"That person was very strong, I....I couldn't keep him here."

"What?! Even you couldn't keep him here?!" Cheng Changshan suddenly noticed the injured tiger next to his brother, "Was that person a mid-stage Soul King?!"

"Most likely not, though I....I couldn't figure out if he was even a Soul King or not." Cheng Changshan despaired, "He had a class seven bird with him and could even use a soul attack. His soul armament was extremely strong too, it slammed aside my sandstorm tiger in an instant and nearly crippled it...."

"That strong?!"

"If he could use a soul attack, then he has to be a Soul King, and if there was also a class seven soulbeast, it's no wonder you couldn't keep them here.....blast! How did little Xin anger a person like that?! Who in the world is he?!"

Cheng Changshan shook his head, "I'm not very sure. He was

very young, but very strong. I've never seen him before, so I cannot ascertain who he is....”

Cheng Changchuan walked over to the injured elder next to them, “Cheng Yu, tell us what happened.”

Having been trying to heal his wounds, the elder struggled to rise to his feet, “Yes....this afternoon, the young master....”

With clear details, Cheng Yu began to retell the story of what happened from when Cheng Xin, Du Shaokong and the others fought with the Four Lords of the Capital to when Cheng Xin had people bring Bai Yunfei over, and then to when Bai Yunfei suddenly defeated everyone and left. Not even a single detail was left out.

Cheng Chaochuan had an ugly look on his face, “Pah! What a mess!! This is all because you've spoiled the boy! He should've learned to behave properly, and now look at what mess he's gotten us! If not for Changlin just happening to be training in this particular area, who knows if little Xin's life would've been saved!”

Neither Cheng Changlin or Cheng Changshan dared to say anything until the elder man was finished speaking.

“You said he came with Zheng Kai?” Cheng Changlin asked Cheng Yu.

“Correct.”

“Just who is this person and how strong is he to be with the Four Lords of the Capital? How is there such a powerful youngster all of a sudden?”

Suddenly, his eyes lit up as if he had just remembered a crucial detail, “Do you remember if that class seven soulbeast was a prisma oriole?” He asked Cheng Changlin.

“Prisma oriole?” Cheng Changlin repeated, “I didn't look too closely, but how could a class seven prisma oriole exist?? Those...”

He trailed off his words as he thought carefully of the bird from the fight. “Hold on, a class seven prisma oriole? Second uncle, are you perhaps saying that youngster is....Bai Yunfei?!”

Bai Yunfei was a name that was making waves through the Capital. Even the Soul Kings had heard of his name once or twice already.

“They say that Bai Yunfei is good friends with Zheng Kai, it may very well be him!!” Cheng Chanlin concluded.

“Bai Yunfei? The instructor of the crafting class in Tianhun Academy—that Bai Yunfei?!” Cheng Changshan snorted, “If we know who he is, we should have him captured and avenge little Xin then, brother!”

“Stop!!” Cheng Chaochuan boomed, “That Bai Yunfei is very special, how can you act so rashly? We still aren’t even sure if it’s him, do your due diligence first before doing anything else!”

Cheng Chaochuan had a strange look in his eyes after he looked at Cheng Xin, “Bai Yunfei....he’s been in trouble after trouble ever since he came into the Capital. And the disciple of Zi Jin from the Crafting School....we’d need to do a more comprehensive investigation before anything else....”

.....

On the other side, Bai Yunfei had finally gotten home where he immediately stopped thinking about the headache with Cheng Xin. He sat down on his bed and looked at the pile of rings in front of him in thought.

These rings were all....space rings!!

After realizing that he had a great amount of space rings, Bai Yunfei decided to have all of them upgraded.

He had more space rings than he knew what to do with them, so upgrading them all and seeing if he could find a ring with great stats wouldn’t be too bad of a thing.

At the same time, this would allow him to search for yet another clue on the secrets of upgrading.

Calming himself down, Bai Yunfei allowed himself a slow exhale. Taking a space ring into his hand and sweeping his eyes over it, Bai Yunfei thought:

“Upgrade.”

Chapter 629: Upgrading Difficulties (Sixth)

The final space ring in the pile of rings burst into ashes in Bai Yunfei's hands. Likewise, Bai Yunfei looked like he was ready to burst into tears.

“Am I in a nightmare? Two hundred space rings and they're all destroyed....”

After spending several hours tirelessly working on upgrading the two hundred space rings, Bai Yunfei was able to upgrade several of them to decent stats. But...in the end, not even a single +12 ring was to be had!!

Even with the aid of the Luck Pendant, Bai Yunfei wasn't able to override his bad 'upgrade luck' today.

Sighing, Bai Yunfei looked at the black ring on his left forefinger.

Equipment Grade: High
Elemental Affinity: None
Upgrade Level: +12
Additional Attribute: +130 Spirit
Soul Compatibility: 28%
+10 Additional Effect: 5% Decrease in soulforce consumption when using skills.
+12 Additional Effect: 15% Damage reduction from spirit-based attacks.

This was one of his +12 space rings that gave resistance to soul attacks and had also been a great deal of help to him since the very beginning.

But it was a retired space ring now and now only there for when Bai Yunfei had need of its specific purposes. Its effects were rather limited, so Bai Yunfei opted for the Yun's Soul Ring rather than this one in general times. The right hand had the Violet Soul Ring and helped him greatly in battle in terms of increasing his spirit, even if it didn't really have any battle-specific effects. There was also the Charm Bracelet and the Soul Sentinel Scarf, so a 15%

reduction in spirit-based attacks wasn't much. Thus, Bai Yunfei had this ring as a reserve item.

Bai Yunfei stared at the ring for a moment in hesitation. "Forget it...." He sighed. "I can't be rash. This has a hard to get effect, it'll be a great pain if I destroyed this one...."

He already knew that upgrading non soul armament items (Superior grade and under) had a tremendously low chance of success. He didn't know just why this was the case, but the truth was the truth. For rings who were only 'High' grade in quality, upgrading them to +13 would be an even smaller chance.

When he was upgrading the +11 space rings he had from another time, Bai Yunfei tried replicating the ability in changing the upgrading outcome like he did with the Critical Gloves. Unfortunately for him, he wasn't able to replicate it whenever he wanted.

It was at least worth mentioning that he was able to at least replicate the effects of that one miraculous time. At one point when he was upgrading right now, he had been able to change the outcome, but....that time had only been when he was upgrading it from +6. Being able to change the outcome on such a low upgrade level like that had almost no value at all though.

He could at the very least confirm that the ability to 'change' the outcome was still possible. And that much was more than enough for Bai Yunfei to continue trying to learn more about upgrading.

.....

Aside from that, Bai Yunfei would come to the Soothing Heart for his morning and evening Soul Consolidating Tea. Its effects were truly miraculous to Bai Yunfei and he could already feel a substantial difference in how his soul was now. Though neither he nor Dan Teng could tell just when his soul would fully heal after going through that ordeal in Baishan City, they both agreed that taking it nice and slow was all that was needed.

Still, to drink away a high-grade primal stone a day was still taxing on Bai Yunfei and he found himself feeling like he had to find a way to alleviate the burden on his finances a little bit.

Perhaps he should go play at Casino Jin for a while?

Zheng Kai came to see Bai Yunfei still, but relatively less than before. Twice before he wanted to have Bai Yunfei come with them and Du Shaokong's group to play. It seemed as though the two groups were getting on quite well with each other, but the trouble that came onto him due to Zheng Kai and the Cheng weighed quite heavily on Bai Yunfei, so he declined both of Zheng Kai's invitations to stay in his home and focus on researching.

The only other thing worth mentioning were his students. Every so often, they'd pay his house a visit now that they knew where he lived so they could ask him a few crafting-related questions.

.....

Time quickly went by before the first day of the week came.

Eating his meal and drinking his tea, Bai Yunfei took Xiao Qi with him to Tianhun Academy.

He traveled down the busy roads without stop through the academy and soon came to the mountaintop.

As per usual, Bai Yunfei leapt onto the part of the mountain where classes was to be held and where his students were usually gathered. The difference this time today was the fact that his students were all gathering around a single person to talk rather than their usual seminar with each other to discuss the matters of crafting.

In the middle of them all was a single relatively short little girl.

Everyone saw Bai Yunfei when he came and immediately greeted him. Afterwards, Bai Yunfei heard Mo Chen say to the girl, "Sister Ping'er, this is our instructor Bai Yunfei."

The group split apart to allow Bai Yunfei a better look at this girl. She was about fourteen or fifteen years old and had pearly-white skin that seemed to shine like crystals almost. Her eyes were wide but lively, and her lips a cherry red. Her nose was gentle-looking like that of a baby. Anyone that saw her would most likely be seized with the temptation to want to rub her cheeks.

She looked a little familiar to Bai Yunfei, however. Staring closely for a second, Bai Yunfei's head snapped up, this girl somehow looked familiar to that girl Huangfu Rui back in the Crafting School!

It was at that time the young girl swiveled to curiously look at Bai Yunfei as if to measure him up.

She crinkled her nose in slight confusion. "This is my brother's teacher?? He looks super young just like brother is. How is he a teacher?? Aren't teachers supposed to be old wrinkly men with long white beards and have closed eyes?"

"Er...." No one knew exactly how to respond to that. Even Bai Yunfei scratched at his chin in embarrassment, "Haha, who is this little girl?"

His question was posed to everyone, but it was the girl herself who answered, "I'm Wu Ping!! I came to play with fourth brother!"

Wu Ping?! Fourth brother?

Bai Yunfei narrowed his eyes, didn't that mean....

Wu Yang suddenly looked bashful behind Wu Ping. "Hehe, instructor Bai.....this is my fifth sister, Wu Ping. She really wanted to see how the crafting class is like and I couldn't refuse her, so I brought her here. I hope you won't mind, instructor...."

Wu Yang's fifth sister—this girl was a princess then!?

Chapter 630: The Fifth Princess Wu Ping (Seventh)

The current ruler of the empire, His Majesty Wu Hong, had five children in total: the First Prince Wu Ren, the Second Prince Wu Zuo, the Third Princess Wu Xiu, the Fourth Prince Wu Yang, and the Fifth Princess Wu Ping.

Bai Yunfei had met the first, second, and fourth prince before. He had also heard that the third princess was engaged to the son of the Minister of the Left and that the fifth princess was usually in the Royal Palace due to her young age.

He just never expected that today would be the day he'd meet the fifth princess.

And what a very cute young girl she was.

Bai Yunfei was initially surprised to see just who she was, but he managed to smile at her. "Haha, Bai Yunfei pays his respects to Her Highness the Fifth Princess."

"Heehee, oh stop it. I hate it when people call me Her Highness. Just call me Ping'er." Wu Ping giggled, her long hair braid swinging when she shook her head.

A princess that didn't enjoy having people call her 'Her Highness the princess'? That was a bit interesting....

"If you're fourth brother's teacher, are you amazing then?"

"What does it mean to be....'amazing'?"

"Uhm....my eldest brother is really amazing, are you as amazing as he is?"

Said eldest brother was a....mid-stage Soul King.

"That's...." Bai Yunfei looked embarrassed, "The First Prince is a genius, I could never compare to him."

“Oh, you’re not amazing then...”

“.....”

If the First Prince was to be the golden standard for if one was amazing or not, then everyone in his generation would have to slam their heads to the wall.

“Fourth brother said that you’re amazing at crafting, is that true?”

Wu Ping asked another question.

“I suppose so....”

“Really?! I saw my fourth brother try crafting before. He threw in so many materials into his cauldron but everything burned to pieces. Sometimes the soul armaments he crafts look even worse than the stones he throws in. In my opin--mphm...!”

Before she could finish her sentence, Wu Yang quickly put his palm over her mouth.

“.....”

The way Wu Ping was trying to ask so many questions like a curious cat left Bai Yunfei unsure if he should laugh or cry. In his mind, she was a lot like Huangfu Rui. If the two ever met, Bai Yunfei was sure they’d get along with each other perfectly.

Bai Yunfei was able to answer several of the questions from the princess, but then when she said that the scarf on his head made him look stupid, Bai Yunfei felt like puking blood. With a final sigh, he spoke, “Well then, princess Ping’er, I’ve class to start. Why don’t you...”

“Class?” Wu Ping lit up with excitement. “Okay okay! I want to see what classes are like!”

Feeling slightly embarrassed, Wu Yang took the girl by her sleeve. “Come on, sister, I’ll show you the crafting cave I use. You’ll be able to see what class is like in there.” He whispered to

her.

“We can go in the caves?!” Wu Ping looked even more excited. Her eyes stared down the caves for a moment before she spoke with concern, “It’s such a small cave, won’t it collapse on us? Didn’t you collapse one of the rooms in the Eastern Sun Palace?”

Wu Yang looked ready to burst into tears at that, “You silly girl, didn’t you promise to not tell anyone about that....”

Everyone was silent at that.

As Bai Yunfei prepared to go into his cave to start the class, Xiao Qi spoke up from his shoulder. “Yunfei, I’m going to find Xiao Lan. I’ll come back when class is over.”

Before Bai Yunfei could even respond, Wu Ping spoke up first, “Ah!!! The little bird can talk!!”

All the other students of the class had been surprised the first time they heard Xiao Qi speak, but they treated him with great respect after they found out. That much should’ve been a given with how Xiao Qi was a class seven. A Soul King or class seven were both existences countless people could only dream of reaching.

Wu Ping was only an early-stage Soul Ancestor and was unable to see through Xiao Qi’s strength. And with how he was sitting without talking on Bai Yunfei’s shoulder, it was only natural that she feel surprised when he started talking.

A brilliant gleam of light entered Wu Ping’s eyes after her shock subsided. “A soulbeast that can talk!! Just like Da Huang! You’re even cuter than Da Huang!”

Xiao Qi gave the little girl a small glance of disdain, “Is there something strange with being able to talk? Is it a bad thing for me to be a class seven?”

“What? Class seven?!” Wu Ping’s eyes grew wide like dinner plates, “You’re....a class seven?!”

“What? Don’t believe me?” Xiao Qi chirped, “You’re too weak, it’s no wonder you can’t tell.”

“Hmph!” She pouted, “Who said I couldn’t tell? Fourth brother told me before that his teacher had a class seven bird, so it was you! But Da Huang back home is a lot stronger than you...”

“Does your family own a class seven soulbeast too? How strong is it? Let him meet me.”

“I can’t. Da Huang usually stays at home and never comes out....”

“Che, what point is there in telling me? I don’t want to listen to your bragging!” Xiao Qi ruffled his wings, “Anyways, I’m going to play with Xiao Lan.”

And just like that, Xiao Qi disappeared into the Training Forest in a blur of light.

“Ah!! Don’t you run little bird! Who’s Xiao Lan?! I want to play too!”

Wu Ping cried out after the bird, but it was too late. Xiao Qi was already gone.

Bai Yunfei shook his head. “Well, let’s go to our caves and begin class then.”

His words rekindled the excitement in Wu Ping who immediately ran after Bai Yunfei when he turned to walk into his cave. Wu Yang had to pull her back into his own cave after that so she wouldn’t disturb Bai Yunfei.

With everyone entering their crafting cave, Bai Yunfei had the Illusion Stones activate. He also heard the little girl gasp when they did.

.....

Like always, Bai Yunfei explained a few important concepts to the class before then making sure they understood the finer concepts by using more detailed explanations on the usage of

materials and methodologies. From demonstration, to explanation, to guidance....

Bai Yunfei slowly taught the class concept from concept. While he was explaining something, Bai Yunfei felt something strange. Raising an eyebrow, he sent a message to everyone, "Please put into practice what I've taught you so far, I will be right back."

And before anyone could ask, Bai Yunfei suddenly took back his Lightningfire Cauldron and left his crafting cave.

Stepping off from the ground to fly into the air, Bai Yunfei traveled for the Training Forest. His eyes narrowed as he traveled further into the forest, and with another press of his foot, Bai Yunfei flew even faster into the skies.

Chapter 631: A Furious Xiao Lan

In the depths of the Training Forest countless meters away from Tianhun Academy.

There lied a small hill where explosion after explosion rung out. With each explosion, a gleam of shining light could be seen.

Five figures stood there to fight with one another against a gigantic figure. From their auras, the five of them were all Soul Exalts. Two of them were mid-stage and the other three were late-stage.

The five men were fighting excitedly, several of them even laughing every so often as they played with the giant foe in front of them.

“Haha!! So there was even a class six blue-eyes wurm here, what a rare soulbeast!”

“None of you better take him! I’ll defeat the wurm and make it into my contracted soulbeast! Haha! A class six soulbeast will increase my strength by a lot!”

“As if! I saw this blue-eyes wurm too! You’ve already killed the white-horned deer I gave you, so don’t even think about stealing this one from me!”

“There’s no point in fighting, this blue-eyes wurm doesn’t want to contract with any of you guys! Let’s just kill it! Its soulgem will definitely be worth a pretty penny, I might be able to become a late-stage Soul Exalt with this!”

“That works!! I’ve never had the meat of a blue-eyes wurm before! I bet it’ll be delicious!!”

The men around the blue-eyes wurm spoke with each other nonchalantly to discuss what they’d do with the soulbeast. Already, many of them had already started to think about how the soulbeast would taste in their bellies.

The soulbeast fighting the five men from the middle was the blue-eyes wyrm Bai Yunfei knew, Xiao Lan!

But the strange thing was the fact that it was a mid-stage class six soulbeast in strength now, hence why it was being beaten into such a disadvantageous state.

There was fury in the blue-eyes wyrm's eyes. Elemental water splashed out with each strike from the wyrm's claws. Three blades of elemental water would come out from its claws as well as a swing of its tail in order to force the five men around it away from it.

But even as hard as it was fighting, the wyrm wasn't able to beat back all of its enemies and keep track of them all. Every so often, a wave of elemental energy would slam into the wyrm and hurt it. Even in its disadvantageous state, it was still capable of hearing and understanding what the five men were talking about. It was furious, unwilling to give up, and above all else, unafraid.

Up in a giant tree about a hundred meters away from this fight was a prisma oriole the size of a pigeon. From its high perch, the bird watched the fight without ever looking away.

It was Xiao Qi.

The bird turned around to look at a figure who just suddenly came into the sky next to him.

The figure quickly came to Xiao Qi's side with a stunned look, "What happened here, Xiao Qi?!"

It was Bai Yunfei.

He had felt Xiao Qi send a message through their bond when he was teaching the class. Knowing something had happened, Bai Yunfei quickly stopped teaching in order to come to where Xiao Qi was, only to see Xiao Lan being besieged from every side while Xiao Qi watched.

The fact that Xiao Qi was at a disadvantage in this fight puzzled

him. He wasn't sure of what was going on, but his soulforce immediately started to spike so he could enter the battle to help out.

“Wai! Yunfei, we shouldn't interfere.” Xiao Qi suddenly called out to him. “Xiao Lan didn't want me to help him, he said he wanted to do this by himself.”

“What?”

Bai Yunfei paused. So that was why Xiao Qi wasn't helping out Xiao Lan earlier.

“But why is that?” He asked, “What's Xiao Lan trying to do?”

“Eh?!” Bai Yunfei cried out when he realized Xiao Lan's soulforce, “Xiao Lan's soulforce....why is it only a mid-stage class six?!”

“Oh, Xiao Lan's master used some secret to seal up his strength. He said that this way would be a lot faster for him to become a class seven. I don't really get it though....”

“There's something like that?” Bai Yunfei had never heard of such a thing before. “What in the world is going on?”

“I don't know who these people are,” Xiao Qi began, “but Xiao Lan and I were talking when we saw a battle nearby. Xiao Lan said he was the boss of this area so he wanted to see if someone was trying to make trouble. Then we saw those group of people killing a bunch of soulbeasts, chee!! What a group of scum! Xiao Lan was angry and wanted to eat them, but he didn't want me to help. In the end....he started to fight with those people.”

“Uh....” The more Bai Yunfei heard, the more mystified he was about Xiao Lan's current situation. Not only was the wurm the boss of this area, these people were....

“Killing soulbeasts? What are they trying to do?”

“They had already killed a lot of soulbeasts by the time Xiao Lan

and I came. They were super happy when they did it too, how annoying!” Xiao Qi chirped in anger, “One of them was skinning a live wind antelope when we came in too!! And they were enjoying it while they were doing it!”

Bai Yunfei glanced over to the edge of where the group were fighting. Over there, a pile of crimson-red sacks of flesh could be seen. It was a pile of dismembered soulbeast arms and legs!!

It was a grotesque sight. All sorts of soulbeasts were killed so wantonly by these group of five without even having their soulgems being extracted. The soulbeasts were killed simply for the sake of being hunted and killed, meaning their deaths was completely pointless and excessive.

Bai Yunfei felt his eyebrows start to narrow at the sight—how could such a thing happen in the Training Forest?

It was no wonder the blue-eyes wurm was so angry. If so many of its fellow soulbeasts were being tortured and massacred like this, any rational soulbeast would be unable to stomach the sight. But unfortunately for the soulbeast, these people weren't easy to kill. It was still unknown just what Long Zhen used seal Xiao Lan's strength to the levels of a mid-stage class six, and despite the fact that it was losing the battle, it was still impressive that Xiao Qi was able to last as long as it was.

“Roar!!!”

A pained cry erupted from the blue-eyes wurm as a golden beam of light slashed viciously onto its back. The beam of light sliced into its flesh, and soon enough, blood was spitting out from the dreadful looking opening.

“No!! Xiao Lan's in danger! Yunfei, should we go help out?” Xiao Qi chirped in concern.

“Of course we're going to help out. It doesn't matter if he said not to interfere. He's not as strong as before, he's only going to end up

in a wok if this continues!”

Bai Yunfei cried out to Xiao Qi, already speeding towards the group of five in a burst of wind.

Chapter 632: I Want to Eat Them

The fury the blue-eyes wyrm was feeling now was far worse than before. If only it had its actual strength! It would've swallowed these annoying gnats a long time ago. But its master had sealed its strength a few days ago and warned that the seal wouldn't be removed so easily. As a mid-stage class six soulbeast, it didn't have enough strength to defeat the group of five anymore.

But now that the fight had progressed longer than it thought, the wyrm wasn't even sure if it would be able to live after this. Furious, the wyrm wanted to try and force open the seal on it, but before it could try, the wyrm felt two familiar sources of soulforce from behind. It gave up the thought after a moment's hesitation. Even though it had told Xiao Qi to not help him earlier, the disadvantage it was in now made it think twice about that particular matter.

The five men smiled to themselves at the harmed state of the blue-eyes wyrm. Laughing, they all prepared for the final blow to kill the wyrm when....

“Stop right there!!”

An exceedingly loud voice called out to the five men, causing them to stop in their footsteps. In the next moment, they turned their heads to see a single blade of fire shoot into the area in front of them.

“Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!”

The five men brought their arms up to protect themselves from the blade of fire. Though they managed to protect themselves, the impact of the explosion had them scurrying away from the wyrm and to the right where they all bunched together in fright.

Bai Yunfei didn't bother to unleash another attack after that. Instead, he came to a stop to the left side of the blue-eyes wyrm.

At that moment, Bai Yunfei saw just who the five were, and of the five, he was surprised to see one of them....

“You?”

His face scrunched up as he asked the question.

There was someone he ‘recognized’ among the five!

“It’s you?!”

Another voice spoke to him at the exact same time he did. The man looked at Bai Yunfei in equal parts shocked and furious.

This person was...Cheng Xin!!

The other four people realized that Cheng Xin recognized who Bai Yunfei was at his cry of anger. “Cheng Xin, you know this person??” One of them asked.

“Know him? Of course I do! He’s the one who injured me a few days ago!!!” Cheng Xin gave Bai Yunfei a death glare, his face red and his teeth gnashed together.

“What?!” One of them cried, “He’s the one who hurt you super badly?!”

“It’s him!! I’d recognize him even if he was a pile of ashes!” Cheng Xin bitterly reaffirmed.

An odd sensation welled up in Bai Yunfei’s mind. It would appear that fate had something in store for him and Cheng Xin if they met twice in such a short amount of time. It seemed that Cheng Xin had already healed from the wounds he gave?

He didn’t know that Cheng Xin had a Soul King heal his wounds, thus how the man was able to heal so fast. A wound like that was a trivial matter for a Soul King.

After his recuperation, however, the elders of his family forbade him from trying to enact revenge onto Bai Yunfei. Cheng Xin still didn’t know who Bai Yunfei was actually. The elders were afraid that Cheng Xin would try something stupid and even put him

under house arrest to hopefully cool his head.

Unfortunately for them, Cheng Xin didn't take that house arrest seriously and slipped out from his home. Calling for a few of his rogue friends, he decided to come to the Training Forest to vent off his anger and go 'hunting'.

The people he was with were people of similar circumstances to him. They were all born to great families and lacked very little. Blessed with a bit of talent and a plethora of resources to become Soul Exalts with, these particular nobles were quite fond of coming to the Training Forest to go 'hunting'. Hunting, as it was, was a quite special 'event' for people like them.

The Training Forest was primarily used for the students of Tianhun Academy to train in, though it didn't always make sure to keep out outsiders, especially those with 'special' statuses.

The hunting they did wasn't known to many, and even the ones that knew were careful not to tell. Their hunting was generally kept to a low profile by going after the lower leveled soulbeasts, and if they did get caught, their families were powerful enough to bail them out if needed.

It was just this time, the group decided to rely on their strength to go a little deeper into the forest to try their luck. And as it just so happened, they came across a blue-eyes wyrm.

.....

“Who are you people?”

Bai Yunfei asked the group in front of him.

The people with Cheng Xin had already known what happened to him prior to their excursion to the Training Forest. This person stopping their 'fun' was also the hated enemy of Cheng Xin, and if that was the case, should they fight him here and now?

“Who are we?” The mid-stage Soul Exalt to Cheng Xin's right snapped in disdain. “You've some balls to not know who we are.

Kid, let's see if you'll ever be able to forget who we are after we break your arms and legs!!”

“.....”

Bai Yunfei stared incredulously at the young man who spoke just then. He really wanted to ask if his head had been slammed against a door when he was younger for him to be able to say such hedonistic words like that so easily. For a person who was a mid-stage Soul Exalt, his ability was as wasted on a dog as it was on him.

He was using elemental platforms to stay in midair, meaning that the group was taking him to be an early-stage Soul Exalt right now, hence why they were being so aggressive towards him. Cheng Xin knew just how strong Bai Yunfei was, but the rancor he felt towards Bai Yunfei was far stronger than his fear for him. The events that happened to him the other day had gone by far too fast for him to really remember, and the pain he felt had blurred the other memories as well. Now that his most hated enemy was right in front of him and his fellow ‘brothers’ were with him ready to fight together to take down Bai Yunfei, Cheng Xin was more than ready to take revenge.

Even if they couldn't defeat Bai Yunfei, Cheng Xin was planning to have Bai Yunfei make enemies with the families of the four here with him....

“Roar!!”

There was a furious roar as the blue-eyes wyrm recovered from the near-death experience it was in. Retreating to Bai Yunfei's side, the wyrm glared at the five men with a look that promised pain.

It knew that there wasn't a need to fight to the death right now. With Bai Yunfei and Xiao Qi here, these ants could easily be dealt with, wouldn't they?

Bai Yunfei didn't bother to ask anymore questions from the other

group. If Cheng Xin was with them, these group of people were surely not people of good characters. Looking to the blue-eyes wyrm, he asked, “Well, Xiao Lan, what do you think we should do with these people?”

Xiao Lan turned its head to gave Bai Yunfei a look. It gave two short growls before again glaring hatefully at the five.

The Charm Bracelet on Bai Yunfei’s wrist pulsated as a mental link was established between Bai Yunfei and the wyrm, allowing Bai Yunfei to understand what the wyrm was trying to say. Bai Yunfei’s lips twitched at the wyrm’s message, his eyes looking a little helpless, “You...want to eat them. That probably won’t do, it’s a little excessive after all....”

The blue-eyes wyrm repeated its desire, “I want to eat them!!”

Chapter 633: Breaking Both Arms

Bai Yunfei's lips twitched at the wyrm's message, his eyes looking a little helpless, "You...want to eat them. That probably won't do, it's a little excessive after all...."

The blue-eyes wyrm was simply thinking about 'eating' any human that dared try to kill it. It was survival of the fittest in the most simplest of terms, but that kind of ideology wouldn't work in this place. Even if they excluded four of the five people there, Cheng Xin was the son of one of the ministers, he couldn't be so easily killed and eaten like that.

While killing Cheng Xin would make Bai Yunfei feel slightly happy, it'd also bring down a great deal of trouble onto them all. Bai Yunfei had thought about this matter before, hence why he didn't kill Cheng Xin the first time.

.....

While the five men were trying to figure out what was going on, Bai Yunfei was giving Xiao Lan's proposal some serious consideration.

"How about this," Bai Yunfei compromised, "we can break both their arms and call it there, alright?"

"Mrrr...."

The blue-eyes wyrm didn't like that idea at all, but it agreed nonetheless. Bai Yunfei's opinion mattered greatly to the wyrm, and it was already used to following whatever plan Bai Yunfei had. The wyrm could only 'agree' with whatever it was Bai Yunfei was saying this time.

"What?!"

Cheng Xin and the others took immediate response to the compromise Bai Yunfei had. Shocked, the young man behind Cheng Xin was the first to respond, "What...what did he just say?!"

Did I hear that right? He said he was going to break our arms?!”

“Haha!! Is this person touched in the head?! What a joke, I’m dying here!” Another man by Cheng Xin’s side roared out in scornful laughter.

The mid-stage Soul Exalt next to Cheng Xin had an odd look on his face, but it quickly gave way to anger. What Bai Yunfei said left him seeing red almost. He was making a mockery of them, and for people like them who spent their days living well beyond most others, how could they take such humiliation like that?

It was only Cheng Xin whose heart went still with dread when he heard what Bai Yunfei said. Fear gripped at his heart for a moment before the words of his companion snapped him back out of it. He couldn’t show any fear right now. He had to maintain his face all the way to the end.

Not even caring for the reaction of the five, Bai Yunfei started to speak aloud, “Since you haven’t stated your identities, I no longer care to find out. You’ve angered my friend here and tried to take advantage of it. Breaking both of your arms will serve as your discipline of sorts.”

Breaking both arms would serve as discipline of sorts?!

The ‘warning’ Bai Yunfei was giving about their ‘verdicts’ angered the five people even more and caused several of them to start seeing red.

“You ignoramus of an idiot!! Who do you think you are?! Breaking both our arms? Fine!! Just try it! We’ll be the ones breaking both your arms and legs! We’ll show you we’re not people to mess with!!”

The person next to Cheng Xin spat in anger, “Get him!!”

The reason why this person had all five people move at once wasn’t because they knew how strong Bai Yunfei was. It was because they were afraid of the blue-eyes wurm attacking them

with Bai Yunfei. Preventing that didn't require much thought.

If a person that the blue-eyes wrym obeyed without much thought appeared, would that person really be an early-stage Soul Exalt?

The five men moved in unison with each other to come rushing at Bai Yunfei with their soulforce blazing to life.

Xiao Qi was planning to make a move as well before Bai Yunfei stopped him (Bai Yunfei didn't want to risk Xiao Qi killing them with a Spatial Edge). It was a little laughable with how strong these people were. They were beneath his notice still, and with a flash of light from his Violet Soul Ring, Bai Yunfei fished the Cataclysmic Seal out from it.

“Bzzz....”

There was a faint buzzing sound as the Cataclysmic Seal expanded into the size of a wall in front of Bai Yunfei before sweeping forward to meet the five.

“What is this?!”

“Watch out!!”

“Get back!”

“Ah!”

The five of them grew alarmed when the Cataclysmic Seal came at them. Everyone crying at once, their first instinct was to back up, but with a late-stage Soul Exalt manipulating the Cataclysmic Seal, how could it possibly be dodged so easily?

There were several thuds as the Cataclysmic Seal slammed into them and knocked them away.

The Cataclysmic Seal returned to its normal size in a flash of light and returned to Bai Yunfei's side as a small red blur of light. The blow from the Cataclysmic Seal had brought Cheng Xin and the others back to their original locations, though each of their faces

weren't filled with as much anger and loathing as before. They all looked rather panicked in fact.

One of the early-stage Soul Exalts hadn't been able to protect himself in time and belched out a mouthful of blood!

Of the entire group, it was Cheng Xin whose face was the whitest of them all. He had seen Bai Yunfei use the Cataclysmic Seal before, and he remembered seeing Bai Yunfei use the same soul armament to send his protector flying away through a wall after being hit with it.

But he didn't realize that this soul armament could expand in size!!

The 'leader' of the group looked displeased at the sight, but he wasn't fearing for his life just yet. They were a group of Soul Exalts after all, and this was only just a single strong soul armament. Something like that didn't mean they wouldn't be able to defeat Bai Yunfei.

“No wonder you were so arrogant if you were relying on a soul armament like that, pah! You think that'd be enough to deal with us? Split apart! We'll attack him from the gaps!”

Seemingly not wanting to offer up 'meaningless resistance', the group split up, much to Bai Yunfei's annoyance. The Cataclysmic Seal took flight again this time into the air. Looking up, Cheng Xin and his friends were all surprised to see a giant object come flying down onto their heads!

“Scatter!”

A panicked voice cried out before each of the five tried to bolt out from the impact area of the Cataclysmic Seal in a burst of elemental energy.

“Hmph!!”

There was a snort from Bai Yunfei. It wasn't loud, but oddly enough, each of the five men felt their souls quake a moment their

bodies locked up mid-flight!

By the time each of the five realized what was going on, they saw their bodies lean slightly away from the drop zone of the brick while sticking both their arms out....

A series of screams and grunts rang through the air as a mountainous object dropped down from the skies onto their arms with a great amount of strength.

Paralyzed in the new crater they found themselves in, the five men stared blankly at the sight in front of them.

Something completely beyond their understanding happened to them for a moment and knocked their minds out for a loop.

“Ah! Ah! Aah! It hurts! It hurts!! What happened! What in the world happened?!”

The silence was broken afterwards as one of them starting scream as if they were being killed slowly. He had been the worst of the group and had his right thigh bent at an awkward angle. Sweat pooled his forehead as he screamed at the top of his lungs.

As if a chain reaction went off, the other early-stage Soul Exalts began to wail in pain as well.

The only one who was in relatively better shape was Cheng Xin due to his better level of strength. But like the others, his face was abnormally pain and twisted with pain. And even more prominent was the shock on his face.

Now that their resistance was stripped from them, Bai Yunfei slowly made his way down from the skies. Sweeping his eyes at the one wailing the most, Bai Yunfei waved his right hand. Under the amazed eyes of the five there, the Cataclysmic Seal smashed down onto the person's right arm!

“Bang!! Crack!!”

Chapter 634: Save Me Fourth Prince!!

There was a sickening banging sound followed by a bone-chilling crack as the person's arm was bent at an unnatural angle. From the collision with the brick, it seemed as though the man's arm had broke in three separate sections.

Then as if it had a will of its own, the brick swiveled around and repeated the action onto his left arm!

A second crack was heard as the man now had both his arms broken.

“Ah—Ah!!!”

The pain was practically making the man's eyes bug out from his eye sockets as he let loose a wail like none other.

He cried for another second or two before his eyes rolled to the back of his head and he fainted from the pain!

“.....”

The area descended into silence for a moment after the person fainted. The other four people with him were as good as stone with how still they were.

Bai Yunfei had done it....Bai Yunfei had really done it!! He had really broken their arms!!

Not even a single person there had thought it possible that Bai Yunfei would actually be able to do such a thing.

If there was a first though, Bai Yunfei definitely planned on having a second. Stone-faced, Bai Yunfei raised his right hand again and brandished it. Weaving expertly with his command, the Cataclysmic Seal whizzed towards the second person!

“Bang! Crack!!”

Like patchwork, the two early-stage Soul Exalts had their arms broken!

Somehow, these two Soul Exalts didn't faint like the first one had. The pain was almost unbearable for them, but they managed to keep themselves fully conscious and scream despite no longer being able to use their arms for now.

Seeing Bai Yunfei 'cripple' three of his companions so quickly and the soul armament come for him next, the mid-stage Soul Exalt next to Cheng Xin blanched. His face drained of all color as he tried to protect himself with a layer of elemental wind. At the top of his lungs, he screamed, "Stop! Stop!! I'm Li Chen, son of the Minister of Justice!! You can't hurt me, my dad is Li—"

TL Note: This is a reference to the infamous Li Gang incident and meme 'My dad is Li Gang'.

"Bang!!"

Not liking the noise coming from him, Bai Yunfei had the brick slap the man across the face first, completely overwhelming the elemental energy around him as if it was a pile of wet paper.

Bai Yunfei had been just about to use the Cataclysmic Seal to break the arms of Li Chen when he turned his head in the direction behind him, "What are they doing here?"

A group of people was coming from the direction of Tianhun Academy. Striding through the skies in a blaze of elemental fire, these group of people had familiar auras to Bai Yunfei.

They were his students.

Mo Wanxia was leading the group with Ouyang Yuyun and Zhang Zhifeng behind her. The Soul Exalts were able to leap through the skies while Mo Chen, Fang Tianmeng, and the other Soul Ancestors had to follow them from the ground. Meanwhile, Wu Yang was carrying a person as he ran with them—it was the little princess Wu Ping.

When Bai Yunfei left during their lesson, the students were all slightly curious at why he left and paused in their practice for a

moment. During that time, Mo Wanxia picked up on the fight and managed to link it together with the reason why Bai Yunfei left. Curious on if something had happened, they decided to go after Bai Yunfei to see.

The Training Forest was generally prohibited to the students of the academy, but for Mo Wanxia and Wu Yang, neither of the two really had to care about such a 'prohibition'. In any case, they were 'following' their instructor to enter the forest.

It didn't take long for them to catch up to Bai Yunfei. The first thing they saw was a gigantic soulbeast and several people lying on the ground groaning and crying out in pain. Realizing it was something serious, the students flew even faster towards their instructor.

.....

Bai Yunfei noted the arrivals of his students with a stern look. "What are you all doing here? Didn't I tell you to practice in your caves?"

Everyone had thought that Bai Yunfei was being attacked by a giant soulbeast, but the scene became a lot more clear when they got closer. They looked first at the blue-eyes wrym and then to Bai Yunfei and the five people he was facing. Baffled by what he was saying, Fang Tianmeng spoke up, "In....instructor Bai, we thought you were in trouble, so...so we came to look."

"Fourth Prince?! Fourth Prince!! It's really you, save me, Fourth Prince! Save me!!"

An 'overjoyed' voice spoke out to Wu Yang when he arrived. It was Cheng Xin. When he saw Wu Yang get here, Cheng Xin immediately tried to latch onto him like a piece of rope.

Everyone was doubly confused by his pleas. Blinking as he looked at Cheng Xin, Wu Yang gasped, "Er....Cheng Xin?! Is that you?! What are you doing here?"

“Fourff Prinff?! Sa-saff uff!! Saff uff Fourff Prinff!!”

Blood was leaking from Li Chen's face as he approached Wu Yang. Like Cheng Xin, he was overjoyed to see him. Because of the slap in the face, Li Chen's mouth had lost a few teeth and made his speech a little garbled.

Wu Yang blinked several times again to try and recognize who this person was.

“Are....are you Li Chen!?”

“Fourth Prince! Please save us, Fourth Prince!! This man....this man's going to kill us!! Take justice for us, Fourth Prince!!”

Warm tears were flowing from Cheng Xin's face now. He was acting like a little brother crying to his older brother, never at all minding just how absolutely strange everything looked to everyone else.

Even Bai Yunfei was surprised. Casting Wu Yang a careful look, he asked, “Wu Yang, do you know them? Are they your ‘friends’??”

“Uh.....” Wu Yang hesitated for two seconds to answer. As he was not an idiot, the general gist of the situation took only a second for Wu Yang to understand. From how Cheng Xin was speaking, he and his friends had to have annoyed Bai Yunfei somehow and was being taught a lesson instead.

“Well....I do know them, actually. As one of the princes, how could I never have heard of the son of the Minister of Justice? I'm not really familiar with them though.” The slightly disappointing look he was being given by Bai Yunfei led to Wu Yang making the decision to renounce his relationship with Cheng Xin and the others. It was the truth after all anyways. He didn't really talk with these people, and as the prince, he was normally fawned upon by these people anyways.

“Instructor Bai, how have these people offended you?” Wu Yang

asked.

Cheng Xin might not be his 'younger brother' but he was still the son of a minister. Wu Yang had the obligation to ask around the situation and see if he could mediate somehow.

Bai Yunfei stared at the five, "They were trying to take advantage of Xiao Lan, so I taught them a lesson. I wasn't going to kill them at all, just break their arms."

Everyone turned to look at Xiao Lan, "What?!" Wu Yang cried out incredulously, "This...this is Xiao Lan?!"

The battle mode of Xiao Lan had never been seen by the students before. They had always seen Xiao Lan just lazing around by Bai Yunfei's side in a very small state, so they didn't expect it to be such a terrifying beast. In fact, some of them were even wondering just why they hadn't seen Xiao Lan in a while, had it been here in the Training Forest the entire time?

Craning his head practically ninety-degrees backwards, Mo Chen sighed in admiration. "So this soulbeast was Xiao Lan?! This must be its battle mode! Good heavens...it's amazing!! Instructor Bai, why did you leave Xiao Lan here in the Training Forest? I was going to say I hadn't seen Xiao Lan in a while."

"Ins....Instructor Bai?? Instructor?!"

Both Cheng Xin and Li Chen were stunned from the conversation between Bai Yunfei and Wu Yang. It felt as though their heads were spinning almost—this man...this man was an instructor? The instructor of Wu Yang?!"

Suddenly, the two men remembered a string of information they got a long time ago.

Wu Yang had been chasing the granddaughter of the academy's chairman, that much was known. It was heard that he joined a newly installed class for the sake of chasing her, and that class was....the crafting class!!

And the instructor of this class was a young man from the Crafting School named Bai Yunfei!

Anyone that was 'someone' in the circles of the Capital would definitely know about Bai Yunfei and how big of an 'upstart' he was. Many heard about Bai Yunfei's fight with the fourth prince and then how he stirred up trouble with the family of the Minister of Finance.....

Acts like that were beyond the little 'games' arrogant nobles like them would play.

But the Bai Yunfei they heard so much about was....this person right in front of them?!

Chapter 635: You Can Get Lost

Wu Yang looked a little hesitant to speak after that. “Instructor Bai, one of these two is the son of the Prime Minister and the other is the son of the Minister of Justice, and the others...”

He glanced at the three knocked out or still-howling men next to Cheng Xin and Li Chen. “Are also the sons of some ministers in our empire. Is there a chance...”

Cheng Xin and Li Chen both brightened up, their eyes hopeful for what Wu Yang was starting to say.

But then Bai Yunfei’s words immediately dashed their hopes....

Bai Yunfei shook his head before Wu Yang could even finish speaking. “If you’re asking if I can be lenient on them, then don’t bother. I can’t let them get off so lightly after they tried to kill Xiao Lan.”

“Furthermore...” Bai Yunfei looked at the already ‘punished’ three people there. “I’ve already punished half of them. To stop now wouldn’t be fair.”

“.....”

Cheng Xin and Li Chen both wanted to cry out in anger. ‘Unfair your mom!’, they wanted to say. But the cold look Bai Yunfei gave the two of them immediately shut themselves up. Their hearts and bodies shivered as they stewed silently in their own panic.

“That....” Wu Yang hadn’t thought that Bai Yunfei would be that determined about this. It wasn’t as though he didn’t care if these people were ‘taught’ or not. He had only tried for a moment to see if he could mediate the conflict. Since that didn’t work, he decided to give up and shrug his shoulders. “You’re the instructor. If you say it must be done, then it will be done. But there will definitely be some trouble in the future, please prepare yourself for it, instructor Bai.”

“Trouble?” Bai Yunfei quirked his lips, “I knew that a long time ago. If I wasn’t thinking about the potential troubles I would’ve had Xiao Lan eat those people and be done with it. That’d be real trouble. What this is right now is settled. If there’s trouble, it’ll come.”

The reason why he stood against these men wasn’t because of some righteous reason like for the soulbeasts the five tortured.

It was because Xiao Lan was an ‘enemy’ of these five, so he’d naturally stand with the wyrm.

“Fourff Prinff, you...you canf jusf leaf us here!! Saff us!!”

Bai Yunfei glared at Li Chen, sending a shiver up the man’s spine before the Cataclysmic Seal slammed into his arm. Like his three other companions, he fell to the ground with his arms broken.

“Ah!!!”

There was another two loud spikes in noise as Cheng Xin was unable to hold withstand the pressure of ‘torment’ anymore. Using up all his strength, he tried to escape as fast as possible in the opposite direction of Bai Yunfei!

His sudden dash for escape was surprising to the group as was his speed. In less than the blink of an eye, he was already over a dozen meters away due to the all-or-nothing attempt he was making.

Unfortunately for him, Bai Yunfei wasn’t caught off guard by this. The Cataclysmic Seal flew forward and struck Cheng Xin squarely on his left shoulder. Despite the impact, Cheng Xin only grunted in pain while maintaining his escape.

In the next moment, he saw a black shadow come at him from the right....

“Bang!!!!”

It struck Cheng Xin with a muffled bang and sent the man flying away like a rocket. At some point, the wyrm had swung its tail like

a baseball bat to send Cheng Xin flying!!

Cheng Xin's decision to try and make a break for it was one even worse than just staying here. His left arm had been broken by the Cataclysmic Seal, but his right arm had....been thwomped with the tail of the blue-eyes wyrm with righteous vengeance. The bones in his right arm would definitely be far worse than the ones in his left, and even if he was a Soul Exalt, his body would definitely need a great deal of time to heal from this....

Bai Yunfei wasn't trying to cripple anyone when he broke their arms. For soul cultivators like them, it'd require the amputation of both their arms in order to be considered crippled. The wounds in a soul cultivator's arm could still be healed no matter how bad it was. Bai Yunfei was only using the elemental fire in the Cataclysmic Seal to deal some relatively worse injuries onto the five here. At worse, it'd take longer than usual to heal, but there'd be no problems afterwards.

But it was much harder to say that about Cheng Xin's right hand....he got what he deserved.

.....

With a plop, Cheng Xin tumbled to the ground far away from the group. His soulforce was at a lull and he didn't get back up after he was hit.

He had been knocked out.

“.....”

Everyone grew silent, even the ones who had only just been screaming in pain a moment ago. For that one moment alone, the four of them thought themselves 'lucky'. Compared to Cheng Xin, they were only let off with a minor 'scratch'....

Bai Yunfei gave the proud looking blue-eyes wyrm a helpless look. “Well, you can get lost now.” He addressed Li Chen.

The three men snapped back to attention at that. Gritting their

teeth in pain as they got up, they began to use their soulforce to stabilize their wounds. Shakily, they loyally made their way over to the knocked out fourth person and Cheng Xin. Wrapping them in a bubble of elemental energy, the three then started their long and painful journey away.

As they left, several of them couldn't help but give Bai Yunfei looks of hatred and fear, only to have Bai Yunfei respond with a smile of his own.

.....

Everyone was speechless after the five left.

Though none of the students saw what happened the events that led up to this situation, they all saw just how Bai Yunfei had broken the arms of Li Chen and Cheng Xin. Stunned, it was the very first time they had ever seen Bai Yunfei be so 'ruthless' like this—except for Fang Tianmeng who saw Bai Yunfei kill several people one after another.

Wu Yang watched Li Chen and his group hobble away with squirmed eyes, "Instructor Bai....you've...you've really done it...."

"Wow!! Instructor Bai is amazing!!"

There was a worshipful voice, prompting Wu Yang to fall into a state of shock—it had been his younger sister who spoke out this time!!

Her hands were still wrapped around Wu Yang's neck, but she was staring at Bai Yunfei's back with stars in her eyes.

"Er...."

Stiff as a statue, Wu Yang immediately said, "Sis—sister! What are you saying?!"

"I said instructor Bai is amazing! Those people were Soul Exalts!! He didn't even move and he beat them all up! Even what he said was....so amazing...."

Wu Yang was speechless.

What kind of logic was that!!

He felt pained by this. He had never heard of his sister using such logic like this before.

He had known about that earlier, he would've brought her out to see some of his fights. If he had, wouldn't he be her hero by now?!

Wu Yang had to admit he felt a little panicked at the look of worship his sister had in his eyes. If he had to put it into words, it felt like his younger sister was being 'stolen' away. "Sister, you are forbidden from worshipping instructor Bai, got it?"

"Why?" Wu Ping cocked her head in confusion.

"Because....because...." Wu Yang struggled to find an excuse, "Because our instructor's wife will feel jealous if you keep saying that! So don't worship instructor Bai from now on."

Chapter 636: The Incoming 'Retaliation'

“What are you talking about?”

Bai Yunfei was storing away his Cataclysmic Seal back into his space ring when he saw Wu Yang and Wu Ping whispering to each other and grew curious on just what could be so secretive.

Wu Yang coughed, “It’s nothing....”

A strange look was given to him for a moment before Bai Yunfei nodded his head. “Well now that this matter is taken care of, we can go back and restart class.”

After bidding the blue-eyes wyrm to be more careful, Bai Yunfei and his students headed back for the academy.

.....

A single figure stood high above the clouds to stare down at the direction of Bai Yunfei and the others. Unmoving, he stood there and watched them leave.

This person was Xiao Lan’s master, Long Zhen!

He had been here since the beginning of Xiao Lan’s battle with Cheng Xin and the others. When Bai Yunfei came to end the conflict, he saw it all.

He smiled when Bai Yunfei left. “What an admirable young man. He’s yet to failed expectations....”

.....

After returning to top of the mountain, Bai Yunfei began to teach class again as if there hadn’t been anything wrong.

The class quickly went by before it came time for class to be dismissed for the evening. When that time drew close, Wu Ping came happily up to Bai Yunfei, “Instructor Bai, can I come play again next time?”

“Next time?” Bai Yunfei smiled after a moment, “Well....alright. I’ll have Xiao Qi accompany you the next time you come, Princess Ping’er.”

Wu Ping had actually looked quite bored half the day. The other half of the day was spent with her speaking with Xiao Qi, having clearly taken interest in a bird that could speak.

“Heehee, okay! I’ll come with fourth brother next time!” Wu Ping giggled, “Then...will I see your wife next time too?”

“Er....” Bai Yunfei blinked. “Wife? What wife?!”

“Your wife, instructor Bai! Fourth brother said so! He said I can’t admire you because your wife will get jealous....”

“I er....haha! Actually, instructor Bai, I was just curious. Why hasn’t she accompanied you to the Capital?” Wu Yang boomed with laughter, trying to save some face for his made-up excuse from earlier.

It was meant to be a simple line to save him some face, but then when Bai Yunfei’s face grew curiously suspicious, Wu Yang noticed something.

Was Bai Yunfei....looking a little embarrassed?

Could it be....?

Wu Yang’s eyebrows floated up on his face, “Do you really have a wife, instructor Bai?! Haha! Why haven’t we heard about her before?!”

“What? Instructor Bai’s wife? Instructor Bai has a family?!” Mo Chen’s ears perked up at the news and immediately came scampering over in excitement to hear more about it.

His loud voice attracted the attention of the others who immediately came around to surround Bai Yunfei. They were gossipy people by nature and wanted to know if this ‘great news’ was true or not.

None of them knew anything about Bai Yunfei's personal life and were thus naturally very curious to hear more.

“Instructor Bai, where is your wife? Why haven't we seen her before? Did she not come with you?” Fang Yong asked.

“I....” Bai Yunfei looked slightly embarrassed when he thought about Tang Xinyun. The others could already tell just what it was he was thinking about from his expression, so he couldn't simply deny the question. “She's...er, she's in the Crafting School still.”

“So there is one!!”

Everyone's eyes grew wide open. “I told you all!” Mo Chen crowed, “Instructor Bai is an amazing specimen of a man, how could he not have a wife? He's been living by himself even in the Capital, so of course his wife has to be in the Crafting School.”

“Oh....no, actually we haven't....”

“But instructor Bai, if you're teaching in the academy, why hasn't she come with you? You're living in such a big home, it has to be lonely....”

“.....”

“Ah, instructor Bai, what's her name?”

“She's....Tang Xinyun.”

“Oh, that's...”

.....

The torrent of gossip had been endless, and Bai Yunfei even found himself being asked if he had any children. With these questions, Bai Yunfei was starting to regret even mentioning Tang Xinyun's name.

He felt guilty. Wasn't it inappropriate to say to his students that Tang Xinyun was his wife?

On the other hand, he felt a little happy about the thought. It was

a very happy one....

Unable to handle the questions of Mo Chen and the others anymore, Bai Yunfei finally 'dismissed' everyone.

He left the academy with Xiao Qi and headed for the Soothing Heart as per usual. Sipping on some Soul Consolidating Tea, Bai Yunfei returned home.

.....

Late that night in Cheng manor.

"Don't stop me, second uncle! I'll kill that Bai Yunfei and take revenge for third brother!"

A furious voice boomed throughout the quiet building, shattering the fragile silence that had been there earlier. The voice had been so loud the room they were in shook a bit.

Within this room, Cheng Changlin could be seen holding one of his nephews back. "Little Hu, don't be rash. I've told you before Bai Yunfei isn't an easy person to deal with. Your victory isn't certain if you go to him now."

In front of him was a tall robust man around 1.9 meters tall. He was Cheng Xin's second brother, Cheng Hu. Having been on the outside for some matters, Cheng Hu came back just tonight in time to see the 'practically-crippled' brother of his. Furious beyond belief, he immediately planned to go out and avenge his brother.

"I won't win against him?!" Cheng Hu spoke out in surprise first before sneering, "So what?! I'll bring a few people with me then. He won't get away with this so easily!"

"Little Hu is correct! We shouldn't let this matter go! So what if this Bai Yunfei has a special status?! He's openly injured the son of a minister, that's more than enough to go after him! Why should we grit our teeth and bear this humiliation, how will outsiders view our family?! Little Hu and I should go drag this Bai Yunfei out!"

Like Cheng Hu, Cheng Changshan was quick to anger and was absolutely furious with this situation.

“Third brother, don’t be rash. Why act in such a way towards someone from the younger generation?” Cheng Changlin furrowed his eyebrows, “This Bai Yunfei is from the Crafting School and is Zi Jin’s disciple. He’s now also the instructor of the crafting class where even the Royal Family regard it highly. His status is especially hard to act against.”

“And what of it?!” Cheng Changshan snapped, “Are we supposed to be cowered by that?! Bai Yunfei will pay the price, our house of Cheng will not be made a mockery!”

“Shut your mouths!!”

A loud voice called for silence as Cheng Chaochuan finally stood up from Cheng Xin’s bedside to reprimand the others.

Straight away, Cheng Changshan and Cheng Hu kept silent and said no more.

“Second uncle, how is little Xin?” Cheng Changlin asked in concern.

“Worry not, I’ve healed up most of his wounds for now. His broken bones have been reset, and his arms are saved.” Cheng Chaochuan spoke lowly, “But this time, the time of recuperation will take at least a hundred days. And his right arm will take at least a year to fully heal.....”

“It’s that serious?!”

Cheng hu cried out in anger, “How vicious! We should kill that Bai Yunfei!”

“I told you to shut your mouth!!” Cheng Chaochuan spoke again, “If you don’t wish to end up like your third brother, you should avoid angering that Bai Yunfei.”

It was with great reluctance that Cheng Hu backed down,

unwilling to argue with his second grandfather. “Are....are we really going to let third brother’s injury stand like this without lifting a finger?!”

“Of course we won’t let this matter stand as it is. But this isn’t a matter you should bother with. I’ll speak with your father in a bit and see how we’ll handle this....

“How are the other families dealing with this?” He turned to Cheng Changlin.

“I’m not sure as of yet, but they were very quick to react. Plenty of people wanted to deal with Bai Yunfei, but after they found out who he was, they quieted down. With how the Li usually act, I’m sure someone from their household will soon do something though.”

Chapter 637: Invitation

The next afternoon, Bai Yunfei was relaxing in the courtyard of his home. Basking in the sunlight, he was thinking about a few crafting related things when he heard Zheng Kai come rushing into his courtyard.

“Yunfei! I heard you debilitated Cheng Xin, Li Chen, and several others yesterday, is it true?”

Zheng Kai asked as soon as he was within close proximity of Bai Yunfei.

“How did you know?”

“How did I know? Almost everyone in our ‘circle’ knows about it. Cheng Xin went ‘hunting’ in the Training Forest and was beaten badly by an instructor from Tianhun Academy....isn’t that you?”

“Yeah, it is. I broke both his arms, he’ll probably need a hundred days to heal from that.”

“Really?!” Zheng Kai’s eyes lit up, “Haha, how should I even describe you, Yunfei? You’re....like a kite!”

He flashed Bai Yunfei a big thumbs up.

“What kind of ‘kite’ would I be? I was just teaching him a lesson.” Bai Yunfei frowned, “Xiao Lan wanted to eat them, so I had to stop that.”

“.....”

Zheng Kai couldn’t help but shake his head after he heard the story of what really transpired, “Tsk tsk, Zheng Kai and Li Chen deserved it. They would’ve gotten away with it if it was anyone else, but since it was you, they really bit off more than they could chew, haha....it sucks that I wasn’t there, I missed a great show!”

He laughed, but his face grew slightly somber afterwards. “But I have to warn you, Yunfei. You’ve managed to anger the houses of

five ministers in the Capital. They most likely won't take the fact that you've mistreated their younglings without an argument. I've heard that aside from the Cheng, the other four have already joined together in their anger for you. They'll most likely try to start something soon, so be prepared."

"Oh?" Bai Yunfei uttered, so Zheng Kai was here to 'report' to him? "How do you think they'll 'start' something?"

"I'm not sure, but there's a possibility that they'll simply just have people come over and kidnap you."

"Kidnap me?" Bai Yunfei asked, "Do they have Soul Kings, how many do you think?"

"Soul Kings?! And how many?!" Zheng Kai's eyes grew wide, "You're taking this rather easily, do you think Soul Kings are like carrots waiting to be pulled from the ground? There's almost a million soul cultivators in the Capital alone, and no more than five hundred of those will be Soul Kings. Do you really think a Soul King will do something because of something this minor?"

Bai Yunfei sighed in relief, "That's good then, no one strong will come then."

"....."

The absolute calmness of Bai Yunfei was nearly praiseworthy. But when Zheng Kai thought about just how strong Bai Yunfei was and how strong his two class seven soulbeasts were, he had to admit, there wasn't really much of a need to be scared.

.....

At that moment, another person came to the outside of the courtyard.

"Lord Bai, your underling has a report to give."

This man didn't walk inside the courtyard, he merely stopped in front of the gates to the place. It was an old man in his fifties. As

regular as he seemed, he looked quite hale and hearty for his age. This was the housekeeper Bai Yunfei hired to take care of his home.

With how large his home was, Bai Yunfei knew he himself wouldn't be able to clean it. In order to avoid it becoming a haunted house with dust and such, Bai Yunfei had a few people hired to take care of the place. They cleaned up the entirety of his home aside from this isolated courtyard where Bai Yunfei would be by himself without any servants or maids. Aside from housekeeping, protecting, his servants had also the responsibility of passing on messages to him.

The entirety of the cleaning staff had been hired by Zheng Kai on behalf of Bai Yunfei.

“Uncle Xu, come in.” Bai Yunfei nodded, “What is it?”

The old man came into the courtyard to respectfully hand Bai Yunfei a red letter. “This just came in from a guest. They said it is an invitation for lord Bai to attend.”

“An invitation?” Bai Yunfei took the letter in confused surprise, “Did they say who it was from?”

The old man shook his head. “They left after handing the invitation. They said that lord Bai would understand as soon as you see the letter.”

“Ah, very well then.” Bai Yunfei nodded, “You may leave then, uncle Xu.”

.....

“What does it say? Who's inviting you?”

Zheng Kai asked rather strangely as soon as the letter-bearer left.

“Haha, just as we were talking about it, this invitation came....” Bai Yunfei laughed and handed the letter to Zheng Kai to see.

Zheng Kai took the letter, flipping it open to look. “The houses of

Li, Zeng, Zhu, and Peng?! They sure do move quickly, but....an invitation to a 'banquet'?? What kind of banquet is this?"

"What kind?" Bai Yunfei smiled, "One like the Hongmen Feast. How unexpected that they'd try this kind of tactic instead."

TL Note: The [Feast of Hongmen](#). Liu Bang was nearly killed under the pretense of a feast by rival Xiang Yu.

"The Hongmen Feast? What's that?"

"Er....it was a malicious one, nevermind. Basically, they're inviting me to a banquet and then while I'm there, they're going to teach me a lesson, doesn't that sound about right?"

This letter of invitation was from the houses of the four people Bai Yunfei punished yesterday.

It was however short one name, the house of Cheng. And that in itself made Bai Yunfei quite suspicious. Of the five people he angered due to yesterday, the Cheng should've been the most furious. Why weren't they a part of this banquet, were they planning something else?

"It says the banquet will be held in a villa outside the Capital, that doesn't bode well...." Zheng Kai narrowed his eyes. "If they're going to host this banquet together, are they afraid of you then? There's no way they'd forget about what you did yesterday, but to join together like this....Yunfei, what are you going to do? Do you want me to come with you?"

"Come with me? Who says I'm going to go?" Bai Yunfei frowned.

"Ah?" Zheng Kai whipped his head to look at him, "You're not going?!"

Bai Yunfei shrugged, "Why should I go when they ask? Aren't they just going to try and mistreat me if I do go?"

So....a situation like this could be answered in such a way like that?!

Then again, Bai Yunfei's answer wasn't a wrong one. He didn't have to go at all.

“But, you not going will be clearly sending a message that you don't care for them. How do you think they'll react to that? Won't they really try and 'kidnap' you then?”

“Who cares then. Fight fire with water and water with earth. I'm far too lazy to go of my own accord. If they really want to take revenge, they'll have to come and start it themselves.”

.....

The next day, Bai Yunfei really did just ignore the feast as he said he would in favor of living his life as he did normally.

As for however the people at the banquet reacted his no-show, Bai Yunfei didn't know, and however angry they got, Bai Yunfei didn't care.

Strangely enough, another day went by without any sign of movement from the four houses.

On the evening of the fifth day since Bai Yunfei broke Cheng Xin's arms, Bai Yunfei came back home from the Soothing Heart to yet another invitational letter.

But this letter was a little different than expected.....

Chapter 638: The Summons of His Majesty

Two days after he refused the invitational letter from four major families, yet another letter had been delivered to Bai Yunfei.

But this time, it wasn't from the same four families. It wasn't even from the Cheng either. This time, the letter came from a group Bai Yunfei never expected to get a letter from.

This invitation was from....the Royal Family!!

Delivered by the fourth prince himself, this letter was more of a 'edict' than it was an 'invitation'!!

The current dynast of the Tianhun Empire, Wu Hong, was summoning him!

Bai Yunfei was shocked when he first received the invitation. It was only after he read the invitation several times again that Bai Yunfei was finally convinced this wasn't some type of joke being played on him by Wu Yang.

The highest ruling figure of the entire empire was summoning him!!

He was baffled and confused. Could this be because of what happened several days ago in the Training Forest? Was even the Emperor himself getting involved in this?!

He didn't even ask any questions of Wu Yang, who said that he had his own instructions from his father. He was only here to deliver the message, whatever meaning there was behind it, Wu Yang himself wasn't aware of it.

This time, Bai Yunfei couldn't simply ignore it like he did with the previous letter. There was no way to ignore a summons from His Majesty.

Bai Yunfei was also confident that there'd be no 'trap' waiting for him at the Royal Palace. Bai Yunfei was nowhere near strong

enough to be warrant needing the Royal Family having to ambush him.

So....was this just an ordinary summons then?

.....

It was with a curious head that Bai Yunfei left early in the morning the next day towards the palace. With Xiao Qi, he followed Wu Yang to the very heart of the Capital where the Royal Palace was.

The imposing awe that was the Royal Palace wasn't something new to Bai Yunfei. He had walked by the northern corner of the palace several times now in his walks in the Capital.

“Instructor Bai, this is the Harmonic Heaven Hall, allow me to go in first to report to my father. I'm sure he'll be here afterwards.” Wu Yang pointed to a glorious-looking palace in front of them to Bai Yunfei.

Bai Yunfei looked over to the glorious-looking palace and nodded. “I'll go in and wait then.”

“Heehee, you really came, instructor Bai!!”

A happy giggle came a little far from the far right. Pausing briefly, Bai Yunfei turned to look towards the source of the sound, only to see a young girl wearing a silky skirt and robe come running towards him and Wu Yang.

Who else could it be but the princess Wu Ping?

“Princess Wu Ping, what brings you here?” Bai Yunfei smiled.

“This is my ‘home’!” Wu Ping craned her head to look at the palace when she got to Bai Yunfei. “Of course I'm here....heehee, Xiao Qi is here too!”

Her attention was immediately given to the little Xiao Qi on top of Bai Yunfei's shoulders. “Hello there, Princess Ping'er.” He spoke.

Feeling slightly helpless, Wu Yang spoke to his sister, “Sister, didn’t I tell you not to come over? Father will be on his way soon. If he were to find out you snuck out from your Bright Duckweed Palace and not studying, he’ll chide you again.”

“Aiyah, that old granny is always going on about some boring old history of our empire. She wants me to memorize so many different people—how boring!” Wu Ping stuck her nose up, “It’s not fun at all, I don’t want to learn something boring like that!”

Still, she seemed like she was slightly afraid of the scolding her father would give her. Glancing around the place, she spoke, “I was only here to take a look anyways! If father really does come, then I won’t be here when he is. But....”

She looked to Xiao Qi, “Xiao Qi, come play with me, why don’t you? I can take you to the imperial flower garden! Da Huang is over there too! I can take you to see Da Huang and we can play together.”

“Da Huang?” Xiao Qi stared strangely at the princess for a moment. With how many times the princess had been going on about this mysterious ‘Da Huang’, Xiao Qi was in fact a little curious about this figure. That and combined with his interest for the Imperial Palace, Xiao Qi had found himself piqued by the princess’ invitation.

Bai Yunfei smiled. “Haha, Xiao Qi can go with you for a while, princess Ping’er.”

With how he was going to be meeting with the ruler of the empire, Bai Yunfei was rather reserved as of late. Even before today, Bai Yunfei had spent a good amount of time warning Xiao Qi of the several things he could or couldn’t say to His Majesty when the time came. At the time, Xiao Qi was a little impatient at the lessons and was even considering not going, but then with the princess willing to ‘receive’ him, Xiao Qi decided it was better that he went to play with her.

“Okay then, I’ll go play for a while. Tell me if you need anything, Yunfei, and I’ll come flying.”

Xiao Qi nodded before he flew away from Bai Yunfei’s shoulder to land on Wu Ping’s. “Let us go, Princess Wu Ping.”

.....

The Harmonious Heaven Hall was a very grand and beautiful palace. Maids adorned both sides of the palace gates along with several strictly-standing guards. Bai Yunfei and Wu Yang both sat on the chairs to the left and drank some tea to wait for the ruler, Wu Hong.

“Wu Yang, do you really not know what His Majesty has summoned me here for? Could it not be for what happened in the Training Forest a few days ago?”

Admittedly, Bai Yunfei didn’t feel very calm. Meeting with the ruler of the empire was very nerve-wracking, and Bai Yunfei didn’t even know what the king wanted to see him for. Since he had some time to kill now, Bai Yunfei wanted to make one final attempt to see if he could glean any last-minute information from Wu Yang.

Wu Yang frowned. “I really don’t know, but I don’t think you should be too worried about it, instructor Bai. My father wouldn’t summon you here to the palace to exact punishment. Trash like Cheng Xin aren’t even people that my father would personally care for.

“However....” Wu Yang paused here to think, “The Minister of the Right came to the palace to see my father two days ago, perhaps it was because of you injuring his son. Father said he wanted to see you after that, so this summons might really have to do with that topic....maybe father wants to mediate this problem between the two of you?? I don’t really feel that my father will help them punish you, instructor Bai. You are the instructor both the Royal Family and the academy have ‘invited’ from the Crafting School to teach the crafting class, so it’s hard to do anything

against you.”

Minister of the Right? That was Cheng Xin’s father; did he come to the palace on behalf of his injured son? Were they trying to have His Majesty bring down ‘justice’ onto this matter?

Bai Yunfei was surprised. He had been waiting to see what the Cheng would do ever since he broke Cheng Xin’s arms in the first place. With each day that went by without any information, Bai Yunfei was even more surprised. The Minister of the Right of all people would definitely want to exact punishment onto the one who hurt his son, no matter just how special this person was.

The two continued to talk for a while after that before Bai Yunfei felt several people near the palace and turned his head towards the front gates. These newcomers had auras far more intimidating than anything else he felt, and the entire palace was washed over in the tides of their powerful soulforce. It felt a bit like the night sky with how deep and profound the soulforce felt, and Bai Yunfei felt a slight stifling sensation that made it slightly hard to believe.

But at the same time, the very first thoughts he had was to bend the knee, bow, and acknowledge his allegiance to the newcomer.

This was a special type of feeling and power that Bai Yunfei had never felt before.

As he was surmising to himself on just how surprising this was, every single guards near the gates bowed their heads in salute to the tall and straight figure walking past them.

This figure was a middle-aged man looking to be in his forties. He wore an expensive golden robe and had his long hair tied up behind his head. His face was clean and steadfast. His eyes bright like stars and his eyebrows sharp like swords. His firm face had a smile on it that made him look friendly, though his entire person demanded respect at the sight.

When hit with such powerful aura, Bai Yunfei thought about

what people had meant when they talked about having 'Kingly Disposition'.

So something like that really existed.

This person was a true and living example of such a phrase....

Chapter 639: Prince Hao

Bai Yunfei and Wu Yang rose to their feet as soon as they felt the entrance of this person. Just as Bai Yunfei was debating on just what to say, Wu Yang spoke out to the man first. “Are you staying here as well, uncle??”

“.....”

Bai Yunfei blinked—Uncle?!

This person wasn’t His Majesty, Wu Hong?!

The person Wu Yang spoke to was younger brother of His Majesty Wu Hong, Wu Hao!

Prince Hao!

The previous ruler of the empire had two sons. One of them was the current ruler, Wu Hong, and the other was Wu Hao, the sole ‘Prince’ of the previous generation.

This man was the vice-headmaster of the Tianhun School while his older brother was the headmaster. With how hard managing the entire empire was, Wu Hong had his younger brother take care of everything in regards to the Tianhun School and other day by day affairs.

Prince Hao was a man that stood at a level above that of the Ministers of the Left and Right. In other words, he was a man that stood beneath only one man and above tens of thousands of others.

.....

Having earlier known about the members of the Royal Family, Bai Yunfei was quick to react, “Junior Bai Yunfei pays his respects to Prince Hao.” He bowed.

Wu Hao nodded his head to Wu Yang first before regarding Bai Yunfei with a calm look. “Now now, no need for niceties, you must be Bai Yunfei?”

“Uncle, this is the instructor of our crafting class.” Wu Yang preambled from the side, “Father summoned him here. We weren’t expecting to see you here as well, uncle....”

Walking to one of the chairs in front of Bai Yunfei and Wu Yang, Wu Hao sat down. He gestured with an open hand for them to sit as well before speaking. “I’ve heard a few things as of late and decided to come take a look at just what kind of genius the Capital has been saying was.”

Bai Yunfei smiled in return to the man. “This junior is by no means a genius. Your praises are wasted on me, Prince Hao.”

“If the personal disciple of the Crafting School’s previous headmaster isn’t a genius, then no one else in the world should dare show their faces.” Prince Hao chuckled. “So young and yet already a peak late-stage Soul Exalt. Truly, I mean it when I say you are a genius of your generation.”

For someone of his caliber, seeing how strong Bai Yunfei was wasn’t a problem.

Right next to Bai Yunfei, Wu Yang was stunned.

Bai Yunfei was being treated so friendly by his uncle? That was an extremely rare sight to see.

Normally, Wu Hao was a man known to rarely give smiles to others and was a more stern man than his older brother. Whenever Wu Yang himself got into trouble, it was usually his uncle that punished him when the family found out.

But none of that stern rigidness was anywhere to be seen from his uncle right now. He was currently treating Bai Yunfei like a friend from the previous generation, asking him if he was accustomed to the Capital yet or if his classes in the academy have been going as planned.

Just slightly, Wu Yang was starting to doubt if this man in front of him was the very same uncle he knew.

Wu Yang sighed to himself. “Instructor Bai is instructor Bai. Even my uncle treats him well....”

“If I recall correctly, you were assaulted by someone from the Soul Refining School. Was it not the Soul Refining Palm from a Soul King? Have you healed from that?” Wu Hao asked in the middle of their conversation.

Not expecting that question to be asked, Bai Yunfei took a second before he responded. “Thank you for your concern, Prince Hao. I was injured then, but I am more-or-less recovered from that.”

“Very well.” Wu Hao nodded. “The events of that time was due to the folly of my Tianhun School. We hadn’t believed a Soul King would dare launch an attack so easily, but due to our slacked defenses, a grave mistake was nearly made. As the overseer over the public safety and security of the soul cultivators in the Capital, I will take responsibility over this.”

“Prince Hao, your words are far too serious. The Capital is a large place, overseeing the entire Capital is by no means an easy feat. The Soul Kings that attacked planned the assault for a very long time. Not being able to respond as quickly as back then is only natural. If not for the intervention of the many Soul Kings that came, I wouldn’t have made it out with only a few injuries.”

Wu Hao smiled. “I heard that an early-stage Soul King was killed by the combined efforts of you and your soulbeast. When the other Soul King fled, I personally led a group to go capture him. He unfortunately decided that death was a better option than capture, and thus we were unable to find out anything more.”

Bai Yunfei hadn’t thought that the one to led the group to chase down the other Soul King would’ve been Wu Hao.

“However....Bai Yunfei, do you know why the Soul Refining School might’ve attacked you? Has there been issues between you and them before?” Wu Hao asked, this time more inquisitive than before.

“In truth, Prince Hao, there has been some knots between this junior and the Soul Refining School. We’ve fought several times in the past and this one has already killed several of their students. There is already a ‘grudge’....”

“Oh? Several times you say?” Wu Hao raised an eyebrow, “The Soul Refining School has always been secretive when one of their own heads outwards. But never has it been for anything good, and rarely can people attribute it to them until after the deed is done. Just meeting them several times would be a very hard thing to do....”

“Rare to see?” Bai Yunfei sighed to himself, “Why do I feel like they’re everywhere. I’m never rid of them.”

“All things considered, the Soul Refining School has been more active as of the past few years. This time, they’ve appeared in the Capital, I wonder just what plot they’re crafting this time.” Sighed Wu Hao, “It’s unfortunate how cunning the Soul Refining School is. Even the information my Tianhun School collects has rarely any important details. Any important details only come after it’s too late to act on them, alas....”

“That is the ‘advantage’ of being a ‘villain’.” Bai Yunfei spoke, “They are always hiding in the shadows. But....the Soul Refining School is a wicked school. I have faith that one day, their school will be scattered like dust.”

.....

The more Bai Yunfei chatted with Wu Hao, the more calm he felt. This Wu Hao didn’t seem as strict as he appeared, and Bai Yunfei didn’t really feel any arrogant airs coming from him.

“Feels like all the Royal Family are people that are easy to get along with, or at least the ones I’ve met so far.”

At some point while they spoke, Wu Hao raised an eyebrow and turned to the gates of the hall. “Haha, my older brother is here.

Why don't we go out and greet him?"

Brother? That meant....His Majesty has arrived!

Bai Yunfei quickly rose to his feet after Wu Hao did. Side by side with Wu Yang, they strode towards the gates of the hall.

When they were outside the hall, Bai Yunfei could see a small group of people come walking towards the gates. Standing at the front of a large procession of guards and servants were four men.

The man up front wore a golden dragon robe. His appearance couldn't be discerned due to the distance, but this man was undoubtedly His Majesty, Wu Hong. By his right side was a middle-aged man who walked half a step behind him. Two younger males walked behind the second man.

"Ah?? They came too?!"

Wu Yang uttered a gasp when he recognized the people following his father. "Instructor Bai," he whispered, "the person to my father's right is the Minister of the Right, Cheng Huayu."

"What?!" Bai Yunfei's eyebrows flew to the top of his head. The father of Cheng Xin was coming with His Majesty, Wu Hong?

Did this mean to say that he was here to seek justice for his son?!

Chapter 640: His Majesty Wu Hong

The Minister of the Right coming with the ruler clearly meant that the man was here for Bai Yunfei. However the Minister of the Right was planning to go after Bai Yunfei, he didn't know.

As Bai Yunfei and Wu Yang looked on in shock, the group was already near enough for Wu Hao to step forward. "Brother." He nodded.

Wu Yang took that as his cue to step forward as well. "Father." He bowed.

Snapping back to reality, Bai Yunfei tried his best to quash the bad feeling in his heart to look at the group in front of him. Bowing his head to the man in front, he spoke, "Ju....Junior pays his respects to His Majesty...."

Kowtowing to the ruler was a necessary thing to do, but Bai Yunfei had never done so before and was a little hesitant. As he was moving to his knee, a kindly voice spoke to him, "Haha, you must be Bai Yunfei? No need to be so reserved, you may dispense with the formalities."

Dispense with the formalities....did that mean he didn't need to kowtow?

Bai Yunfei sighed in relief, the pressure he was feeling in his mind was starting to lighten a bit.

"Thank you, Your Majesty."

Bai Yunfei spoke gratefully as he raised his head to look at the people in front of him.

The man in gold dragon robes was the very definition of dignified. His shoulders were straight and his chest broad. Aged forty in years or so, the man had a faint but noticeable smile on his face, though his calm and sharp eyes were measuring up Bai Yunfei. With how sharp the man's eyes were, Bai Yunfei felt like

his very soul was being searched.

This man was the current ruler of the empire, Wu Hong.

Bai Yunfei felt intrinsically small in front of this man. In his presence, Bai Yunfei felt like he was a little man staring up at an eternally tall mountain.

This!

This was what people meant by having a King's Disposition! Even Wu Hao's aura felt diluted by several degrees in comparison to this.

“Your old servant pays his respects to His Highness Prince Hao and Fourth Princeling Wu Yang.”

Whilst Bai Yunfei was feeling lost in the mighty aura of Wu Hong, the elderly man next to the ruler spoke, followed by the middle-aged man in purple who bowed to Wu Hao and Wu Yang.

“Cheng Yao pays his respects to Prince Hao and Fourth Princeling Yang.”

Another young man in white robes bowed as well.

This young man next to Cheng Yao was the first prince, Wu Ren. “Uncle.” He nodded to Wu Hao.

“Well then, let's talk more inside.” Wu Hong waved his hand to dismiss the guards around them. With a nod of his head, everyone walked into the hall.

.....

Wu Hong sat himself at the topmost chair while Wu Hao sat to his left. Wu Ren sat down next with Bai Yunfei by his side. To show his respect for the title Bai Yunfei had as his instructor, Wu Yang sat to the right of Bai Yunfei.

To the right of Wu Hong was the Minister of the Right, Cheng Huayu. There was also the young man Cheng Yao, eldest son of Cheng Huayu and oldest brother to Cheng Xin.

After everyone was well and seated, Wu Hong smiled at Bai Yunfei. “Chairman Mo told me a while ago that the crafting class we have been trying to prepare for so long had finally opened, and that he appointed the instructor to be someone from the Crafting School. I have to admit, I was curious in seeing just what kind of genius Zi Jin would send over when I heard about it, but with so many things happening one after another, that had to be postponed until today, haha...Now that I see you, you are indeed a genius as I expected. Truly, you are fully deserving to be called Zi Jin’s disciple.”

‘Being worthy to be called the disciple of Zi Jin’. This type of praise from his seniors had always made Bai Yunfei feel a little helpless, but at the same time, it also help pointed out just how amazing his master was.

Even His Majesty, Wu Hong, had the light of respect in his eyes when he talked about Zi Jin.

“Your Majesty is far too kind. This....this junior is still unsure if this junior is worthy enough of being the instructor of the crafting class. This junior will try his best to live up to Your Majesty’s expectations.” Bai Yunfei spoke courteously. He didn’t know how to address himself in conversation with Wu Hong, so he decided to opt for calling himself ‘junior’. It was better than just saying ‘I’, ‘this one’, or even ‘this commoner’.

“No need to be so modest. I already know just what kind of achievements your crafting class was able to pull off in a single month.” Wu Hong smiled. “My son Wu Yang gave me a soul armament he crafted just two days ago, that in itself is already a fantastic feat. I had never thought that the crafting class would take off so quickly, but it is all due to your own efforts. As the ruler of the empire, I must thank you for allowing for my empire to have a new set of talents in this field.”

From the praise Wu Hong was speaking to him, Bai Yunfei could heard the pleased tone in his voice and was slightly at ease. Slowly,

Bai Yunfei was starting to feel that Wu Hong was somewhat down to earth like anyone else and not at all that scary like he first imagined.

“Thank you for your encouragement, Your Majesty. This junior will do my best to continue to teach the crafting class well.”

“Yes, I have faith that you won’t disappoint us.” Wu Hong smiled. “Were the materials sent to you enough for you to teach with? Please ask if there’s any other requests you might have, even if its to the academy or the Royal Family, we will do our best. It’s only natural to supply your class with the best materials we can offer for your services.”

“Yes, thank you.” Nodded Bai Yunfei, “In truth, this junior has only been teaching the basics of how to craft, so the materials needed aren’t very particular, we only require a decent quantity of them. The warehouse in the academy has been more than enough for the lessons, so we should be fine for the time being.”

“Very well then.” Wu Hong smiled in response to Bai Yunfei. “Speaking of time being, I know your journey to the Capital was a long one. Have you grown accustomed to life here yet?”

“Thank you for your concern, Your Majesty. This junior has been living well in the Capital. It is all thanks to His Highness the First Prince for allocating a home for this one.”

He nodded to Wu Ren to show his thanks.

“Oh? Is that right? Very good....” Wu Hong gave Wu Ren a strange but pleased look.

.....

After a few more basic words of conversation with Bai Yunfei, Wu Hong gestured to the silent Cheng Huayu to his left. “I haven’t introduced you two yet. This is the Minister Cheng of the Right, and this is his eldest son Cheng Yao. We are here today to discuss a matter several days ago....I heard that there was some friction

between you and the youngest son of Minister Cheng?”

Bai Yunfei's eyes widened fractionally, “Here it is!”

‘Friction’ though? It wasn't friction but a full on out feud.....

What was Cheng Huayu planning on doing today? With his youngest son injured so badly, how would he try to take ‘revenge’?

Or perhaps His Majesty Wu Hong was here to try and have the two parties ‘compromise’ somehow?

Chapter 641: Cheng Yao

From the very moment Bai Yunfei first laid his eyes on Cheng Huayu, Bai Yunfei felt that this man didn't look all too friendly. He was more unfriendly than not, but Bai Yunfei could 'understand' that much. If he was all smiles to the one who nearly crippled his son, Cheng Huayu would be a terrible father.

In response to being introduced by Wu Hong, Cheng Huayu looked up to gave a small quirk of his lips to 'smile', albeit a slightly more cold one than friendly.

Knowing what could possibly happen if he answered wrong, Bai Yunfei nodded his head calmly. "If this junior may report, Your Majesty, there was indeed something between Cheng Xin and I. He provoked me twice, so I taught him a slight lesson."

Everyone froze at his words, Cheng Huayu most of all. Startled along with Cheng Yao, both of the two gave Bai Yunfei a stare that had a cold light in them.

Wu Hong included, everyone thought that Bai Yunfei would try to be as polite as possible to say this was a 'misunderstanding' or 'apologize' when this topic was brought up. None of them thought that Bai Yunfei would be adamant in his response.

'I did hit him, but he deserved it.'

"Hmph!! A slight lesson?! The bones in both my son's arm have been fractured into pieces. It'll take many months before he'll regain full usage of them. Do you think that to be a slight lesson?!" Cheng Huayu sneered at the 'arrogance' of Bai Yunfei's words. "Bai Yunfei! Don't think you can afford to get away with being excessive with your status! The house of Cheng might not be as impressive as your Crafting School, but we will not stand to be bullied by anyone!"

"Excessive?" The smile on Bai Yunfei's face widened by a bit.

“Does Minister Cheng think my actions were excessive? Do you know what your son was trying to do? He went after my life upon our first meeting. I was kind enough to punish him slightly for that knowing that he was your son. He did heal in a few short days after that, did he not? Then the second time....he and a few others were in the Training Forest to wantonly kill several soulbeasts. They were even planning to kill one of my soulbeast friends, who wanted to eat your son if not for my intervention. In light of his status, I only injured him. If anything, you should be thanking me.”

“You! You—what utter rubbish!!” Cheng Huayu stuttered in anger, “I already inquired about what happened in the villa. My son was indeed slightly in the wrong, but you were clearly pretending to be a Soul Ancestor to trick my son. You deliberately led him on and injured him! If you didn’t hide your strength, would my son really try to make life difficult for you?!”

“Oh?? Do you mean, then, Minister Cheng—that if I was a weak and ordinary Soul Ancestor, I should’ve allowed myself to be killed by your son?” Bai Yunfei sneered back. “Me deliberately pretending to be a Soul Ancestor? I am free to hide my strength if I choose to. Not seeing how strong I am is a fault in the eyes of your son and his guards. Furthermore, I was never one that’d use the name of my master or otherwise to threaten others.”

“You—!” Cheng Huayu was at a loss for words. This was the first anyone had ever talked back to him in such a fashion. As the minister of the empire, how could he be treated otherwise other than with respect? But now, a mere Soul Exalt from the younger generation was mockingly refuting every single point he was trying to make in this debate. It was making him furious.

The others were watching this exchange with different emotions. Wu Hong and Wu Hao were both looking on with a calm, but strange look at Bai Yunfei. Wu Ren was sighing to himself, thinking that Bai Yunfei wasn’t a very flexible person with how he

was acting in this situation. Wu Yang on the other hand, was looking on with interest.

On the other hand, Cheng Yao was staring at Bai Yunfei with a strange glint in his eyes, though the emotions on his face were practically nonexistent.

“Brother Bai’s words are quite rational. It was my third brother that failed to see the truth of the matter, and his punishment by your hands, brother Bai, was a good lesson. He should take this lesson to heart and know that there are people in this world that he shouldn’t anger.”

Two seconds while Cheng Huayu was steaming to himself, Cheng Yao spoke up with a faint smile to Bai Yunfei. “My third brother has never been disciplined in his life and has always stirred up trouble. We should be in fact thanking you, brother Bai, for disciplining my insensible third brother.”

“Er....”

This time, it was Bai Yunfei’s turn to be stunned for once. The politeness of Cheng Yao’s words seemed practically enigmatic to Bai Yunfei, but he somehow managed to respond. “How kind of you. As long as he keeps this lesson in mind, I believe he’ll suffer less in the future. How he hasn’t lost his life yet I am unsure.”

“As you say, brother Bai, I hope that my third brother will have sufficiently learned his lesson and grow up.” Cheng Yao’s lips twitched upwards. “I only just came back to the Capital two days ago, but even then, I’ve heard of how strong you are, brother Bai. Is it true that you defeated an early-stage Soul King?”

“An early-stage Soul King was indeed killed by me a while ago, but that was in part due to having a class seven soulbeast help out.”

Cheng Yao was talking about what happened the night of when Bai Yunfei came out from Casino Jin. What happened in Baishan

City was known to only a select few, and Bai Yunfei had no desire to show off that feat either.

Relying on a class seven soulbeast to kill an early-stage Soul King wasn't anything special. That was what Cheng Yao had heard, and like many others, that was what he felt about the situation.

“I've heard that brother Bai is a late-stage Soul Exalt that can defeat even a peak late-stage Soul Exalt with ease. With your arsenal of powerful soulbound armaments, even those the same level as you are unable to win. How admirable.”

Bai Yunfei narrowed his eyes, there was something strange to his words. “The rumors are exaggerated. I am nowhere as amazing as they say I am. I am only fortunate enough to own a few decent soul armaments.”

Cheng Yao smiled as if to agree with what Bai Yunfei was saying. “I have always been fascinated with the soulbound armaments of the Crafting School and wanted to see one for myself. Unfortunately, the students of your school rarely venture out from the mountain and so I've been unfortunate in not seeing one. Fortunately, you are here in the Capital, brother Bai. If I could, will you do me the honor of comparing notes with me?”

Comparing notes?

So that was his plan....

Bai Yunfei narrowed his eyes. This was what the Cheng was planning after all. They didn't outright ask for Bai Yunfei to pay the price. They were using this as an excuse to take revenge for Cheng Xin!

To ask to compare notes right in front of the empire's ruler was basically the same as forcing for a duel and then taught a lesson in front of everyone?

Was Cheng Yao that confident in his own strength?

Wu Hong hadn't even spoke since the very moment Cheng

Huayu started this conversation with Bai Yunfei. Did he agree with the Cheng, then?

Chapter 642: Sparring In Front of Nobility

Bai Yunfei could see it now.

The Cheng knew they couldn't use their status to try and force Bai Yunfei to do anything, so they opted to swap to a more cunning strategy to take revenge for Cheng Xin. By issuing a 'challenge' they'd be able to take back the face they had lost.

Comparing notes was a theoretically safe sparring session, but neither the leg or arm had any eyes, and so injuries were often very hard to avoid. If they could have Cheng Yao—who was from the same generation as Bai Yunfei—fight and win against Bai Yunfei, not only could they reclaim the face they had lost 'fair and square', they could also use it as a way to mask their intentions of teaching Bai Yunfei a lesson.

The fact that Wu Hong was silent was proof enough that he was agreeing with this plan, or at the very least didn't have any other way to mediate this conflict. The son of a minister had been severely hurt, after all, and no matter who was right or wrong, the Cheng had to do something about it. Their honor was at stake after all.

Comparing notes would be a very simple and 'fair' way of resolving this conflict between both parties.

Perhaps Wu Hong didn't really care for this matter and was only interested in seeing two talented geniuses of the same generation compete and potentially learn from the battle.

The die had already been cast, so who was Bai Yunfei to refuse it?

"If lord Cheng wishes to compare notes, then this one will be honored to do so. Please instruct me well."

Cheng Yao's eyes lit up at his response. Lips curling into a meaningful smile, he rose up to face Wu Hong, "Your Majesty, as you have heard, brother Bai and I wish to compare notes. If Your

Majesty could be a witness, the two of us will fight well and without regrets!”

Wu Hao smiled from besides Wu Hong, “Haha, very well then. Two youngsters fighting one another is a good learning experience. To have two geniuses compare notes today is a very difficult thing to come by. Please let us see a befitting match from two geniuses.”

Wu Hong gave a slightly deep look at Cheng Huayu first before he nodded. “Very well. You two are both well known youths of your generation, and having two of those in one place is quite rare. Comparing notes wouldn’t be too bad of a thing. I’ll allow it. You may proceed outside.”

Wu Hong stood up to lead everyone into the outside of the hall with Wu Hao and Cheng Huayu right behind him. Giving Bai Yunfei a quick look, Cheng Yao followed behind his father while Wu Ren and Wu Yang walked with Bai Yunfei.

“Instructor Bai, that Cheng Yao is one of the more outstanding students from the Wind Lightning School. I heard that he became a peak late-stage Soul Exalt several years ago and can use both elemental wind and lightning to a point where his strength is beyond those of his same level. Please be careful.” Wu Yang whispered in warning to him.

Bai Yunfei narrowed his eyes, “The Wind Lightning School? Cheng Yao is from that school?!”

“He is. Cheng Yao is gifted in using both elements. He’s rumored to be able to use them in strange ways too. The Wind Lightning School personally came to scout him out and so he was taught since he was small in the school. He’s one of their major students.”

Wu Ren chose that moment to speak up as well. “Yunfei, Cheng Yao’s current strength isn’t something that can simply be classified as a peak late-stage Soul Exalt. He’s very close to becoming a Soul King and can be considered one of the strongest under Soul Kings.

You must be very careful when you fight him.”

The look on Bai Yunfei’s face hardened by a fraction of a degree. “Yes.” He nodded, “Thank you for your warnings, I will take note of it.”

He hadn’t thought that Cheng Yao would have a story like that behind his person. Being the eldest son of a minister was already very superior by itself, but to hear he was one of the core disciples from the Wind Lightning School was more than enough to make Bai Yunfei reconsider the importance of this person. He had already met another person from the Wind Lightning School, Du Shaokong who had been very amazing. From what he heard already, this Cheng Yao was definitely far more amazing than Du Shaokong.

There was also the unordinary aura he was picking up from Cheng Yao’s person. That type of soulforce was far beyond what any peak late-stage Soul Exalt should be capable of. In a way, he felt similar to that of instructor Xiao Nan back in the academy who was extremely close to becoming a Soul King.

Him being a core disciple of the Wind Lightning School by being able to use both elemental wind and lightning made him even more amazing than most soul cultivators. Combined with the fact that the Wind Lightning School had definitely taught him several extremely strong techniques, Cheng Yao’s strength could definitely be considered extremely strong. Being known as one of the strongest beneath Soul Kings would definitely not be wasted on him.

While Bai Yunfei had fought several times against a Soul King, those times had always been with the help of his soulbeasts like Xiao Qi, the blue-eyes wyrm, or the permafrost mastiff. If he were to fight someone else of the same caliber as an early-stage Soul King by himself, even if it was just comparing notes, Bai Yunfei wasn’t very confident in his chances.

This was also including in the fact that Bai Yunfei's current physical condition was far from optimal. To fight against Cheng Yao who was second only to a Soul King, it was definitely unknown to Bai Yunfei just how this battle would go....

It was too late to retreat now, though. The opponent had already asked the ruler to take witness in this challenge, and the die had already been cast for Bai Yunfei.

.....

Outside the hall was a giant plaza that spanned for a great deal of space. With everyone walking outside, Wu Hong stared at both Bai Yunfei and Cheng Yao. "This is a spar to compare notes rather than a battle to the death. Do not do anything that might threaten the life of the other, understand?"

"Yes!"

Cheng Yao responded and bowed at once to Wu Hong. In a gust of wind, he took off into the skies and came to a stop roughly two hundred meters high in the sky. Rather than using elemental energy to form solid platforms to stand on as custom for all Soul Exalts, Cheng Yao's back had a pair of wings made of wind to help keep him 'afloat' in the air without falling.

Looking back at Cheng Yao staring from the skies, Bai Yunfei bowed once to Wu Hong and Wu Hao and nodded once to Wu Ren and Wu Yang. His feet glowed red as he stepped into the skies, each step he took had a small platform of elemental energy to take him higher and higher before he came to a stop just twenty meters away from Cheng Yao on the same level of height.

Cheng Yao's eyes were focused on Bai Yunfei as he came up. Not even a bit of hostility was leaking from him, but he seemed more than ready to use all his strength to fight and test just how strong Bai Yunfei's strength was as it was known in the 'rumors'.

He didn't know much about Bai Yunfei besides what he was told

from the elders of his family. From them, he had heard that a few late-stage Soul Exalts protecting Cheng Xin had been defeated in a single blow. He also learned that his second uncle had been unable to stop Bai Yunfei from leaving, and according to him, this Bai Yunfei was capable of using a soul attack somehow.

But if he looked at Bai Yunfei right now, there didn't seem to be anything special to him. The aura Bai Yunfei was showing wasn't any different than to what a late-stage Soul Exalt might show. Even more curious was the state of Bai Yunfei's body. Normally, a body filled with energy would normally have the sensation of being bottomless almost with how much energy there was, but Bai Yunfei's body hadn't that same feeling to it.

“Could he still be hiding his full strength then?” Cheng Yao wondered to himself.

The two men regarded each other for two seconds before Cheng Yao cupped his hand customarily to Bai Yunfei. “Brother Bai, please instruct me well.”

Likewise, Bai Yunfei lifted his right hand, “Please.”

“Then....be careful, brother Bai!”

With that opening remark, Cheng Yao took action with a grunt. Eyes glowing with a cold light, the wings on his back flapped once before his entire person was propelled forward. Both hands a blur, Cheng Yao weaved elemental energy through them for an attack.

Rather than elemental wind, it was....elemental lightning!

He closed the distance between him and Bai Yunfei in the blink of an eye with both hands now at their opposing side of his waists and bent slightly at the fingers as if to grab onto something. As soulforce circulated through his body, his arms both swung outwards!

Elemental lightning surged out from him as soon as he took action. As if caught by his hands and whipped open like a curtain,

the elemental lightning within the surrounding area immediately came alive to surge and spark chaotically for a hundred meters all around!

Like a chain reaction, more and more elemental lightning started to spark to life. Purple colored lightning spanned the entire area to cover both Bai Yunfei and Cheng Yao at the center!

A series of crackling could be heard as the elemental lightning grew stronger and stronger. Ray after ray of elemental lightning shot this way and that, creating a net of lightning all around.

In the blink of an eye, the space around Bai Yunfei had turned into a lightning field!

This was a technique of the Wind Lightning School: Lightning Purgatory!

Chapter 643: Electric Purgatory

“This is one of the supreme techniques of the Wind Lightning School, ‘Lightning Purgatory’. If Cheng Yao is using this move right away, he must be trying to finish this battle as soon as possible then?”

In front of the Harmonious Heaven Hall, Wu Ren was watching the area in the sky turn into a field of lightning with fascination.

“Lightning Purgatory?! That must be amazing, isn’t it?” Wu Yang asked nervously, his eyes staring focusedly onto the sight up ahead.

“By condensing elemental lightning into a certain area, Cheng Yao can control the current of the lightning into a field of sorts. While inside, any person will be affected by the elemental lightning, especially in speed. If they’re not careful, then they’ll be struck by a great extent of the gathered elemental lightning. It is truly a powerful soul skill.”

“It’s that amazing?!” Wu Yang remarked, “No wonder they’re one of the Ten Great Schools then. This ‘Lightning Purgatory’ sounds even stronger than some of the stuff we learn.

“But something like this seems like it’s also dependent on the user’s skill. Instructor Bai should be able to deal with something like this....”

.....

In the middle of the electric field, Bai Yunfei looked around himself at the countless streaks of purple lightning. Like tiny snakes, they spanned across the area around him. Though they weren’t attacking him, Bai Yunfei felt his body start to tingle a little bit in numbness, and his speed felt like it was dropping.

“Bang!!”

There was a crackling sound as a flower of fire bloomed to life

from Bai Yunfei's body. Flickering rhythmically, the fires scattered the nearby elemental lightning, though in some parts of the field, some of the elemental lightning could be seen entering the flames to join with the tiny purple spark in the fire. The rich elemental lightning from the field seemed to be feeding the fire, fueling it to full bloom and making the flames dance even brighter and bigger....

“Hmph!!”

There was a sneering sound as Bai Yunfei observed the elemental lightning around him. In the next moment, a strong amount of energy was felt before what appeared to be a bolt of lightning came striking down onto Bai Yunfei.

Still armed with a pair of wind wings on his back, Cheng Yao was traveling at hyper-fast speeds. There had only been seventy to eighty meters of distance between Bai Yunfei and him at first, but now that distance had been cut into half with this charge. As he moved, his right hand lashed out and clutched at the air. A bolt of lightning formed inside of his grasp, and with a mighty throw, he launched the bolt at Bai Yunfei!

Even with the intimidating crackling sounds of the lightning all around him and then the attack coming at his front, Bai Yunfei didn't seem unsettled at all. Not even looking like he was going to dodge, Bai Yunfei raised his right hand and swung his hand at the bolt of lightning!

“Boom!!”

The bolt of lightning made contact with the fires around Bai Yunfei's palm. Clenching his palm to make a fist, Bai Yunfei crushed the lightning bolt into pieces!

This bolt of lightning was only the preamble to Cheng Yao's true attack. Right after Bai Yunfei took apart the bolt of lightning, his eyes narrowed. Taking advantage of the propulsion offered by the elemental lightning when it exploded, Bai Yunfei used the Flash

Step and the Wave Treading Steps to instantaneously move backwards away from his original spot.

At the same time, Cheng Yao's person came diving down like an eagle where he had been with his right hand like a claw to strike.

Bai Yunfei's instantaneous movement had been surprising to Cheng Yao. Though his attack had failed to land, Cheng Yao followed it up with a kick with his left leg to propel him forward. The wings on his back flapped at the same time to add to his forward inertia to give chase to Bai Yunfei.

Elemental lightning gathered to his right fist as he launched an unhesitating punch onto Bai Yunfei's face.

Shifting his feet, Bai Yunfei kicked off to the right side of Cheng Yao's punch before weaving his head back under. Having his punch fail, Cheng Yao stretch his hand wide to sweep his hand at Bai Yunfei's throat.

Lifting his head back and twisting his body, Bai Yunfei was able to successfully swing himself under and to the other side of Cheng Yao's arm.

The two were moving at insanely quick speeds, and with Cheng Yao's fierce motions, his arms and legs were simply ripping through the air almost with clattering sounds while Bai Yunfei dodged each strike made at him. Nine out of ten times did Cheng Yao's attacks fail to land while the tenth would always have its strength reduced by a half before Bai Yunfei parried it.

Nearly a hundred blows were made by Cheng Yao, but the more he attacked, the more astonished he felt. "What amazing flexibility he has! Even in my Lightning Purgatory he's still able to dodge my attacks like this. But....why is he only defending? He hasn't actually attacked me yet, it feels like....he doesn't have the energy in his body?!"

Just like Cheng Yao had guessed, Bai Yunfei's body was currently

lacking in strength. If Bai Yunfei had the strength, he would've used the Eighty-one Fold Fist Force onto Cheng Yao's first punch. But right now, Bai Yunfei's body couldn't handle that strain and wouldn't be able to handle a straight on punch from Cheng Yao either.

That was why he decided to use the Wave Treading Steps and the Flash Step to help himself react to Cheng Yao's barrage of attacks. By dodging again and again, he was able to think a little about how to best fight this battle.

He wasn't planning on using one of his trump cards or strongest moves to take the victory. Though this battle was meant to be the Cheng's way of teaching him a lesson, Bai Yunfei felt like this was also a chance to learn something.

He'd be able to learn how the people from the Wind Lightning School fought if he were to keep this up.

But aside from the opening move, the Lightning Purgatory, the rest of Cheng Yao's attacks had been relatively minor. He wasn't using any special soul skills and was instead fighting like he was trying to get a feel for Bai Yunfei.

Barely dodging Cheng Yao's moves one after another for about seven minutes, Bai Yunfei finally dodged one of Cheng Yao's chops before he leapt ten meters backwards. Scanning the area, Bai Yunfei kicked off again to bring him up to speed like a crimson shooting star towards the edge of the cage of purple lightning. From the looks of it, he was trying to escape from the electric field.

“Trying to run away?! It's too late!!”

Cheng Yao's called out at once in triumph. Rather than give chase, he brought back hands forward to launch a giant ray of elemental lightning.

“This is one of my Wind Lightning School's strongest attacks. Electric Purgatory: Thunder Compression!!”

With his cry, his hands swung out to have his palms face Bai Yunfei!

From far away, it looked as if the entire electric field was starting to tremble as if being pulled by something. Then it started to swirl like a whirlpool before condensing into one spot!!

The entirety of the electric field's energy was being focused onto the center!

It shrunk within the blink of an eye in front of Cheng Yao before hovering just thirty meters in size in front of him.

Twenty meters.

Ten meters.

Eight meters.

Five meters....

Two meters!

The electric field was now an electric ball that was gathered around Bai Yunfei's person.

He was inside the ball!

As if compacted to the point of no more, the electric ball froze before exploding!

“Boom!!!”

Chapter 644: Pulsing Winds

It was as if a miniature sun had exploded in the area. The compressed electric ball immediately exploded into a flurry of elemental lightning and light that even the guards and servants several hundred meters away in the Harmonious Heaven Hall had to close their eyes shut. Several of them had even felt a wave of electricity run over their bodies, turning them numb.

There was no way Wu Hong or the others would be affected by this surge of elemental lightning. They were all only surprised for a brief moment that such a powerful explosion would suddenly happen.

“How amazing....is this the strongest explosive technique from the ‘Electric Purgatory’? This.....is something that could beat even an early-stage Soul King in strength!”

Wu Yang exclaimed in shock.

Wu Ren nodded. “Yes, it’s no wonder it’s one of the supreme techniques of the Wind Lightning School. Compressing the energy into a ball that small sounds simple to do, but the elemental lightning makes it very hard to do so. One would need an extraordinary amount of strength to compress it that much. The fact that a peak late-stage Soul Exalt like Cheng Yao was able to do so without much soulforce consumption is very surprising.

“But....” He continued, the look of shock in his eyes increasing by a bit to look at the glow of purple light spreading through the skies. “What’s more amazing is Bai Yunfei’s defense. At the moment of that tremendous explosion, not only was Bai Yunfei able to defend himself, he did it without being hurt in the slightest....”

.....

The explosion of elemental lightning was beyond Cheng Yao’s

control. It dissipated quickly, revealing first Cheng Yao still floating there in the skies with his wings. His aura was slightly subdued as if he was trying to regain some strength. His eyes were both staring forward at something in shock, however.

From the epicenter of the explosion, a bubble of orange light was starting to show from behind the purple. It was about two meters in length and circular as well like the electric ball that used to be there, but the orange light remained even after the former disappeared. Shimmering a bit, the orange light finally collapsed to reveal Bai Yunfei behind it.

Bai Yunfei was absolutely calm and his entire person standing straight. He seemed to even be smiling—he was completely unhurt! An attack that could be on par with what a Soul King could put out had done nothing on him!

“A defensive soul armament? One that can expel elemental energy....” Cheng Yao muttered as he watched the orange light collapse. Just faintly there in the light, he could see an object. “If it can block the strongest move from my Electric Purgatory, then it has to be a low-heaven tier soul armament at the very least, if not a mid-heaven.

“But....I won’t believe that you’re completely fine!! Even if you defended yourself, your soulforce has to have taken a hit! I’d like to see just how many times you can take a hit like that!” The light in Cheng Yao’s eyes hardened.

“If elemental lightning is out of the question, then what about elemental wind?!”

“Whoosh...”

There was a strange shift of light in Cheng Yao’s eyes. All around him, the wind started to pick up strangely to blow at the corners of his and Bai Yunfei’s robes. Even more curious was the fact that beyond the three hundred diameter area, everything was completely calm. As it were, even the trees within the area had

only wind blowing across the treetops from one side.

There were a few other minute changes in the surrounding atmosphere as well. Bits of green light was starting to appear out of nowhere and started to dye the flow of the wind with an unnatural light.

Cheng Yao felt himself a little unhappy that one of the strongest moves in his arsenal had failed to defeat Bai Yunfei. If that failed, his other more ordinary moves wouldn't fail then. There wasn't any need to probe Bai Yunfei's strength anymore, it was time for his strongest move.

With the wind swirling around him, Cheng Yao raised his right hand to allow for an object to appear on it.

It was a circular weapon that had a sharp blade almost all around the object. The object was about a third of a meter in diameter and three fingers wide with a hair width in edge. In one section of the object, there was a small palm-sized section for the 'blade handle'.

This was a soul armament, the Lunar Chakram!

Crafters from the Crafting School weren't the only ones with powerful soul armaments. The more outstanding individuals from the more powerful clans and schools would also have one or two of them as well, wouldn't they?

The Lunar Chakram was a soul armament bestowed from the headmaster of the Wind Lightning School, a low-heaven tier wind-type soul armament!

The wind seemed to pick up a bit when the soul armament came into being. The wind around Cheng Yao spun with an even faster velocity as if being drawn to the perimeter of the soul armament and hone the edge with its energy.

"A heaven-tier soul armament." Bai Yunfei stated. His eyes stared at the weapon in Cheng Yao's hand, but not in surprise. He was more curious about the weapon and its make itself rather than its

grade.

He also noticed the wind picking up around Cheng Yao and his weapon, “This....must be a wind-type soul skill?”

Back when Cheng Yao was using his explosive technique with the elemental lightning, Bai Yunfei had immediately used the strongest defense the Cataclysmic Seal had to offer to protect himself .

The strength of the Electric Purgatory was surprising, but the real surprise was with how strong the defenses of the Cataclysmic Seal was. This was the first time he was able to use it since Baishan City, and Bai Yunfei could tell that it had gotten a lot stronger compared to before despite him only increasing by one stage in strength.

Even with his opponent opting to use elemental energy to attack, Bai Yunfei was still adopting a wait-and-see approach to let Cheng Yao take the initiative.

His ‘relaxed’ posture infuriated Cheng Yao to a certain degree. The soulforce in his body began to bubble in accordance to his emotions. The elemental wind was still being wrapped around him, but its trajectory was slowly becoming like a single belt of wind that was crossing this way and that around the area on itself.

“Wrrrrr.....”

The sound of the wind started to grow louder and louder, piercing the ears of everyone that was within the vicinity. Soon enough, even Bai Yunfei was starting to feel the wind to sound somewhat like if someone was wailing.

But...how could the wind pull off a sound like that?

Suddenly, Bai Yunfei blanched, “This is bad!!”

“Chiyah!!”

In the next moment, Cheng Yao’s eyes lit up with a bright light

and uttered a strange sound from his lips.

At his command, the wind around his person started to echo his cry. With each time there was an echo, the sound grow louder and louder!

Simultaneously, the elemental wind swirled forth towards Bai Yunfei with great speeds!

Not only was he being attacked by a gale of wind, a wave of sound was accompanying it! Bai Yunfei couldn't help but clamp his hands to his ears as the ringing in them started to get worse. His head felt faint as both the wind and the noise surged through his ears. With how the wind was attacking him, Bai Yunfei felt like it was trying to tear apart his person from the inside and entwine his soul!!

This was....a mental attack!!

Cheng Yao was capable of using a mental attack!

This was one of the ultimate techniques of the Wind Lightning School.

Secret Arte of the Wind: Pulsing Howl!

Through the usage of elemental wind, a mental attack could be made!

In the moment Bai Yunfei's mind was distracted by this attack, Cheng Yao availed the moment to fly towards him. With the wings on his back and the wind around him, Cheng Yao was able to speed towards Bai Yunfei in no time at all!

Blinking the dizziness away from his mind, Bai Yunfei realized in alarm that there was a cold gleam of light already in front of him. With practically no time to think, Bai Yunfei tilted his head backwards to allow for the cold streak of light to graze over his nose.

Flipping over to his right rather than snap his head back, Bai Yunfei felt something like a claw come at his face. Though he

dodged the throat strike, Bai Yunfei was unable to stop the second blow to land on his stomach and send him flying backwards.

He flew ten meters away with his hands clutching his stomach as he doubled up. But right as he steadied himself, his back was drenched with sweat as he realized something.

There was a cold gust of wind coming right at the nape of his neck!

Chapter 645: The Anomaly in the Soul

Sentinel Scarf

“Clang!!”

Bai Yunfei’s right arm flew to behind his head, colliding with the object coming at him with a metallic clang when his bracer parried it.

“Whoosh....”

The streak of green light flew away from Bai Yunfei’s bracer and then back towards Cheng Yao who caught it.

It was that heaven-tier soul armament!

“He...how was he able to regain himself so fast!!”

Cheng Yao was in shock. The ‘Pulsing Winds’ was a mental attack! It was something that could affect even the soul! There should’ve been no one other than Soul Kings that wouldn’t be affected for as long as Bai Yunfei was. Most people would’ve fallen into a state of despondence, but Bai Yunfei had only been stuck for as long as it took one to blink their eyes before he was back to normal!

“He was able to block my Lunar Chakram, does that mean....the bracer on his arm is also a heaven-tier soul armament?”

The sleeves that used to hide Bai Yunfei’s arm from sight were cut open due him having to block the Lunar Chakram.

Cheng Yao looked pained—any regular soul cultivator would’ve tried to dodge the blow and would’ve left them open to another attack, but Bai Yunfei reacted differently to what he thought and blocked with his arm. That way, Bai Yunfei was able to avoid a follow up from Cheng Yao without fear of being hurt.

His face darkened. With a grunt, he swung his arm to release the chakram again to fire it at Bai Yunfei.

.....

From far away near the Harmonious Heaven Hall.

Wu Hong had been watching the fight go on with wide-open eyes. From when Cheng Yao used the Pulsing Winds to when Bai Yunfei managed to snap out from his stupor and defend himself, Wu Hong felt himself at a loss almost. His soulsense was starting to creep forward into the battle to cover the place.

His eyebrows furrowed a moment after as he felt something. “Strange....”

The sharp Wu Hao next to him caught onto the the tone in his voice at once. “Brother, what is it?”

Wu Hong looked strangely to Wu Hao as well before he shook his head. “It’s nothing, I was merely surprised by their strengths, that’s all, haha. Neither of the two are Soul Kings, and yet one is capable of a soul skill that is similar to a soul attack, and the other is capable of immediately countering it. What a miraculous exchange.”

“Ah yes, it does feel a little breathtaking to watch.” Wu Hao smiled, “The strengths of these two youngsters transcend every other peer they have in their age group. They are well worthy of being the ones to lead their generation.”

They were talking with one another, but their eyes were glued to the fight taking place in the skies away from them. The battle was indeed a ferocious, but amazing one. With them here to watch the fight, they could immediately stop the fight if it seemed if one person wouldn’t be able to evade a killing blow in time.

Wu Hao himself had nearly leapt into action when Bai Yunfei had nearly been hit by the Lunar Chakram, but then when he felt the change take place in Bai Yunfei’s aura, he immediately disregarded his previous plan.

And so the two came to a lull in their conversation to fully enjoy

the battle between Bai Yunfei and Cheng Yao in peace.

But while Wu Hao was watching the fight without seeming like anything was the matter, Wu Hong himself had a strange look in his eyes. They flickered with light as he thought to himself, “If Hao didn’t feel it....was I mistaken then?? I could’ve sworn I felt ‘it’ appear.....

“But I can’t feel anything anymore. Was I just imagining things then? Perhaps it was something else? How strange...”

.....

When Cheng Yao had used his ‘Pulsing Winds’ to attack Bai Yunfei, it had actually hampered Bai Yunfei’s movement by a great amount. But due to some sort of miracle, his next attack failed. Even if Cheng Yao were to try again with the move, it wouldn’t be enough to deal with Bai Yunfei.

Even if an actual early-stage Soul King were to try and do the same thing with Bai Yunfei, it wouldn’t work. How could Cheng Yao and his imitation of an attack work then?

Whilst Bai Yunfei was entranced by the effects of Cheng Yao’s attack, the Soul Sentinel Scarf on Bai Yunfei’s forehead had emitted a noise that Bai Yunfei could hear. It was soothing to the ears and immediately flooded his body with relief and energy to drive away the foreign energy sapping his ability to move.

Bai Yunfei’s mental fortitude was on par with Cheng Yao. Combined with the effect of the Soul Sentinel Scarf, there was no way Cheng Yao’s Pulsing Winds would be able to do a thing to Bai Yunfei.

But still, there was a look of bewilderment in Bai Yunfei’s eyes when the attack took place. Even if he was able to block it, he was still panicking at the situation.

This bewilderment wasn’t because of the mental attack Cheng Yao unleashed, but because of something else.....

There was a feeling he had never felt before coming from the Soul Sentinel Scarf!

It wasn't a feeling he'd normally have whenever an effect of one of his equipment activated. This was the feeling of something 'resonating' mysteriously with him!

As mentioned before, Regalias are usually with a soul, and the one in the Soul Sentinel Scarf was merely a small trace of one without any actual sentience. Even with how much time Bai Yunfei spent into trying to study what a soul armament with a soul meant, he wasn't able to find a thing about it. Aside from when the soul armament had registered him as his master, Bai Yunfei didn't feel anything else from the depths of the Soul Sentinel Scarf. Actually, Bai Yunfei had nearly forgotten that there was such a thing in the Soul Sentinel Scarf to begin with.

But this time he clearly felt it. The soul within the Soul Sentinel Scarf had 'woken' without even a warning!

It was as if a signal had been given to the soul and it was finally 'responding'!

Or in other words, it was 'resonating' with Bai Yunfei!!

In that short moment, Bai Yunfei could sense a feeling of excitement coming from the scarf. It was as if something was truly coming to life within the Soul Sentinel Scarf in order to resonate with him!

This sensation lasted only for a moment before it faded. The effects of the Soul Sentinel Scarf was already being activated, and Bai Yunfei was already snapping out from his stupor from Cheng Yao's attack. Without even being able to think if what he felt was real or not, Bai Yunfei had to respond to the Lunar Chakram.

He had to dodge the weapon without sparing anything else a second thought. And by the time he dodged that, he had to dodge yet another throat grab from Cheng Yao before he was hit with a

blow to the stomach and sent flying away.

.....

“Clang! Clang! Clang....”

Green met crimson as the two streaks of light mixed with one another. A series of metallic clangs could be heard whenever the two lights intersected and a small shower of sparks were seen.

Each time Cheng Yao released the Lunar Chakram, he was able to try to attack at places Bai Yunfei wasn't defending as he parried the Lunar Chakram.

But Bai Yunfei was still able to dodge most of his moves with the same grace as always. Every blow Cheng Yao tried to land with his fists usually hit air, and each time the Lunar Chakram came forward, Bai Yunfei's Cataclysmic Seal would come forward to stop it.

This was quickly becoming a battle Cheng Yao felt like puking blood from. From each time he tried to attack, Cheng Yao could see Bai Yunfei 'examining' each of his moves as if his fighting style was supposed to be a performance Bai Yunfei was enjoying.

There was also another aspect to Bai Yunfei that Cheng Yao had a hard time believing his eyes. From the looks of things....Bai Yunfei's soulforce didn't look like it had depleted at all!

He himself had already used the Electric Purgatory and the Pulsing Winds, which took a decent amount from him. If he added on the attempts he tried to hit Bai Yunfei, his soulforce was already a quarter gone. But Bai Yunfei didn't even look like anything had changed since the battle even begun!!

Bai Yunfei's strength didn't seem like it was on par with his, but Bai Yunfei's soulforce was definitely holding out for far longer than his!

Despite him hardly able to believe that notion, Cheng Yao had to admit that if things were to continue on like this, the one that'd

end up losing would most likely be him!

Chapter 646: Thundercloud Tempest

“He has to have used up some soulforce by now, so why is it that it looks like nothing’s changed?!” Cheng Yao’s eyes looked pained.

Frost overtook them though with his next thought, “If that’s the case, I’ll have to use that move then....you’ve led me no other choice!!

“With His Majesty and Prince Hao here, they should be able to save Bai Yunfei before any damage becomes fatal....but if he does get severely injured, that’s just his bad luck then!!”

Determined to launch a new plan of attack, Cheng Yao’s eyes landed back onto Bai Yunfei. Looking as though victory was certain, Cheng Yao whiffed his right hand to unleash the Lunar Chakram again. This time, the chakram took an irregular arc that left behind several mirror images that all then shot towards Bai Yunfei like one!

The wind wings on Cheng Yao’s back flapped twice to accelerate him into the skies and to widen the horizontal distance between the two.

His arms were right in front of his chest as he retreated. They flipped through countless hand seals to meld his soulforce around in his body. With each hand seal made, his soulforce made a different circulation through his body, and when the final one was made, his soulforce immediately flew out from his body to shine in the area around him. For a brief few moments, the ripples from his soulforce became two separate forces of elemental wind and lightning!

“Whoosh....cerrack!!”

The sounds of wind screeching and thunder cracking could be heard then. The clouds above their heads were starting to darken and gather together to form a thundercloud above Cheng Yao!

Three hundred meters below Cheng Yao to where the ground was, several pieces of vegetation and trees were starting to quiver tremendously as if being pulled at by something. Several of the loose stones from the flower garden in fact were already flying into the skies.

The area in which the skies used to be clear were now dark with clouds, and the fierce weather in the area was already changing for the worse with a tempest starting to take place.

.....

In the moment when Cheng Yao was forming his hand seals, Wu Hong, Wu Hao, and Wu Ren were all looking on in strange surprise. “A soul skill that requires hand seals? Could it be...?” Wu Hao muttered.

Practically before any breathing could be done by the spectators, the area in front of them was already darkening quickly.

“This weather change....this is the ultimate artes of the Wind Lightning School, the Thundercloud Tempest!” Wu Ren exclaimed.

“Thundercloud Tempest? Is that move amazing?” Not knowing much about the Wind Lightning School, Wu Yang asked his older brother in curiosity.

Wu Ren nodded. “The Wind Lightning School practices both elemental wind and lightning to an astonishing degree, but it's only when the two elements are used in conjunction that the school's true might can be seen. From the Wind Lightning School, they've an ultimate arte known as the ‘Thundercloud Tempest’. By controlling both wind and lightning, the user can bend the power of a natural disaster to their will. They say that there was once a battle between the Wind Lightning School and the Water School where one early-stage Soul King from the former used this move to immediately kill another early-stage Soul King from the Water School! Even between Soul Kings, a soul skill that can immediately

kill another is a very strong soul skill indeed....”

“It’s that strong?!” Wu Yang exclaimed, “Then if Cheng Yao is going to use a move like that, wouldn’t...that kill instructor Bai then?!”

“What? You think he’s overdoing things? Haha, the way I see it, he doesn’t have any other choice. He’s already seen that he won’t be able to win against Bai Yunfei if he doesn’t do this....” Wu Ren shook his head. “You shouldn’t be worried either. I might not know if Bai Yunfei will be able to take this move, but with father and uncle here, neither of the two will stand to the side and let anything bad happen to either of them. Let us wait by the sidelines and see what happens next....”

In the time taken for the two brothers to talk, the area where Bai Yunfei and Cheng Yao were fighting was already completely different than before. All of the wind within a three hundred meter diameter was already being taken in and add to the gale!

An immaterial pillar of wind was already spiralling into the skies with increasing speeds without actually going anywhere like if it was locked in place in front of the Harmonious Heaven Hall. The wind screamed and roared as it picked up the loose objects nearby--the fact that this entire construct was formed by someone’s control over elemental wind was very impressive to the onlookers.

There was a hurricane taking place on the ground and rolls of thunderclouds in the skies. Every so often, the dark thunderclouds would unleash an arc of lightning, but never with any sounds of thunder.

Bai Yunfei was within the eye of the hurricane. All around him, the hurricane screeched and roared at his ears while he looked up at the forming thunderclouds above with a grim look.

The hurricane took ten seconds only at most to form around him. Bai Yunfei had planned to escape beyond the hurricane’s initial radius, but Cheng Yao’s chakram seemed to have a life of its own

whenever it came at him. Though Bai Yunfei was able to sue the Cataclysmic Seal to block the chakram, he was still forced back whenever he tried to run and was in the end stuck in the hurricane.

Trying to escape anymore would've left him open to a sneak attack, so Bai Yunfei decided to spend all his effort in protecting himself.

Of course, Bai Yunfei was a little curious on how strong this attack would be.

He could see that this mysterious ultimate arte from the Wind Lightning School wasn't something he'd be able to come across any normal day. He had to admit, he was curious to see how he'd fare against this. He'd of course understand that being careful was extremely important here, but he was also confident that he had enough strength to weather this situation.

“Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang....”

Several cracks of thunder echoed in the area before blades of wind formulated from the hurricane. They flew this way and that, leaving behind heavy gulches in the earth when they landed while several bounced off from the barrier the Cataclysmic Seal formed. The barrier shimmered slightly, but it was able to hold its own.

But the look on Bai Yunfei's hardened by a margin. He could sense that the amount of wind blades were starting to grow larger and larger, and more powerful with each one that formed....

The hurricane itself was also starting to take on a purple hue to it. Just barely, Bai Yunfei could see a striking resemblance to the hurricane and the Electric Purgatory....

“Boom!!!”

At last, there was the cracking sound of thunder as a purple bolt of lightning a meter thick came crashing down onto Bai Yunfei!

Having been prepared for this, Bai Yunfei kicked off from the

area he was in, activating the Flash Step to travel ten meters in a split-moment. The purple bolt of lightning crashed into the ground with an ear-splitting crack and left behind a deep crater there.

But this was only the start. After Bai Yunfei dodged that bolt of lightning, yet another purple bolt was dropping down on him again!

One bolt, two bolts, three bolts...time after time within the hurricane, at least a hundred bolts of lightning started to come crashing down from the thunder clouds while Bai Yunfei was barely left with any room to dodge!

Aside from the multiple bolts of lightning, the hurricane around Bai Yunfei was still jettisoning several blades of wind at him. Like a web of blades, they combined with the web of lightning arcing from the clouds to surround Bai Yunfei!

At this, the onlookers near the Harmonious Heaven Hall were finally starting to look wary. Wu Hao's soulforce was slowly coming to a boil as he prepared himself to step in if necessary.

.....

“Hmph!!”

But there was a single snort from within the hurricane that utterly baffled everyone that heard it.

By all rights with all the howling winds and crackling lightning, no one should've been able to hear this snort in the first place. But everyone did hear it. It was as if....this snort was being transmitted into their minds directly rather than through their ears!

At the same time the snort was made, the hurricane and even the thunderclouds seemed to stop for just a single second!

It was as if time had stopped for just half a second where everything ceased to move!

“Boom!!”

In the next moment, there was a deafening explosion from within the hurricane before a brilliant beam of fiery light came into being. Flames as sharp as the wind blades from the hurricane came to life before the entire hurricane was swallowed up by a giant swirl of fire!

Shortly afterwards, everyone could feel a tremendous amount of elemental fire burst out from within the hurricane. There were two deep roars before two pillars of fire shot into the heavens like if they were two dragons made of fire trying to ascend into the skies! Breaking free from the hurricane, they collided with the thunderclouds and scattered the dark clouds apart!!

The Dual Dragon Burst!!

Chapter 647: Victory

The explosion gradually dissipated away to reveal a now very dusky area where flames were still licking away at the remnants of Cheng Yao's attack. With the hurricane more or less gone and the thunderclouds scattered, everyone could see that the skies were back to their normal color and that the natural disaster-like image from before was gone as if it had only been an illusion before.

But the entire area was sweltering with heat as if there was now a severe drought in the area, reminding everyone that the events taking place here was indeed real.

“Yao'er!!”

A horrified cry erupted from the audience. A streak of purple light came flying from Wu Hong's side with such great speed that the person moving had disappeared completely from sight just three meters after he moved. Reappearing half a kilometer away, the person was holding a person in his arms.

The one who suddenly came forth from the audience was the Minister of the Right, Cheng Huayu, and the person he was holding was his son Cheng Yao!!

Cheng Yao's robes was in a raggedy state. Singed all over and his hair messy, Cheng Yao looked as if he had only just escaped from a burning wildfire. Having fallen from the skies before Cheng Huayu took him into his arms, Cheng Yao was having a hard time trying to stand right now. His entire body was trembling fiercely and his face was deathly white. But both of his eyes weren't look at his father who saved him, but at the area where he fell from with a look of shock.

His lips trembled for a moment as if he was trying to search for the right words to say. Then, his mouth dropped open to 'puke' out a large amount of blood!!

“I...Impossible....I...I...I can't....believe this!!!”

He spoke in between mouthfuls of blood. His eyes rolled over to the back of his head and then....he fainted!

“Yao'er!!”

Cheng Huayu cried out again before his entire body glowed purple in light as he transmitted his own soulforce into his son's body to heal his wounds.

Cheng Huayu was a lightning-type mid-stage Soul King.

As he was feeding his son his soulforce, Cheng Huayu was also scanning Cheng Yao's body with his soulsense in panic. After not seeing anything too serious, the panic in Cheng Huayu's face faded away. He turned away to stare where Cheng Yao had fallen with wrathful indignation and even a bit of killing intent.

Floating a hundred meters high in the sky from where the elemental fire was still burning was a single person who slowly stepped forward and out from the fires.

It was Bai Yunfei.

Like Cheng Yao, his robes were in a state of disarray, but not as badly as the other. His face was slightly pale, his breathing hitched, and his soulforce slightly waned. But compared to Cheng Yao, Bai Yunfei was in a far better state.

By now, the spar in front of the nobles of the empire was over, and the result was....clear to see.

Bai Yunfei watched on as Cheng Huayu gave him a nasty glare with raised eyebrows. He wasn't really afraid. He was sure that Cheng Huayu wanted to kill Bai Yunfei but couldn't due to the current place they were in.

The sounds of footsteps echoed through the air as Wu Hong and the others came forward.

Bai Yunfei stood to attention and faced Cheng Yao being held by

Cheng Huayu. “Lord Cheng, I’ve won.” He spoke ‘politely’.

It was an unkindly thing to say at the end of something and nearly led to Cheng Yao fainting again. There was a hiccup in his breathing as his lips trembled slightly. Reluctant and wanting to say something, Cheng Yao found himself unable to actually speak any words and could only think about how unbelievable it was for him to lose.

Bai Yunfei turned back to face Wu Hong and the others, “Your Majesty....” He began respectfully.

Wu Hong gave him a slight nod. “Very good. It was a wonderful fight between the two of you. I am pleased to see it.”

The ruler turned to Cheng Huayu and his son next, “How is Cheng Yao?”

Eyes still burning slightly with anger, Cheng Huayu managed to reply to the ruler, “Thank you for your concern, your Majesty. Yao’er is slightly injured, but nothing consequential.”

Anyone could tell that Cheng Yao was definitely not ‘slightly injured’, but Cheng Huayu would never admit that his son had been more than just ‘slightly’ injured by Bai Yunfei.

“Instructor Bai, are you alright?” Wu Yang rushed to Bai Yunfei to whisper to him.

“I’m fine, nothing consequential either.” Bai Yunfei shook his head.

Bai Yunfei was making use of the same lines as well. He might’ve looked a lot better than Cheng Yao, but he was putting up a good front to hide his pains. The battle just now had done a number onto him, and he was already having a hard time continuing to stand. His head felt like hundreds of needles were stabbing into him, and also, he felt slightly out of it.

But all in all, he was in a much better state than Cheng Yao.

“Whoosh!!”

A brilliant streak of multi-colored light came flying towards the group. As everyone turned their heads, the streak of light came to a sudden stop right in front of Bai Yunfei.

“Yunfei--are you alright?! What happened?”

A frantic voice came from within the streak of light before it disappeared, revealing a little bird in it.

It was Xiao Qi.

“Haha, it’s nothing. I was just comparing notes with somebody else, that’s all.”

He took Xiao Qi to introduce him to everyone else. “Your Majesty, this is my contracted soulbeast, his name is Xiao Qi.”

Using the bond between him and Xiao Qi, Bai Yunfei reminded the bird to be respectful to the people here. Chirping respectfully on Bai Yunfei’s shoulder, Xiao Qi spoke to both Wu Hong and Wu Hao, “Xiao Qi pays his respects to Your Majesty and Prince Hao.”

“Oh? This is your contracted soulbeast?” Wu Hong gave an appraising eye to Xiao Qi. “A class seven prisma oriole....how unprecedented, haha. Even your soulbeast is quite special....but why wasn’t he with you before?”

“I....” Bai Yunfei didn’t know to respond at first, but then he saw a small figure come running towards the group from a distance.

“Xiao Qi came with me to the Royal Palace, but then he went to play with Princess Wu Ping.” He admitted.

“Xiao Qi! Xiao Qi! Wait up for me! Why are you flying so fast, I can’t keep up!!”

Wu Ping’s half-tired cries could be heard as she ran towards Xiao Qi. When she realized Wu Hong and the others were here, she came to a screeching halt. Sticking her tongue out, she teetered to her father, “Father, uncle...”

Wu Hong shook his head helplessly, but his eyes had a dotting light in them, “Ping’er, you snuck out to play again I see.”

“I....I was just trying to relax...” Wu Ping pouted. Seeing that her father wasn’t angry with her, she turned to obediently walk to where her fourth and first brother were.

“Your Majesty,” Cheng Huayu bowed to the ruler, “your humble servant wishes to return home to treat his son’s wounds, if Your Majesty will allow it.”

Wu Hong raised an eyebrow inquisitively, but he nodded. “The battle just now was a hard one and surely requires time to rest. I’ll allow it.”

“Thank you, Your Majesty, your humble servant will withdraw now!”

.....

Cheng Huayu left with the injured Cheng Yao in tow, and Bai Yunfei took this pretense to leave as well. Saying only a few words more with the man, Bai Yunfei was granted permission to leave and left with Wu Yang leading him.

On the roads leading out from the Royal Palace, Wu Yang was staring at Bai Yunfei with wide-open eyes. “Instructor Bai,” He spoke at last, “you really are super amazing....Cheng Yao was on the same level as a Soul King almost, and yet you beat him so easily....”

He knew Bai Yunfei was a strong one ever since he defeated instructor Zhou Yu, but then today was the real icing on the cake to prove just how immensely strong Bai Yunfei was.

“Easily?? It wasn’t that simple...” Bai Yunfei shook his head with a laugh, touching the Charm Bracelet on his hand subconsciously, “I was actually in trouble there....”

In that battle when the Thundercloud Tempest was nearly upon him, Bai Yunfei found himself at a bit of a loss. He had only

protected himself against half of the wind blades coming at him when the protection from the Cataclysmic Seal had failed him. Without being able to resupply the barrier with any more soulforce before it collapsed, Bai Yunfei knew he had to act now and make use of his strongest technique.

So he used the Charm Bracelet to activate his pseudo soul attack.

He put all his strength into the soul attack so that the Thundercloud Tempest would lose control for just even a little bit. Then in that pause, Bai Yunfei used the Dual Dragon Burst to further break the control Cheng Yao had on the technique.

Doing that had led to Bai Yunfei's own body practically collapsing from exhaustion though. The 'coil' and 'fusion' form and then the soul attack had drained a great deal of strength from Bai Yunfei and made his head feel slightly light. If he was at his peak strength, using those three wouldn't even had done much, but in his current weakened state and the traces of his soul still somewhat damaged, the fatigue the three things had on him was unexpectedly immense....

However, Bai Yunfei still learned a lot from this battle, and Bai Yunfei felt like the insights he gained from it was great.

Chapter 648: The Regalia in the Royal Palace

After Bai Yunfei had left, Wu Hong remained behind in the palace by himself. Wu Hao and Wu Ren had left the palace already, and Wu Ping had left rather unhappily with them to go back to her 'lesson'. Behind in his own resting quarters, Wu Hong sat upon his throne and appeared to be deep in thought.

After a while, his right drifted across a piece of space in front of him, an illusionary door about a meter tall appearing where his hand trailed.

Rays of silver light was shining forth from beyond the spatial door. From beyond, a room could be seen, but before anything within the room could be made out, the spatial door blinked out from sight.

However, there was now a new addition to the room Wu Hong was in after the door disappeared.

A sword.

It was a little over a meter in length and about three fingers wide in blade width. The blade was translucent, but of delicate make.

Shiny in light, it felt like this long sword was made from crystals almost.

It also didn't seem like there was really an 'edge' to this sword, and that it'd shatter if swung.

Wu Hong had taken this sword from beyond the mysterious spatial door earlier, but the sword itself flew out from the room rather than Wu Hong physically retrieving it.

“Soul Slayer, is that feeling you had still there?”

Surprisingly, Wu Hong opened his mouth to say something, but aside from him, there wasn't any other 'person' in the same room

as him!!

But when he spoke, he was looking at the floating crystalline sword as if....as if he was waiting for the sword to respond back to him!!

The real surprising thing was what happened after that. The crystalline sword trembled for a moment, and then....

“The feeling is long gone. It was only at that moment when I connected to you that I felt it. But I didn’t feel anything afterwards, I’m starting to doubt if I even felt the right thing or not.”

A voice that sounded neither like a male or female rang through the room, and the source of that voice felt as if it was...coming from the crystalline sword!

“It isn’t too likely that you were mistaken. With your perception, is there even a way being mistaken is a possibility? At the same time you felt it, I could have sworn that there was something special that was calling you.”

“Do you think....this sensation is due to another ‘Regalia’?”

The sword he called ‘Slayer’ responded then. “Only a sentient soul armament would have the same fluctuations in its aura like the one I sensed. And only those types of fluctuations would pique my perception as it did. Unfortunately, I was only able to sense that this fluctuation was ‘familiar’ before it disappeared from my senses....”

“A familiar sensation?” Wu Hong exclaimed, “Then was it really a Regalia?!”

“If we are to speculate based on that feeling alone, then I would surmise that a sentient soul armament was just born. If I were to speculate a little more, then I would say that the ‘Throne’ was finally given sentience.....” Light shined again from the crystalline sword as it talked, pulsating slightly with each word ‘spoken’.

“The familiar feeling shines a new light on the situation, however. If I had to put my finger on it, it was the feeling of an ‘old friend’. But the feeling was hidden quickly afterwards—intentional perhaps—so I was unable to make sure of which.”

Wu Hong looked pensive. “But if it was a Regalia, why hadn’t my brother’s ‘Ironheart’ feel a thing then?”

“Of all the Regalia within the Royal Palace, I am the one with the strongest perception. If even I was unable to sense anything more for just a single moment, then ‘Ironheart’ not feeling it wouldn’t be unnatural. I spoke just now with ‘Flame’ and ‘Hundred’, neither of them sensed anything.”

The sword paused here for a moment as if to sigh. “I cannot even be certain if it was an ‘old friend’, why would they ‘hide’ from me then? Ai....if ‘Seeker’ was here, he’d be able to find out just who it was....”

Wu Hong sighed with him, “The Ten Great Regalia my ancestor gathered....the Tianhun School have spent a thousand years to look for all that were lost to us. From beginning to even now, they were all gone from us, gone without a trace....”

“Ah, Tianhun....he was a master beyond all others I have seen in my many years. A youngster like you might be considerable for your time, but Tianhun was far beyond you.” Slayer replied wistfully. “It was unfortunate he did not take me with him when he left. He said then, that ‘we Regalia would have their fates with another’, and he took ‘Seeker’ and ‘Underworld’ with him to disseminate to the world. I truly wonder where they are now....”

Wu Hong wasn’t angry at being called a ‘youngster’. By all rights, he was one. “The Patriarch was a genius beyond all else without anyone being his equal even now. There is no way I’d ever be able to compare to him....tell me, if the sensation you felt really belonged to one of the wandering Regalia, which one do you think it’d most likely be?”

The sword was quite for a moment before it responded. “I would surmise that it would be one of the ‘soul’ Regalia. ‘Soul Seeker’, ‘Soul Sealer’, or ‘Soul Sentinel’. The three of them are most likely. ‘Underworld’, ‘Heart’, and ‘Throne’ are the less likely.”

“Seeker, Sealer, and Sentinel....” Wu Hong repeated the three. His eyes flew open as he repeated the last one, “Sentinel!! I remember....there was something on Bai Yunfei’s head...”

“What is it?” Slayer asked, “Have you found a clue?”

“I saw a person with a long cloth strip wrapped around his forehead. If I’m correct, that must be....’Sentinel’?”

“You saw so yourself? It was wrapped around the head?” Asked Slayer in astonishment, “And not around space itself? It seems unlikely....if that were true, you should’ve been able to tell.”

“Yes, that was what I thought too. But if there really is a Regalia, then I would wager it to be very likely that person has one.” Wu Hong sighed. “But how in the world would that person come to own a Regalia....?”

“If possible, why not send some people to investigate?” Slayer recommended. “Do not tell me you would try to steal it away in that case then? Whether this person has a Regalia or not isn’t even verified yet. I strongly advise you try not to take it away if the Regalia has accepted that man as its master....”

“Steal?” Wu Hong repeated in surprise, “Worry not. As you said before, a Regalia will have their ‘fates’ with another. I have no desire to steal any away. I only wish to pay attention to any that show up.”

.....

Back on North Seventh Street, Bai Yunfei headed straight home from the Royal Palace. With the strictest orders to not to be disturbed, Bai Yunfei secluded himself in his room. Xiao Qi stood by the window next to the door while he sat on his bed and began

to investigate how his body was faring.

It was a while later that Bai Yunfei reopened his eyes with a sigh and a shake of his head. “It was only a small outburst and yet my body was hurt again. The road to the recovery of my soul is a long and bumpy one....”

Even now, his head felt quite light and his cognitive abilities a little scattered. Unable to rein in his emotions, Bai Yunfei had nearly fallen prey to his stomach on the way back. There had been a stall selling some steamed buns when Bai Yunfei came across. His mind suddenly had the urge to eat, as if he hadn't already for days on end. It was after he took several steps towards the stall that Bai Yunfei realized now wasn't the time to eat. He had his injuries to look after and heal still....

Massaging his temples, Bai Yunfei muttered to himself, “I shouldn't try to use anything like a soul attack for the time being....”

He touched at the Soul Sentinel Scarf on his forehead to think about the instantaneous outburst from it during his battle. “If I wasn't wrong, there was a ‘resonance’ from it as if it sensed something alike to it. What was it that it sensed? Could it be....the Royal Palace had a ‘Regalia’ there as well?!”

“It's possible, how could the Royal Palace not have a Regalia, if not multiple? Then....was I found out? Or was it not found out with how quick the outburst was?”

“I can't even imagine what would happen if someone else were to find out I have a Regalia. I hope I can keep on hiding that....as long as I've the strength, no one should be able to find out....”

Unfortunately for Bai Yunfei, Wu Hong was already guessing that Bai Yunfei had a Regalia on him. Fortunately for him, Wu Hong wasn't planning on anything bad towards him....

Chapter 649: Kicking Someone While They're Down

After his battle with Cheng Yao in the Royal Palace, Bai Yunfei rested for an entire day before it was time for his weekly class at the academy.

Today, as it seemed, was a day where Zheng Kai was free. Coming to find Bai Yunfei, the two of them were ready to head to the academy together. It was after a small chat that Bai Yunfei found out that Du Shaokong and his friends had already left the Capital, and Huang Bin and the others were busy with a few things, hence why Zheng Kai was here today to come find him.

“Are you alright, Yunfei? You seem a little different than before—are you thinking about something? Were you hurt yesterday in your battle with Cheng Yao?”

Zheng Kai had noticed on the way to the academy that Bai Yunfei was rubbing his temples with his hands and his eyebrows were furrowed together.

His battle with Cheng Yao in the Royal Palace wasn't known to many, but Zheng Kai was one of the privileged few that did know. Only a few people that heard about the battle knew of the results, so Zheng Kai only knew after Bai Yunfei told him that he had won against Cheng Yao. Admittedly, Zheng Kai was surprised. Even without Cheng Yao being in the Capital, it was widely known there that he was one of the strongest of his generation. Many elders praised his abilities heavily and there were even a few that were equating Cheng Yao to be on the same level of genius as Zheng Kai's eldest brother, Zheng Cheng. And the two of them were on the top of the list for the 'Top Ten Prodigies'.

“It's nothing to worry about, just feeling a little tired. My battle yesterday was pretty big, and I haven't yet healed from it.”

The battle yesterday had been a short one, but the soulforce he used up to defend himself had been plentiful. That Dual Dragon Burst and the soul attack had been extremely taxing despite how easily he had beaten Cheng Yao with it. With how heavy the price was, even an entire day to heal wasn't nearly enough for Bai Yunfei to feel normal. Right now, he felt weaker than even the normal person, and his mental strength wasn't back to normal either. As he was, Bai Yunfei was not at optimal levels of anything; he was feeling fidgety, his mind was unable to concentrate, and he was completely distracted with everything else.

Fortunately, this was something that'd only take two or three days to fully recover from.

The two continued to talk on their way to the academy. As they were just about to crossover into the sixth year area, the two slowed to a stop.

A group of people was in their way. As with how things looked, this group was waiting for somebody.

Somebody meaning them two.

With Bai Yunfei's arrival, the entire group looked up. The leader of the group spoke a few words to the people around him before he strode on over.

As the group came over, their sweltering attitudes seemed to increase with each step.

Each of these people were Soul Exalts, and there were at least thirty of them!

"They....seem to be looking for you, Yunfei? What's going on?"

Zheng Kai blinked a few times, unsure of what was going on in this situation.

Like Zheng Kai, Bai Yunfei watched them walk on over with a raised eyebrow and surprised expression. "I....don't know either...."

“Did you perhaps flirt with some rich girl, and now her family is coming for your head?”

“Is there a story like that in your book?” Bai Yunfei glanced at him.

“.....Hehe.”

“.....”

The two chattered with one another without even bothering to look at the group in front of them.

While the two were chatting, the group was already splitting up to surround Bai Yunfei and Zheng Kai from every side. The four leaders were right in front of Bai Yunfei, and a thick-browed middle-aged man from the right stepped forward after looking at him for two seconds. “If I may ask,” He clasped his hands together, “might you be Bai Yunfei, sire?”

Eh? They were actually being polite?

Surprised, Bai Yunfei nodded his head. “I am, whom might you all be?”

“This one is Zhao Feng. I am here on behalf of Justice Minister Li to escort lord Bai as a guest!” The man replied with a serious voice.

“Justice Minister Li?” Bai Yunfei repeated, turning to Zheng Kai for clarification.

“That’s Li Chen’s father.”

Li Chen was one of the people Bai Yunfei broke the arms of back in the Training Forest!!

“War Minister Ceng wishes to invite lord Bai as a guest!”

“War Minister Zhu sends a cordial invite to lord Bai to be our guest!”

“Revenue Minister Peng wishes to have lord Bai as a guest!”

The three other people next to Zhao Feng replied one after

another—through this, they were revealing their affiliations.

“The Li, Ceng, Zhu, and Peng...” Bai Yunfei muttered, “It’s them...”

These four families were the ones who tried to invite Bai Yunfei last time before he ignored them. As things turned out, the four families hadn’t given up on Bai Yunfei, and now it seemed they were going for a more direct approach.

The lords of the four houses were all people of high status. There was no way any of them would sit quietly with their sons being beaten so badly. Bai Yunfei’s special status wasn’t strong enough to fully protect him from their machinations, so the four families tried to ‘invite’ Bai Yunfei the first time. With the end result being them being ignored, the four of them were infuriated beyond belief. Because the Cheng hadn’t lifted a finger, none of the four did anything until now. And then when Cheng Yao returned to the Capital, they figured the Cheng would cause trouble for Bai Yunfei now, so they waited for the Cheng to do their thing.

But then new information came in: Bai Yunfei and Cheng Yao had a spar in front of the Royal Family!

None of the four families knew the outcome, but they didn’t care. This was the signal they were waiting for, this was the time to act!

The battle between Cheng Yao and Bai Yunfei didn’t seem to have left any visible wounds on Bai Yunfei, but what they were here for was to kick Bai Yunfei while he was down!

They didn’t want anything from Bai Yunfei, they just wanted to regain some of the face they had lost. So the four families debated with each other to see what could be done. And the plan they came up with today was to send some people to the academy to ‘invite’ Bai Yunfei.

.....

“Trying to kick me while I’m down? This must be their way of

regaining some of their lost honor....” Bai Yunfei thought to himself now that he knew just who these people were.

He smiled, “Do they really think I’m that easy to bully...?”

“Thank you for your kindness, but I’m afraid that this one hasn’t the time to accept your master’s ‘invitations’.” Bai Yunfei declined at once.

Zhao Feng narrowed his eyes. “Lord Bai, it is with great sincerity that my lord wishes to invite you to his abode.”

“I’ve said it already, I’m busy!”

Before Zhao Feng could say anything else, a dark-skinned middle-aged man sneered. More impatient than the other, this man replied, “Pah!! My lord has already said that we are to invite lord Bai back no matter what. Please come with us, sire!”

Revealing himself to be a late-stage Soul Exalt, the man shot forward like lightning to grab at Bai Yunfei’s robes with an outstretched hand!!

Chapter 650: Losing Control Again?

This dark-skinned man was a rather impetuous one. Once he saw Bai Yunfei was being ‘uncooperative’, he immediately decided to just force Bai Yunfei to come with him!

He was of course just a reckless man working on the commands of another. He didn’t know anything about the situation.

But no matter what the case was, it was simple what was happening—action was being had.

His actions were followed up by another five of his companions who came forward to grab at Bai Yunfei.

This wasn’t an ‘invitation’, this was a ‘kidnapping’!

Together, the five men drew closer to Bai Yunfei with the dark-skinned man at the front. A distance of just over ten meters was nothing for a late-stage Soul Exalt to travel so quickly. Blazing orange in light, his right hand was already nearly touching at Bai Yunfei’s collar!

As a man who stood at two meters in height and burly in stature, rushing at this sickly-looking young man who also looked fatigue seemed like there’d be a very obvious outcome. They’d collide, and the young man would probably fall apart with exhaustion.

But reality was not as it seemed. The moment this person’s hand came forward, Bai Yunfei looked briefly startled by it before his eyes narrowed onto it. In a flash, his right hand rose up as if to flick away an annoying fly.

“Bang!!”

There was a loud crash as Bai Yunfei withdrew an object with a wave of his hand. In the next moment, the dark-skinned man was thrown far away with the trajectory like a bullet!

He flew past the five men running behind him, nearly slamming

into Zhao Feng and his men almost. The dark-skinned man dug his feet onto the ground and teetered a few steps backwards before coming to a complete stop, his right hand holding his stomach and his eyes staring at Bai Yunfei in shock.

The other five men had managed to dodge the dark-skinned man when he flew backwards. With their 'boss' beaten back, the five of them were alarmed, but not discouraged. Continuing forward, each of them slammed into the orange barrier from the Cataclysmic Seal with a sickening thud before they flew backwards as well!

“You are all....very annoying.”

There was dark look in Bai Yunfei's eyes. With a wave of his right hand, Bai Yunfei had the Cataclysmic Seal circle back to him before he flew at them himself!

Having not expected Bai Yunfei to take action, Zheng Kai was surprised. He didn't think that Bai Yunfei would take the initiative like this.

Even in his sickly state, Bai Yunfei was quick like a leopard. Traveling to the middle of the five in an instant, Bai Yunfei took the Cataclysmic Seal into his hand and slammed it into the face of the dark-skinned man now getting back onto his feet.

“Watch out!”

Zhao Feng cried out a moment too late. Even his attempt to step forward wasn't fast enough.

Bai Yunfei's eyes flashed dangerously. His right hand shifted direction abruptly to go from the dark-skinned man to Zhao Feng—much to the mans shock as he threw up his arms to protect himself.

“Bang!”

The resulting sound from impact wasn't all too loud, but there was still a surprising result. As if struck by a thousand pound

weight, Zhao Feng was sent flying away!

The +13 additional effect of the brick, Hurl!

With Zhao Feng sent hurling away, Bai Yunfei's right leg came up to kick at the dark-skinned man next.

His leg connected with the man, sending him two steps back while Bai Yunfei....staggered three steps back!

From how he looked, it seemed as if Bai Yunfei had kicked off a wall and fell backwards due to the rebound force.

The dark-skinned man frowned in confusion. He clearly felt that there was something wrong with the kick just now. Rather than being painful, the kick actually felt pretty weak!

On the other side, Zhao Feng came tumbling back down to the ground five to six meters away. As startled as he was, he wasn't very hurt.

Everything transpired within a few seconds worth of time almost, but Bai Yunfei's actions were the signal for everyone to start fighting. Once they saw Zhao Feng and the dark-skinned man get hit, the rest of the people in the group immediately formed several smaller groups to attack Bai Yunfei from several angles!

One by one, they flew forward with their fists and legs flying to surround him!

Their goal was to 'humiliate' Bai Yunfei. Since Bai Yunfei chose to face them rather than to run away, the group felt satisfied with being able to use force onto him. Without even a word from Zhao Feng, everyone came forward to attack.

As ferocious as their assault was, none of the people there brought out any weapons. Their actions were considerably 'restrained' for what it was worth so that the extent of the damages would be limited to just this small area of the land.

These people, or 'instigators', were afraid of beating Bai Yunfei

so badly that he'd become crippled or even die. If that was the case, then the Crafting School would definitely be angered.

But clearly, their misgivings were for naught as not even a minute after the battle started, something completely unexpected happened....

“Bang! Bang! Bang....”

One thud after another, a crimson streak of eerie light floated from one of the twenty-or-so persons to the other. A red brick was in this crimson streak of light, and every three seconds, the streak of light would send one of the enemies flying out from the group.

Those that flew out were the lucky ones. If the object landed on them and they didn't get hurled away, then there'd be a loud cracking sound as the brick slammed heavily onto them and left behind a devastating injury....

Bai Yunfei realized from his interaction with the dark-skinned man that a battle with physical flesh wasn't possible. He didn't have the strength for that anymore. Rather than to use his fist or feet, Bai Yunfei decided to use his agility to his advantage. By using the Wave Treading Steps, Bai Yunfei was able to wield the Cataclysmic Seal to fight.

The battle continued for several quick minutes, but none of the people fighting Bai Yunfei could even lay a hand onto Bai Yunfei. Of their entire battalion, almost half of them were early-stage Soul Exalts, nearly a quarter were mid-stage, and the rest were late-stages. Zhao Feng himself was the only peak late-stage Soul Exalt.

A force like this should've been more than enough to deal with even a peak late-stage Soul Exalt, but the longer they fought, the more they realized that their entire group was being played!

With their level of strength, a battle like this wouldn't have been too much. But since they weren't trying to kill Bai Yunfei and weren't using any weapons, their battle prowess was noticeably

decreased. And with the addition of Bai Yunfei using the Cataclysmic Seal's normal and special mode for its additional effects, the group was in disarray and unable to fight properly.

Thus, the battle was a one-sided one.

As for Bai Yunfei, no one noticed that the more Bai Yunfei weaved in and out of the group to strike at a person, the more his eyes started to change....

He hadn't the patience to fight these people before, he just wanted to teach them a quick lesson. But right now, the impatience in his eyes was replaced by the emotions of 'enjoyment' and even 'cruelty'.

For the next dozen people hit by Bai Yunfei, they had definitely noticed the change after they were struck. Bai Yunfei's actions were becoming more and more deadly!!

It was now every time someone was hit by the Cataclysmic Seal, they were accompanied by a mouthful of blood being forced from them. Some of these people were already unable to fight anymore, but they were still struck mercilessly by Bai Yunfei away from the battlefield and knocked out!

There was something wrong here....

More and more students from the sixth year area were starting to gather at the outskirts of the battlefield. Even Mo Wanxia and the other students from the crafting class came over from the gates where they were waiting before to watch in surprise at Bai Yunfei's battle.

After a while, when they saw the way Bai Yunfei's attacks were starting to pick up in violence, Mo Chen voiced his doubts. "Hey.....what's going on? Why is instructor Bai so warlike all of a sudden?? Doesn't it look like he's going to kill those people?"

He wasn't joking with his words. As of right now, everyone could sense the killing intent starting to leak from Bai Yunfei....

“Boom!!!”

There was a loud explosion of red light and sound that answered Mo Chen. Scorching heat billowed outwards from when Bai Yunfei slammed a gigantic Cataclysmic Seal into Zhao Feng and sent him flying!

Not stopping after it hit Zhao Feng, the Cataclysmic Seal slammed into a few more enemies that hadn't the time to dodge and sent them away with more than light injuries!

The battle should've been finished with everyone in their current state of shock, but then....they were shocked even more by what Bai Yunfei was doing next!

Enveloped in red light, Bai Yunfei waved his right hand. The twenty-meter square wide Cataclysmic Seal vibrated with energy before it flew high into the skies and then....started to drop!

And right below the brick were at least a dozen seriously wounded people!

He was going to...kill them!!

“Bai Yunfei! Stop!”

As several people were starting to cry out in alarm at the potentially killing blow, a single larger voice cried out from afar. A streak of gray light came shooting over towards the area and then pressed his palm up against the bottom of the Cataclysmic Seal!

Somehow, the palm thrust was enough to force the Cataclysmic Seal to deviate from its original path. Veering to the right, the Cataclysmic Seal smashed into the rock garden fifty meters away!

“Bai Yunfei, what are you doing?!”

The figure spun around to face Bai Yunfei with disappointment after he knocked the Cataclysmic Seal aside.

But Bai Yunfei only snorted in cold response before commanding the Cataclysmic Seal back at the person!!

Chapter 651: Prevention

“Assistant headmaster Wu is here!”

Mo Chen cried out at once in joy, “Thank heavens! If he was late by even a second, those people would’ve been killed!”

From the side, Zhang Zhifeng spoke, “I’d assume the assistant headmaster Wu was actually here sooner and was watching the battle, he only took action when it seemed like instructor Bai was going to kill them....”

“Oh, really?” Mo Chen scratched his head, “I was going to say how timely he was....”

But Fang Tianmeng cried out then, “Ah!! Instructor Bai is attacking assistant headmaster Wu! Why is this happening?!”

Alarmed, everyone turned their heads just in time to see the Cataclysmic Seal fly towards the gray-robed person!

.....

“Wuuuaah!! Bai Yunfei—have you gone mad?! What are you attacking me for?!”

The person who stopped Bai Yunfei from killing those people was the assistant headmaster Wu Dijian. He realized with a start that the brick was coming at him rather than the people he had just saved and slapped away the Cataclysmic Seal with a cry.

Because he was worried that the brick would hit the others if he dodged, he had no other choice but to forcefully stop the brick.

“Bang!!”

There was a loud bang as the mountain-sized Cataclysmic Seal was smacked down again.

It might’ve been a dangerous object to block for a Soul Exalt like Zhao Feng, but for Wu Dijian, he could do so without a problem.

While Wu Dijian stopped the Cataclysmic Seal with ease, the outcome didn't leave him as well as he thought he'd be.

No sooner did his hand leave the Cataclysmic Seal did a burst of fire materialize out from the Cataclysmic Seal to wrap around his arm and then spread to the rest of his body!

+10 Additional effect of the Cataclysmic Seal: Flame Twister!

10% Chance to activate 'Flame Twister' and restrict the mobility of another by 10% for a maximum of ten seconds upon attacking.

Cooldown of 1 minute.

“What is this?!”

Wu Dijian stared at the spreading fire around his body—he couldn't dispel the flames!! Even more shockingly, he could feel his body start to slow down when the fire touched him!

“What a strange flame!!”

Even with the long expanse of knowledge Wu Dijian had accumulated over his lifetime, he had never experienced something like this before in his life. The soulforce in this flame was strange beyond belief, and the flames persisted on his person for a moment before finally disappearing.

The Flame Twister usually persisted for ten seconds on most people, but for Wu Dijian, it lasted only two seconds!

Wu Dijian glared angrily at Bai Yunfei as soon as the flames faded away. As he was about to reprimand Bai Yunfei, he paused once he saw the coloration in Bai Yunfei's eyes.

They were crimson. Both of Bai Yunfei's eyes were bright-red with craze.

“This....” Wu Dijian realized with a start. Remembering what happened to Bai Yunfei back in Baishan City, he cried out, “This again?! What's going on?!”

No longer angry, Wu Dijian shouted out to Bai Yunfei in grim concern this time. “Stop, Bai Yunfei! If you don’t snap out of it, I’ll have to rough you up a bit!”

Unfortunately for Wu Dijian, his shout did nothing to snap Bai Yunfei out of it. Raising his hand, Bai Yunfei pointed a finger at the Cataclysmic Seal.

And at once, his soulforce exploded to the level of a peak late-stage Soul Exalt!

‘Coil’ form, activated!

The Cataclysmic Seal exploded in size in accordance to Bai Yunfei’s power-up. Swelling to the size of a small mountain, it flew three hundred meters in the air to come crashing down on Wu Dijian again!

“Again!!”

Wu Dijian cried out, “You leave me no choice then!”

Gathering his soulforce to him, Wu Dijian started to look serious. His entire aura churned violently as he unsheathed his treasured sword to reveal and use its shining edge against Bai Yunfei.

“Yunfei!!”

Xiao Qi cried out in worry from farther away, but even he was unable to waken Bai Yunfei from his berserk rage. He hadn’t cared what Bai Yunfei was doing when he was just teaching the people a lesson, and even when Bai Yunfei was starting to leak his murderous intent, Xiao Qi didn’t care. These people didn’t mean anything to him, but then when Bai Yunfei had finally lost control over his emotions, Xiao Qi realized it was too late. Trying to communicate with him through their soul bond and then a mental link when the former was fruitless, Xiao Qi was rebuffed in all of his attempts. Having not experienced this before, Xiao Qi was at a loss for what to do or even think.

Xiao Qi was in a tough situation. Wu Dijian was about to attack

Bai Yunfei seriously enough to cause some harm, but at the same time, Bai Yunfei might not snap out of it if Wu Dijian didn't.

Just as Wu Dijian was about to fly forward and knock out Bai Yunfei.....

“Yunfei—stop!!”

There was a cry from farther away that seemed a little garbled by the time it reached Bai Yunfei's ears, but even then, everyone was alarmed to see it have effect!

Somehow, the completely unresponsive Bai Yunfei came to a halt as soon as he heard this voice!

The berserk aura radiating from Bai Yunfei dipped by a notch as did the tint in his eyes. Alarm took their place as Bai Yunfei seemed to have realize something. Stunned, Bai Yunfei turned behind towards the source.

Likewise, Wu Dijian was startled by the response of Bai Yunfei and froze in midair along with the Cataclysmic Seal.

When he looked at the staggering Bai Yunfei, Wu Dijian craned his head to look where he was facing and to where the source of that cry came from.

Everyone turned as well towards the source of the voice. They were all surprised that someone's cry could have an effect—just who could snap Bai Yunfei out from his rage with just a few words?!

Just who?

With hundreds of people looking in the same direction, everyone could see three people hurrying on over. At the front of the three was a figure in white and two more people a hundred meters behind. They were all racing with crimson-red light shining underneath their feet as they ran, and some could just barely make out the figure of a female leading them.

Alarmingly, once the female came close enough into sight, she headed straight for Bai Yunfei and then...into his arms!

“Yunfei! You...what happened to you? Don’t scare me...”

A voice filled with concern and worry rang into Bai Yunfei’s ears.

Bai Yunfei was frozen stiff ever since he first heard the voice. When he felt something warm envelop him, a smidgen of rationality came back to him.

In disbelief at the first thing he saw in front of him, he cried out.

“Xi—Xinyun?!”

Chapter 652: Reunion

“It’s me, Yunfei, it’s me...”

The woman in his arms nodded, “Yunfei, what happened to you? Why are you like this? Are you okay?”

“It’s...it’s really Xinyun!!”

By now, the light in Bai Yunfei’s eyes were back to normal with full clarity. Bringing his hands up to touch at the shoulders of the young girl in his arms, Bai Yunfei gingerly held her further away from him so he could take a good look at her face.

Skin so seemingly fragile that even blowing on it would bruise it, lips a crimson hue like cherries, eyelashes long but dainty, eyes filled with both tears and concern—this was the face Bai Yunfei had longed to see for many days and nights.

Who else could this be but Tang Xinyun?

“Xinyun....it really is you!!” Bai Yunfei exclaimed, “How...how did you get here?”

He was a little startled by the concern she was giving him. Blinking once before he realized the reason why, Bai Yunfei smiled at her, “Don’t worry, I’m fine. I lost control of my emotions for a moment, but I’m all good now.”

“Lost control?” Tang Xinyun studied him for a good two seconds, “What in the world happened? How could you lose yourself like that?”

“It’s a long story, I’ll tell you later....” Bai Yunfei smiled, “But you shouldn’t worry. Just look at you—you’re close to tears already. It’s been a long time since we last met and I’ve already made you cry almost. Auntie Zhao would think I’m bullying you if she were to see this.”

“Nnh...” Tang Xinyun nodded meekly before smiling. “As long as

you're fine....I was scared to death seeing how you were just now....”

“Brother strawhat!! Brother strawhat!! I'm here too! How come you'll hug sis Yun and then just ignore me?!”

Another exuberant voice called out next before the two figures behind Tang Xinyun finally caught up to them. Shortly afterwards, a shorter and younger girl came flying to Bai Yunfei with a disgruntled pout on her lips.

“Err....” It took a moment before Bai Yunfei was able to tell who they were, “Doraemon?! Tingting? You two are here as well?”

These two people were Huangfu Rui, the little princess of the Crafting School, and Kou Tingting, the daughter of headmaster Kou Changkong.

“Ah!!”

Still in contact of both of Bai Yunfei's arms, Tang Xinyun let out an embarrassed cry from her intimate position with Bai Yunfei and pulled herself away.

“Heehee, sis Yun's done hugging, it's my turn now!!”

Huangfu Rui giggled, tossing the little white piggy in her hands to the ground to run and hug Bai Yunfei.

“Haha....” Bai Yunfei smiled as he hugged the young girl back. “You've grown up, Doraemon, but why do you seem more playful than before?”

With the passage of a few years, Huangfu Rui was truly a lot taller than she was before, though the juvenile air to her person was still the same as ever. From her actions, her cute mischievous side could still clearly be seen, but strangely, she looked like she was sixteen or seventeen years old still on the outside.

He nodded to Kou Tingting with a smile, “Long time no see, Tingting.”

As always, Kou Tingting was wearing a long blue dress as gentle as the ocean colors and looked even more kinder than before. “How have you been, Yunfei? Doing well?”

“I’ve let you all worry, don’t worry about me, I’m fine.”

Bai Yunfei turned his attention next to the little white pig on the ground and the little bird on Tang Xinyun’s shoulder. “Xiao Hong, Xiao Bai, it’s been a long time. You two look a lot stronger than before.”

Xiao Hong was what Bai Yunfei named the red magiboar, rather than the name Xiao Rourou Huangfu Rui gave it. Xiao Bai was of course, the quickshade bird that contracted with Tang Xinyun.

“Snrf....” The red magiboar snorted twice and pawed at the ground in greeting. From the looks of things, it didn’t look all too pleased at being tossed onto the ground for Huangfu Rui to greet Bai Yunfei.

“Chirp chirp~” The quickshade bird tweeted at Bai Yunfei. It looked a lot more intelligent and lively than it was before.

.....

“Hey!! Bai Yunfei! Are you going crazy or not? If you’re done, maybe you can clean up your toys? I’m starting to get nervous here!”

From a good distance away, the voice of someone calling out to him caused Bai Yunfei to turn around. In the skies, the assistant headmaster Wu Dijian was holding the Cataclysmic Seal up above his head with a disgruntled look.

“Uh....” Quickly, Bai Yunfei waved his hand to call the Cataclysmic Seal back to him. He bowed apologetically to the elderly man, “I....this one apologies, assistant headmaster Wu. Please forgive this one for my actions....”

Wu Dijian gave him a long look before he finally nodded. “Are you really fine there, you brat? You’ve the balls for trying to go

against me, it's a good thing you woke up as soon as you did, or I'd knock you out for two whole days. What is wrong with you? Going crazy over such a small matter like this, where is your dignity?!"

Bai Yunfei dropped his head in embarrassment. He knew he was in the wrong here.

"Well then, let's leave it at that since you're all fine and dandy now. You can deal with this situation here, I'll be leaving."

Wu Dijian gave a final look at the injured people laying on the ground before flying away from the place.

Bai Yunfei turned to the fearful looking people laying on the ground in front of him. "You may go," He spoke to the bloody and bruised Zhao Feng, "report to your lords and tell them that if they really want to take revenge for their sons, I don't mind. I'll play their game. But if they still wish to continue after this, I'll be sure to find the time later to pay a visit to your homes in the future."

.....

After Zhao Feng and his group left, Tang Xinyun gave Bai Yunfei a strange look, "Who are those people, Yunfei? They're all Soul Exalts....just what do so many experts like those want with you?"

"They're the experts from some of the families of the empire's ministers. There was a conflict between them and I, so they came to look for trouble. I'll explain this story later too."

Xiao Qi finally flew on over back to Bai Yunfei's shoulder, "Yunfei, are you okay? Who were those guys?"

"Wow!! This bird can talk!"

Huangfu Rui exploded in delight as she pointed at Xiao Qi—this reaction was almost identical to princess Wu Ping when she first saw Xiao Qi as well.

Likewise, Tang Xinyun and Kou Tingting were surprised. Even the red magiboar and quickshade bird had shocked looks in their

eyes.

“Haha, let me introduce you all.” Bai Yunfei smiled, “This is Xiao Qi, my contracted soulbeast. He’s a class seven prisma oriole and can talk.”

“Class seven!!”

The group exclaimed, giving Xiao Qi yet another stare in astonishment.

“Hello everyone, I’m Xiao Qi. Please treat me kindly.” Chirped Xiao Qi in greeting to everyone. When he saw Xiao Bai on Tang Xinyun’s shoulder, a curious look entered its eyes.

Just at that moment, another group of people came forward to greet Bai Yunfei. It was Mo Wanxia and the other students, and a curious Zheng Kai.

“Are you alright, instructor Bai?”

Mo Chen asked while giving Tang Xinyun and the other two females a glance.

“Yunfei, you alright? Who are these young misses?” Zheng Kai asked as well.

“Yunfei,” Tang Xinyun started, “These are...?”

Bai Yunfei felt slightly dizzy with so many people gathered around him. Waving his hands, he spoke, “Please don’t rush everyone, I’ll introduce you all in a moment.”

He pointed first to Mo Chen and the group behind them. “Xinyun, you should probably know by now that I’m teaching here in Tianhun Academy, right? These are my students.

He glanced to Mo Chen next, “These three are fellow students from the Crafting School, this is Tang Xinyun....”

The eyes of everyone in the group sparkled at the very mention of her name. Confused, Bai Yunfei trailed off his words to think about just why they were making that reaction. Heart skipping a

beat, Bai Yunfei realized then just what kind of mistake he had just made!

Gleeful, Mo Chen took a step forward to bow respectfully to Tang Xinyun and spoke the very words that made Bai Yunfei nearly faceplant into the ground....

“It’s nice to meet you, instructor Bai’s wife!!”

Chapter 653: A Warm Recount

“Ah....”

A sweatdrop dripped down from Bai Yunfei’s forehead before he rushed to explain to Tang Xinyun, “I...he’s just poking some fun, don’t mind him....”

He gave Mo Chen a glare while Tang Xinyun wasn’t looking.

But Mo Chen didn’t seem to get the hint, “What? Instructor Bai, she isn’t your wife?”

“Wi—no—me...?” Tang Xinyun seemed to finally respond, her face scarlet. “What are....I’m not...”

“You’re not instructor Bai’s wife?” Mo Chen repeated, “But instructor Bai said before his wife was called Tang Xi—err....”

A second glare from Bai Yunfei finally got him to catch on. Now that he realized just what Bai Yunfei was trying to tell him, Mo Chen blinked and scratched his head in mock embarrassment, “Haha!! Maybe not now, but later! I was a little early I guess, but hehe, it’s all the same....”

The red flush on Tang Xinyun’s face was already traveling down to her normally white neck. She casted Bai Yunfei a quick look, but other than that, she said nothing in response to Mo Chen.

Was....was that silent approval??

Bai Yunfei’s eyebrows flew up on his head with delight, though he coughed when he thought about just how inappropriate this question was starting to get. “And this is Kou Tingting, the daughter of the Crafting School’s current headmaster. She’s also a student of the Water School....and this is the daughter of our second and third elder, Huangfu Rui.”

“Xinyun, Tingting, these are the students of the class I’m in charge of. This is Mo Wanxia, the granddaughter of headmaster

Mo. This is....”

One by one, Bai Yunfei introduced Tang Xinyun to each of his students. When he reached Wu Yang, both Kou Tingting and Tang Xinyun were surprised beyond belief.

He was only using a few words to introduce everyone, but it was still taking a decent amount of time with just how many people there were.

“Hem hem!!”

As Bai Yunfei was wrapping up the introduction of his students, there was a loud unnatural cough as if trying to remind Bai Yunfei just who he was forgetting.

Blinking, Bai Yunfei turned to Zheng Kai with a perplexed face.

“Ah, I nearly forgot,” he smiled, “Xinyun, this person is a good friend of mine from the Capital, he’s Zhe—”

“Hem hem! This one is Zheng Kai. Zheng as in the character for Solemn, and Kai as in the character for victory. Pleased to meet you three.”

Seemingly unhappy with how Bai Yunfei was introducing him, Zheng Kai chose to do so himself. Speaking in a refined manner like that of a scholar, Zheng Kai introduced himself, though both Tang Xinyun and Kou Tingting were a little taken aback.

“Ah, lord Zheng...it’s nice to meet you....” Kou Tingting bowed her head politely, though her face looked a little strange.

Was she....a little ‘guarded’ against him?

Clearly, Zheng Kai’s nickname of being the ‘Sex Lord’ was not lost on her. As no idiot, Kou Tingting wasn’t disarmed by the smiles Zheng Kai was putting up and looked very cautious.

“Er....” The smile slipped a bit on Zheng Kai’s face, much to Bai Yunfei’s secret amusement.

With the introductions all well and done finally, Kou Tingting

asked, “Yunfei, were you about to start class?”

“I was planning to when these people came forward and delayed that.”

“Then please teach your class first, we’ll pay our respects to headmaster Mo first. Our teachers have matters to talk with with senior Mo.”

“Oh? Alright then.” Bai Yunfei nodded, “Then please do that, I’ll be on the mountain top for my class. If I’m not here when you’re done, you can find me up there.”

He pointed to the right, “Headmaster Mo’s building should be in the stone tower over there.”

.....

Bai Yunfei watched Kou Tingting and the others leave before he clapped his hands to catch the attention of his students. “Alright, let’s head up the mountain for our lesson.”

“We’re still going to have a lesson?” Mo Chen groaned, “Instructor Bai, it’s not every day you can have a reunion with your wife, why not go see her? We can put off class for today even....”

“.....”

They turned afterwards to head up the mountain. A few steps later though, Bai Yunfei realized the addition of one more person. “Ah’Kai, why are you following us? Don’t you have a female student to chase after?”

“Hehe, I want to see the scenery from the mountain top, that’s all. I’ll leave when you guys are done for the day....”

“You’re really coming with us?” Bai Yunfei asked in surprise. “Don’t tell me you’re trying to wait for Tingting and the others to come back?!”

Bai Yunfei saw earlier the type of looks Zheng Kai was giving Kou

Tingting. “I’m warning you, Tingting is the only daughter of our headmaster, don’t you dare treat her badly!”

“What are you even talking about? Who said anything about treating her badly? Why do I feel like you always think I’m up to nothing good?” Zheng Kai retorted, “Am I some sort of vulgar and crude scourge on women in your eyes?”

“.....”

Bai Yunfei levelled a calm glance at him, a small smirk on his face. “Aren’t you?”

“You—!” Zheng Kai choked, “I might be known as the ‘Sex Lord’, but I’ve never bullied or harmed a pretty young girl yet. All those females have been with me willingly, and we even broke up without trouble. I’m actually a pretty innocent guy, you know?”

“....” Bai Yunfei stared at him a moment longer “Why didn’t you just say you’re a virgin?”

“Why would I? That’d be embarrassing. But....hehe, don’t tell me you’re a virgin?”

“Go die!!”

.....

Late that night at the Hundred Aliments.

In honor of Tang Xinyun, Kou Tingting, and Huangfu Rui’s arrival in the Capital, Bai Yunfei held a welcoming party after class was over.

But aside from the four of them, there was one more shameless person.

Zheng Kai.

As confidently and suave as always, Zheng Kai spent the entire supper speaking attentively to Kou Tingting. Bai Yunfei watched from the side with a twitching lip, determined to find out just what Zheng Kai’s intentions were as soon as he could.

During their meal, it was only after Bai Yunfei asked a bit before he found out that the group was here because of him. Tang Xinyun specifically, was worried about his wellbeing and finally was able to make the trip here to find him.

It all started two months ago when Bai Yunfei's life jade started to grow fainter in light. When it dimmed so drastically, the entire upper echelons of the Crafting School were startled. If not for the fact that his life jade started to improve in color directly afterwards, elder Xiao Binzi would've come to the Capital himself to see what was going on.

Two months ago was when Bai Yunfei was with Zheng Kai right outside Casino Jin and was nearly killed by the Soul Refining Palm.

Despite the seemingly fatal period coming to an end, Tang Xinyun was still worried. Without even waiting for Bai Yunfei to send any information back from the Capital, she made up her mind.

She'd go to the Capital to find Bai Yunfei!

Three years had gone by since Bai Yunfei left the Crafting School. It wasn't a very long time for soul cultivators, but for two people that longed for one another, every day that passed felt exceedingly lost almost. In Tang Xinyun's case, she'd always be thinking about Bai Yunfei whenever she wasn't training or crafting. Even though she was waiting for him to return, Tang Xinyun was more willing to be at his side or even take care of him if he was injured....

The emotions between Bai Yunfei and Tang Xinyun were without a doubt deep. Neither of the two had touched upon the topic of marriage or such, but something like that was already a done deal well before Bai Yunfei even left the Crafting School.

The fact that Tang Xinyun was so determined to come so far away to the Capital for him made Bai Yunfei extremely delighted.

There was no way the Crafting School would allow Tang Xinyun

to come to the Capital by herself. As it just so happened, Kou Tingting had only just returned from the Water School, and Huangfu Rui said she wanted to go see Bai Yunfei as well, so the two went with her. Aside from them three, there was also the second elder Huangfu Nan as their guard. But for some odd reason, he circled back to the Crafting School when they were nearing the Capital in a hurry.

Once Bai Yunfei heard the reason for their coming to the Capital, he decided to ask, “How has the Crafting School been in the last three years?”

Chapter 654: Changes in the Crafting School

It had been a very long time since Bai Yunfei left the Crafting School. Ye Zhiqiu, Mo Xiaoxuan, Zhang Sanxian, Fei Nian, and the others, just how were they doing? Bai Yunfei really wanted to know.

“Everything is well in the Crafting School, though plenty of the students have suddenly started to become stronger all of a sudden. Most of the disciples are already Soul Exalts. Seniors Song Lin, Li Tiechui, and Lian Lingmin are all late-stage Soul Exalts. Ye Zhiqiu, Fei Nian, and the others are mid-stage Soul Exalts, and there’s already plenty of the inner students who have become Soul Exalts as well....”

“The second and third elders became a Soul King two years ago, and senior Jiang Nan is a peak late-stage Soul Exalt, he’s trying to become a Soul King, we just don’t know when he’ll become one.”

“What?!”

This was alarming news. When he first left the Crafting School, Song Lin, Li Tiechui, Xiao Nanren, and Lian Lingmin were only just early-stage Soul Exalts. Somehow in three short years, so many people had advanced further in strength?

Comparatively, Bai Yunfei wasn’t as surprised to hear the two elders becoming a Soul King. The both of them could’ve become a Soul King earlier if not for one important reason—finding the best time to craft a lifebound armament.

At that thought, Bai Yunfei asked, “Has....has either of the two elders formed a lifebound armament?”

“They haven’t,” Kou Tingting sighed, “crafting one of those is extremely difficult, and even after preparing so many years, neither of the two elders were able to do so....”

Huangfu Rui piped up next, “Dad was so hurt after that

happened! I even saw him crying his eyes out like a kid! He even wanted mom to comfort him, how embarrassing!”

“Eh?!” Bai Yunfei exclaimed alongside Tang Xinyun and Kou Tingting.

Was the failure in crafting a lifebound armament really that bad that the second elder Huangfu Nan was reduced to such a state?

“Xinyun, did something happen to the second and third elder....?”

“I...I’m not sure. I never heard of such a thing.” Tang Xinyun shook her head negatively. “But I did hear my master say in the past that she was trying to become a Soul King before. She also said that if she advanced now, she’d be able to become a mid-stage Soul King in a short amount of time. I don’t know why she and the third elder decided to try and become a Soul King earlier than they were planning....”

There it was....a hidden motive?

Suspicious, Bai Yunfei asked a second question, “Was it the headmaster’s idea to have so many students become a Soul Exalt?”

The reason why he was asking was due to the fact that students of the Crafting School normally didn’t advance in strength so quickly. Even with how many ‘geniuses’ there might be in the school that’d normally advance in strength faster than usual, training wasn’t something the Crafting School particularly emphasized. Even Song Lin, Li Tiechui, and the others mentioned earlier would usually hang around the levels of a late-stage Soul Ancestor for a while. So for them to all become a Soul Exalt meant that the school was telling them to pursue that route.

“Yes.” Tang Xinyun nodded, “The headmaster said for us to all concentrate on our training and try to advance as fast as possible. He said that he or the elders will personally help anyone strengthen their soulbound armament and soul compatibility if we

become a Soul Exalt to compensate for the rushed timing.”

The crease between Bai Yunfei’s eyebrows increased, “Did anything out of the ordinary happen in the school?”

“Not that I can recall....”

“Strange...” Bai Yunfei thought to himself. Though he was unsure of the reason behind all these things, Bai Yunfei knew there was definitely something strange. Was....the Crafting School in some sort of trouble?? Was a powerful enemy drawing close? Is that why the headmaster wanted everyone to get stronger all of a sudden?

He was slightly more experienced with how the world worked now.

There was plenty of things Bai Yunfei understand about the world, and now that he was a part of the Crafting School, Bai Yunfei could say that in terms of strength, they weren’t very strong, aside from the previous generation. The current generation—which was Song Lin and the others—leaned towards the ‘weaker’ side. They were like an unripe fruit that hadn’t reached maturity yet. With the average rate of training for those in the Crafting School, it’d take them a good ten years of experience or so in order to become strong like the previous generation. Normally, this substantive increase in strength would be a happy one, but Bai Yunfei felt like there was still half the story he was missing.

“No matter the reason, there has to be someone that’s trying to take advantage of the Crafting School. It doesn’t matter who they are....I’ll make sure they won’t get away with this!!” Bai Yunfei clenched his fist.

Afterwards, Bai Yunfei told the story of his travels and the many diverse experiences he had during that time. It took a full half hour for him to summarize what happened to him, and everyone was astonished as they listened.

The moon was already high in the sky when the group left the Hundred Aliments. Led by Bai Yunfei, Tang Xinyun and the others were walked back to his home. With how rushed the group was in coming to the Capital, the three of them were in a decent rush to take a nice nap.

Zheng Kai and Bai Yunfei walked at the front while the three females from behind to appreciate the night time scenery and chat with one another.

They came to an intersection of the street. Normally, Zheng Kai would turn left to return to his manor while Bai Yunfei went right, but for some reason tonight, Zheng Kai followed him to the right.

“What are you doing? Your house is that way.”

“Well...” Zheng Kai smiled, “I’m going to be sleeping over at your place for tonight.”

“My place?” Bai Yunfei asked, “Ah’Kai, just what are you planning?”

Zheng Kai snuck a glance at Kou Tingting behind them as she was looking at a street stall. Pulling Bai Yunfei another two steps forward, he whispered, “Yunfei, you’ve got to do your brother a favor.”

“What favor?”

“I...don’t think Tingting likes me very much,. What do you think I should do to change her mind about me? Also, what kind of clothes and accessories do you think she likes? What color? What foods, actually? What type of guy does she like?”

“Er....how should I know?” Bai Yunfei stammered a bit before his eyes flew wide open, “Are you really trying to go after her?! Ah’Kai, I told you before Tingting isn’t your average girl. I cannot allow you to go after her like you do with most girls. If you hurt her, then the the Crafting School will definitely flay you alive, I can’t help you then.”

“Hey, watch what you’re saying, how can you treat a brother like that?” Zheng Kai spoke as if wounded, “Of course I won’t treat her like that. She’s on a whole different level than everyone else....”

The expression on his face froze for a moment before he looked at Bai Yunfei in earnest. “Yunfei, do you believe in love at first sight?”

“What? What do you mean?”

“I didn’t believe it at first, but I’m a firm believer now. Ever since I saw Tingting, I knew. Brother, I’m being absolutely serious about this!

“I want to be with Tingting and have her be my wife!!”

Chapter 655: The Restless Second Generational

It was getting late at night with the full moon shining brightly overhead. Several dark clouds would roll and obscure the moon from sight, leaving parts of the Capital darker than usual at times.

In the western parts of the Capital, there stood a relatively isolated villa away from the other buildings.

In one of the more luxurious rooms, five young men sat around a round table to talk with one another.

“Damn!! I didn’t think that this Bai Yunfei would be that amazing—even the combined efforts of our experts weren’t able to do anything!”

A young man with a wide forehead and small eyes grumbled, his fist slamming down onto the table. With how heavily bandaged his arms were, he yelped in pain as soon as his hand touched the hard surface. Gritting his teeth and pushing his soulforce to his arms, the man tried his best to alleviate the pain.

Amusingly, every single one of these five people were all similarly injured with both their arms at the very least injured to some degree. Everyone else had bandages wrapped around their arms, and one of them had also a plaster cast on his right leg. With how everyone here was injured, it looked like a gathering for the crippled.

“Isn’t this ridiculous? With the Soul Exalts from each of our four families, there was at least thirty of them there. And they couldn’t beat a single person? He isn’t even a Soul King! Just what in the world do we have to do?? I heard the assistant headmaster was involved, did he help Bai Yunfei?”

A young man with a small birthmark on his chin cried.

“No—can’t be. I heard that the assistant headmaster tried to stop

Bai Yunfei. If not for him, I heard that all of our men would've been killed by him!!” Another bellowed, “That Bai Yunfei went crazy, I think. He was completely reliant on a super strong soul armament of his and didn't even move a finger to defeat all of our men!”

“That must be what his Crafting School calls a ‘soulbound armament’. Didn't we get beat up by something like that that day? Damn! Crafters are an annoying bunch! They rely on their soul armaments to harass others and beat others that'd normally be stronger than them!! Why can't I have a soul armament as strong as that!!”

“Pah, you're too full of yourself. Bai Yunfei would beat you even without his soul armament!” One of the more silent members on the right finally spoke, “My elder brother fought with him. Even without his soul armaments, that Bai Yunfei knows some amazing soul skills. No one that isn't a Soul King is a match for him, not even my older brother!!”

“What?!”

The other four cried out at once, “Xin, are you serious?! Your older brother was the one that lost in the spar?!”

“Do you think I'd really say something untrue at the expense of my own house?! I'm telling you the truth, that day, it was my brother that lost! That Bai Yunfei wasn't without his own injuries. I recall my brother saying that Bai Yunfei's soul was injured. The reason why he went crazy and nearly killed the people you four sent was because of the instability of his emotions.”

The one they were calling ‘Xin’ was none other than the youngest son of Minister of the Right Cheng Huayu, the one Bai Yunfei had a ‘grudge’ with, Cheng Xin!!

Both of his arms were likewise heavily injured, but his facial expressions looked a far magnitude better than the others. His treatment was presumably better than the others, though his right

arm was extremely bandaged up and hung limply at his side.

Cheng Xin and the other four people gathered here were the ones Bai Yunfei taught a lesson from that day in the Training Forest.

The reason why the five of them were gathered here was simple.

With the elders of their family not being able to teach Bai Yunfei a lesson, how could they not be angry? Thus, they were here to vent and discuss to one another.

Li Chen sat to the right of Cheng Xin. “Fuck!” He swore, “Why couldn’t that Bai Yunfei just go full on out crazy?! Our families would have all the reason to take action against him if he killed the ones we sent! The more trouble he makes, the less likely he’ll be able to get away! Even my dad is afraid of dealing with Bai Yunfei, I think he’s hoping to drop the issue...damn! There’s no way I’m going to take this lying down, you know?!”

“But....with how our elders are trying to keep the peace, how are we supposed to do anything? We tried to fight him and lost, and we aren’t even a match to him in status. How are we going to take revenge?”

The one with a birthmark asked—he was the young son of the Zhu, Zhu Yizhi.

“If we can’t do things by right, we’ll do it out of sight! We’ll find a criminal and have him assassinate Bai Yunfei!” The one with a large forehead cried, this one was Zeng Fei, son of the Zeng.

“Out of sight? If several late-stage Soul Exalts were defeated by him, do you think an ‘ambush’ will work? Aside from a top-notch assassin, they’d have to be a mid-stage Soul Exalt at the very least. I’m not saying we shouldn’t hire one, I’m saying we probably can’t find one.”

The last one to speak was Peng Huaguang, son of the Peng.

“Then what are we going to do?!” Zhu Yizhi exploded in anger, “Don’t tell me you’re trying to find a Soul King to deal with Bai

Yunfei? How are we going to find someone like that?!”

“Lord Xin, what do you think we should do?” Li Chen asked when he saw Cheng Xin not saying a word.

“Yes, lord Xin, we’ll listen to your ideas!”

In the perspectives of the others, Cheng Xin and his house was the strongest of the five, so it was natural that they wanted to listen to him.

Cheng Xin grew silent for a moment to think. “If we really want to stick it to that Bai Yunfei, we don’t necessarily have to make a move on him....”

“What?” Everyone spoke.

“Lord Xin, what do you mean?” Li Chen asked for clarification, “According to what I know, Bai Yunfei came by himself to the Capital, are we going to go after one of his students then? Would that even be enough to threaten him?”

“He came here alone, true, but now....I heard that there were a few people that came to him today in the academy? The one that stopped him from going crazy wasn’t the assistant headmaster, but a girl that appeared out of nowhere....”

“Was there?” Li Chen’s eyes grew wide, “Could it be that that girl is Bai Yunfei’s....?”

Cheng Xin nodded, “I shouldn’t be wrong. I’ve already sent some people out to look into the matter. That girl is currently with Bai Yunfei and resting in his home.”

“Then....” Zhu Yizhi started to speak, “We should go after Bai Yunfei’s girl?”

“Think about it,” Cheng Xin barked in laughter, “If Bai Yunfei were to know someone assaulted his woman, how angry do you think he’d be? If he loves that woman enough, don’t you think he’d be willing to sacrifice his training or life possibly?”

The eyes of everyone sparkled in fanatical glee at that, Peng Huaguang nodding the most out of them.

“I like it! Let’s do that! If we can’t do anything to Bai Yunfei, why not his woman then?! I very much doubt Bai Yunfei will be constantly with that girl! Once we’ve the chance, we should go after her! Hehe....I can’t wait to see the look of pain on his face, you think he’d become a lunatic? Haha!!”

But Zeng Fei voiced his doubts, “Shouldn’t we first confirm her identity? If in the chance she’s....”

“What is there to investigate? She’s most likely just another student at the Crafting School,” Cheng Xin waved his hands arbitrarily. “But so what? This is the Capital, not the Great Plains Province! We don’t even have to do this ourselves, we can have a servant or guest do the dirty work! Let’s find a criminal and give him some incentive. I’m sure he’ll be willing to sacrifice himself for us. And even if it fails, it won’t be led back to us, so we’ll be fine!”

“If that’s what lord Xin has come up with, then let’s do as lord Xin says! Allow us to prepare for a moment and find some incentives! This time....we’ll definitely get our revenge!”

Now at the end of their conversation, the five men stepped out from their rooms and out the villa. It was late at night, so the five were prepared to return to their own homes when two figures suddenly came walking into the villa and met them by the gates.

At the sight of the elder on the right, Cheng Xin immediately bent down into a bow.

“Sec—second grandfather!!”

This elder was Cheng Chaochuan!

Chapter 656: Secrets

Like Cheng Xin, Cheng Chaochuan was a little surprised to see him.

“What are you all doing here?!” He asked dangerously.

“We—we were just....bored—we came here to talk and were just going home....” Cheng Xin didn’t dare look his grandfather straight in the eye as he stammered.

Cheng Chaochuan sent a chilling glare at the five men in front of him, “Pah! You’d best be on your best behavior. If anything else happens, I’ll break your legs to go with your arms!”

“Ye—yes.....your grandson will listen obediently...”

Cheng Xin bowed his head repeatedly before he led the other four away from the place.

Cheng Chaochuan had wanted to say a few things more to them, but since the person he was accompanying didn’t seem patient at all, he ignored the matter with Cheng Xin to gesture towards the villa behind, “This is one of the properties we the Cheng own. In ordinary times, there’ll be a few youngsters coming and going, but if sire needs a place to stay, there will definitely be no one to bother you here.”

By his side was an elderly man in gray robes. He had a dull expression on his face, but his eyes were chillingly dark enough to have even a mid-stage Soul King like Cheng Chaochuan give him the polite treatment. In other words, this man was by no means weak.

The elder nodded his head, “I won’t be here in the Capital for long. As soon as I finish that, I’ll leave. During that time, I’ll do all that I can to help you, I hope you won’t fail to disappoint me either....”

Cheng Chaochuan arched an eyebrow, a hint of displeasure

showing in his eyes for just a moment.

“Worry not, sire. We are only just waiting for the best possible moment to ensure nothing goes wrong. Due to the importance of this matter and the fate of our entire Cheng, we must do all that we can to be careful. And so, let us please confer over a few crucial details....

“But this isn’t the place for that. Please sire, follow me into this room.”

.....

From far away, Cheng Xin and his band of five were far away enough from the villa to look back at it.

“That...scared me,” Li Chen patted his chest, “no wonder he’s a Soul King if he can scare us out of our minds with just a few words. Lord Cheng, what is your grandfather doing here?”

Cheng Xin shrugged his shoulders, “How should I know? It’s a good thing we finished as soon as we did, otherwise my grandfather would’ve heard what we were talking about. Let’s go home, we can’t let anyone find out about this. We meet again in two days!”

“Are...are we still going to go through with this plan?” Zhu Yizhi asked timidly, “Your grandfather said to behave ourselves. What if he already knows about our plans? If we go through with this, what if....”

“Hmph! Watch what you’re saying!” Cheng Xin glared at him, “Don’t make me look down on you, little Zhi. Are you afraid? I’ve heard my grandfather say those words so many times already, and even if I did get into trouble after that, he only scolds me at most. I’m not afraid, are you?!”

“N—no! I’ll do as you say, lord Xin!”

Continuing to walk into the Capital, Li Chen suddenly spoke up, “Lord Xin, I heard that....Xu Sihan has had some trouble with Bai

Yunfei before. Do you think we should rope him in? If by chance we get caught, we'd have one more person to help us. And if anything....we could use him as our scapegoat.”

Zeng Fei and Zhu Yizhi both lit up at that suggestion, “That’s a good idea! That Xu Sihan is a pretty stupid one. If we say just a few words to him, we can probably use him to our advantage!”

But Cheng Xin quirked his lips, “Did it really take you all this long to think about that? I asked Xu Sihan to come earlier today, but he wimped out saying he didn’t want to anger Bai Yunfei any more.”

“Ah? You already went looking for him, lord Xin?” Li Chen spoke, crestfallen. “Is that Xu Sihan that cowardly, what a loser! He might be the son of a minister like lord Xin, but his actions and personality aren’t even a tenth of what lord Xin is!”

“The Xu have always been a cowardly house. They can’t beat my family, so they choose to retreat inwardly. Sooner or later, there’ll only be one senior minister in the entire empire, the Cheng!”

.....

Bai Yunfei took Tang Xinyun and the others back to his residence. Having the servants draw up a room for the three travel-weary females, Bai Yunfei was ready to let them retire early for the night.

He didn’t even speak more than a few words with Tang Xinyun, and the thick-faced Zheng Kai didn’t have the chance to speak with Kou Tingting either. Rather than giving up, he rounded on Bai Yunfei to ask him a few questions about her. Bai Yunfei was willing to answer only a few questions before he got tired of it all and slammed the door shut on Zheng Kai’s face, much to the cursing of his friend.

Bai Yunfei shook his head as he listened Zheng Kai order one of the servants to draw up a room for him. As good as a friend Bai

Yunfei felt Zheng Kai was, he still couldn't shake off the negative 'reputation' he had. Even worse, with how recent his latest escapades with several women were, Bai Yunfei wasn't feeling confident in helping Zheng Kai pursue Kou Tingting.

The emotions of Zheng Kai today was a rare one, admittedly. Bai Yunfei didn't even know if he should treat Zheng Kai seriously or not.

Either way, Bai Yunfei couldn't exactly forbid Zheng Kai from pursuing Tingting, even if the two were a well match for one another. It was Zheng Kai's personal choice, and Bai Yunfei didn't care much as long as he wasn't being used as an 'accomplice'.

The days following that night were considerably far better than usual in Bai Yunfei's opinion. With Tang Xinyun here, it was like the world had gotten a lot brighter than before with the rekindled flames of emotion from not seeing Tang Xinyun in a long time fueling that light. Just being able to wake up in the morning and feeling the aura of her being close by filled Bai Yunfei with a great deal of happiness from morning to evening.

Being new to the Capital, Tang Xinyun was extremely curious on how the city was. Together with Bai Yunfei, the two of them roamed around the Capital from one place to the next. One day, they'd explore the academy, another day, the northern parts of the Capital, and then the day after, the eastern parts....

In the course of these days, there was an uninvited 'host' who seemed to take it upon himself to lead the 'tour' around the Capital. Taking them from west to east and south to north, this person was so excited to lead them that it felt like he was taking some drugs to keep up his energy.

That person was Zheng Kai.

Most of his time was spent paying extra attention to Kou Tingting almost. Unfortunately for him, Kou Tingting felt neither grateful nor wanted his attention and hardly gave him the

opportunity to be alone with her to say a word or two. If not for Zheng Kai knowing when to back off when he did, Kou Tingting would've most likely had an even worse opinion of him.

Stuck in his own enjoyment with Tang Xinyun, Bai Yunfei had hardly cared for Zheng Kai's predicament, causing Zheng Kai to mutter under his breath that Bai Yunfei was someone that chose a lover over a friend.

It might've been his imagination, but Bai Yunfei felt as if the wounds on his body and soul were healing even faster than before now that Tang Xinyun was here. Perhaps it was because of his good mood, but his body felt better than usual for the next few days. The feeling of weakness was gone for the most part. In fact, Bai Yunfei felt like he was back to the levels of strength before his match with Cheng Yao. There also didn't seem to be a chance of him losing control of his emotions again as badly as just a few days ago.

If things kept on like this, it wouldn't be long before he'd regain enough strength to be back at his optimal level of power.

.....

Several days later on the sixth day of the week.

It was night time, and Huangfu Rui was feeling a little tired with how much time she spent playing today. With Tang Xinyun and Kou Tingting deciding to take the younger one back to Bai Yunfei's place, Bai Yunfei decided to go to the Soothing Heart himself to have a pot of Soul Consolidating Tea.

As soon as he entered the teahouse, someone already seated from within called out to him.

It was one of the other instructors from the academy, Xiao Nan.

Bai Yunfei took a seat in front of him, "Big brother Xiao, what a coincidence. I don't normally see you here drinking tea."

Xiao Nan smiled back, "This is by no means a coincidence,

Yunfei. I was actually waiting for you.”

“Waiting for me?” Bai Yunfei repeated, “Is something the matter, big brother Xiao?”

Chapter 657: Xiao Qi Falling in Love?

Xiao Nan spun his teacup on the table with an idle finger, “You said you’d visit me in my home, Yunfei. I’ve been waiting a long time and yet you haven’t come yet....”

“Ah....” Bai Yunfei looked embarrassed, “I....was a bit busy as of late and the matter slipped my mind. Please forgive me for my slight, big brother Xiao.”

“Haha, merely joking with you, Yunfei.” Xiao Nan slapped the table, “But I did speak with my wife about the matter about bringing home a ‘famous’ person to be our guest. She’s been asking me ever since about it, so why not come to my home for a dinner party, would you be interested in one sometime soon?”

“Of course—! Tomorrow would be fine with me, if tomorrow works for you, big brother Xiao.” Bai Yunfei smiled, though he was a little confused. For a friend like him, was there really a need for Xiao Nan himself to come and seek him out for an invitation to this ‘banquet’?

“It’s settled then. I’ll go home and tell my wife then. She’ll prepare a nice meal tomorrow at noon, we can have a nice drink then!”

.....

On the way back home, Bai Yunfei was suddenly imposed a question on by Xiao Qi, “Yunfei, are you going to take Xinyun with you to brother Xiao’s house tomorrow?”

“Why do you ask?” Bai Yunfei asked as he tilted his head back, “She probably won’t want to go....she doesn’t know big brother Xiao after all, so staying with Tingting will probably be more likely.”

In truth, he did want Xinyun to come with him as his ‘plus one’ to Xiao Nan’s house, but that wasn’t very likely. Xinyun would be

embarrassed to go, and Bai Yunfei wouldn't be able to have Kou Tingting and Huangfu Rui come with him either. So in the end, he decided to go by himself and let Xinyun and the others up to their own devices.

He could have Zheng Kai bring them somewhere, there was no way Zheng Kai would do anything that'd besmirch his own honor anyways.

"In that case...." Xiao Qi chirped and tilted its head in deep thought, "I.... won't go with you then. Brother Xiao's house is in the academy, so there probably won't be any danger. I'll keep Xinyun and Tingting company and protect them from danger."

"Eh??"

Bai Yunfei was surprised, he hadn't thought Xiao Qi would have a reason like that.

That didn't make sense....

He raised an eyebrow to give Xiao Qi a curious glance.

Why did he feel like Xiao Qi was looking a little weird?? Wasn't this the first time Xiao Qi had said something like this before?

And didn't Xiao Qi's tone and look in his eyes look a little familiar to Bai Yunfei??

Bai Yunfei observed Xiao Qi for a moment longer before he realized just where he remembered this sight.

Zheng Kai had the same exact expression on his face!

Was the expression on his face not the same as the one Zheng Kai had whenever he spoke to Kou Tingting as of late? If there wasn't a difference between Xiao Qi and Zheng Kai, then that meant the reason behind the two of them were the same....

In other words....

Flashing through the memories he had of Xiao Qi over the course of the past few days, Bai Yunfei quickly came to an

‘understanding’. At the same time, he was a little curious. “Hey, Xiao Qi. Do you want to stick with Xiao Bai?” He glanced over at the bird.

That was right! Over the course of the past few days, weren’t Xiao Qi and Xiao Bai constantly together? That was pretty likely since Bai Yunfei himself was stuck to the shoulder with Tang Xinyun, so it made sense that their soulbeasts were next to each other too. He hadn’t paid much attention before to this tidbit, but now that he looked back, the two birds looked like they were ‘stuck together’ like shadow and person.

“Yea. I promised Xiao Bai I’d take her to North Fifth Street to look at a show....” Xiao Qi nodded. He didn’t seem to be willing to hide his emotions or plans, or else he just didn’t bother to hide anything from Bai Yunfei.

Or perhaps he wasn’t even feeling ‘embarrassed’ about this at all....

“Damn, he’s even got a date at the theaters....”

Bai Yunfei felt flummoxed almost. Without Xiao Qi even needing to say anything, Bai Yunfei was able to clearly feel the excitement and happiness from Xiao Qi at the thought of this date. It was extremely familiar to Bai Yunfei, as he himself had the exact same emotions run through him when he was with Tang Xinyun for the past few days....

So! It was confirmed then.....Xiao Qi had fallen in love!

And it was with the soulbeast partner of Tang Xinyun.

Was this what people called a ‘soulmate’?

Wearily, Bai Yunfei stared at the oriole, “Xiao Qi, do you like Xiao Bai?”

“Like?” Xiao Qi cocked his head before nodding, “I do—Xiao Bai is really pretty! I feel happy playing with her, and I like being with her. I never had this feeling before when I played with Xiao Lan.”

What a truly naive child....

Bai Yunfei smothered a snicker. Perhaps Xiao Qi didn't understand what the emotion called 'love' was? Or actually, wasn't this the purest form of love there is?

"Xiao Qi, do you always want to be with Xiao Bai?"

"Ah?" Again, Xiao Qi cocked his head, though his response took a moment later to be said, "Don't you want to be with Xinyun for your entire life?"

"Er...." Bai Yunfei couldn't formulate a proper response to that sudden change of a topic, "What do you mean?"

"You and Xinyun are always together. I am your soulbeast partner, and Xiao Bai is Xinyun's soulbeast partner. Of course we'll always be together."

"....."

What formidable logic!

But still....it wasn't as if he was wrong either....

Bai Yunfei would definitely endorse it if Xiao Qi and Xiao Bai were always together. It might be a little early to be considering marriage for someone like Xiao Qi, but it wouldn't do any harm if Bai Yunfei kept the topic in mind, would it?

Elated, Bai Yunfei patted Xiao Qi on the head, "Haha, no problem! You can always be with Xiao Bai, and protect Xinyun too.

"Chase after your fortune, I'll support you with all my strength!!" He quipped.

Zheng Kai would've fallen to the ground and thrown a tantrum in protest if he heard that.

He was a 'brother' to Bai Yunfei, so why couldn't he get this type of treatment and support in his chase!?

.....

The next morning.

In the instructor dormitories in the fifth year area of Tianhun Academy.

With how large the academy was, the dormitories was basically a city in itself with the instructors living well and freely. Everyone had their own 'little villa' almost.

As per the directions given to him by Xiao Nan, Bai Yunfei managed to make his way to Xiao Nan's place, but not before asking several people for the way.

Xiao Nan's place was relatively average with just two stories and a small courtyard in the back and front. Several flowers and grass grew in both courtyards for the rabbits to eat.

Since he didn't bother to hide his strength, Bai Yunfei was greeted by Xiao Nan at the door before he could even knock.

"Big brother Xiao, please excuse my disturbance." As he was led in, Bai Yunfei realized he had no gifts to bear and was immediately embarrassed.

"Haha, what disturbance? Yunfei, you've made me happy by just coming, come on in now—let's talk inside." Xiao Nan laughed and led him in.

"Xiao Jie, Yunfei's here, come and greet him."

Led by Xiao Nan, Bai Yunfei walked to an elegant drawing room before Xiao Nan called out to the room to the right. A clear-sounding voice called back in return before a figure came slowly into their room.

It was a young woman who looked to be twenty-six or twenty-seven around. She had a tall, but slender figure and was dressed like a very homely wife. An ovalish face and tender-white skin, her black hair accentuated her beautiful and refined appearance of being a daughter of a noble.

“Yunfei, this is my wife, Zhao Jie.” Xiao Nan introduced her as soon as she walked in.

“It’s nice to meet you, sister-in-law.” Bai Yunfei greeted her at once.

TL Note: When referring to the wife of a fellow brother, especially older, you call them ‘Saozi’.

Zhao Jie smiled. “Haha, so this is the Yunfei my Nan is always talking about? Please, come sit, I’ll pour you both some tea.”

Bai Yunfei watched as Xiao Nan pulled up a chair and took a seat with him, but Zhao Jie turned her head towards the interior of the house to speak, “Xiao Han, are you still in there? Why don’t you come on out?”

Bai Yunfei blinked—there was someone else here as well??

Who was it?

Chapter 658: Goodwill of the House of Xu

According to what Bai Yunfei knew, Xiao Nan and his wife had always lived in Tianhun Academy so they didn't normally go out. Was there another guest here with him today?

It being impolite to use soulsense in the home of another, Bai Yunfei refrained.

A moment after Zhao Jie called out, Bai Yunfei heard a set of footsteps slowly walk towards the room.

When he saw just who it was, his face revealed some surprise, "It's you?" He spoke subconsciously.

Bai Yunfei 'knew' this person. They met before actually—back in the Soothing Heart, he had a bit of a tiff with this person.

The son of the Left Minister, Xu Sihan!

Bai Yunfei had taught him a lesson the last time they met in the Soothing Heart. It was only because of Xiao Nan that an all out fight hadn't happened. While Bai Yunfei knew Xu Sihan was Xiao Nan's cousin from his wife's side, what was Xu Sihan doing here still?

Was it a coincidence?

A flicker of hate and fear flashed across Xu Sihan's eyes for a moment. He trawled a little hesitantly to Zhao Jie's side to whisper, "Cousin, I...."

"What? Speak clearly, are you getting cold feet now?"

"I...."

As reluctant as he was, he looked like he was finally about to say something when Zhao Jie placed a hand onto his shoulder and pointed him to the seat next to Xiao Nan, "Go take a seat. Your family might've sent you over, but your cousin isn't here to force you to do anything. If you want to leave, go, but I won't stop them

from punishing you if you do.”

“.....”

A frown appeared on Xu Sihan’s face as he walked over to the chair next to Xiao Nan and sat down with his head bowed low.

What kind of showing was this??

Bai Yunfei felt suspicious, just what was Xu Sihan planning?

Zhao Jie spoke up apologetically to him next, “Yunfei, I’ve heard that little Han has offended you. I wanted to take the chance today to apologize on his behalf. Little Han has been spoiled by his family since he was small and his behavior isn’t always the best. I hope today you and he will be able to work things out.”

“Ehh???”

Bai Yunfei uttered in surprise—was Xu Sihan really trying to apologize?

With his cousin speaking on his behalf, Xu Sihan looked as though he had made up his mind. Biting his lips, he forced himself to look at Bai Yunfei with an earnest expression. “I unintentionally offended brother Bai the other day. Please excuse the slight I’ve made and forgive this one for it.”

As reluctant as he was to say those words, it didn’t feel like he didn’t mean his words either, so he really was trying to reconcile with Bai Yunfei.

“I....”

Bai Yunfei didn’t know how to respond. He had never expected Xu Sihan to apologize like this. He hadn’t even thought about Xu Sihan at all, in fact.

Ever since his conflict with the family of the Right Minister, the matter with Xu Sihan and the Left Minister had been completely overshadowed, and Bai Yunfei didn’t bother to think much about it.

What Bai Yunfei didn't know was that there were others that took this event pretty seriously. The house of Xu. It wasn't a major topic, though the higher-ups of the family had still managed to hear about it. As it so happened, they also heard about how Bai Yunfei also got into a conflict with Cheng Xin and then even the four sons of the other families that got along with the Cheng. When it ended with the five of them eating a loss, the Xu snickered to themselves and admitted that it was Xu Sihan that offended Bai Yunfei rather than the other way around, which is why the higher-ups didn't care much for this.

The mess the Cheng was in now was all in due part with how their pampered son had angered Bai Yunfei, after all.

So the elders of the Xu sent out the order to have Xu Sihan not only cease his hostilities with Bai Yunfei, but to apologize!

Whether it was in personal status or strength, Bai Yunfei was racking up a great deal of value in the eyes of many other influential powers in the Capital. If this series of events with the Cheng was making them an enemy out of Bai Yunfei, then the Xu—who were fundamentally opposed to them—would definitely want to have Bai Yunfei's support.

Or at the very least, not make an enemy out of him as well.

Xu Sihan had actually wanted to form a 'feud' with Bai Yunfei as well after he was hurt. But then when he heard about the conflict between Bai Yunfei and Cheng Xin, he grew a little cautious and decided to take the 'wait and see' approach. Things got even more unpredictable with Bai Yunfei dealing with the experts from the Li, Zeng, Zhu, and Peng ordered to 'deal' with him. Disbelieving almost at Bai Yunfei's victory, Xu Sihan was starting to doubt the reasonability that was his grudge. At the same time, he was given a stern 'talking' to by his elders and was told to apologize to Bai Yunfei.

As hedonistic as he was, Xu Sihan was no simpleton. He could see

how serious the elders were, and he didn't dare go against their demands. Remembering that Bai Yunfei got along with his cousin and husband, Xu Sihan went reluctantly to them to see if his cousin would be able to help out or be 'mediators' at the very least. He felt quite embarrassed to be making the apologies, since he had never had to 'apologize' with him being the son of the Left Minister.

The stunned look on Bai Yunfei's face gave Xiao Nan the impression that Bai Yunfei wasn't quite ready to forgive Xu Sihan, so he decided to speak up. "Yunfei, I was there at the time and know that Xu Sihan's behavior wasn't right. However, I've already punished him several times after that and so I'll hope you'll spare me some face and forgive him."

Xiao Nan didn't really like Xu Sihan in truth, but he was still related to him through his wife, and the two of them were on good terms with one another. Zhao Jie herself had asked Xiao Nan if an apology could be arranged on Xu Sihan's behalf so that the hatchet could be buried between him and Bai Yunfei.

Blinking oddly at the sight, Bai Yunfei waved his hand, "Big brother Xiao, you are far too serious with your words. I...haven't even thought about the events that day, let alone think about forgiving or not."

Since Bai Yunfei had already taught Xu Sihan a lesson, he never really thought about the matter. He wasn't one to split hairs over everything and form long-lasting grudges with people.

If only Cheng Xin himself were to come and do the same thing.

Xu Sihan sighed to himself inwardly. He had been worried that Bai Yunfei would turn the nose and try to humiliate him. To have this matter resolved so easy had done wonders for his mind.

"Then...thank you for your magnanimity, brother Bai. This is just a small gift of my thanks, please accept it on my behalf." Xu Sihan took out a white stone from his space ring and sent it over to

Bai Yunfei in a bubble of elemental energy.

He was giving a gift too?!

Bai Yunfei was doubly alarmed. Planning to refuse the gift at first, Bai Yunfei opened his mouth to do so when he saw the object floating over to him. Eyes sparkling when he recognized what it was, Bai Yunfei accepted the item and took it straight into his space ring. “Then this one will thank you for your kindness, lord Xu. Let us consider this matter settled then.”

Unique Equipment

Equipment Grade: Low Heaven

Elemental Affinity: None

Special Effect 1: Increase the chance of success when upgrading by 1000%. Effect cannot be stacked with the effect of another item.

Special Effect 2: Increase the chance of success when crafting by 700%. Effect cannot be stacked with the effect of another item.

Cannot be upgraded.

The object Xu Sihan gave him was an upgrade stone! One that was a Low Heaven in grade!

Bai Yunfei held an undoubted interest in upgrade stones and thus wouldn't refuse one offered to him.

But there was no way the Xu would give him such a 'precious' item as an apology present. They were clearly also trying to enter Bai Yunfei's good graces as well.

Since he wasn't enemies with the Xu, Bai Yunfei didn't have to worry about losing any face by accepting this gift. It wasn't a bad thing either to make friends with the Xu and the Left Minister, so Bai Yunfei took the gift without much of a fuss.

All of the worry evaporated from within Xu Sihan as soon as he saw Bai Yunfei take the gift. By accepting the gift, Bai Yunfei would most likely not treat him bad in the future. He was a little fearful

of Bai Yunfei and didn't want to end up a half-cripple almost like Cheng Xin and his group....

.....

Zhao Jie went off back to the kitchens to prepare some food while Bai Yunfei, Xiao Nan, and even Xu Sihan began to talk to one another in the drawing room.

It was a rather harmonious lunch the four had with one another. Xu Sihan had dropped the hedonistic air he normally had and wasn't quite the disgusting person Bai Yunfei first pegged him to be, causing Bai Yunfei to have a new perspective on him.

Of course, he still didn't care much, and neither was he really looking to make friends with Xu Sihan either.

With the meal wrapping up, Bai Yunfei found it time to take his leave and bid everyone farewell before he left with Xu Sihan.

They walked together through the academy, though Xu Sihan still looked slightly embarrassed as he followed behind Bai Yunfei. Hesitating here and there, Xu Sihan finally managed to speak aloud after some time, "Brother Bai, there's....something I feel I need to tell you about...."

"Oh?" Bai Yunfei quirked an eyebrow, "What is it?"

"You better be careful for now, brother Bai. There might be some people who'll try to do you harm...."

"Oh? What makes you say that, lord Xu? Who would do that?"

"Cheng....Cheng Xin and his friends. I know what I'm saying might make you suspicious of me trying to instigate some disharmony, but I truly am speaking honestly here. Cheng Xin came to me a few days before and wanted to know if I had a grudge with you, brother Bai. He wanted to see if I'd be interested in taking revenge, but I refused. I think he and his friends haven't given up yet, so I wanted to inform you of the potential, brother Bai."

“This again?” Bai Yunfei narrowed his eye. “I’ll take that in mind, thank you for your warning, lord Xu.” He cupped his hands to Xu Sihan.

After bidding farewell to Xu Sihan, Bai Yunfei headed straight home, though he shook his mind at the words spoken to him by Xu Sihan.

“What a bunch of restless second generationals. You’d all better not be too much, or else I won’t just leave you all as half-cripples next time....”

Chapter 659: Flame-shaped Lightningseed

The first day of the week came by again, meaning it was yet again time for classes.

Since Bai Yunfei would be teaching that day, Tang Xinyun and the others decided not to bother him, though neither did they take a tour in the Capital either. They woke up rather early today, and the sun wasn't yet out, so they chose to head to the outskirts to the south to watch the sunrise from the mountains.

So Bai Yunfei headed for the academy by himself. Not even Xiao Qi was there with him. He chose to stay by Tang Xinyun's side.

As per usual though, the students of the crafting class were all gathered and waiting for him by the foot of the mountain. As soon as Bai Yunfei appeared, Bai Yunfei was a little surprised to see the meaningful looks he was being given.

“What are you all doing?” Bai Yunfei looked down at his own body in confusion. “Why are you all looking at me like that?”

Mo Chen laughed mischievously at him, “You look pretty well today, instructor Bai! You must've had a lot of fun the past week and a half! A healthy face full of vigo—actually, a refreshed face beaming with happiness suits you better!”

“Oh? Does it?” Bai Yunfei touched at his face, “Ah, well, I have been sleeping well as of late. Much better than before.”

“That's probably not the only reason, is it? There must've been one more person by your side that'd make you feel like this I'm sure!” Mo Chen gazed down the academy. “Eh?” He cried out in ‘surprise’, “is instructor's wife not here with you today?”

“Wha—away with you! Stop making fun of your instructor! Return to your crafting caves so we can start class!”

.....

The students were learning the art of crafting at an extremely fast rate now. Crafting a mid-human tier soul armament wasn't a problem for them anymore, and now most of them were embarking on the attempt to craft high-human tier soul armaments. Ye Ming, for example, was already capable of crafting high-human tier soul armaments and was nearly at the crux of being able to craft earth-tier soul armaments.

The lesson today wasn't anything hard, it was just explaining the process of crafting a earth-tier soul armament and the more important parts to look after. This way, the students would have a better chance of crafting one.

It was a dry and dull lesson that skipped over the unimportant details. So time slowly went by before Bai Yunfei dismissed the class at sunset.

He bade the students a few words of farewell before each of them took off. Only Ye Ming stayed behind, asking to speak with Bai Yunfei before he left.

"Instructor Bai, if I could have a moment, please." Ye Ming walked apologetically up to him, "I've a few questions I hope you can answer, instructor Bai."

"Oh?" Bai Yunfei turned his head back, "What kind of questions? Was there something you didn't understand today?"

"It's not about crafting," Ye Ming shook his head, "It's about a companion lightningseed."

"The companion lightningseed?" Bai Yunfei arched an eyebrow at the question. "Let's go in there to talk." He motioned to one of the crafting caves.

Upon entering the cave, Bai Yunfei took out two stone stools for the student and teacher to sit on. "I've almost forgot to ask you about it after all this time, how goes your development of a companion lightningseed?"

“If you could please take a look, instructor Bai.” Ye Ming smiled as his right hand rose up to have his palm facing the ceiling. Concentrating on his palm, Ye Ming had a flash of red light appear first on it, distributing a wave of heat through the room.

Left there on his palm was a chicken-egg sized ball of fire.

Ye Ming had taken out his essence fireseed!! And in the perimeter of his essence fireseed, there was an even smaller sized ‘flame’ the color of violet as it floated around the fireseed like a satellite.

This was....a companion lightningseed!

“You’ve succeeded already?!” Bai Yunfei’s eyes lit up, “You formed a companion lightningseed already?!”

Ye Ming nodded. “I only managed to do so three days ago. I was really close to giving up since I thought I wouldn’t be able to do it. But I decided to do something a little differently than you described it and it worked. I...I never thought it’d actually work.”

“Changed?” Bai Yunfei repeated, his eyes narrowing a bit when he picked up on that bit of the sentence. “Eh? Your companion lightningseed, why is it...?”

He realized then that the companion lightningseed was like....a fire!

‘Lightning’ in the shape of fire!

Bai Yunfei’s companion lightningseed was a small spark of lightning in the shape of a bolt.

Aside from the difference in shape, Bai Yunfei could feel something else was different. Ye Ming’s companion lightningseed seemed a little more ‘lively’.

It wasn’t just that though. It felt as if the companion lightningseed and essence fireseed had some sort of ‘agreement’ between the two to have one another be more ‘spirited’. The companion lightningseed rotated around the essence fireseed with

a rhythm identical to that of the fireseed. Bai Yunfei could even feel Ye Ming's companion lightningseed was incomparably close to the fireseed and flickered at the same time the fireseed did. If he didn't know any better, Bai Yunfei would've thought this companion lightningseed was just a miniature part of the fireseed!

He didn't have the time to make a careful conclusion of his findings, but Bai Yunfei could at the very least confirm that Ye Ming's companion lightningseed was 'superior' to his own companion lightningseed!!

A moment after his shock subsided, Bai Yunfei looked back to Ye Ming with a questioning look, "Ye Ming....how did you manage to do this?"

"Instructor Bai, is there a problem with my companion lightningseed? I feel like it's different to yours, and I'm not very sure how to describe this since it's still new to me. I'm afraid of something going wrong, so please lend me your advice on this matter, instructor Bai."

He drew back his fireseed into his body as he spoke. For regular soul cultivators, one's essence seed shouldn't be left out in the open for an extended period of time.

Bai Yunfei shook his head, "Don't worry, though your lightningseed is a little different from mine, it's definitely not a bad thing. I just wish for you to tell me, how in the world did you manage this?"

Ye Ming thought for a moment before he spoke. "I tried so many times and failed whenever I tried doing it the way you taught me, instructor Bai. It was three days ago when I was training when...."

He explained the state of mind he was in along with several of the thoughts he was having at the time. All of his thoughts were very thought-provoking, and Bai Yunfei couldn't help but feel slightly enlightened by them. In the end, Bai Yunfei could only sigh in admiration of the explanation.

What Ye Ming did to form his companion lightningseed wasn't inherently difficult to put into words. For the sake of oversimplifying the feat, what Ye Ming did was.....treat 'lightning' like fire!

The ways of manipulating each of the different elements in the world were different, some of them being almost opposing in nature. It was only those soul cultivators with dual affinities that wouldn't have trouble in this aspect. For Ye Ming's lightning companionseed, he treated the energy coming from it like how he would treat his essence fireseed so that while any elemental lightning would lose some of its 'nature' as lightning, it would become more like fire. And by doing this, it made the companion lightningseed a lot easier to control and have his fireseed accept the companion lightningseed.

This was a method Bai Yunfei had never even heard of before.

His companion lightningseed had been formed almost completely accidentally! Furthermore, he had tried to learn how to control elemental lightning so that he could control his companion lightningseed, so trying to control it via that method had his essence fireseed carry some of the nature of the elemental lightning had. With nature taking its course like that, Bai Yunfei's lightning was never able to become like fire.

Though Bai Yunfei had 'seen the light now', Bai Yunfei was still at a loss for how he had never even thought about this method before.

Ye Ming's methodology had given Bai Yunfei a whole new path to walk on!

So this was the true way the companion lightningseed was meant to be used!

Chapter 660: Anger

Thinking to himself for some time, Bai Yunfei raised his right hand and focused on his overturned palm. A streak of purple light sparked to life over it, dancing erratically on top of his palm.

It was his companion lightningseed. His control over it was a little better than Ye Ming's control over his. Just calling out the companion lightningseed was no problem for him.

He carefully observed the companion lightningseed, though Bai Yunfei could already feel his soulforce start to change in him. Feeling the companion lightningseed start to tremble and look like it was starting to crumble a bit, but not enough to disappear completely. Just faintly, he could feel the lightning bolt shape of his companion lightningseed start to destabilize a bit and pulsate with energy before starting to change.

The change was made quickly, but the reversion back to its lightning bolt shape took two seconds as if unable to hold onto that change indefinitely. Controlling the companion lightningseed, Bai Yunfei tried to alter the lightningseed's shape again, only to have his efforts be rebuffed.

With each time he tried, the lightningseed seemed to have a bigger change to its shape. Slowly, it was attaining the shape of 'fire'.

Several minutes went by with the companion lightningseed of Bai Yunfei growing closer and closer to being a flame in shape. It was also remaining in said shape for several seconds now.

The more Ye Ming watched, the more he was amazed by what he saw. It took him countless attempts to succeed when he first thought of the idea, but now it was only taking Bai Yunfei a few minutes to get him closer and closer to the point of success. At this rate, Bai Yunfei would succeed in no time at all.

It wasn't for another ten minutes almost when Bai Yunfei decided to give up. Putting away his companion lightningseed back in his body, Bai Yunfei started to recirculate his soulforce to freshen up. "Ye Ming, thank you." He spoke gratefully to the other.

"Ah....instructor Bai, what do you mean?" Ye Ming replied, feeling Bai Yunfei's words to be wrong. "I ignored your teachings, instructor Bai, how could you be thanking me for that? This isn't proper..."

"The one who was instructing the other should be you actually. I should be thanking you, proper or not."

It was true. Ye Ming started off with trying to ask for some advice from Bai Yunfei, but it ended up with Bai Yunfei becoming the one to ask him about how to deal with his companion lightningseed. Ye Ming's perspective on how to train the companion lightningseed gave Bai Yunfei a great deal of benefit, and so it was only right that Bai Yunfei thanked him.

The two talked for a moment longer before Bai Yunfei finally spoke, "Ye Ming, you shouldn't worry. Your companion lightningseed is completely fine. If you keep training like this, you'll definitely see yourself getting stronger and stronger. In my opinion, using the companion lightningseed won't net much power by itself, but using it in conjunction with your elemental fire will see to a fifty percent increase at the very least!

When Bai Yunfei used his companion lightningseed, he'd normally see the strength of his elemental fire increasing by twofold or even threefold. With Ye Ming's 'flame-shaped lightningseed', he'd be able to experiment himself and see just how much his own strength would increase by.

"Then I am relieved." Ye Ming nodded his head. Thinking a bit, he spoke up again, this time a little more hesitantly, "Instructor Bai, you said before that when I reached a seventy percent success

rate with crafting high-human tier soul armaments, you'd help teach me the method of how to craft earth-tier soul armaments. I feel that I am already at such a percentage, would it be possible....?"

"Oh? This quickly?" Bai Yunfei looked surprised, "You've already reached seventy percent success rate?"

Ye Ming nodded. "Yes."

Ye Ming's talent for crafting was unexpectedly extremely high....

Bai Yunfei felt pleased about Ye Ming's success. He smiled, "In that case then, we ca—"

His words died in his mouth mid-breath. Mouth freezing in place, Bai Yunfei suddenly whirled around to look outside the cave.

His sudden action startled Ye Ming. Turning his head to the outside as well, Ye Ming was confused. He didn't see anything there, and his soulsense wasn't sensing anything out of the ordinary. "Instructor Bai, what's wrong?"

Bai Yunfei's expression looked murderous almost, his eyes seemingly spitting fire. "Ye Ming, we'll talk about teaching you how to craft earth-tier soul armaments another time. I've an important matter to take care. I'll be leaving first!"

His feet flashed violet in light before Bai Yunfei flew out from the cave. His Tempest Sword came out from his space ring, and in no time at all, Bai Yunfei took off into the skies on it.

Ye Ming stood there inside the cave for some time after that. Feeling as Bai Yunfei's aura disappeared into the distance, he looked at the skies, "Did instructor Bai find out something if he's so hurried?"

.....

Just five kilometers away from the southern gates of the Capital stood a small forest with a small clearing.

A young woman dressed in a flowery robe sat over a small patch of flowers with a smile. Sometimes, she'd bend down to pull one or two wild grasses while a small white pig by her feet roamed around the area. Not too far away from the two, two other beautiful woman smiled and spoke to one another in small voices.

These three women were Tang Xinyun, Kou Tingting, and Huangfu Rui.

Aside from them three just a hundred meters away almost, there were another eight middle-aged men scattered about on the ground. One of these men on the ground had only a single eye and no eyepatch even to hide his missing eye. Without anything to cover his missing eye, the man looked rather scary, and the many scars on his face didn't help. Just at a glance alone, anyone could tell he wasn't a very friendly man.

All of the men on the ground were knocked out, and flying above them all was a small bird the colors of the rainbow looking down on them all. It was Xiao Qi.

A green streak of light coming towards them caught Tang Xinyun's eye. As she turned to look, Xiao Qi's chirp was made known to her, "Yunfei's here!"

A moment later, the green streak of light came to a stop right next to Tang Xinyun and the others, revealing Bai Yunfei inside.

"Xinyun, Tingting, are you all okay?"

Bai Yunfei spoke up in concern, looking around the area as he did.

Tang Xinyun smiled, "Yes. No need to worry, Yunfei, we're fine."

That was when Bai Yunfei noticed the people laying down on the ground. "That's good." He sighed.

"Bro strawhat, you're here!" Huangfu Rui came running up to him with Xiao Rourou in hand. "We went mountain climbing today! It was a tall mountain—much taller than Mt. Crimson!

There was also a strange stone that was like Xiao Rourou! Heehee, we wanted to pick it up, but sis Ting said no....we can take you there next time!”

“Haha...” Bai Yunfei patted her on the head, “Well, I’ll come with you next time, for sure.”

He gave a glance at the group of people still laying unconscious on the ground. “Xinyun,” He whispered to her, “are those people the ones that attacked you? Are there anyone else?”

Xinyun shook her head, “There shouldn’t be anyone else but the ones there. We were going to return to the Capital when we were stopped by them. They were going to kidnap us before Xiao Qi knocked them all out. I didn’t see anyone escape.”

“That’s good then.” Bai Yunfei nodded. “You should all go back first then. I’ll deal with this.”

He nodded to Xiao Qi, “Can you send Xinyun back and then come back?”

“I can.”

Tang Xinyun looked a little concerned, “Yunfei, you....you should be careful. Don’t do anything dangerous.”

“Don’t worry, I’ll be careful. I’ll be back before it’s late.”

.....

Watching as Tang Xinyun and the others skywalked back to the Capital, Bai Yunfei whirled around when he saw them safely reach their destination. Stalking towards the group, the smile on his face slowly receded away and was replaced by a bone-chilling look.

The reason he was so hurried on his way out the crafting cave was because Xiao Qi had communicated to him through their soul bond that someone had tried to attack Tang Xinyun!

Xiao Qi had also told him that the nuisances had already been taken care of, hence why Bai Yunfei wasn’t too overly panicked.

While he was flying over to Tang Xinyun, Xiao Qi was already describing what had happened.

While Tang Xinyun were about to return back to the Capital from their excursion, a group of people came forward to stop them. They weren't normal bandits but....a group of Soul Exalts!

The leader of the group was a late-stage Soul Exalt! Furthermore, three of them were mid-stage Soul Exalts and four were early-stage Soul Exalts!

Not only was such a high levelled group trying to stop Tang Xinyun, they were trying to kidnap her!

As of today, Tang Xinyun was only an early-stage Soul Exalt and Kou Tingting was a mid-stage Soul Exalt. The little genius that was Huangfu Rui was a late-stage Soul Exalt (thought not yet fully accustomed to her strength). Combined with the early-stage class six Xiao Bai and the mid-stage class six red magiboar, the group themselves were at a disadvantage. If they fought, Tang Xinyun and the others would stand a very small chance of winning.

But the situation wasn't as bad as it seemed, for there was still one entity not yet accounted for....

Xiao Qi!

The group of 'bandits' didn't seem to realize the situation of Tang Xinyun's group and was more than ready for an 'easy' kidnapping. But unfortunately for them, Xiao Qi resolved the issue in no time at all and knocked them all out.

For a class seven soulbeast like Xiao Qi, people like those Soul Exalts were powerless.

Xiao Qi had only knocked them out rather than kill them since he wanted to wait for Bai Yunfei to come and deal with them.

.....

Bai Yunfei sat down on a large rock in front of the group of

people and looked at them one by one. Lifting his left hand to take out his Lightning Eagle, Bai Yunfei shot at the thighs of two Soul Exalts.

“Ah!”

“Ah!!”

Two loud cries of pain rang out as the two victims were roused out from their slumber with pain.

One of the two was the one-eyed man and a late-stage Soul Exalt. The other person was a scrawny early-stage Soul Exalt. Because of Xiao Qi forcing their soulforce into a lull, neither of them were able to move.

Bai Yunfei waited for the two to stop screaming before he spoke. “Speak. Who are you and who sent you?”

Chapter 661: One-eyed Mara

Being Soul Exalts, the cries of the two victims were quickly suppressed. They were only just looking around themselves when they heard what Bai Yunfei said and looked up to see the young man sitting in front of them.

The scrawny man with a pointed lip and monkey-like cheeks immediately felt the paralysis on his body and began to sweat. “Who are you?!”

“Bang!”

A loud bang echoed in the air and replied his question. All the man saw was the young man hold a strange object in his hand before he felt something impeccably fast strike his left thigh. A burst of blood flew out from the area as he looked at the wound. A moment later, he started to cry.

“Ah!!!!”

Since his soulforce was blocked from being circulated, he was unable to treat his wound or even minimize the amount of pain from it. Soul Exalt or not, he couldn't help but cry again.

Bai Yunfei shot him a glare, “I'm the one asking you the questions. You've not the right to be asking me anything.”

He turned back to the one-eyed man, who had been up to this point relatively stoic. “I'll ask again. Who are you and who sent you.”

There was a slight scowl on the other man's face, though he regarded the Lightning Eagle in Bai Yunfei's hand with some fear. Looking away, he said, “Friend, we brothers were here blind and offended you. We admit our wrongs, please be lenient with us, sire, and spare our lives. We—”

“All you need to do is answer my questions.”

Bai Yunfei interrupted him.

The man clenched his jaw tightly as he hesitated. “This one is Qiu Bailu, the one known in these areas as the One-eyed Mara. If sire can forgive me, I will owe you my life. Whatever it is sire wishes for me to do, I will not hesitate!”

The reason why he mentioned his name was to try and emphasize his importance in Bai Yunfei’s eyes. As it were, he had some degree of fame to his name as a wandering soul cultivator and was a relatively strong expert. With a value like that, Qiu Bailu was sure no one wouldn’t easily kill him.

“The One-eyed Mara?” Bai Yunfei replied. The name was familiar to him. This was one of the more well known wandering soul cultivators around the Capital who specialized in shady practices such as killing and looting.

He pointed to the others behind him, “And these are?”

“They are like me, wanderers. I can vouch on their behalf sire, if you spare our lives, we will sell our lives to you!”

The scrawny man to his side nodded his head repeatedly despite the pain.

Bai Yunfei felt indifferent to Qiu Bailu’s ‘promise’, however. Taking two seconds for consideration, he asked then, “Who hired you to kidnap those women.”

“That....” Qiu Bailu looked troubled. “Was a misunderstanding, sire. We were hired by no one. When we saw three young women on the road, we....succumbed to a moment’s temptation, sire, and offended those young women. Please be magnanimous, sire, spare our lives.”

“No one?”

Bai Yunfei’s eyes narrowed together, “Is it worth throwing your life away for whatever it was Cheng Xin gave you?”

“Cheng Xin?” Qiu Bailu’s face went blank. “I don’t know any Cheng Xin. This really is a misunderstanding, sire. We were hired by no one.”

He didn’t seem like he was lying. It seemed as though he didn’t know any Cheng Xin.

Bai Yunfei’s eyes flashed dangerously, “Then was it Li Chen? Zeng Fei? Zhu Yizhi? Peng Huaguang? Which one of them called for you?”

He studied the man’s expressions, but none of the names sparked any reaction from him.

Were they really not here because of those second generationals?

Bai Yunfei was starting to doubt himself. No matter what the case was, Bai Yunfei was sure that Cheng Xin and the others would try to take revenge on him. And if they couldn’t go after Bai Yunfei, they’d definitely go after the ones close to him.

After a while, Bai Yunfei focused his attention on the scrawnier one. His cold glare froze the man stiff for two seconds before the glare warmed up a bit. “Tell me who sent you here and I’ll spare your life.”

“I....I....” The scrawny man trembled. He wasn’t as enduring as Qiu Bailu was due to the relative strength between he and Bai Yunfei. Combined with the intimidating tactics of Bai Yunfei, the man was starting to fill up with terror. “Milord, there really wasn’t anyone that sent us here, we....we were blind to offend you, please spare our lives.” He stammered.

Ignoring his pleas, Bai Yunfei turned his his attention to the bald man to the other side of the scrawny man. Firing a bullet into his right thigh, Bai Yunfei ‘woke’ the man up.

There was a loud scream as the person was roused. Raising his right hand, Bai Yunfei lashed out with a crimson thread of light that wrapped around the bald man and dragged him to the space in

front of Bai Yunfei!

“Tell me who hired you and I’ll spare your life!”

Bai Yunfei demanded, not even caring to clear up the situation for the bald man.

“Who are you? I’ll—ah!!”

There was another scream of pain as Bai Yunfei shot him straight through his left thigh.

“If you won’t answer, you’ll end up like him!!”

He spat coldly, jerking his thumb in another direction, forcing the bald-headed man to follow his pointing at the startled scrawny man.

“Bang!!”

A bloody hole appeared in the middle of the scrawny man’s eyebrows as a lightning bullet speared straight through him and exited out from the back of his head. Growing blank in the face, the scrawny man fell back down to the ground and didn’t move again—he didn’t even know that he died and succumbed to his wound without another thought.

Bai Yunfei had killed him without warning.

His actions astounded the bald-headed man and Qiu Bailu. Pupils dilating, both their faces grew incomparably pale.

“Tell me who sent you and I’ll spare your life!!” Bai Yunfei’s voice grew heavier by a notch as he heaved the Lightning Eagle to aim it in between the bald man’s eyebrows. “Now or you’ll end up like him!”

“I....I.....”

Flustered and panicked, the bald-headed man was absolutely terrified by Bai Yunfei’s actions. His strength as an early-stage Soul Exalt wasn’t nearly enough to help him in this case. He knew that in a moment, what happened to the scrawny man next to him

because of the strange soul armament in Bai Yunfei's hand would happen to him.

“Tell me!!!”

Bai Yunfei's voice thundered. At the same time, there was a spark of light from the Charm Bracelet that hit the bald man's eyes!

Having been so startled by Bai Yunfei's intonation, the man tilted his head up to look at Bai Yunfei, and the moment he met Bai Yunfei's eyes, the man saw a pink light appear in them. Almost as if he was in a dream, the man went slackjawed and the light in his eyes dulled a bit!

He stayed in that trance for several seconds before at last he finally mumbled, “I....I... don't know who. Big brother sent us the score this time, we don't know who our client is....”

His voice was nearly silent, but to Qiu Bailu, it may as well been a clap of thunder in his ears. All of the blood drained away from his face as he whipped his head first to the bald-headed man and then to Bai Yunfei, “What...what did you do to him!? This is impossible....!”

“Bang!!”

There was a bang and a splatter of blood from the bald man's head. “If you don't know, you don't need to live....”

He turned his head to look at the appalled Qiu Bailu. “Now can you tell me who sent you?”

He smiled.

Chapter 662: A Strange Occurrence

‘Smiling’ in between killing people.

Qiu Bailu’s heart skipped a beat in fear, his mind unable to do anything but to look on in fear.

His fear wasn’t because of Bai Yunfei killing people. His name wasn’t given to him in vain, and neither was the nickname of ‘Mara’. After several dozen years of killing, his victim list was perhaps in the hundreds if not the thousands, he wouldn’t even bat an eye if he killed a commoner.

What surprised him was the fact that Bai Yunfei was killing these people without even a warning!! He couldn’t even see Bai Yunfei move as he killed!

It was important to note that Qiu Bailu was a man who walked the path between life and death almost constantly. He was more than familiar with the sensation of ‘killing’ and all that applied to it. In his experience, any one person would always reveal a hint of intent to kill the moment before they do so and their soulforce would fluctuate just slightly. As a late-stage Soul Exalt, his perception on the act was far more sensitive, and he’d even be able to sense when an early-stage Soul King was prepared to kill. (But even if he could feel that murderous intent, it didn’t mean he’d be able to evade it in time)

But right now, Bai Yunfei wasn’t revealing even a bit of that murderous intent. From start to finish, his aura had been the exact same, and even after he killed the two persons, there wasn’t even a change in his expression!

An ‘unordinary behavior’ like this was what truly gave Qiu Bailu the fear he was feeling.

Furthermore, he didn’t even know just when this youth in front of him had used the strange soul armament in his hand and shot

his two companions through the head....

To make the matters even worse, the last words of his bald-headed companion had revealed that all he was saying was a lie. This meant the youth would be even more likely to kill him now.

“Fuck! My life is important, so don’t blame me for trying to preach for it! That damnable person didn’t tell me I’d come across such a killer, this is all his fault!!”

Qiu Bailu gritted his teeth before finally staring back at Bai Yunfei, “Fine—I’ll speak! There really was a person that hired us to come. We were only pawns, people that had debts! Sire, please spare us and I guarantee you I can bring you to that person! There’s no need for you to do anything, we’ll help you take revenge on him!”

But his words didn’t even spark a single emotion on Bai Yunfei’s face.

“Speak.”

Qiu Bailu hesitated for a moment before he continued. “Sire, could you first please release our bonds? I’ll personally take you to that person!”

“Bang!”

There was a loud echo of gunfire, followed by the groans of another three of his companions before they were killed.

Bai Yunfei was still expressionless.

“Speak.”

“He’s crazy! He’s f*cking gone crazy!!” Qiu Bailu roared to himself. “The leader of the ‘Desert Wolves’ in the southern parts sent us here, he told us to kidnap a few girls for him!!”

The ‘Desert Wolves’?” Bai Yunfei repeated in surprise. Feeling that the name was familiar to him, Bai Yunfei thought for a moment—wasn’t that the gang that little ‘killer’ Yi Zi was running

from the same day he went with Zheng Kai to go fight?

He remembered that the vice-leader of that gang was only a Soul Sprite before Yi Zi killed him off. The leader himself was only just a Soul Ancestor, and the gang itself was very weak. How could they possibly employ a group of Soul Exalts like Qiu Bailu and the others??

Qiu Bailu could tell from Bai Yunfei's expressions that he was doubting what he said. "The leader is a mid-stage Soul Ancestor, but he's just a middle man. The reward being offered was tremendous, a sum that only the major factions can even hope to give. I'm speaking the truth. There's half of the reward in my space ring, we can offer it to you sire. Everything I'm saying is without a lie. Sire, if you allow me to go after the Desert Wolves, I can force them to say who the real mastermind is!"

Eyes flashing dangerously to the right hand of Qiu Bailu, Bai Yunfei waved his right hand and forced Qiu Bailu's right arm up. The space ring on his right index finger came flying off of it and into Bai Yunfei's hand.

Taking the ring, Bai Yunfei looked through it for a moment before then looking back to Qiu Bailu, "Was it really the Desert Wolves that sent you?"

"Yes!!"

"I don't believe you."

"...." A muscle in Qiu Bailu's face twitched.

"You interrogated me when you thought I was lying, and now you don't believe me when I'm telling the truth, are you f*cking with me?!"

His next words were spoken in a hurry, "I'm speaking the truth!! Sire, if you can bring me to the Desert Wolves, you'll see for yourself the truth!"

"Is that so?" Bai Yunfei spoke. "But if you set a trap for me there,

wouldn't that just mean I'd be walking into it?"

"Er...." Another facial twitch. In his mind, Qiu Bailu was thinking that whatever Bai Yunfei was thinking was merely just conjecture and not reality.

At this moment, Qiu Bailu saw Bai Yunfei raise that strange soul armament of his and point it towards him.

"Ho—Hold on, what are—"

"Bang!!"

There was another bang as the person two persons to his right had his head blown up. The body twitched reflexively from the shot before it went still for the last time.

"Do you speak the truth?"

Bai Yunfei's words were practically like ice.

Qiu Bailu's pupil dilated within themselves, "It's true! It's true! I wouldn't lie to you!"

"I don't believe you."

Again, those four words were said again. Another shot was heard as yet another one of Qiu Bailu's companions was killed. Blood and brain splattered everywhere—some on his face—and his ears were ringing now.

"He's gone mad! Truly and utterly mad!!!" Qiu Bailu howled to himself. He didn't know what Bai Yunfei would do next. Killing a person without even showing any intent and completely incapable of communication either!

When he saw Bai Yunfei point the soul armament to his own head, Qiu Bailu's eye dilated again to become practically a pin hole in size. Fear gripped at his heart as he howled, "I'm really not lying to you! I'm speaking the truth! Honestly!! What else do you want from me!?"

"Look at my eyes!!"

Qiu Bailu flinched reflexively at the roar. Fearing for his life, Qiu Bailu did as Bai Yunfei said and looked up. Somehow, Bai Yunfei was now right in front of him, and the moment he looked up, he saw an eerily strange light as if he was staring into a pair of whirlpools rather than eyes....

“Who sent you here?!”

An explosive-like voice rang in his mind, freezing Qiu Bailu to the core. Memories flickered across his eye before he himself went slugged. His single eye grew unfocused as he stared in the direction of Bai Yunfei.

Bai Yunfei’s position in front of Qiu Bailu was a little strange with how he was stooped over to stare at his eye. In Bai Yunfei’s own eyes, there was a pinkish light in them that shined in the same way his Charm Bracelet was shining with a type of ‘frequency’ in between the two like never before.

Clearly, Bai Yunfei was looking at Qiu Bailu’s eye and ‘searching’ his soul for something....

Chapter 663: A New Application of the Charm Bracelet

Bai Yunfei could ‘see’ a picture in the mind of Qiu Bailu. There was a room where Qiu Bailu and a vulgar-looking man was sitting together. The other man was treating Qiu Bailu extremely courteously as he handed him a space ring. Then the two began to talk.

Unfortunately, this was only a ‘picture’ of the events and so there was no sound.

Several seconds later, the pictures began to skip as Qiu Bailu started to look for people and gather up a group....

The scenery changed around again as Qiu Bailu led his group out from the Capital. Soon, they were on the same road as three women and was prepared to kidnap them when a small bird the colors of the rainbow defeated them all....

These images were a lot clearer to see for Bai Yunfei compared to before. Then the images began to flicker and grow unsteady like a television receiving static. Blurring together and skipping from image to image, the scenery started to grow hazy, the people a mosaic, and everything unclear before hopping to the next image. In just a matter of seconds, plenty of recollections and images had gone by.

The more Bai Yunfei looked through the images, the more they started to look like they were beginning to crumble apart.

“Ahh!!!!”

There was a cry of agony. Qiu Bailu’s remaining eye was starting to bulge out from his eye socket and his body was trembling non-stop as if shocked. Blood was even spilling out from his nose!

“Stop!!”

With a slight grunt from Bai Yunfei, Qiu Bailu's screams came to a stop. His body slowly went back to normal before he crumpled back down to the ground and his eye unfocused in its gaze.

The strange light in Bai Yunfei's eyes disappeared as well. He took two stumbling steps backwards and shook his head. Both his hands pressed against his temples to massage it, and his face looked slightly fatigued as well. But in his eyes, the unmistakable light of joy could be seen along with a smile.

“It worked! It actually worked!!”

Bai Yunfei cried out in jubilation. Closing his eyes to exhale and calm himself down, Bai Yunfei let his arms drop from his head. He looked at the Charm Bracelet on his left wrist with a pleased smile.

“The mental link effect has so many applications—just in this application alone makes this effect far better than even any other +12 additional effect so far.” Bai Yunfei gingerly touched the crystalline bracelet. “This is the only spirit-related attack I have so far, and its effects are drastically different than any other additional effect my other equipment has....if it affects the ‘soul’, just how flexible is the soul? How unfortunate I can't test it, if only another soul-related effect would appear....perhaps in the future I can upgrade the Charm Bracelet to +12? I wonder what kind of effects it'll have....”

Thinking to himself for a moment, Bai Yunfei turned his gaze back towards Qiu Bailu. With a wave of his right hand, a wave of elemental fire mixed with his soulforce entered Qiu Bailu's body and began to clear up the blockages in his acupoints, allowing him to move once more.

The strange thing was that Qiu Bailu didn't move as soon as his acupoints were cleared up. He remained on the ground still to stare lazily at wherever his head was pointed towards.

Bai Yunfei touched at his Charm Bracelet again. When he sensed something, Bai Yunfei spoke, “Stand up.”

He repeated this command verbally, and then with his mind. Then the ‘impossible’ happened—Qiu Bailu ‘rose’ to his feet!

Even though there was a bullet wound straight through one of Qiu Bailu’s thighs, it didn’t seem to bother him when he stood up and stared at Bai Yunfei.

A flash of light flickered across Bai Yunfei’s eyes. Happy, he looked at the wound on Qiu Bailu’s thigh and ‘commanded’, “Heal.”

There was a flash of red light from Qiu Bailu’s body as his soulforce began to heal the bloody wound on his thigh.

Qiu Bailu’s person was still.....just like a statue that would only listen to commands!

And the one ‘controlling’ him was Bai Yunfei!!

.....

This was a ‘derivative’ ability of the +10 additional effect of the Charm Bracelet!

From his studies in the applications of the Charm Bracelet, Bai Yunfei was already capable of two derivative abilities from the mental link effect. One was the ability to detect lies, and the other was the ability to unleash a pseudo soul attack. Feeling extremely interested in this study, Bai Yunfei continued to do his research to see what else could be done with it.

Last time in Baishan City, Bai Yunfei could remember when he first used the mental link effect to launch that pseudo soul attack during the battle. There was another instance shortly afterwards where when Bai Yunfei was filled with murderous intent, he had used thought with every single fiber in his body to have everyone there ‘kill themselves’.

In the end, several of the early-stage Soul Exalts slit their own throats.

While this wasn't an example of controlling the 'mind', it was still in the end....'control'!!

By borrowing the ability of the mental link effect, Bai Yunfei was able to inject his own thoughts into them and affect their bodily movements!

That ability felt similar to a type of 'Mesmerization', or perhaps it was....Hypnosis.

He guessed that by using the mental link effect to enter someone's mind, he could use a great deal of mental energy to force the other mind to submit. And when he exploded with anger that one time, he was able to fully subjugate the mind and through a method almost like 'magic', he was able to know what the other was thinking and redirect their thoughts enough to a point where it could be considered 'manipulation'!

Bai Yunfei was never able to confirm his suspicions since this type of ability to control would do a great deal of harm to the person afflicted. Without any other real way to investigate his findings, Bai Yunfei was left unable to do anything until today where Bai Yunfei was able to 'properly' experiment.

With Qiu Bailu as his test subject, Bai Yunfei whittled away at his rationality and allowed fear to grip at his mind. Then connecting to his mind with the mental link effect, Bai Yunfei invaded his mindspace and flipped through it!!

The surprising thing to him was how fluidly everything went!

He managed to invade Qiu Bailu's mind and take away some rather important information from it.

However, there was also a very serious effect Bai Yunfei didn't expect to have. With how vicious he was in his invasion, Bai Yunfei somehow managed to not only subjugate Qiu Bailu's mind, but....destroyed it!

The Qiu Bailu right now had no rationality in him right now. As

far as people were concerned, he was already 'dead'!! His mind wasn't there, he was just a braindead husk!

The end result was a bit similar to when Bai Yunfei was studying the slave seal and ended up with that soulless class three little snake.

The movements Qiu Bailu was doing was only because of the commands Bai Yunfei was giving him.

In short, the method of controlling was similar between the Charm Bracelet and the Beast Taming Ring. But in this case, the Charm Bracelet controlled people rather than soulbeasts!

Even now, Bai Yunfei found it very hard to believe at what he was capable of doing now.

As the wound on Qiu Bailu's body healed, Bai Yunfei looked at him with a pensive stare. The Charm Bracelet was still shining with a soft glow, and after a while, Bai Yunfei decided to cut the connection between him and Qiu Bailu.

After he cut off the connection, Bai Yunfei tried to send another order for Qiu Bailu to heal himself.

Once the connection was cut, Bai Yunfei paid attention to what was going on in Qiu Bailu's body. He could see that Qiu Bailu's body was still sending soulforce to heal the wound, but the more time went by, the less soulforce was being used. But even more importantly....was his life!

Bai Yunfei could sense that the lifeforce of Qiu Bailu was waning with each passing second. At this rate, he'd probably die within an hour or so!

Surprised, Bai Yunfei hurriedly re-established the mental link between him and Qiu Bailu. Entering Qiu Bailu's mindspace, Bai Yunfei saw his soulforce started to circulate like normal again, and his lifeforce had ceased to wane.

"I see now. In this case, this ability is a little less useful than I

thought....” Bai Yunfei muttered. “But still, it’s still a nice desperation move. I can also try to adapt its usage, it’s worth a shot researching a little more....”

.....

As he was thinking about how to use this new ability of the Charm Bracelet, a streak of light was flying in his direction.

Xiao Qi had returned.

“Yunfei, I brought Xinyun and the others back home.” Xiao Qi reported as he dropped down to Bai Yunfei’s side. “What are you doing? What’s wrong with that guy?”

Deep in thought, Bai Yunfei nodded his head to him, “I’m trying to see how to use this new mental link effect. Let’s go to another place for now.”

“Another place?”

“The south parts of the city. Let’s see just who hired these people.”

“Eh....” Xiao Qi looked down at the remaining people there, “And what about these people?”

Commanding Qiu Bailu back to his feet, Bai Yunfei stared at the people Xiao Qi was looking at.

“Kill them!” He spoke mercilessly.

Never did Bai Yunfei even think about sparing these people.

This time, these people had truly infuriated him.

It had been trouble after trouble that greeted him since he came to the Capital. He had been patient and merciful even when they came to kill him, but now that this was happening, Bai Yunfei would no longer bear it.

This was because they were now trying to use Tang Xinyun to get to him.

Bai Yunfei wouldn't allow anyone to hurt her. If anyone tried, they'd be eliminated!!

No matter who it was, they'd die!

.....

With the night rapidly approaching, Bai Yunfei took Qiu Bailu and Xiao Qi back to the Capital to get to the southern parts of the Capital.

They found the Desert Wolves hideout after a decent amount of time and immediately found the boss.

Even Qiu Bailu was more than enough to deal with the likes of a mid-stage Soul Ancestor. It took no time for Bai Yunfei to interrogate the man and then end his life.

After that, Bai Yunfei followed the clues left behind by the Desert Wolves to another place in the Capital.

The outskirts of the western part in the Capital.

Chapter 664: Investigating the Western Outskirts

According to what the Desert Wolves said, their client was someone they didn't really know. Since this person was extremely strong, none of the Desert Wolves dared to treat him with anything but respect. And with such a hefty reward, the Desert Wolves was quick to find Qiu Bailu. All they were told to do was to kidnap a certain person and bring them secretly back to the western outskirts where someone would collect them.

But Bai Yunfei saw no one there to receive them when he got there.

“No one's here....did they find out their plan was a failure?” Bai Yunfei muttered as he waited at the foot of a mountain. “If....they're being so careful about this, then there must be a spy of some sort. Maybe....it's because they saw that Xinyun returned home safe and sound and found out it was a failure. That's why no one's here.”

If that was the case, then didn't that mean the clues would end here?!

Bai Yunfei leapt up into the air to stand three hundred meters in the sky to look around the place.

“They said they'd be here, so maybe they might still be around. In that case....I'll take a good luck around this place!”

Bai Yunfei couldn't give up now that he was so close. Even if he had his doubts now, Bai Yunfei wanted to make sure of everything. If that didn't work, then he'd try something else.

In his perch high above the skies, Bai Yunfei could see a good part of the surrounding area. The properties of the richer people in the Capital were all brightly lit with lanterns and such, and just five kilometers away from where Bai Yunfei was, he could see a several

villas having their inhabitants celebrate from one place to another with feasts.

Carefully, Bai Yunfei stared at the celebrating villas, staring from left to right to see who was who.

Though he was being very observant on what each group of people were doing, Bai Yunfei wasn't trying to eavesdrop on them, he was trying to feel if their auras were familiar or not.

He wanted to find...Cheng Xin, Li Chen, and the others!

They were the main suspects. In Bai Yunfei's mind, finding them within the vicinity would almost prove their guilt in this matter. He just needed to investigate and see if his suspicions were true.

.....

Bai Yunfei's current strength was enough to allow him to scan the area without anyone really noticing him. There weren't many soul cultivators here, and especially not Soul Kings, meaning Bai Yunfei wouldn't have a very high chance of being found out.

Either way, Bai Yunfei made sure to be as careful as he could just in case. As low as the chances are, Bai Yunfei didn't want to anger and cause trouble with a Soul King.

Bai Yunfei didn't notice anything after he scanned half the villas in the area. As luxurious as the events going on in several villas, nothing suspicious was to be had.

From the positioning of the bright white moon, Bai Yunfei guessed it to be around ten at night now. Flying through the forest, Bai Yunfei soon found himself approaching yet another villa.

This one villa was a lot more quiet than the other ones, as if no one was inside.

Bringing Qiu Bailu with him as he investigated each villa was a bit of a hassle, so Bai Yunfei had Qiu Bailu wait in a far away area for him while he and Xiao Qi sped off towards this villa.

As he approached the corner of the villa, Bai Yunfei extinguished his soulsense and hid himself from sight.

A few seconds later, Bai Yunfei was close enough to look into one of the rooms, where his eyes immediately lit up afterwards!

“Cheng Xin, Li Chen, and three others....they’re all here!!”

The fact that he found them here was far too unlikely to be coincidental....

Cold fury flashed across Bai Yunfei’s eyes. Stepping over the villa walls to land on top of the rooftop, Bai Yunfei headed for where Cheng Xin and the others were.

There were a few experts in the villa, but the strongest was only a late-stage Soul Exalt and wasn’t strong enough to sense Bai Yunfei.

In no time at all, Bai Yunfei was hidden in the top of a nearby tree and away from sight near where Cheng Xin and the others were.

Hidden in the foliage, Bai Yunfei had his soulsense spread slightly outwards to peer into the room.

“Lord Xin, do you....do you think Qiu Bailu and the others are already killed?”

The moment Bai Yunfei started to eavesdrop into the room, what he heard immediately caused him to narrow his eyes!

.....

In the room, Cheng Xin, Li Chen, Zeng Fei, Zhu Yizhi, and Peng Huaguang sat together around a large table just like a few days ago. They were looking better than before, though Zeng Fei and Zhu Yizhi still had one of their arms in a sling. Everyone else was looking much better, though it was still clear to see that their arms were to some degree limited in movement.

When everyone decided on how to deal with Bai Yunfei, they each went back home to prepare a few things like pooling together their primal stones and selling their earth-tier soul armaments.

While they did that, Cheng Xin had one of his trusted aides go find an unremarkable gang hire a group of mercenaries to go kidnap ‘Bai Yunfei’s girl’.

Zheng Kai didn’t come with Bai Yunfei when he had his lessons today. As it so happened today, Zheng Kai was busy so he didn’t accompany Tang Xinyun and the other two when they went to play today. Grabbing onto this opportunity, Cheng Xin gave the command to have Qiu Bailu and his group do the kidnapping today and bring them back.

That afternoon, Cheng Xin and the others waited for the group to come back and bring Tang Xinyun back to them.

The only problem was when they waited until the sun was already setting down the mountains without anyone coming. That was when they received the message: Bai Yunfei’s woman had already returned to the Capital!

That astounded Cheng Xin and the others. Qiu Bailu and his men had actually failed in their task?

Afterwards, Cheng Xin had someone head over to the Desert Wolves, but their men came back saying the Desert Wolves were nowhere to be found!

That was because the Desert Wolves was already completely wiped out.

Feeling slightly panicked at that, everyone began to discuss wildly amongst themselves on what to do.

“Why didn’t we succeed? Wasn’t that Qiu Bailu a late-stage Soul Exalt? He had plenty of early-stage and mid-stage Soul Exalts with him, how could their combined strengths not be enough to deal with those few women? How’d they let them get away?”

“Can’t have. Didn’t you hear what our men just told us? Those women came back to the Capital without a scratch. That means they didn’t even fight. Did Qiu Bailu and their men not even do

anything?”

“How couldn’t they? We gave them their orders, and our men saw them exiting the Capital.”

“That’s right. Even if they didn’t move, we would’ve got a report from them. But not even one of them came back!”

“And the Desert Wolves being gone is a problem too. They were here when we gave them their orders this afternoon, so why can’t we find any one of them?”

“Something must have happened! Damnit, what happened to them?!”

“.....”

Li Chen looked to the silent Cheng Xin in hesitation. “Lord Xin, do you think....Qiu Bailu and his men were all killed?”

“What a useless group! ‘One-eyed Mara’? He couldn’t even kidnap a few women! He might as well be dead!” Cheng Xin snapped in anger.

“Lord Xin thinks something has happened to them too?” Li Chen frowned, “But....our informants said both Bai Yunfei and Zheng Kai were in the Capital when the kidnapping attempt was made. There shouldn’t have been anyone strong enough to protect them women. How in the world did Qiu Bailu fail to kidnap the three then?”

“How should I know what happened?” Cheng Xin grouched, “Maybe we’re wrong, or maybe something really did happen. All I know is that our plan most likely failed. We’ll have to come up with a new one.”

But Zhu Yizhi looked worried. “But, lord Xin, won’t we get found out if our plan failed? If Bai Yunfei were to come....”

“Pah!” Cheng Xin sneered, “Even if Qiu Bailu and the others were kidnapped, they’d only lead Bai Yunfei back to the Desert Wolves.

There wouldn't be any clues that'd link them back to us, how would we be found out?"

"Lord Xin is right. Zhu Yizhi, you shouldn't worry. Do you think Bai Yunfei is from the Fate School and will find us by divining it? Even if he's suspicious, there's no proof. What can he do without that?"

Cheng Xin waved his hand, "Let's get talking about our next plan then...."

.....

The group continued to talk, but what they never imagined was that Bai Yunfei was listening in on their conversation from their side!

On the tree outside, there was a series of rustling sounds from where Bai Yunfei was. His right hand was grabbing onto a tree branch, and the pressure he was exerting was enough to break it off. The look on his face was especially dangerous, and his killing intent was nearly leaking out from his hiding place.

Since he had his proof now, Bai Yunfei had nothing to hesitate about. These people would die today!!

It was the last straw. Bai Yunfei's soulforce was already circulating in his body as he prepared himself to attack and kill these people.

"Eh?"

Just at that moment when he was about to strike, Bai Yunfei suddenly ceased in his movements and hid himself. His right leg snuck back into the tree and in no time at all, Bai Yunfei had taken out the Walk-on Strawhat and dropped it onto his head to hide his presence.

He drew himself deeper in in the tree and remained motionless to further hide his aura.

On his shoulder, Xiao Qi hid his aura as well and began to distribute a small amount of elemental wood to envelop him and Bai Yunfei inside. This way, the two of them would be mistaken for the tree rather than people.

No sooner did they finish this did Bai Yunfei slowly turn his head to the right to look at a rooftop just twenty meters away from where Cheng Xin and his group was.....

Chapter 665: An Astonishing Discovery!

In almost a second after Bai Yunfei managed to hide his aura completely, Bai Yunfei felt two strong auras come out from the right side of the villa.

Soul Kings!!

A moment prior to their arrival here, Bai Yunfei could feel a disturbance in the space in the villa. Luckily, he was able to react in time and hide himself, else the two Soul Kings would've found out about his presence here.

He could feel a weak amount of soulsense wash over the area as soon as Xiao Qi managed to hide his own presence. Bai Yunfei could feel his own breath caught in his throat and his heart practically refusing to beat due to his nervousness. It was fortunate for him that their soulsenses were only doing a very lazy scan. If it was stronger, then Bai Yunfei definitely would've been found. And combined with the fact that Xiao Qi's ability to hide now was a lot better than before, Bai Yunfei and Xiao Qi were able to successfully hide themselves from the two Soul Kings.

Their scanning was only within the perimeter of the villa itself, so Qiu Bailu who was hiding a little distance away wasn't found out.

These two Soul Kings were clearly not expecting to have enemies in this area, so their soulsense scanning was done very lazily and not at all expecting any visitors to suddenly pop up.

Bai Yunfei sighed in relief when he felt the soulsenses retreat away from him. But still, he refused to move from his spot so he could observe what would happen next in relative safety.

.....

On the right side within one of the rooms.

In the center of one of the darker rooms, the air was twisting

slightly within itself to reveal a two meter tall pitch-black hole of sorts. This black hole remained for only two seconds before it disappeared from sight, but not before revealing a figure in white and another figure in black.

When the figure in white appeared, he waved his hand to activate the light stones in the room. Straight away, the room light up with light, revealing the appearance of the two people in the room.

One of them was an elderly man with greying hair.

The elder in white was one of the strongest in the house of Cheng and Cheng Xin's second grandfather, Cheng Chaochuan. The person in black next to him was the person that had first been with him when Cheng Xin was first scheming against Bai Yunfei.

The very first thing both Soul Kings did was send their soulsense throughout the villa and scan it for people.

Their eyebrows furrowed together when they detected someone. But what they detected was Cheng Xin and his group, not Bai Yunfei.

“A small group of senseless youngsters, let us pay them no mind, brother Wu Shang.” Cheng Chaochuan withdrew his glance to grab onto a chair to sit on as he spoke to the disdainful looking elder with him.

The one named ‘Wu Shang’ nodded, sparing a lazy glance at the bickering group. He walked with Cheng Chaochuan to where the chairs were and sat down without a word as if resting.

Cheng Chaochuan didn't seem to care much for the cold attitude he was getting from him. “Brother Wu Shang, we've already dealt with Xu Jiang with a great deal of success we weren't anticipating. Should we take action against that Xu Jinlin then?”

Wu Shang looked up at Cheng Chaochuan, replying with his gravelly voice. “You are too impatient, sire. I only just took care of Xu Jiang, the house of Xu will most definitely be wary now. Do you

believe it be wise for us to take action now? Furthermore, what kind of person is this Xu Jinlin? He's a Soul King that wouldn't lose to you or I, how could a mere Soul Exalt like Xu Jiang compare to him? If we want to take care of him, we must be very careful with our next plan, or at least find a way that'll allow us to use Xu Jiang for it...."

"I know that, naturally, but..." Cheng Chaochuan looked worried for a moment, "I heard that Xu Jinlin has been trying to become a late-stage Soul King recently. If he succeeds, then the equilibrium between the Cheng and Xu will become imbalanced, and fighting him then would be hard. Even if the two of us were to band together, it'd be a little..."

But Wu Shang frowned, "Late-stage Soul King? Is advancing to the next stage so easy to do when said? That Xu Jinlin is hardly even eighty, breaking through to a mid-stage Soul King was already difficult for him. With his talent, becoming a late-stage Soul King is nothing more but a fool's wish! Pah, let him try to advance. If he fails, his strength will fall, and that will suit us just fine!"

Cheng Chaochuan casted Wu Shang a meaningful look. He himself had only just became a mid-stage Soul King, so he didn't know just how difficult it was to become a late-stage Soul King. It did however seem that Wu Shang had experienced this before from how he was speaking. Did he perhaps fail to become a late-stage Soul King before?

Despite never experiencing the difficulties of becoming a late-stage Soul King, Cheng Chaochuan had still been able to become a mid-stage Soul King. From that experience, he could infer just how difficult the next step would be. The advancements of a Soul King was different than any of the stages below. Using the 'bottleneck' metaphor wouldn't fit how Soul Kings and the higher levels grew in power. Not only was a great deal of strength needed, one also had to have luck, making advancement very difficult.

Cheng Chaochuan himself didn't want to try and become a late-stage Soul King for at least thirty years. If anything, he wouldn't even think it all too bad if he remained at a mid-stage Soul King for the rest of his life.

But even then, the world was not so kind to listen to him! That Xu Jinlin had rare talent, and his growth was unsettling to Cheng Chaochuan. In the case Xu Jinlin did breakthrough, that would really be a great deal of pain, and so he would have to hurry to deal a blow against the Xu for the sake of the Cheng.....

He had already 'taken care' of the heir apparent to the Xu, Xu Jiang, but today Cheng Chaochuan felt the need to hurry up and deal with the actual patriarch of the house, Xu Jinlin. If he could succeed in that, then....

"You needn't worry about Xu Jinlin for the time being. Wait until the 'situation' with Xu Jiang settles down first, then we can plan for how to take care of Xu Jinlin." Wu Shang glanced at him. "We should avoid a confrontation with the Xu for now."

Cheng Chaochuan nodded. "That is easy to be done. We the Cheng have lived like this for the last hundred years, waiting a short amount of time like this is nothing.

"Will you be resting here in the meanwhile then, brother Wu Shang?" He asked a moment after. "With the matter of Xu Jiang, the entire house of Xu will most definitely be searching the area, and the Tianhun School might get involved. If that's the case, then staying in the Capital might be dangerous."

Wu Shang nodded. "I used up a great deal of energy and must recuperate for the meanwhile. I will hide here for now. But in the meanwhile, I want your Cheng to do me a favor...."

"Oh?" Cheng Chaochuan quirked an eyebrow, "Please ask away, brother Wu Shang."

"I want you to investigate a person named Bai Yunfei. Compile

everything you know about him for me.”

“What?!” Cheng Chaochuan gasped, “You want to deal with Bai Yunfei?!”

Wu Shang glanced at him, “Will that be a problem?”

“No...no problem at all.” The stunned look disappeared in an instant to be replaced with a smile. “I will have my men investigate everything about Bai Yunfei as quickly as possible. We will wholeheartedly cooperate with you.”

He never thought that Wu Shang would actually want to deal with Bai Yunfei himself. That would be doing the Cheng a great favor in fact, so it was only natural that he agreed to help.

Wu Shang nodded, “Also, according to what I know, there’s been several people that came looking for Bai Yunfei. One of them is the young daughter of the patriarch of the house of Tang in the Forest Pass Province, and the other two are the daughters of the current headmaster and elder of the Crafting School. I want information on them as well. The more the better.”

Cheng Chaochuan’s pupils dilated, and he couldn’t help but gasp again.

Was he planning to take action against Tang Xinyun and the others too?!

There was no way he couldn’t feel stunned about that. This was an absolutely major action to take!

He wasn’t the only one stunned. There was someone else that was even more bewildered—the ‘eavesdropper’ Bai Yunfei standing right outside!

Chapter 666: Being Chased!

With how strong Bai Yunfei was, he didn't need to use his soulsense to eavesdrop on the conversation between Cheng Chaochuan and Wu Shang. His ears alone were perceptive enough to be able to hear anything within this silent part of the villa.

Bai Yunfei had been surprised enough when he heard of the names 'Xu Jiang' and 'Xu Jinlin'. Those two people belonged to the house of Xu, and the Left Minister was also from the Xu. It was the family of Xu Sihan.

This Cheng Chaochuan—or perhaps it was better to say the Cheng—was conspiring against the Xu!

Furthermore, Bai Yunfei heard them say that the eldest heir, Xu Jiang, had already been 'taken care' of!

Many people within the Capital were already aware of how the two Ministers of Left and Right didn't get along. It was also known that the two often fought with each other in secret, but Bai Yunfei just couldn't believe that the Cheng would even go as far to attack one of the major members of the Xu!

And their next target was the current head himself!

While hearing the names of those two was surprising enough, Bai Yunfei was sent into an even deeper level of shock from what two said next.

They had mentioned his own name!

From the person Bai Yunfei knew was 'Wu Shang', he found out Wu Shang was going to conspire against him as well!

If that wasn't enough, Tang Xinyun, Kou Tingting, and even Huangfu Rui were being targeted as well!

At this, Bai Yunfei couldn't hold his stasis anymore. His heart was beating rapidly, and his aura was now going into a frenzy!

And the moment his aura started to fluctuate wildly, Bai Yunfei realized his mistake. “Crap!”

“Tsk!!!”

Far too late to hide himself now, Bai Yunfei immediately began to feed soulforce into his feet to shoot into the skies!

“Boom!!”

A moment later, there was an explosion from where he used to be hiding. A fireball about twenty meters in size came flying out from the room from the right and impacted against the tree. Upon collision, the tree blew apart and the surrounding area was reduced to ash!

Bai Yunfei frowned at the amount of elemental fire fired at him. If he had been a moment too late, then Bai Yunfei would've had to block the attack, and that wouldn't have ended well for him, let alone allow him enough time to escape.

Not even caring in what direction he ran away towards, Bai Yunfei ascended to the skies a hundred meters up. His feet were flashing violet in light as he used the Flash Step to travel over a dozen meters each activation. His Tempest Sword was already out now, and stepping onto it, Bai Yunfei was able to fly even faster to blaze through the skies like a shooting star!

From when he fled the tree to when he was on his Tempest Sword, not even three seconds had passed!

An idea struck Bai Yunfei as he was fleeing from on top of the Tempest Sword. His right hand touched at the Charm Bracelet on his left wrist, allowing for a mirage-like light to glow, and then his soulforce dropped by a portion!

At the same time he was flying, a red and green light was flying out from the half-destroyed room from the right like bolts of lightning. Wu Shang was stepping into the air when he saw Bai Yunfei start to fly. Sneering, he took off with renewed speed after

him!

Cheng Chaochuan was slower than him by a step. When he saw the startled five young men peek their heads out from their rooms, he cried out to them “Stay in your rooms and don’t come out!”.

Then without further ado, he took off after the direction Bai Yunfei was traveling towards.

.....

In the night sky, a light green blur of light could be seen with a red and a dark green streak chasing after it.

Within the green light, Bai Yunfei’s eyes were flashing rapidly as he tried to think of what to do as he fled.

Chasing after him were two mid-stage Soul Kings. He would definitely die if the two caught up to him, no matter how powerful his options were!

Suddenly, Bai Yunfei forced his Tempest Sword to turn abruptly so that it’d fly to the right at once!

Just a hundred meters in the original direction Bai Yunfei was traveling in, a figure in red was stepping out from a distortion in space. He was slightly surprised to see Bai Yunfei turn direction, but he sneered and chased after him again.

Bai Yunfei looked a little more troubled after he changed direction, “Xiao Qi!”

“Chirp!”

There was a resounding chirp from Xiao Qi on his shoulder. Extending its wings wide and activating the Wind and Lightning Feathers, Xiao Qi revealed itself as a class seven soulbeast to fill the area around his wings with elemental wind and lightning.

Storing away the Tempest Sword, Bai Yunfei leapt onto the back of Xiao Qi.

As soon as he was safely secured on Xiao Qi’s back, Bai Yunfei

took off with speeds even greater than before!

.....

Xiao Qi wasn't as strong as Wu Shang or Cheng Chaochuan who were both mid-stage Soul Kings, but he was still a soulbeast capable of flying and had the advantage in this aspect. He could go even faster with the Wind and Lightning Feathers. Though Cheng Chaochuan and Wu Shang could teleport every so often, Xiao Qi would be able to change direction fast enough so that he and Bai Yunfei wouldn't be hard-stopped by either of the two.

The more they gave chase, the more Wu Shang and Cheng Chaochuan felt surprised about. They could tell just who they were chasing: a Soul Exalt and a class seven soulbeast. It was surprising enough neither of the two felt them when they were hiding, but it was even moreso that they weren't able to catch up with their strengths as mid-stage Soul Kings!

Cheng Chaochuan was prepared to use teleportation even to block off Bai Yunfei, but as he was preparing to do so, he came to a screeching halt. Whipping his head back, he looked off in a distance in their original direction in abject shock.

Almost two seconds later, indignant wrath flooded the eyes of Cheng Chaochuan. "Damn you!!" He roared out loud.

Seemingly no longer caring for Bai Yunfei, he took off to fly back in the direction where he came from without even warning Wu Shang.

Wu Shang on the other hand looked strangely at Cheng Chaochuan when he heard him curse out loud. Still curious as he watched him fly away, Wu Shang hesitated for a moment before deciding to chase after Bai Yunfei.

From up ahead, Bai Yunfei looked a little pleased when he heard the roar of Cheng Chaochuan, though he didn't look back. Instead, he patted Xiao Qi on the back of his neck and transmitted his

thoughts to him. Xiao Qi chirped once in response and then turned direction again to fly quickly in that direction.

“Hmph!!”

Anger filled Wu Shang’s eyes as he saw Xiao Qi try to fly away. Sneering, he increased the soulforce circulating through him to fly even faster after them.

With him going full speed, it didn’t take long for Wu Shang to catch up. The head-start Bai Yunfei had before was now all but gone now, and the distance between him and Wu Shang was almost non-existent. Wu Shang didn’t even have to teleport anymore, and it felt like within ten minutes, Bai Yunfei would definitely be overtaken by him.

At last, there was only fifty meters between Bai Yunfei and Wu Shang when the latter took action. Throwing his right hand out, chains seemingly made from fire flew out from his robes to fly at Xiao Qi and Bai Yunfei as if it was alive!

“You’ll stop here!!”

Chapter 667: To Battle

The chains were tiny, like the size of an infant's arm almost, but they were red all over and had a pointed rhombus-shaped tip at the very end of it. When Wu Shang swung out with it, his target had been the back of Bai Yunfei's head to hopefully spear through him with the chain traveling as fast as a fire dart.

When the chain was about ten meters away from the back of Bai Yunfei's head, Wu Shang saw Bai Yunfei turn his head and swing his right arm back to throw something!

“Whoosh!”

The Cataclysmic Seal came flying out, shining bright red as it struck against the chains.

It was with contempt that Wu Shang watched Bai Yunfei try to use his soul armament to stop his chains. Shaking his right arm slightly to send some soulforce into the chain, Wu Shang had his weapon coil and spin to allow for a ‘passageway’ in the middle of the chain to go through it. He'd allow for the weapon to enter the passageway before he narrowed the spiral and catch Bai Yunfei in it as well!

But. Would things really work out that way?

Of course not.

The moment the chains started to change in flight pattern, Bai Yunfei's eyes flashed once with light! His right hand—previously closed together after he tossed the Cataclysmic Seal—thrust open his fingers! As if the activation signal for something, the Cataclysmic Seal started to tremble before it exploded in size!

In no time at all, the Cataclysmic Seal went from being the size of a brick to being as tall as a wall!

“Clang!!”

There was a ringing sound as the tip of the chain struck against the enlarged Cataclysmic Seal. The tip bounced backwards, and then so did the rest of the chains behind it as the Cataclysmic Seal continued on its path!

“A heaven-tier soul armament!”

Wu Shang remarked in surprise. He jerked his right hand back to recall the chains to him. Traveling back into his sleeves, the chains began to shrink in size to become as tiny as his pinky so that the last segment of the chains could wrap around his arm.

It took some time for the extremely long chain of chains to shrink and coil around his arm, and Wu Shang came to a stop.

It wasn't as if he was giving up the chase, but that Bai Yunfei had stopped as well to turn to face him.

Unharméd due to his Cataclysmic Seal, Bai Yunfei faced Wu Shang with Xiao Qi. Leaping to the side, Bai Yunfei's hands flipped through several hand seals and immediately felt his soulforce start to increase in strength!

Dual Flame Arts: 'coil' form!

Dual Flame Arts: berserk mode!

He was entering his strongest mode for fighting! This meant....he had given up trying to flee and was prepared to fight!

The Cataclysmic Seal seemed to shrink away from sight as Bai Yunfei went into berserk mode. It flew around to Xiao Qi who gave a small chirp and flew to Bai Yunfei's head in a protective position.

.....

Wu Shang felt surprised by Bai Yunfei's actions. Was Bai Yunfei really trying not to run? Did he think he could fight against him?

“A power-enhancing soul skill?”

Wu Shang muttered as he witnessed Bai Yunfei increase in strength. But then his eyes flickered with the light of disdain—Bai

Yunfei was going to fight like that?

He was overestimating himself!

Hiding his sneer, Wu Shang didn't even bother to say anything to Bai Yunfei. He just needed to capture him and then slowly interrogate him for what he needed to know. Raising his left hand, Wu Shang swiped it through the air!

The temperature in the surrounding area increased by nearly half of what it used to be. Red light started to fill the air and area as more and more red light started to converge here. Elemental fire began to flicker into being, and soon enough, the entire place was engulfed in fire.

The changes in the area wasn't anything much compared to what was being changed above Bai Yunfei's head. After Wu Shang had swiped his hand, a 'cloud' of fire began to form over Bai Yunfei's head. Swirling in on itself as if to build up power, the cloud then took on the shape of a giant palm to smash down on him!

Eyes flying up to stare down the flaming palm, Bai Yunfei threw up his own right hand to have the Cataclysmic Seal fly up. Shining with light as bright as a miniature sun, the Cataclysmic Seal increased in size again to stop the giant palm!

At the same time, Bai Yunfei was feeding his soulforce to his feet to shoot forwards against Wu Shang. From behind, Xiao Qi flew in close pursuit.

“Bang!!!”

The flaming palm and Cataclysmic Seal slammed together. Wu Shang's eyes narrowed for a moment, the fingers on his left hand bending slightly as he increased his soulforce to increase the gravitational power of the palm!

In the next moment, the flaming palm smashed down even harder onto the Cataclysmic Seal!

The Cataclysmic Seal was unable to fully stop the flaming palm!

Bai Yunfei spared a quick glance at the situation of the brick before having it grow larger in size again. Its downwards descent slowed by a small amount, allowing Bai Yunfei enough time to escape from the radius of the palm and into the airspace right in front of Wu Shang!

Eyes still flashing coldly, Bai Yunfei called his Fire-tipped Spear to him. When it appeared, the Fire-tipped Spear soon split into three to attack at Wu Shang from three different angles!

Simultaneously, the Cataclysmic Seal behind Bai Yunfei shrunk in size and fell to the side, allowing for the flaming palm to smash fiercely into the ground without anything to resist it anymore.

Wu Shang hadn't the intention to even move from his spot to dodge Bai Yunfei's spears. Instead, he flew forward to meet the spear-wielding 'doppelgangers' and swung his right arm around to hit them all!

“Crash!!”

The faint clanking of his chains hitting against the three spears could be heard as Wu Shang used his chains to stop the spears advances!

Having timed it perfectly, Wu Shang had his chains continue onwards to Bai Yunfei to try and slam into him!

“Bang! Bang!”

The chain swung through the midriff of two of the doppelgangers, and with the blade-like properties the chains had with its swing, the two doppelgangers were immediately dispelled!!

After the two doppelgangers were destroyed, the crimson-red chain continued onwards with only a slight decrease in speed to attack the real Bai Yunfei!

“Bang!!”

There was another bang, but this time, the chain didn't cut apart Bai Yunfei. It slammed into the left part of his waist and tore at his robes to reveal the golden armor he wore underneath. Paling in the face from the blow, Bai Yunfei was forced to stop his spear just three inches away from Wu Shang's chest. He stumbled backwards and whirled away from the chain's path to retreat!

Because of the chain hitting Bai Yunfei in the waist, the forward half of the chains coiled around Bai Yunfei to wrap around him!

If Bai Yunfei were to let the chains fully wrap around him, escape would be extremely difficult, hence why Bai Yunfei had to bend his body as he retreated.

While Bai Yunfei was able to avoid being wrapped up before the chain could even make a half-circle, he wasn't fully safe from danger. At the same time as he was retreating, the tip of the chain took on a strange trajectory and coiled around to stab into his right leg!

Chapter 668: Difficulties

Blanching as the chain came at him again, Bai Yunfei twirled his Fire-tipped Spear downwards to stop the chain from hitting his leg.

“Hmph!”

A strange buzzing sound began to vibrate into his ears and through his mind the moment afterwards, causing Bai Yunfei to fall into a state of disarray!

A soul attack!

Bai Yunfei paled. The Soul Sentinel Scarf on his forehead was already transmitting its warm energy throughout his body to repel the soul attack. Moving his right hand, Bai Yunfei twirled the Fire-tipped Spear and blocked the tip of the chain, diverting it away from his leg.

Taking advantage of the miss, Bai Yunfei kicked off into the air to escape even farther away.

“Eh??”

An expression of surprise escaped from Wu Shang. He had felt the soul attack land on Bai Yunfei and be immediately rebuffed, surprising him. Before this, Wu Shang had already pegged Bai Yunfei as someone who over estimated himself and didn't really think of Bai Yunfei as being a threat. A Soul Exalt was nothing more but an ant, no matter how much they tried to power themselves up. To kill them was easy, and Wu Shang threw out his Flaming Palm Press, soul attack, and chain as a casual way of attacking since he figured that'd be enough to kill Bai Yunfei. But somehow, Bai Yunfei was still alive.

Still, this wasn't too unexpected of an occurrence. Wu Shang could tell that Bai Yunfei was relying on the bird soulbeast to escape. And now that he caught up, there wasn't a chance Bai

Yunfei could flee. Even if Bai Yunfei had something special up his sleeves, it was futile in the face of true power.

Sending some more soulforce into his weapon, Wu Shang had the now thick-as-bones chain start to twine around Bai Yunfei again.

“Chirp!!”

There was a loud chirp from the skies above, causing Wu Shang to frown in shock. Abandoning his attack on Bai Yunfei, he quickly flew backwards.

Three separate blades of darkness dropped down from the skies not even a moment too soon on where he used to be.

“A spatial tear!!!”

Wu Shang cried out in his disbelief. He looked back up at Xiao Qi with renewed shock, unable to believe his eyes.

“This is a space-type soulbeast?!”

From what he observed from Xiao Qi, Wu Shang took him to be a wind and lightning-type soulbeast. The fact that Xiao Qi was capable of using space-related attacks was extremely astonishing. The space element was extremely rare to see, and a class seven soulbeast capable of that element was even more so. There wouldn't be a single person that wouldn't be surprised.

In the beginning Wu Shang hadn't even considered Xiao Qi to be a problem. But now that he knew of this particular ability, he had no choice but to treat the bird as a threat. Space-type attacks were merciless and couldn't be blocked. Though he was stronger than Xiao Qi, he couldn't treat the bird lightly anymore.

“No wonder he's so brazen if he has a special soulbeast like this. He's not a Soul King, but he has a class seven soulbeast. What kind of person is this....”

Wu Shang hadn't been in the Capital for long, and even then, most of his time spent in the Capital was spent in training. He

didn't come out from isolation often before the Cheng invited him to the Capital for help. That was why he only knew Bai Yunfei from his name and reputation and couldn't recognize the fact that this person was actually one of his targets.

.....

On the other side, Bai Yunfei had finally managed to disentangle himself from the chains and moved himself a hundred meters away. Coming to a stop now, he glared at Wu Shang.

“Damn, so attacking up close won't work!”

Bai Yunfei grumbled to himself. After this exchange, he knew close combat was all but impossible—he was no match for Wu Shang this way! The chains Wu Shang wielded were far more powerful than he expected, and under the control of a mid-stage Soul King, Bai Yunfei was completely unable to properly defend himself from it!

He was already in berserk mode, meaning he was as strong as he could possibly be. Whether it be his strength, speed, or perception, bai Yunfei was still unable to even contend with an early-stage Soul King. So in the face of a mid-stage Soul King, Bai Yunfei was powerless.

If he couldn't take the advantage by taking the initiative....Bai Yunfei would have to be on the defense and hope for the 'right' timing, wouldn't he?

Battles where Bai Yunfei was weaker than his enemies wasn't a very uncommon sight. By using the effects of his equipment and timing the effects to activate at the right time, Bai Yunfei was normally able to either equalize or win the fight.

But right now....that situation couldn't be applied here!!

He could maintain berserk mode for twenty minutes at most. But since he still wasn't fully healed from his wounds from Baishan City, Bai Yunfei was under a great deal of pain in the berserk mode.

Every action he took felt like he was being stabbed again and again. And even with his strength, enduring all this pain was making fighting in the berserk mode very difficult. Furthermore, if he were to persist in this mode, the backlash afterwards would be extremely unbearable, and how would he fight against his opponent then?

So his options were to beat his opponent within twenty minutes or run away!

But both these options were as doable as scaling the heavens....

If Bai Yunfei were to think about how to turn the tide, then he had several opportunities available to him:

Use the Soul Sentinel Scarf's to rebound soul attacks.

Use Yun's Soul Ring to ignore any single spirit-related attack.

Use the Fire-tipped Spear to ignore any elemental defense.

Use Xiao Qi's attacks to catch the Soul King off guard.

Combine the Dual Dragon Burst and the Charm Bracelet's pseudo soul attack together.....

He had plenty of 'opportunities' to choose from, but those were easier said than done. If by chance he failed, there probably wouldn't be a chance to recover from it....

"I can't be too pessimistic. I managed to survive the battle in Baishan City, I've it 'better' than before. If I go all out, I should be able to hold it out until the right moment. And this time....I have 'that' to help me. If I do it right, I should be able to turn the tables!"

Watching as Xiao Qi weaved about and around as Wu Shang tried to beat him back with his chain, Bai Yunfei narrowed his eyes. Storing away the Fire-tipped Spear, he raised his right hand and aimed his palm at Wu Shang. Gathering his soulforce to his palm, the Ardent Sun Glove he wore began to light up as he activated the

+10 additional effect. A fireball about twenty meters wide formulated in his palm before shooting outwards like a bullet!

After the first one was shot, the Ardent Sun Glove fired off a second and third fireball right afterwards!

A flicker of shock crossed Wu Shang's eyes when he saw the three fireballs come at him. Rather than parry the fireballs, Wu Shang instead flew higher in the skies.

His raise fifty meters higher into the sky wasn't too hurried. Dodging the fireballs without an issue, Wu Shang looked back to Bai Yunfei just in time to see Bai Yunfei point his middle and index finger at him and bend his fingers up!

The fireballs flying underneath Wu Shang at this moment changed directions in accordance to Bai Yunfei's fingers to chase Wu Shang upwards!

At the same time, Xiao Qi's entire body glowed red before he flapped his wings and sent down a hailstorm of fire!

“Boom!!”

A series of explosions rocked the world as the three fireballs and the rainstorm of fire covered Wu Shang's person and the entire area in a sea of fire.

Bai Yunfei didn't look happy, however. He knew this wouldn't be nearly enough to even hurt Wu Shang. He wouldn't let a 'chance' like this go though. Arms extending outwards to have them in front of his chest, Bai Yunfei began to flip through several hand seals—now was the time for the Dual Dragon Burst!

At the same time, Bai Yunfei was telling Xiao Qi to get ready to use the spatial edge.

But, just as he was about to attack....

“Whoosh!!!”

From the ocean of flames, a crimson-red chain of chains flew

forth to come striking down Bai Yunfei in almost no time at all!!

Chapter 669: "Devouring" Chains!

The speed in which the chains were coming at Bai Yunfei was beyond fast. Before Bai Yunfei could finish even the third hand seal, the tip of the chain was already right in front of him!

Blanching, Bai Yunfei gave up activating the Dual Dragon Burst to have the Cataclysmic Seal come forward to block the chain. It hummed slightly before the barrier activated and protected Bai Yunfei from within.

“Clang!!”

The barrier trembled as the tip of the chain stabbed onto its surface. Vibrating and humming with a metallic echo, the barrier then....

“Crack!!”

Then Bai Yunfei watched with a furiously beating heart as the barrier protecting him was penetrated by the chain!!

The fragments of the barrier was dropping around Bai Yunfei as the chain continued onwards, albeit slightly slower than before. Winding around like a lively snake, the chain seemed to make one final push to try and stab Bai Yunfei through the throat!

Fortunately for Bai Yunfei and unfortunately for Wu Shang, the barrier Bai Yunfei had around him gave enough time for Bai Yunfei to make the next move. Flinging his arm up, Bai Yunfei had his bracer deflect the chain tip.

“Boom!!”

There was another clang and a flurry of sparks as the tip of the chain struck against the Flameblade Bracer and bounced off.

This bone-chilling attack had been very easily dissolved, allowing Bai Yunfei to sigh in relief. Kicking back, Bai Yunfei moved away to safety.

But this time, danger was quickly approaching him again!

“Whoosh!”

Just as Bai Yunfei was thinking he was safe from the chains, he heard the chains start to shake and clank again before it suddenly came back at him again to coil around his right arm!

“Crap!!!” Bai Yunfei cursed to himself. He hadn’t thought that the chain would be able to do anything after he deflected it, but it was still capable of pulling off an attack like this!

The ability to control the chains to move so fluidly like this was capable only because of the large amount of soulforce being fed into the chain. When the barrier broke and Bai Yunfei deflected the chain with his Flameblade Bracer, Bai Yunfei assumed that this would’ve been enough to exhaust the soulforce running through the chain. If Wu Shang wanted to keep using the chain as a weapon, he’d have to pull the chain back and refill it with soulforce before he tossed it out again. He’d at the very least have to fill the tip with soulforce so that he could control that part of the chain.

But the situation unfolding in front of Bai Yunfei wasn’t going as he thought it was....this meant that the soulforce Wu Shang put into his chain was far more than Bai Yunfei initially thought!

Or perhaps there was another way to offload some soulforce into the chain!

.....

Bai Yunfei was surprised. He had been planning on attacking Wu Shang again before the chain came at him again. As fast as he was, the chains were faster than he was, so in no time at all Bai Yunfei’s entire right arm was looped four or five times around with the chain!

There was a whooshing sound as the chains tightened around his arm, squeezing it with a considerable amount of force and turning

the cloth of his robes around his arm to cindered ash!

It wrapped only around his forearm where his Flameblade Bracer, so it didn't hurt Bai Yunfei too much when the chains constricted around his arm. It was only that the fact that Bai Yunfei stumbled forward a bit when it constricted. Managing to stabilize himself, Bai Yunfei pulled his right arm back and bent his arm so that he could resist the force acting on him through the chain.

He could only hold onto this equilibrium for a moment before the next change suddenly took place!

The chains that used to be as crimson as flames almost immediately extinguished its lights, plunging the chains from red to jet-black. And at the same time, the chains went from feeling extremely hot to be extremely cold!

In a single moment, the change in the chains started to take on a new effect and shined with a jet-black light!

Feeling the change taking place, Bai Yunfei's eyes widened in shock. Rather than being shocked about the external changes taking place, he was....

The moment when the chains turned dark black, a sinisterly dark light starting to shine from the center of the chain into his arm. And then....the soulforce in his body began to drain out!

The chains around his arm was draining his soulforce!

An equally sinister aura was starting to emanate from the sea of flames. The flames quickly drew apart and retreated from the center before elemental fire reignited in the area to illuminate the figure of Wu Shang.

Wu Shang didn't look at all injured when the elemental fire died back down. When he raised his right hand, the other end of the chain was held in it. His expression couldn't be seen too clearly, but a foggy aura clung around to his body.

Before, it was elemental fire that Wu Shang was releasing from his body. But right now, it was dark and foreboding....this was elemental darkness!!

The moment Bai Yunfei felt his soulforce leave his body, Bai Yunfei's heart froze for a moment.

“This sensation....the Soul Refining School?!”

The very first thing he thought of when he felt his soulforce being drained was the Soul Refining School. Was this person someone from the Soul Refining School?!

Something was different this time though. The previous few soul cultivators he fought before drained his soulforce only when they had physical contact with him. In this case, Bai Yunfei was in fact losing his soulforce, but it was seemingly because of the chain...

Thinking about it for a moment or two, Bai Yunfei's eyes latched onto the jet-black chain and grabbed onto it with his right hand so he could check the stats.

Equipment Grade: Low Heaven

Elemental Affinity: Fire, Darkness

Attack: 2800

Equipment Effect: Drain up to 10 soulpoints per second of any constricted target (One at the most). (Amount is determinant on the difference in strength between user and target).

Amount of soulforce drained cannot exceed total soulforce reserve.

Upgrade Requirement: 180 Soulpoints

Bai Yunfei couldn't help but let out a gasp when he saw the stats of the chains fly through his head. “An equipment that can drain soulforce!”

There was actually an equipment that could absorb and drain someone's soulforce!

This meant....the reason his soulforce was being drained was due to the equipment effect of the chain and not because of some secret

art from the Soul Refining School? Did this mean this person wasn't from the Soul Refining School then?

Debating with himself for a moment, Bai Yunfei quickly came to a decision, "No!! This type of draining is...far too much for only 10 soulpoints to be drained!"

The quantification of soulforce was something Bai Yunfei could easily say he was an expert of. He could tell just how much soulforce was leaving his body, and 10 soulpoints was far too little a sum for how much was leaving his body now! If he had to guess, at least 20 points of soulforce was being drained away!

This was a result two times bigger than what the equipment effect pointed out!

Chapter 670: Break!

To put it simply, Wu Shang was also using another method with the chains as the ‘medium’ to absorb Bai Yunfei’s soulforce!

“Does this mean....he still might just be someone from the Soul Refining School?”

Bai Yunfei’s eyes narrowed as the idea came back to his mind. This man might really be a soul refiner.

After all, he had never heard of anyone that wasn’t from the Soul Refining School being able to absorb someone else’s soulforce.

This was a secret only the Soul Refining School knew.

Furthermore, it felt as though everyone that was in the Soul Refining School was a soul cultivator with two affinities. Aside from one of the more commonly seen elements, they had also darkness as their secondary—Wu Shang was fitting the same examples right in front of him.

“Again the Soul Refining School! They’re absolutely everywhere—just how large are they?!”

His conjecture on Wu Shang’s identity was startling to Bai Yunfei. Now wasn’t the time for him to be thinking about what kind of machinations the Soul Refining School was up to now, however. Now that he knew the stats and general information of the chain, Bai Yunfei had to think about what to do now.

The very first thing to do was to disentangle the chains around his right arm.

Not even ten seconds from when the chains first touched Bai Yunfei to when Bai Yunfei figured out the stats of it had passed. Though it was a short amount of time, Bai Yunfei had already lost almost three hundred points of soulforce!! It wasn’t a relatively very large number in his case, but losing soulforce like this would gradually build up. And even more importantly....it’d make an

extended battle even harder!

So he couldn't let the chain stay close to him any longer. If Wu Shang were to try and attack him now, Bai Yunfei wouldn't be able to dodge it!

Bai Yunfei's right arm shook so as to try and dislodge the chains around his forearm off. Unfortunately for him, a low-heaven tier soul armament like these chains wouldn't be so easily thrown off. No matter which way he shook his right arm, the chains shook with him like a snake to stay on. In the end, the chains only wrapped around his arm even more so that the four coils that had previously been around his bracer was now multiple crings reaching to his shoulder!!

The unbelievably sharp tip of the chain was moving fluidly with a sheen of black light to stab into Bai Yunfei's shoulder!

Alarmed, Bai Yunfei brought his left arm up to block the tip from hitting him!

“Xiao Qi!!”

He didn't need to call out to Xiao Qi however, as the bird was already flying on over with a furious trill. Wu Shang's attack onto Bai Yunfei with the chains had ruined Xiao Qi's original plan, causing the bird to briefly pause for two seconds before growing angry at seeing Bai Yunfei get attacked. Wings flashing green, nearly a hundred blades of wind were thrown out at the emerging figure of Wu Shang. Unfortunately, all Wu Shang had to do was raise his left hand and block all of the blades of wind coming his way. Several of the blades of wind aimed at the chains had only smashed onto the links in a myriad of sparks, but the chains remained intact!

Xiao Qi already knew regular attacks were useless before Bai Yunfei had called out to him. Still furious, Xiao Qi began to materialize five different Spatial Edges in front of them. They formed into five long blades of absolute nothing before sailing

towards Wu Shang and his chain!

This time, Wu Shang looked at the attacks coming at him with a solemn expression. He had been on guard against Xiao Qi ever since he found out about his affinity for space. As the Spatial Edges approached, Wu Shang pushed off with his left foot to easily dodge the attacks!

“Damn! Xiao Qi, again!!”

Bai Yunfei cried out to the bird while trying to retreat himself—when Wu Shang dodged the Spatial Edges, he took off into the direction Bai Yunfei was in!

There was slack in between the chains now that Wu Shang was rushing for Bai Yunfei. Now with some freedom to move, Bai Yunfei started to run back as well. Needless to say, Wu Shang being close to Bai Yunfei would only be dangerous for him, but because of the strange motions of the chains, he was well on the way to becoming as wrapped up as a present.

The more Wu Shang drew close to Bai Yunfei, the more the chains in Wu Shang’s hand began to shrink. That also meant that the distance between Bai Yunfei and him was shrinking! With him being faster than Bai Yunfei, Wu Shang had confidence that he’d be able to easily defeat Bai Yunfei when the time came.

In truth, Wu Shang had actually many methods of killing Bai Yunfei from far away. The only thing preventing him from using those methods was him wanting to interrogate Bai Yunfei before he killed him.

But when he was within fifty meters of Bai Yunfei, Xiao Qi made his second attempt. The first volley of Spatial Edges failed, but with another circulation of his soulforce, Xiao Qi materialized another five blades to attack Wu Shang with them!

Not even caring for the effort it took to materialize five Spatial Edges at the same time, Xiao Qi had the five go straight for the

midway between Bai Yunfei and Wu Shang!

If Wu Shang continued forward, he'd be hit by the Spatial Edges. If he retreated, then the chains would be hit by the Spatial edges instead!

“Hmph!!”

A mocking sneer appeared on Wu Shang's face rather than indecisive concern. Coming to a stop, Wu Shang swung his right arm towards the right. By doing this, the chains in his hand clanked around for a bit before extending the number of chains between him and Bai Yunfei by a certain amount and forcing Bai Yunfei to fly towards the right!

The chains in the middle lengthened in size while also arcing to the right to swing Bai Yunfei.

And in the end, the Spatial Edges failed to hit their targets!

Because of the effort it took to create the second volley of Spatial Edges, Xiao Qi's strength took a sharp dip while also preventing him from doing anything else in response to Wu Shang's action.

Casting a quick glance to the bird, Wu Shang smirked before continuing his rush at Bai Yunfei. It was then that he realized there was a humming sensation coming from his chains....

Raising an eyebrow, Wu Shang looked sixty meters in front of him where Bai Yunfei was violently yanking at the chains, causing a parabolic motion to transmit horizontally across the chains. Because of the increase in slack and him being swung to the side, Bai Yunfei had a good ten meter segment of the chain to work with.

Wu Shang's face whitened a moment later when he saw Bai Yunfei pull out his Fire-tipped Spear and thrust it into the segment of the chain he had manipulated into coming closer to him!

“Clink....”

The clear sound of collision could be heard when the spear touched onto the chain. It was a long, but single sound, and although Wu Shang heard what seemed like a single blow, there was actually eighty-one attacks in that one spear thrust!

This was...the Eighty-one Fold Stab!!

“Boom!!”

A tremendous explosion rocked the world as dazzling flames shot forth from the midpoint between spear and chain. Within the explosion and flames, a faint cracking sound could be heard....

Bai Yunfei could be seen leaping away shortly afterwards. In his right hand was a dozen-meter long segment of the chains!

“Pcht....”

A moment after the explosion effect of the Fire-tipped Spear activated and broke the chain, Wu Shang felt his face whiten again and his mouth drip with blood!

For once since this battle begun, Wu Shang felt a strong amount of fear and disbelieving shock.....

“How....how did my Devouring Chains break?!!”

Chapter 671: Damage to the Armament, Damage to the Soul!

Wu Shang's Devouring Chains were of extremely strong make. He didn't know just how strong it was, but several attempts to see how strong it was before had him concluding that it was close to being a mid-heaven tier soul armament. Heaven-tier soul armaments like this one wouldn't break even if another one of the same tier were to hit it. But....a mid-heaven tier soul armament would!!

“Is that spear....a mid-heaven tier!!” The man stared at Bai Yunfei in shock. “No—he destroyed my Devouring Chains with little difficulty, that means....it's a high-heaven tier!!”

A high-heaven tier soul armament!

Wu Shang could hardly believe his own mind.

A high-heaven tier! Was there even fifty of those known to exist on the continent, and each of them already in the hands of a supreme existence? Soul armaments of that high of a grade were the treasure of any few sects that owned them! Wu Shang found it preposterous that someone who wasn't even a Soul King yet would own a high-heaven tier soul armament.

Wiping his mouth with his hand, Wu Shang looked down at the blood. Staring blankly at it for a second, his eyes soon began to shine with joy and 'greed'!

To a mid-stage Soul King, a high-heaven tier soul armament was an irresistible prize to be won!

“I might have lost some energy when the Devouring Chains broke, but it'll be fine when I go back and let 'him' heal. But this spear....I want it!” Wu Shang's eyes flashed avariciously. “Aside from that spear, there's still a few other soul armaments of strange make on him. That strange block soul armament that could block

the Devouring Chains, that armor he's wearing, the bracer on his arm, and even his glove....all of those soul armaments are unordinary! They might even be....heaven-tier soul armaments!!”

“Wearing heaven-tier soul armaments all over....” Counting each article of soul armament Bai Yunfei was wearing, Wu Shang felt a feeling of pleasure like none other before in the last hundred years almost. This was a bounty of the utmost proportions—he had only three heaven tier soul armaments himself, and he was a mid-stage Soul King!

So coming across Bai Yunfei with so many heaven-tier soul armaments felt like Wu Shang had come across a free meat pie sent to him by the heavens. If he could take these soul armaments, then....

“Hold on!!”

A sudden thought brought Wu Shang to a sobering start. “He's very strong despite his young age. A fire-type soul cultivator as well. More importantly, for someone to get so many powerful soul armaments like this, this person has to be....

“The Crafting School! Zi Jin's newest disciple, Bai Yunfei!!

“That has to be it! It all makes sense if this is him! He has to be Bai Yunfei!”

Wu Shang had finally realized who he was fighting!

.....

The thoughts flew through Wu Shang's mind quickly. By the time he had figured out who Bai Yunfei was, the broken half of his chains was already speeding back into his sleeves.

Though now that he had a good look at the half-melted ruined part of his chains, Wu Shang looked furious. Glaring at Bai Yunfei, he gave him a healthy dose of killing intent!

Now that he knew who Bai Yunfei was, he didn't even need to

interrogate him. Wu Shang could simply....just kill him!

But when he looked up at Bai Yunfei, Wu Shang's pupils dilated rapidly, and the killing intent he had in them immediately turned into shock.

“Bastard—what are you doing?! Stop!!” He cried out in discomposured anger.

At his last word, Wu Shang lashed out with a soul attack!

The soul attack struck against Bai Yunfei, who wobbled slightly under its influence, but it ultimately failed to stop Bai Yunfei. His actions continued onwards, and the only thing Wu Shang could do was watch as Bai Yunfei brought his right hand down onto the segment of the chain in his left hand still!!

“Pcht!!”

Flustered for a moment, Wu Shang was unable to stop Bai Yunfei and once again had blood spill from his paled face!!

.....

Just ten seconds ago.

Bai Yunfei hadn't hesitated to retreat as soon as he broke the chains with the Eighty-one Fold Stab. Still holding onto a segment of the chains with his left hand, Bai Yunfei flew backwards with at least ten meters of chain unwrapped from his right arm.

Something had inadvertently caught his eyes when he looked at the chains, causing him to stare in confusion.

At the end of the chain—where it had been severed—there seemed to be something....shining red.....

It wasn't the molten metal that'd normally be caused by the explosion, for this was red. Was this....blood?!

There was blood within the chains?!

Confusion ran rampant through Bai Yunfei's mind for a split

second before he came to a realization. Flicking his head towards Wu Shang, Bai Yunfei took notice of the trail of blood spilling from his mouth!

He felt then that Wu Shang's soulforce was slightly weaker now as well, and that was when it all made sense to him. "Damage done when the armament is damaged.....this is a soulbound armament!"

The state Wu Shang was in was a textbook example of what would happen when a soulbound armament was damaged—this is what happened when the soul was harmed!

What is known as 'soul compatibility' is a measure that any soul cultivator and soul armament would have. Soulbound armaments, as known to everyone in the know, were soul armaments that had a soul compatibility of 50% or higher. Aside from Soul Kings, it was generally accepted that only those from the Crafting School would have a soulbound armament (some exceptions may apply). But when one became a Soul King, soulbound armaments were no longer a rare thing.

The nomenclature that are soulbound armaments are something understood by many to be the result of an extremely enigmatic relationship between soul cultivator and soul armament. Once one becomes a Soul King, their understandings about what a 'soul' is increases many times over. From there, they can freely 'force' any one of their soul armaments to be branded with an imprint of their soul. Over time, this brand can be reinforced to 'reforge' the soul armament into a soulbound armament. But this was a method that was many times more troublesome than the method the Crafting School knew.

Soul armaments that could endure this strain of being branded and reforge were only heaven-tier soul armaments, however.

Soulbound armaments are very particular things. When the relationship between a soul armament and a soul cultivator reached a particular point, a sliver of the soul cultivator would enter the

soulbound armament (similar to having the soul armament recognize its 'master'). This way, the soulbound armament would be able to create feats of strength beyond what it would normally be capable of. Correspondingly, this relationship between the soul cultivator and soul armament meant that should a soulbound armament be injured, it'd cause harm to the soul cultivator.

When a soulbound armament was damaged, the soul was too!!

The amount of damage to the soul was dependent on how large of a compatibility there was between the two. It wouldn't be lethal, but it also wouldn't be light either. When damage was done, the soul cultivator would be very clearly affected by it.

A good example would be what was going on in front of him. Wu Shang's soulbound armament—the Devouring Chains—was heavily damaged, and Wu Shang's soulforce was noticeably lower than before.

It was an instantaneous judgement on what caused this, but Bai Yunfei's eyes widened when his mind caught up to the realization!

Soul armaments and soulbound armaments are something only the Crafting School would probably have a great deal of knowledge about. And in this moment as he held a segment of the Devouring Chains in his hands, Bai Yunfei was sure that there was still a sliver of Wu Shang's soul inside of it. The reason why the tip of this chain could move so fluidly as if it was alive was because of the soul imprint on it and was thus probably the most important part of it.....

Without Wu Shang being able to control this segment of the chain, the part Bai Yunfei was holding would most likely lose the soul imprint it had on it with given time. But if Bai Yunfei were to forcibly remove the imprint.....then it would do a great deal of damage! Furthermore, Wu Shang couldn't recall this part of the soul armament back since this 'segment' was no longer part of the soulbound armament!

Forcibly scrubbing the soul imprint within the damaged Devouring Chains was well within Bai Yunfei's current abilities.

Putting away the Fire-tipped Spear, Bai Yunfei pushed his soulforce to his hands and then forcibly transmitted a large amount of it into the Devouring Chains.

There was a furious howl from Wu Shang as he caught onto what Bai Yunfei was trying to do. He felt a surge of pain assault his head as Wu Shang's soul attack hit him head on. Nearly fainting from the pain, Bai Yunfei was able to make a comeback due to the Soul Sentinel Scarf. Blinking, Bai Yunfei raised his right hand and immediately slammed it against the chain!!

Chapter 672: Forced Back Step by Step

Wu Shang hadn't even finished fully unleashing his soul attack when he felt his own soul be attacked, prompting him to spit out a mouthful of blood!

Meanwhile, Bai Yunfei was just snapping his head out from the pain of the soul attack. Wu Shang's attack hadn't done too much damage for Bai Yunfei to quickly snap out of. Without a break in his step, Bai Yunfei raised both of his hands in front of his chest and began to go through a series of complicated hand seals!

Weakened by what Bai Yunfei did, Wu Shang looked a little dejected almost from his ordeals. Feelings of shock and even indignation swam through his mind as he thought about the wounds inflicted onto him.

How could he not be angry?

Spurring his soulforce into healing the damage done to his soul, Wu Shang's body began to blaze with intensified killing intent. He just needed a few seconds at most to heal from this, and then he'd completely destroy Bai Yunfei to make him pay for what he had done!!

But why would Bai Yunfei allow Wu Shang the few seconds he needed to heal?

“Chirp!!”

Wu Shang blanched at the sound, his head snapping towards the direction of the chirp!

Xiao Qi was using a soul attack!!

As a class seven soulbeast, Xiao Qi now had a new powerful technique in his arsenal. Taking advantage of the injured state of Wu Shang, Xiao Qi launched with his own soul attack. Though Wu Shang was stronger than Xiao Qi, his weakened state would still reel from Xiao Qi's attack!

It took an additional second for Wu Shang to fully neutralize the soul attack and regain enough of his cognitive functions to respond to his surroundings. When he lifted his head again, his eyes widened in shock—eight separate Spatial Edges were already nearly upon his head!!

“Tch!!”

Wu Shang clicked his tongue. Before he could even regain his usage of soulforce, he twisted his right leg into another direction and scurried forward.

That’s right—Wu Shang had ‘scuttled’ forward! He was actually being forced to scuttle!

He fled ten meters forward as the Spatial Edges just barely graze the back of his spine. Parts of his robes that had fluttered in the wind were eaten up by the Spatial Edges, leaving behind nothing but sweaty flesh and a nearly traumatized Wu Shang.....

Before he could even finish reacting to that, Wu Shang felt an indomitable amount of soulforce start to gather right in front of him!

Heart skipping a beat, Wu Shang tilted his head up to look at the now flame-enveloped figure of Bai Yunfei. His right hands were clenched tightly by his side, and a terrifying amount of elemental fire was gathering around him to coil around his arms!

This was a soul skill! A soul skill that was powerful enough to threaten the life of even him!

Even at a glance, Wu Shang was thoroughly filled with fearful emotions. Once again urging his soulforce to help him, Wu Shang fled backwards while trying to attack Bai Yunfei with his soul attack to hopefully cancel out Bai Yunfei’s ultimate move.

But....with how Bai Yunfei had been taking advantage after advantage against him earlier, this time was no different!

“Chyiah!!!”

Bai Yunfei roared abruptly. It wasn't very loud in the audible sense, but it echoed through Wu Shang's mind very clearly like a sharp sword to stab into his soul. Freezing as it reverberated throughout his body, Wu Shang's soulforce began to slow down!

This was the pseudo soul attack from Bai Yunfei's Charm Bracelet!

Practically the moment after he cried out with this attack, Bai Yunfei's arms punched outwards!

Berserk mode: Dual Dragon Burst!!

Two dragons materialized out into the world in a burst of fire. Intertwining around each other so that one another seemed to touch each other almost, the two Dragons flew with terrifying speed and power!

By the time Wu Shang was back to semi-decent clarity, the two dragons were already about to devour him!

It was too late for him to even try to dodge!

"Damn!!!" Wu Shang howled to himself with wide-open eyes. Abandoning the idea to dodge, Wu Shang's eyes flickered dangerously as his hands went through several quick hand seals!

"Bang!!"

Fire exploded out from Wu Shang's body as soon as his hands landed on the last seal. Forming a giant whirlpool all around him, the flames circled first around Wu Shang before spreading outwards.

But a second before the whirlpool formed, the two flaming dragons had converged into the center of the whirlpool onto Wu Shang!

The Dual Dragon Burst had hit their target!

Like how a misstep led to stumbling, Wu Shang was being forced back again and again in increasing intensity starting with his

soulbound armament being damaged. Bai Yunfei's actions had been completely unpredictable and beyond his imagination. In that one moment of negligence, Wu Shang ended up being forced into a situation where he had to endure the Dual Dragon Burst!

“Boom!!!!”

There was an ear-deafening explosion as a shockwave exploded outwards for nearly a kilometer in radius. As if a miniature sun had appeared out of nowhere, the entire evening sky was illuminated by light.

The Dual Dragon Burst exploded with terrifying turbulence where Wu Shang was. With how devastating and tremendous the area of effect was, it was for certain that Wu Shang wouldn't be able to dodge this without being able to instantaneously teleport!

For several hundred meters in radius, the area was washed in a sea of flames and stifled with scorching heat. Even Bai Yunfei and Xiao Qi had to retreat a few hundred meters away so they could stare anxiously at the heart of it.

Because of how powerful the Dual Dragon Burst was and how chaotic the elemental fire was being, peering into the area with soulsense was impossible, and Bai Yunfei couldn't even hope to guess how it was going with his naked eye.

“Did it work? It has to, please...”

Bai Yunfei's face looked a little haggard. His reserves was noticeably depleted and his breathing was rough. A faint red light was still flickering around his body as if trying to replenish the amount of soulforce he had just used up.

At last, the painfully 'long' ten seconds had passed. The aftermath of the Dual Dragon Burst was starting to fade, and Bai Yunfei could finally start to make out a few things.

“It....worked?! He's definitely pretty injured!”

Bai Yunfei whooped internally in delight. He could sense with the

sea of flames that Wu Shang's aura was weaker by over half of what it was before! His aura was flickering as if unsteady, meaning he was seriously hurt!

“This is great!! In this case, I can...”

Bai Yunfei was thinking to himself in delight when his thoughts came to a pause. Eyes widening, Bai Yunfei saw something that caused his joy to turn into shock!

The flaming whirlpool that had been around Wu Shang had all of a sudden....stopped!

For some strange reason, the flames had all froze where they were!

A second later, Wu Shang's aura exploded dramatically before the whirlpool started to move again, but this time in the inverse direction!

Even more shockingly, Bai Yunfei could see two pillars of flame rise up from the center of the whirlpool as Wu Shang's aura increased. The whirlpool began to reduce in size as if being drawn into the pillars. Rising into the sky, the pillars began to twist around one another before turning into two flaming dragons to head towards Bai Yunfei!

Incredibly fast like lightning, they closed the distance quickly enough to be right on him!

This was.....the Dual Dragon Burst?!

Chapter 673: Replicating Flames

Whether it was how the dragons roared or how they moved, these two dragons looked....exactly like the Dual Dragon Burst!!

Exactly like the two Bai Yunfei had just thrown at Wu Shang!

When it seemed as though everything was coming to a finish, the flames around Wu Shang turned back into two giant dragons to fly back towards Bai Yunfei!

“What....what in the—!!”

Bai Yunfei was planning to use the Dual Dragon Burst as the opening move to give Xiao Qi the opportunity to attack again with the Spatial Edge. Then, he figured he could use the +13 additional effect of the Fire-tipped Spear to attack as well. But before he could even do any of that, the situation took out an extremely unpredictable turn of events.

He was actually being attacked by the Dual Dragon Burst?!

Could Wu Shang use the Dual Dragon Burst as well?!

But....how was that even possible? The Dual Dragon Burst wasn't any ordinary trump card. It was the ultimate trump card that not even a fire-type Soul King would be able to learn. This was something someone from the Crafting School created and had subsequently refined for a thousand years before the move found its second user in Bai Yunfei. Bai Yunfei simply couldn't believe that this was possible!!

Trying to snap himself out of his stupor, Bai Yunfei stared briefly at the dragons coming at him. There was something to it that caught his eye. “Ah! It's not a real Dual Dragon Burst!”

Using elemental fire to construct two giant dragons made of fire was a feat possible for those talented in the path of elemental fire, but the power behind the dragons would be less than that of the Dual Dragon Burst. The Dual Dragon Burst required a special way

of melding soulforce and elemental fire together with a special frequency in order to achieve an astronomically high amount of power.

Within the Dual Dragon Burst was an aspect that no other technique would be able replicate.....and that aspect was the way the two dragons of elemental fire spiralled and interacted with each other! This was the quintessence of the technique!

The two flaming dragons coming at him might've looked like the Dual Dragon Burst in terms of appearance, but something was different if one took a closer look. There was a difference in the frequency of the elemental fire!

Which meant that in essence, the very nature of these two flaming dragons were incomparably different to the actual Dual Dragon Burst.

But still.....that didn't mean the power behind this imitation was negligible either!

In the end, this was still an attack that a mid-stage Soul King pulled out with all his might! If Bai Yunfei was hit with that, he'd be seriously hurt!

.....

Slightly reassured now that he knew it wasn't the actual Dual Dragon Burst coming at him, Bai Yunfei still felt the hair-raising pressure coming at him and rushed back without a second thought. The Cataclysmic Seal came flying up in front of him to defend against the attack.

“Hmph!!”

A sneer came ringing out at that moment—reaching Bai Yunfei even faster than the two flaming dragons did, a powerful attack slammed into Bai Yunfei's mind and attacked at his soul!!

A soul attack!

Bai Yunfei's face went deathly white. Coming to a stop due to the immense amount of pain, Bai managed to fight off the pain just enough to bring his right arm back. The Cataclysmic Seal, which had paused briefly when Bai Yunfei was struck by the soul attack, glowed orange in light before enveloping him in a sphere of energy.

And in the next second, the two dragons landed onto it!

“Boom!!!”

Like when Bai Yunfei's Dual Dragon Burst hit Wu Shang, there was another loud explosion and surge of elemental fire into the surrounding area. Only this time, it was Bai Yunfei that was in the middle of this chaotic outflux of elemental fire.

.....

Standing several hundred meters away at the edge of the sea of flames, Wu Shang stood slightly stooped at the waist. His face was pale, his breathing labored, and his eyes were looking a little unsettled.

“How dangerous—I would've been heavily hurt if I didn't respond fast enough. This is preposterous. He is only a mere Soul Exalt, but he can unleash a powerful soul skill like that. I've never heard of the Crafting School having an art like that. Wouldn't even the greatest arts of the Fire School lose out to something like this?”

He was surprised to feel that half of his soulforce was more or less gone. He had been pushed to an astonishing degree in such a few rounds. And to make things worse, he lost the majority of his soulforce in an instant. If he hadn't though, Bai Yunfei's attack would've most likely dealt a near-fatal blow on him.....

His hands had been going through a series of complicated hand seals as the Dual Dragon Burst came for him. At the same time, his body was exporting a great amount of elemental fire. On the eve of the Dual Dragon Burst hitting him, he materialized a tsunami of

fire to swallow up the dragons. He wasn't trying to forcibly scatter the Dual Dragon Burst; he was trying to assimilate it into his own attack and control it!

This was a mid-heaven tier soul skill: Replicating Flames!!

It was a soul skill he had taken off the body of an unbelievably strong person who had died in their training. It became the strongest skill in his arsenal as soon as he learned it, and even now, it wasn't perfect and was being closely researched and trained in still.

As its name implied, what it could do was....replicate the soul skills of another person!

'An eye for an eye', and a 'tooth for a tooth'. That was what this soul skill symbolized. By itself, the soul skill wasn't anything special. But when it came into contact with another soul skill, then.....not only did it stop the soul skill, it'd fire back at the offender with a near-identical version of it!!

Of course, the soul skill couldn't replicate soul skills of a higher level than itself and could only replicate fire-type soul skills.

"He really is Bai Yunfei. His strength is even more preposterous as people say it is. This is a terrifying talent with a bottomless amount of potential. No wonder the young headmaster wants to eliminate him sooner than later...."

There was a look of delight in Wu Shang's eyes when he saw how troubled Bai Yunfei was in the maelstrom of fire. Urging his soulforce into action, he prepared to rush Bai Yunfei to re-engage him in battle.

"Chirp!!"

Suddenly, the furious cry of Xiao Qi came down onto him along with a soul attack.

"Pah! You reckless brat!!" Wu Shang snarled before retaliating with his own soul attack. He blocked Xiao Qi's attack and swung

his right hand. There was a clanking sound as the remaining segment of his chains came out to strike down Xiao Qi!!

Having been prepared to use the Spatial Edge, Xiao Qi was caught off guard by Wu Shang's attack and was struck in the abdomen. With a pained cry, Xiao Qi came tumbling down from the skies!

“Eh?”

Wu Shang uttered in surprise after Xiao Qi was dealt with. Turning his head, he saw the churning maelstrom of fire up ahead start to flicker as if on the verge of collapsing. At the center, Bai Yunfei's aura had suddenly spiked again as if becoming even stronger. From his actions, it seemed as if Bai Yunfei was about to make his escape from the maelstrom.

“Quit your death throes!”

Wu Shang wanted to scream, the killing intent in his eyes increasing in intensity. Both of his hands began to go through a series of hand seals for another technique!

“To have forced me to expend so much soulforce and use two heaven tier soul skills to kill you—you should feel proud in your death!”

A few seconds later, Wu Shang pointed his right hand out to point at Bai Yunfei!

“Boom!!”

A ten meter thick pillar of fire exploded out from the ground where he pointed at to pierce straight into the middle of the maelstrom where Bai Yunfei was!

Author Note:

The reason behind this long battle is because of the importance in plot progression and it being a pivotal point in Bai Yunfei's strength development. For readers that believe this fight to be taking forever, please bear with me.

I've been beset with a very problematic situation as of late, and I've been feeling very uneasy about it since then. This in turn has affected the quality and frequency of my chapters, and I do apologize greatly for that. While I cannot say much, I can however say that life is filled with countless moments of helplessness. I can only hope that my life will get back on track soon....

No matter what difficulties or troubles that might occur, I will not give up on this book. I have everyone's support and company after all!

Chapter 674: Death Throes?

The pillar of fire that erupted from the ground wasn't made from ordinary fire, but....lava!!

By calling upon the powers of the earth, Wu Shang was able to summon lava from the very depths of the world—this was a heaven-tier soul skill!

Like a magmatic sword, the pillar of fire speared straight through the fiery maelstrom in the air and into the clouds. Any neighbor cloud was immediately evaporated upon contact. The advent of gravity soon caused the pillar of lava to fall back down to the earth, sprinkling down like rain. With how vast of an area the sprinkles covered, it didn't take long before the entire forest was turned into a sea of fire!

Wu Shang watched the pillar of lava spear through Bai Yunfei's position with a satisfied smile on his face. He could barely sense the chaotic—but weakening—aura of Bai Yunfei and was slightly impressed that Bai Yunfei was even able to endure for so long. He was still sure that Bai Yunfei's barrier would soon collapse, and his life would be extinguished.

“Chirp!!”

Another trill from behind caused Wu Shang to turn a frosty eye towards the source, “You're noisy!!”

He sent another powerful soul attack at Xiao Qi while also blocking the one sent at him. Evading the Spatial Edges sent at him, he whipped his left hand upwards to send a flame blade towards Xiao Qi!

With how injured he was, Xiao Qi's soul attack was no match for Wu Shang. And with how the Spatial Edges took a good amount of soulforce from him, Xiao Qi was barely able to defend himself from the blade of fire sent at him with his wings.

“Boom!!”

This time the Wind and Lightning Feathers protected Xiao Qi from the brunt of the attack. The blade of fire exploded and sent Xiao Qi tumbling to the ground!

With Xiao Qi temporarily out of the battle, Wu Shang didn't care to pay attention to him. Killing Xiao Qi wouldn't do, since he wanted him alive to give to the Beast Taming School later. A class seven soulbeast with a space affinity—even if contracted—was a prize the Beast Taming School would gladly pay a large sum for.

But first he had to make sure that Bai Yunfei was dead before he took Xiao Qi and left. They were a decent ways away from the Capital, but such a commotion near their borders would surely catch the eyes of the many Soul Kings there. If any of them decided to come over and check, then there'd be a great deal of trouble.

The moment he turned to look at where Bai Yunfei was, his eyebrows suddenly perked upwards in surprise. Somehow, Bai Yunfei's soulforce had spiked yet again while still protecting himself within the maelstrom of fire and lava!!

Wu Shang narrowed his eyes to look closely and think about the situation. “A meaningless struggle. Even if you sacrifice your essence fireseed, you'll only have strength for one short moment. You are like the final rays of light the sun brings, you cannot escape death!!”

.....

What Bai Yunfei was doing right now could actually be said to be similar to being the final rays of the sun!

The Cataclysmic Seal's barrier was the only thing protecting Bai Yunfei when the 'Fake Dual Dragon Burst' from Wu Shang's 'Replicating Flames' hit. Given only a short time to breathe, Bai Yunfei was now backed into a corner.

He had never thought that he'd be hit with the Dual Dragon

Burst—even if it wasn't the true version of it....

Countless waves of elemental fire pulsed and lashed out with destructive force against his barrier. It destroyed everything else within the area they covered, and even the earthen barrier around him was starting to 'melt'. He had already poured all his soulforce into the barrier, but Bai Yunfei knew the barrier wouldn't be able to hold on for much longer.

In a short few seconds, Bai Yunfei's soulforce had already depleted by two-thirds! In light of that, Bai Yunfei would most likely succumb to the Fake Dual Dragon Burst!

"Damn!" Bai Yunfei gritted his teeth in frustration. Calling upon the stockpiled soulforce in the Violet Soul Ring, he managed to send some more soulforce into his barrier to hopefully reinforce it long enough to make it through this ordeal.

A pained cry from Xiao Qi made its way to his ears during this time. At the same time, he felt Xiao Qi's aura drop drastically.

"Xiao Qi!!" Bai Yunfei cried out to himself, but before he could do anything, the area beneath his feet rumbled dangerously!

A moment after, the pillar of fire completely enveloped him and the barrier!

At first stuck in the middle of a maelstrom of fire, there was now a pillar of lava on him!

"Bang!!"

There was a popping sound as the earthen barrier suddenly collapsed!

Countless streams of elemental fire immediately covered Bai Yunfei!

.....

All Bai Yunfei could see around him was red. Like being submerged in water, Bai Yunfei felt it hard to move with his arms

and legs having some sort of force moving against them.

The elemental fire was trying to devour away at his body, but the essence fireseed within Bai Yunfei's body was exporting a large amount of elemental fire itself to serve as a layer of protection just two centimeters over his skin to prevent the elemental fire to get across.

Unfortunately for him, the elemental fire only grew stronger the more it tried, and soon, Bai Yunfei could feel some parts of his final protection start to give.

“So....in the end I couldn't beat a mid-stage Soul King after all? Ironic that someone like me who depended on soul armaments and chance was finally beaten with ease by a person with two soul skills.....”

“Is this how I die then? Dying like how some of my enemies died before, being burned to cinders....”

“In the end, I was still too weak!! If I was only just a little stronger. Just a little stronger....”

“I.....I don't want to die!”

Despair was settling in on Bai Yunfei's face now. But it seemed that he was really on the verge of death!

He was already in berserk mode, which was his strongest state, there was no more powerups from here!

He could hear Xiao Qi's faint chirps, and through their soul bond, Bai Yunfei could feel Xiao Qi's aura weaken again as if struck by another attack. He could feel the many emotions Xiao Qi was feeling—anger, shock, panic, and concern—Xiao Qi was trying with all his might to continue fighting, fighting as if he'd die if he stopped.

“Xiao Qi....”

Bai Yunfei wanted to say something to him through their bond,

but already Bai Yunfei's mind was starting to fade. He couldn't do it.

“What a joke! How can I die here? I won't die—I still have so many things I haven't done yet. I can't die, I won't die!!”

Clamping down on his tongue strong enough to draw blood, Bai Yunfei snapped his eyes open with renewed life.

Circulating the remaining soulforce in his body, Bai Yunfei began to think of a plan only a desperate madman would do—if he couldn't block it, he'd absorb it!!

“Bang!” There was a light cracking sound as the final protection Bai Yunfei had disappeared, allowing for the seemingly endless amount of elemental fire to devour at his body!!

His clothes were the first to go. They burned to ashes and then to nothingness a moment later. Now without any obstruction, the elemental fire began to enter Bai Yunfei's body!

From all over, Bai Yunfei was beset with elemental fire. Every single inch of Bai Yunfei's body seemed as if it was being burned....No—every single cell in his body felt like it had been doused with gas and was starting to burn his body from the inside out!

“Ahhhh!!!!”

A pain-filled cry erupted from Bai Yunfei's mouth before stopping almost straight away when the elemental fire came pouring into his body through his mouth!

Bai Yunfei's entire body felt numb with how fast and hard the pain was hitting him. It felt like he wasn't in control of his own body anymore. Cracks were starting to form all over his skin, and fire was starting to seep through, though it didn't seem Bai Yunfei had even noticed that yet...

His clarity came back to him the moment when he felt an influx of elemental fire start to pour into his body. It started to destroy

everything in its path as it traveled to his origin acupoint; the seemingly last barrier of resistance left in Bai Yunfei's body.

But with the berserk mode meaning both his essence fireseeds were at their strongest, the two fireseeds were trying their best to break apart this flow of elemental fire and absorb it. Bai Yunfei's origin acupoint was like a bottomless hole with his body constantly taking in the elemental fire to be absorbed, hence why his body was able to handle it so far.

But there was just far too much elemental fire to absorb. It was a futile attempt to even try, but Bai Yunfei had decided to do so. After a while, Bai Yunfei felt like his heart was starting to bulge a bit and the pain of his organs being burned was starting to reach his heart.

The feeling 'death' was getting closer and closer. Bai Yunfei could already feel his soul start to melt away and his own lifeforce start to drip. Parts of his body was starting to fail, and it felt like any second now, he'd be blown apart and the rest of his body burned to cinders.....

“Pa....”

From within Bai Yunfei's body, he heard something seemingly shatter. It wasn't his body, but his.....essence fireseed!

“Ahhhh!!!!”

Erupting again with a cry of agony, both of Bai Yunfei's eyes began to shine with a furious beam of light. As if given the signal to be renewed in life, his body began to spike in energy!

It was said those that were about to die would have one final spurt of strength like the final rays of sunlight before the sun set. Was....Bai Yunfei going through such a phase like that?!

Chapter 675: Breakthrough! Experiencing the Soul King Realm!

A brilliant gleam of light erupted from within the maelstrom of elemental fire and the pillar of lava. The light coming from this third source was different than from the previous two, as the flames were slightly violet in light. Exploding into view, this third flame turned into a whirlpool of its own to encompass every single other source of elemental fire!!

There was a tremendous amount of soulforce radiating from the center of the whirlpool before the already tremendous soulforce skyrocketed even higher!

This explosion of power was continuing to increase in level. From a peak late-stage Soul Exalt to a....Soul King!

.....

Wu Shang's eyes perked upwards in surprise at what was happening within the center of the maelstrom. The escalation of soulforce within the maelstrom was causing him to look on in shock.

“No!! This isn't sacrificing his essence fireseed, and neither is this his final death throes. This is....a breakthrough!!”

He could hardly believe his eyes or even what he was sensing. Bai Yunfei—who was on the verge of death—was going to make a breakthrough rather than die?!

Wu Shang couldn't believe such a preposterous event was happening!

.....

But that was exactly it!

Bai Yunfei's situation wasn't as bad as it was before. He was no longer on the verge of dying. His strength was making a comeback

with him 'breaking through'!

The fireseed essence within his origin acupoint had indeed 'shattered' when it absorbed more than it could take in. But....rather than disappearing, it had instead formed a completely new fireseed!

Like a cicada undergoing metamorphosis, Bai Yunfei now had a new lease on life!

This was completely unpredictable to both him and Wu Shang. Neither of the two predicted that such a thing would happen!

The reason behind this special situation was all in due to the 'special situation' Bai Yunfei was in!

His soul, body, and origin essence had all been injured back in Baishan City, especially the two fireseeds. Using the Dual Dragon Burst and his strongest Berserk Mode when in 'fusion' form brought Bai Yunfei to new unbelievable levels. At that time, Bai Yunfei was essentially at his limit, and it was fortunate that Wu Dijian stopped him when he did, otherwise Bai Yunfei would've suffered even more damage than he already did.

Bai Yunfei had noticed the peculiar state his two fireseeds were in, but he decided not to think about it much in favor to try and heal his body. The two fireseeds during that time got to familiarize themselves with each other more, though Bai Yunfei never imagined that at the moment when his body was again at its 'weakest', the two fireseeds would help him break the bottleneck!

When Bai Yunfei was in this moment of peril with the elemental fire all around him, he made the last-ditch effort to try and absorb it all. This act had inadvertently fulfilled one of the special requirements for the two fireseeds!

Limits had their own 'classifications' to speak of. When reaching the limits of a level, there were definitely those who weren't able to overcome the challenge and succumb to it. But there was also

the chance that someone would overcome this challenge and survive to reach a new realm.

The breakthrough!!

Bai Yunfei had two fireseeds, meaning he had double the tolerance, unmatched talent in harmonizing the Dual Dragon Burst, and a determination stronger than most. Along with the many strengthening and healing-capable upgraded equipment, Bai Yunfei was able to profit from the danger he was in and ‘borrow’ the boundless amount of elemental fire to metamorphose into a new stronger being!

After the Soul Exalt level was the Soul King realm!

.....

Within the flames, Bai Yunfei stared at the large amounts of elemental fire dance around his body in surprise. He felt as snug and cozy as ever within this warm heat and could feel the wounds in his body start to heal quickly. It was like there was a gentle warm breeze blowing onto him. If before his body was a dried up barren wasteland, then right now that same wasteland was being transformed into a fertile grassland filled with life.

Bai Yunfei still wasn’t absolutely sure of what was going on, but he was sure of one thing—he wasn’t dead and he had broken the limits. He had become....stronger!

“I broke through? This....” He clenched his right hand to feel the raw power course through it. “This is the Soul King realm? This is really it?! The Berserk Mode could take me into the Soul King realm?!”

Indeed, Bai Yunfei wasn’t exactly a true Soul King just yet. By conjunction with the Berserk Mode and the Dual Flame Arts, Bai Yunfei was able to ‘temporarily’ reach the Soul King realm. His actual strength was still at the Soul Exalt level, and at best, he was a peak late-stage Soul Exalt. With the Berserk Mode he was of

course....able to breakthrough the barrier usually known to many as being normally impossible to become a Soul King!

As he was looking on in shock, Bai Yunfei suddenly realized something and jerked his head up. Raising his right hand, the Ardent Sun Glove in that hand exploded with light before a fireball about twenty meters large flew out of it to hit a fifty meter long blade of fire coming at him!

“Boom!!!!”

The two fiery objects collided with one another to transform into a deadly rain of fire. A figure in black came out from the fires, his entire person shrouded with black energy. The black energy coiled around his right hand before materializing into a giant sickle to slash downwards onto Bai Yunfei!

.....

Wu Shang was beyond shocked. What he was looking at right now defied every bit of logic he was aware of. He knew....that he had to kill Bai Yunfei at once! He couldn't delay any longer!

For once in this battle, he felt 'threatened'! 'Fear' was starting to appear in his mind!

The unknown was something any single person would fear. And right now, Wu Shang was absolutely 'terrified' at this!

He had a prediction: If he didn't kill Bai Yunfei today, then the situation would spiral out of his control and endanger his life!

The black ephemeral sickle he had in his hand wasn't made of ordinary elemental energy. This was an attack that left the body untouched. What it actually harmed was....the soul!!

This was a physical soul attack!!

.....

Bai Yunfei's eyes widened when he saw the sickle attack come down onto him. Just from looking at it, his body felt a great deal of

foreboding!

This was a soul attack!

As fast as lightning, Bai Yunfei thought up of that observation. He didn't know why, but he could just 'tell' this was a soul attack!

At the same time, he was now aware of something he had never been aware of before....

It was hard to even describe it, but it felt as if his eyesight was being split into two different modes. One was the normal vision, the other had no world, no mountains, no forests, and no Wu Shang even. There was only a body of hazy 'mist' that felt extremely strange.

“Is this...a soul?!”

Bai Yunfei realized right away what it was. What he was looking at was Wu Shang's soul!

By the point he realized that, the tremendous black sickle was already about to drop onto Bai Yunfei's head!

Chapter 676: The Killing Blow

As the dark sickle dropped down towards his head, Bai Yunfei raised his right hand to point a finger at Wu Shang!

A soul attack!

He didn't use the Charm Bracelet this time. This soul attack was powered purely by his abilities as a Soul King to launch a true soul attack!

He could see something akin to a flow of water spread out from his finger to instantly spread towards Wu Shang. From there, he saw the 'mist' that was Wu Shang's soul start to churn. The dark sickle Wu Shang was attacking with flickered for a moment as if on the verge of collapsing!

Using the Flash Step to move away, Bai Yunfei zipped back in retreat to dodge the giant attack—he wouldn't dare try to block this attack!

“Damn!! How can his soul attack be this powerful!!” Wu Shang cursed to himself. The dark sickle was gone now, but with a shake of his hand again, Wu Shang sent the Devouring Chains in his sleeves to go after Bai Yunfei.

He sneered when he saw Bai Yunfei try to run away. With his left hand, he swiped out at the space towards Bai Yunfei!

Another soul attack!

Bai Yunfei blanched. From his 'special vision' he could see a series of transparent 'claws' come flying out from Wu Shang to seemingly grab hold of his own soul!

Lifting his left hand up, Bai Yunfei was prepared to try and block against this attack when all of a sudden, he felt the Soul Sentinel Scarf on his head start to pulsate strangely!

In the next moment, the soul attack from Wu Shang seemingly

came crashing into an invisible wall. It paused there for a second before going into the opposite direction of which it came from!!

This was....the +10 additional effect of the Soul Sentinel Scarf!!

30% chance to completely deflect a spirit-based attack.

Cooldown of 10 minutes.

A 30% activation rate combined with the doubling effect of the Luck Pendant (double the chance of an equipment or additional effect triggering) meant that this was now a 60% chance of activating! It hadn't activated the past few times, but it was finally doing so now!

“Now's my chance!!” Bai Yunfei's eyes lit up. He took out the Fire-tipped Spear without hesitation and dove at Wu Shang!

Wu Shang's face had gone white the moment he used his soul attack. His eyes widened in fear as his aura suddenly dropped drastically! As if hurt by something, Wu Shang stumbled backwards. Even the Devouring Chains lost half their brightness and speed.

Being hurt by his own soul attack was something new to Wu Shang. As soon as he was hit by it, he froze, unsure of what to do or think.

Eyes glistening with opportunity, Bai Yunfei rushed past Wu Shang's chains to deliver a stunning thrust of his spear at Wu Shang's chest!!

Having been lost in his own thoughts, Wu Shang had nearly allowed himself to be speared through by the Fire-tipped Spear. He drew back in panic, his feet moving one after another to beat a hasty retreat!

His reaction speed was fast, as expected from a Soul King. Even under a state like this, he was still able to dodge a fatal blow like that!

Bai Yunfei had thought that Wu Shang would use his elemental energy to try and block the spear and preemptively activated the +13 additional effect of the spear. But since Wu Shang fled backwards rather than activate a shield, Bai Yunfei lost half his soulforce for nothing!

Because of the sudden loss of half his soulforce, Bai Yunfei wasn't fast enough to do a follow up on his attack. Eyes filled with anguish at this lost opportunity, Bai Yunfei waved his left hand out with a violent vigor!

This wasn't an attack with soulforce, elemental fire, or even a command for his Cataclysmic Seal to attack. What he was doing was sending soulforce to the black ring on his hand. At the farthest reach his left hand could get, all Bai Yunfei could see was a bright flash of white light before a gigantic white figure pounced towards Wu Shang!

“Roar!!!”

There was an ear-deafening roar when the figure appeared. A chilling aura descended upon the place and immediately dropped the temperatures down from roasting hot to a gentle warm.

This was the....permafrost mastiff!!

At last Bai Yunfei had decided to unleash one of his strongest weapons to help him fight!

.....

In this current moment, Wu Shang was alarmed. He hadn't finished rousing himself from the soul attack yet when this white streak of light came at him. The fear he felt was elevated to new levels, and as he brought his right hand up to try and protect himself, there was a tremendous roar that reverberated through his head and shook his soul even.

A soul attack from the permafrost mastiff!

“Whoosh!!!”

Nearly faster than he could respond, the white streak of light that was the permafrost mastiff streaked towards Wu Shang!

The jaws of the mastiff could clearly be seen when it was only a good ten meters away from Wu Shang. Its jaws clamped down onto Wu Shang's arm, the one with the chains coiled around it!

“Pcht....”

There was a splurt of blood from Wu Shang's arm as the mastiff's jaw clamped down. As the blood drained from his shoulder, Wu Shang stared at the spot in disbelief.

His entire right arm had been ripped off by the mastiff!!

“Ah!!!!”

A second later, Wu Shang let loose an agonized scream!

His left hand came up to grab at his right shoulder to try and staunch the blood while also staring at the permafrost mastiff. His face was twitching violently from both shock and pain, “A soulbeast puppet! This is a soulbeast puppet!! How....are you from the Beast Taming School!? How is this possible?!”

He had been so sure that this person in front of him was Bai Yunfei. But now that he was using a soulbeast puppet to fight, Wu Shang was no longer sure. He was so certain that only beast tamers would use such soulbeasts to fight. It was almost common sense, so....was he wrong about this person being Bai Yunfei?!

As shocked as he was, he was still fully capable of rational thought. Re-evaluating the situation, Wu Shang had only one option left. He had to run!!

He hadn't thought that he'd be brought to such a desperate state like this in this battle. His right arm was gone and his soulforce was all but depleted. He himself was injured and fighting against an early-stage Soul King and two class seven soulbeasts. If this fight continued, the only end result left for him would be death!

As unwilling as he was to flee, Wu Shang really had no other choice but to accept the reality of the situation. He had lost this battle. He needed to escape if he wanted to live!

The remaining soulforce he had in his body wasn't going to his right shoulder to heal his wounds, but to his feet so he could ascend to the skies!

A hundred meters was ascended within an instant before Wu Shang came to a stop to run back towards the direction of the Cheng's villa.

But how would Bai Yunfei let him escape like that? The usage of the permafrost mastiff had been extremely effective, and now it was finally time for him to counter attack—he'd settle this battle once in for all!

“Roar!!”

The permafrost mastiff roared again before unleashing a soul attack onto Wu Shang. At the same time, a burst of elemental ice streaked out to strike down Wu Shang!

“Chirp!!”

There was a chirp from the right as an injured Xiao Qi came flying back up to follow up with a soul attack of his own! And at the same time, another five Spatial Edges came up to attack him!

“Die!!”

Bai Yunfei's eyes narrowed dangerously. His left hand came up to point at Wu Shang—not only was he attacking with a soul skill, he was using his Charm Bracelet embolstered with the Soul Sentinel Scarf's additional effect to deal the final blow onto Wu Shang!

Even for a mid-stage Soul King, there was no way he'd be able to withstand three simultaneous soul attacks!!

His entire body came to a stop as if he had turned into a statue in midair!

“You’re a beast tamer....from the Beast Taming School! How can you kill me! How can you kill me!!!”

Wu Shang roared in fury and in despair, but the only response he got was a resounding explosion!

“Boom!!!!”

The elemental ice attack from the mastiff collided with the elemental fire Wu Shang put out, creating a bright explosion of red and white.

Simultaneously, the five Spatial Edges went straight through the center of the explosion of colors....

Chapter 677: Tragedy at the Manor

This time, the five Spatial Edges sliced straight through the explosion of white and red light without much trouble.

And by the time it came out the other side of the explosion, Wu Shang's aura was nowhere to be felt!!

Several pieces of flesh fell down from the skies where Wu Shang used to be. Dropping into the sea of flames down below, they were immediately brought to cinders.

“Phew....”

At last Bai Yunfei sighed. The enemy was well and truly dead now, and the tired Bai Yunfei could relax for once.

“Finally....I managed to live....” Bai Yunfei wiped the sweat off his forehead. “I really thought I was going to die back there, how dangerous....”

“My enemy this time was a Soul King, my luck really isn't all that great....” Bai Yunfei lamented, his finger touching at the Luck Pendant on his chest. “Your ‘luck’ doesn't really seem to work in cases like this....”

He clenched his fists tightly, “But....I was able to gain such a huge boost in strength after this. That's some great ‘luck’ in itself. Desperation really is the easiest way for a person to surpass their limits. It feels like every time I breakthrough it was because of a situation like this....”

“But if I had a choice....I wouldn't want to always be in situations like this! In the case that I fail just once, I won't have a life to fall back on....”

He sighed. Looking around himself with a wistful smile, Bai Yunfei tried to cheer himself up. “Is this what being a Soul King feels like? It's a strange feeling, like if I really am someone strong....this feels far different than to what a Soul Exalt feels

like....”

He wasn't stuck in his fantasy-like state for long, however. The elemental fire around his body gave a violent shiver before it was forcibly drawn back into his body. Simultaneously, Bai Yunfei's face paled as an unstoppable force forced his aura to drop intensively!

In a matter of moments, the powerful feeling Bai Yunfei had before was all but gone. He had fallen from essentially the heavens to revert back to a Soul Exalt. Staggering back like a drunkard in a drunken stupor, Bai Yunfei nearly fell down from the skies from his abrupt change in feeling.

“Huf....huff....huff....”

He gasped heavily, taking in deep heavy breaths to try and quell the flushed colors on his face. He looked as if he had just emerged from a very long dip under water. After a good ten or so breathing cycles, he managed to tilt his head high enough to look at Xiao Qi, “Xiao Qi, look around the place. Then we go home....”

He turned his head to look further away, “From the elder's reaction, something must've happened back there. I wonder if it went as smoothly as I thought....but no matter. Even if Qiu Bailu fails, I won't be harmed. And if there's any survivors, I'll think of something later....”

.....

A little while before after Bai Yunfei and the other two Soul Kings left the Cheng property.

It was only after Cheng Chaochuan and Wu Shang left the place to give chase after Bai Yunfei that Cheng Xin and the others timidly poked their heads out from their room. Watching as the three streaks of light disappeared beyond the horizon, they all looked then at each other with a hint of fear.

“Whe...lord Xin, what was your second grandfather doing here?”

And who was he chasing after? Didn't it look like that person was hiding just outside our room?!"

Li Chen asked Cheng Xin.

But he shrugged his shoulders in response, "How should I know?? My grandfather hasn't come back to this place ever since that one time. They weren't here when we first got here, were they? Soul Kings can go wherever they want, do you really think we can predict where they go?? I don't even know where they were before, let alone just who they're chasing."

"What kind of battle happens between Soul Kings? We shouldn't stay here and guess, I....I think we should leave, this place isn't safe. Right??" The relatively more cowardly Zhu Yizhi proposed.

Ruminating on the idea, Cheng Xin nodded his head. "That works, this place is already being used as a place to receive more secretive guests for my second grandfather. I don't think we should come back here for now. Let's....return to the Capital. We can meet again in another place next time."

Just as they were planning to leave this place....

"Boom!!"

There was a loud explosion that rocked the earth underneath Cheng Xin and the other four. Out of nowhere, a powerful aura revealed itself in the area to come rushing over to them!

The guards around the villa sprung to action at once to whatever intrusion was happening. But as soon as they drew close to the source, they were blown to the side one by one. Crying as they were smashed away, the guards were powerless to stop this intrusion to get close to Cheng Xin and the others!

"What's going on?!"

Startled, Cheng Xin and the others began to send out their soulsense in an attempt to see who it was. But before they could even do so, the doors to their room were blown apart to allow a

person to come in!

Amidst the sand and dust that kicked up into the area, this figure in red came to a stop into the room.

“Who—who are you?!”

Someone cried out from within the room. Everyone was backed as far away as they could away from this person in a defensive formation.

“Eh? Isn’t....isn’t this Qiu Bailu?!” Peng Guanghua cried out, “You! What are you doing here? Aren’t you—”

“Watch out!!”

Before he could even finish his sentence, Li Chen and Cheng Xin from the side cried out in warning. There was a streak of red light before a flaming fist blew past them with great vigor....

“Bang!!!”

There was a muffled explosion as if something exploded. Red and white matter exploded everywhere, splattering the wall behind with its color....

“Plop....” Peng Guanghua collapsed to the ground, his arms and legs spasming slightly. But his head....was gone!!

The lightning-quick movement of Qiu Bailu had been done to smash his fist through Peng Guanghua’s head!

Peng Guanghua was only an early-stage Soul Exalt while Qiu Bailu was a late-stage Soul Exalt. He had no chance of dodging, let alone coming out of this alive!

Cheng Xin and the others watched in stunned silence as Peng Guanghua’s body gave its final spasms. Qiu Bailu brought his bloody fist back to turn his eyes at the other four. At his glance, the other four jumped a bit before scattering in every way possible.

Zhu Yizhi was the first to start crying out.

“Ahhh!!! Ahhhh!!!! Guards! Guards!! Save me!!!”

Unfortunately for him, all of the remaining guards were elsewhere due to the earlier privacy they were giving the five for their ‘meeting’. The ones who did come here fast enough had already been completely defeated by Qiu Bailu when he first stormed in!

There were no emotions in Qiu Bailu’s eyes. Almost like a bloodthirsty animal, a guttural growl escaped from his lips as he stared down the noisiest one first, Zhu Yizhi. Straightening the fingers on his right hand, he lashed down with his right hand at him!

A stream of red light flew out from his hand, cutting apart the ground and table in between him and Zhu Yizhi several dozen meters away!

“Save me! Save meee!! Sa—!”

“Pcht....”

Due to his flustered state of being, Zhu Yizhi hadn’t thought that he—being the ‘farthest’ target away from Qiu Bailu—would be the first one to be chased down. By extension, he hadn’t thought to dodge and was ultimately cut into two by the flying streak of red light from Qiu Bailu!

There was still no emotion in Qiu Bailu’s face after he killed this second person. Kicking off the ground, he went after yet another person to the left.

This time, his target was Cheng Xin!

Chapter 678: Alleviating the Final Headache

Luckily for Cheng Xin who was a mid-stage Soul Exalt, he was not as terrified as his other companions and was quick to react to Qiu Bailu's maddened rush. Only sparing a moment to widen his eyes, Cheng Xin whirled to face the man and brought out a golden longsword to send a wave of soulforce at the killer!

“Whoosh!!”

A golden energy wave flew out from the sword with great power to attack Qiu Bailu. Without even caring to see if it landed or not, Cheng Xin turned direction and leapt out the window.

It took only a moment for Qiu Bailu to reflexively dodge the blow. Heading for the right, he aimed another sword swing.

But this was a failure as well. Cheng Xin was already too far away. As it so happened, Zeng Fei was now the closest one to him!

Qiu Bailu turned on him without any further consideration. Stalking for Zeng Fei with an outstretched hand, he lashed out to grab at Zeng Fei's throat! Like a savage beast, all Qiu Bailu cared about was landing his prey!

“Ah!!! Get away from me!!” Zeng Fei shrieked. He had been relieved to see Qiu Bailu go after Cheng Xin first and was planning his escape, but then when Qiu Bailu turned his attention onto him, Zeng Fei was terrified. Bursting with soulforce, Zeng Fei tried to emulate what Cheng Xin did to beat Qiu Bailu back. Unfortunately for him, he was far too weak and lacked a good soul armament, so Qiu Bailu caught up to him in a flash!

“Ah—...” The terrorized scream from Zeng Fei came to an abrupt stop. He hadn't the chance to dodge and was powerless to stop Qiu Bailu from gripping onto his throat. There was a sharp crack as the pressure in Qiu Bailu's grip tightened, and then in a nasty spray of blood, Zeng Fei's throat was reduced to a pulp!

In less than ten seconds, three of the people were already killed!!

All that was left was Li Chen and Cheng Xin, both of which were terrified beyond belief. Giving each other only a brief look, they ran off into the opposite direction while Qiu Bailu came exploding out from the window behind them!

“Hrnf.....Huuuu...”

Qiu Bailu was stooped at the waist with his breath exhaling deeply with emotion. His soulforce was fluctuating crazily as blood began to drip from each of his seven apertures! Not even caring in the slightest for his own state of being, Qiu Bailu glared with his bloodied eyes down at Li Chen. Locking down on his target, he took off like a bullet to give chase!

Cheng Xin hopped onto the roof after he split ways with Li Chen. Qiu Bailu going after Li Chen had filled him with joy, and since he hadn't any intentions to help Li Chen out, Cheng Xin took off into the skies to get as far away as he could possibly get. He could feel several powerful guards stationed within another part of the property—two of which were late-stage Soul Exalts—if he could just get to them, he'd be safe.

“Ahh!!!!”

A howl of pain from behind saw to Cheng Xin snapping his head back in fear. Qiu Bailu had caught up to Li Chen and had a fist of his punched straight through him!

Cheng Xin's heart nearly came to a stop at this frightening sight. Any last vestige of color was now gone from his face as he redoubled his efforts to run like a madman! Now that Li Chen was gone, Qiu Bailu would be going after him next!

“How did this happen! How the f*ck did this happen!! Why is Qiu Bailu coming to kill us, why!!”

Cheng Xin was brought up in the safety of the Capital where no danger had ever been anywhere close to him. For him to have all

four of his companions die such violent deaths in front of him terrified the living daylight out of him. There wasn't any time for him to even think. There was only time for him to run!

To run for his life!

“Young master!!”

Two figures came to view up on the rooftops—the two late-stage Soul Exalts he felt earlier. Several other guards Cheng Xin first brought with him were already starting to gather due to the most recent disturbance. None of them had thought that there'd be someone willing to attack this property, but they were quick to come over. And when they saw Cheng Xin running so doggedly as if being chased by the dogs from hell, the guards looked a little farther away just in time to see Qiu Bailu toss the now deceased Li Chen to the ground!

Everyone's heart trembled in fright—especially the two late-stage Soul Exalts that were Li Chen's guards. Their eyes were filled with despair since their young charge was now dead. “Die!!!!” They cried in fury.

Bodies lighting up with soulforce, one person brought out his green longsword to swing it in Qiu Bailu's direction to send out ten blades of wind!!

Following his lead, the other late-stage Soul Exalt fired off an orange ball of elemental energy about twenty-meters forward!

The two powerful auras that were the late-stage Soul Exalts blew past Cheng Xin to attack Qiu Bailu. As they blew past, Cheng Xin sighed in relief and changed directions to head downwards and to the side so the guards could deal with Qiu Bailu.

“Boom!!!!”

There was an explosion of power as soulforce blew outwards behind Cheng Xin. Surging with such power that a shockwave was created, the only thing the guards saw was a person completely on

fire come charging at them!

Qiu Bailu!!

He was a terrifying sight to see by this point. Wounds deep enough to see bone could be seen on his body, and his abdomen had been cut deep enough to have a part of his intestine start to trickle out. Even more terrifying, his left arm had been blown straight off to have only his shoulder remain, blood spraying out like a spring of blood.

He....he had simply brute-forced his way through the two late-stage Soul Exalt's attacks!

As terrifying as his wounds were, everyone was simply astonished that he....he was moving as if he didn't even notice it!! There wasn't even a twitch in his face! His soulforce was still fluctuating crazily as if it was....as if it was on the verge of explosion!

Anyone could tell that whatever Qiu Bailu was doing was beyond abnormal!

“This....this is....he's self-destructing!! Young master, watch out!!”

The earth-type late-stage Soul Exalt exclaimed in horrified realization at what Qiu Bailu was doing.

He was right!! Qiu Bailu was definitely trying to self-destruct!

“Self-destruct?!” Cheng Xin cried out with wide-open eyes. His relief was gone as quickly as it came. Anxious as ever, he began to make his retreat with all due haste.

But Qiu Bailu had made a beeline for him and was already right in front of him!

“Don't come any closer—get away! Get awayyy!!” Cheng Xin howled at the top of his lungs. As hard as he tried, he simply couldn't get away from Qiu Bailu and was within arm's reach in

just two seconds. With a right arm dripping with blood, Qiu Bailu grabbed onto Cheng Xin's shoulder!

His soulforce spiked violently with elemental fire gathering all around him now. Surging and churning like a storm, it looked like explosion was imminent now!

.....

A thousand meters high in the skies of the western corner of the villa, a distortion in space ripped open to reveal a frantic-looking elder.

It was Cheng Chaochuan.

He scanned the area with soulsense as soon as he arrived. The moment he felt what was going on, his eyes widened with horror!

“Little Xin!!”

His face drained of all color. He knew that Cheng Xin was right on the verge of being blown up by Qiu Bailu!

Back when he was chasing Bai Yunfei, Cheng Chaochuan had felt an unnatural aura fluctuate on its way to the villa. Knowing that Cheng Xin was there, Cheng Chaochuan gave up chasing Bai Yunfei to hurry back to the villa. In his mind, Wu Shang would've been more than strong enough to chase down that one person and come back. His run back to the villa had been a bit long, and it looked like he was a bit too late!

“Bastard! Stop right there!!!”

He spat in murderous fury. Green light exploded from Cheng Chaochuan to display his might as a mid-stage Soul King and aimed a soul attack at Qiu Bailu!

There was still a chance for him to stop Qiu Bailu from self-destructing if he launched a soul attack against him,

But that was only if a soul attack worked on the person in the first place....

Cheng Chaochuan's eyes flew open a second later in disbelief. "Nothing! He has no soul—but how!"

He wanted to strike down Qiu Bailu at once with his soul attack, but....it didn't even affect Qiu Bailu because he had no 'soul' in him!

"No!!!!"

A mixture of anguish and fury filled the air as Cheng Chaochuan watched the area in front of him explode with blinding red light!

"Boom!!!"

Qiu Bailu, a late-stage Soul Exalt, had self-destructed!!

Almost half the entire villa was engulfed by the explosion. Like a lotus blooming into the air and shaking the ground, the explosion of light kicked up a storm of dust.

Cheng Xin—who was being protected by a circle of soldiers—had no chance of avoiding the self-destruction of Cheng Xin. Try as hard as he might to protect himself from this life-taking explosion, there was no way he'd be able to survive. Even the auras of the two late-stage Soul Exalts had their auras snuffed out the moment they came into contact with the explosion!

And with that, the masterminds behind this entire plot, Cheng Xin, Li Chen, and the other three, were all dead!

And the one who killed them was the one they hired to go after Bai Yunfei's loved one!

.....

Qiu Bailu invading the villa, killing Cheng Xin and the others, and then self-destructing were all 'orders' given to him by Bai Yunfei.

Bai Yunfei communicated with Qiu Bailu earlier when he was escaping through their mental link. He gave him a single order, and that was to.....kill Cheng Xin and the others! At any price! And

then to self-destruct!

Bai Yunfei continued to run away as soon as the order was given to until the mental link was at its limit. No longer able to give the command for Qiu Bailu to hold on, Bai Yunfei knew Qiu Bailu would carry out the command left in his mind as soon as he was out of range. He waited for Wu Shang and Cheng Chaochuan to chase after him before Qiu Bailu could carry out his orders. Hidden in the bushes when the two of them were chasing after Bai Yunfei, Qiu Bailu ran into the villa to deal with Cheng Xin and the others!

The development went better than Bai Yunfei thought even. Cheng Xin and the others were all dead, and Qiu Bailu was gone without a trace. No one would be able to link it back to him.

Him stumbling upon the private conversation between Wu Shang and Cheng Chaochuan was an accident and earned him a new enemy, but Bai Yunfei was already gone by now. The Cheng could investigate as much as they wanted, and it was possible that they might link what happened to Cheng Xin and the others to Bai Yunfei, but since they were all dead and the Desert Wolves—who were the only outside link that knew about this mission for Bai Yunfei—were gone, Bai Yunfei was safe. Qiu Bailu had thrown away his life for everyone to see, and his death destroyed any evidence that it was Bai Yunfei that did it all while getting rid of this final headache.

But still. The events today were very serious. Was it possible that he'd invite new dangers and trouble onto his head? How would he deal with that then??

Chapter 679: The Spoils

Late that night on North Seventh Street in the Capital, where Bai Yunfei lived.

Inside one room, a person sat on top of his own bed. Red light flowed off from his body and into the surrounding air as he tried to meditate.

It was Bai Yunfei.

The very first thing he did after killing Wu Shang was to return home at once. Not even speaking with Tang Xinyun or anyone else when he did, Bai Yunfei shut himself up in his room and began to recuperate.

It only took a single glance for Tang Xinyun to know Bai Yunfei wasn't fine. She didn't ask him about it either. Bai Yunfei might've looked fine on the surface, but she knew him. She knew that he was simply faking it. The injuries he had sustained were worrisome to her, but she didn't want to 'expose' him and his lies.

It was only when Bai Yunfei was in his own room and had meditated long enough for his breathing to return to normal that Tang Xinyun was reassured and allowed herself to sigh in relief that Bai Yunfei was okay.

As it were, Bai Yunfei's wounds weren't all that serious.

The most egregious of the wounds he had were healed up when he made that breakthrough. He hadn't been hurt after that, but him canceling out his Berserk Mode meant that he was in a particularly fragile state right now.

By borrowing on the powers that were the Yun's Soul Ring and the other upgraded equipment he had, Bai Yunfei was able to replenish his soulforce. Even the debilitated state he was in for using the Berserk Mode was all but almost healed up before the night was over.

In fact, Bai Yunfei was feeling even better than before.

This was because right now, his regular state of being was now at the level of a....peak late-stage Soul Exalt!!

The extremely weakened state he was in before due to the battle in Baishan City was completely gone. He was healed well and truly, and even the damage to his soul was gone since his strengthened soulforce at the time had cleared that problem up.

There was another difference in that of his two essence fireseeds. They were back in their original positions split apart from one another. No longer were they in a half-fused state one with one another, though it seemed that the level of friendliness between the two fireseeds were a lot better than before. Bai Yunfei wasn't even using the Dual Flame Arts to adjust the frequency between the two fireseeds, but the two fireseeds seemed to be getting along without at all looking as if they'd be trying to devour one another, much to Bai Yunfei's delight.

The moon in the sky slowly waned in place for the sun to overtake it. By the time the first rays of the sun was starting to bear down on the world, Bai Yunfei was only just starting to wake. Exhaling slowly, he stretched his shoulders and popped the muscles in his neck with a satisfying cracking sound.

He smiled. Never had he ever felt as good as today.

“Haven't felt like this in a very long time....I've basically made a complete recovery....” He thought to himself as he continued to stretch his waist.

“How're you, Xiao Qi?”

He inclined his head to look at the roof.

Up on the rafters was a bowl-sized 'house'. It was filled with hay and even silk to adorn the place—this was the 'nest' Xiao Qi made for himself.

Xiao Qi came down in a flash of light to appear in front of Bai

Yunfei, “I feel great, haha! I feel stronger than before! I gained a lot of experience after killing that guy, it took me an entire night to process it. How convenient this is.....with how much I gained, I’m pretty sure I’ll just need a few more times to become a mid-stage class seven.”

“A few more times....” Bai Yunfei’s lip twitched. “Forget it, I don’t want to always be stuck in these dangerous situations. In any case, are there even enough mid-stage Soul Kings in this world for you to kill for ‘grinding experience’?”

“Grinding Experience? What’s that?” Xiao Qi tilted his head.

“Ah....it’s nothing.” Bai Yunfei waved his hand, “You were injured pretty badly yesterday, are you sure you’re alright?”

“I’m completely fine, don’t worry.” Xiao Qi chirped and flew two quick loops in front of Bai Yunfei to prove it.

“That’s good then....” Bai Yunfei nodded. He sighed to himself. Compared to himself, Xiao Qi was even more ‘ridiculous’. He hadn’t even the help of any recovery equipment and was hit so many times by Wu Shang yesterday night. As much as he over-exerted himself, once Xiao Qi managed to kill Wu Shang was he enveloped by a strange glow of energy and start to heal. Practically every wound he had was healed within minutes of being in that bubble, and not only were his wounds healed, his strength grew.

“Everything is because of that +14 additional effect of the ‘egg’. Whatever special effects that egg had, it was super ‘abnormal’....”

He sighed again. It was unfortunate he’d never be able to know just what that +14 effect was. How had he longed to see the concrete details of the effect—if he had a +14 piece of equipment, just how much stronger would he be??

If he could perhaps strengthen some of these ‘high quality’ equipment to +14.....

Bai Yunfei shivered in delight at the thought.

“I’ve hit a wall in my research for the Upgrade Technique. I have to keep on going and get familiar with the ability to turn ‘failure into success’. Maybe at that time I’ll be able to up the levels of one of my equipment....”

.....

When he thought about equipment, Bai Yunfei’s eyes lit up in remembrance of something. With a shake of his arm, a long set of chains came to view on his hand.

It was the shrunken form of the Devouring Chains.

He took out a detached segment of the chains—the tip—and studied it for a moment.

“The chains’ are really strange. Too bad it was destroyed, I wonder if I’d be able to reattach the segments with my current strength....” Bai Yunfei sighed to himself, “This is a challenge. I’ve become a lot stronger, so I should have a chance. Maybe I can try in the future.”

He stored the chains back into his ring to take out the space ring he found on Wu Shang. Peering into it, Bai Yunfei stared to look through each of the items inside.

It wasn’t until a good while later when Bai Yunfei’s eyes sparkled with delight. Shaking his right hand, he took out a crimson-red scroll from within.

A soul skill scroll!!

A little flabbergasted at the discovery, Bai Yunfei poured over the scroll to read its contents.

The sparkle in his eyes shined even brighter after he was done reading it, a pleased but astonished smile showing on his face.

“The Replicating Flames....so there was a soul skill like that. No wonder then. Wu Shang being able to ‘replicate’ my Dual Dragon Burst was because of this....” Bai Yunfei muttered, “What a strong

soul skill. So he was brave enough to leave the scroll on him, hah, how convenient for me. If I can learn this skill, it'll become one of my trump cards in the future.”

Bai Yunfei put away the scroll so he could continue to look through the space ring. Rummaging through it, Bai Yunfei found plenty of earth tier soul armaments and a considerable amount of soulgems and primal stones. There were also a few high quality medicines, but nothing out of the ordinary.

What Bai Yunfei really wanted to find was some sort of proof of identity on who Wu Shang was. But there wasn't even anything that'd link the man together with the machinations of the Cheng.

If he thought about it, there was no way people like Wu Shang would be so stupid to leave behind some sort of undeniable proof on their identities or affiliation.

“What a shame. If I had proof that the Cheng and the Soul Refining School were working together, then I could've sent in that proof to have the Cheng looked after. My word alone won't be enough to do anything, and it'd only expose me as being in the know. That wouldn't end well for me if I want to live in peace....”

He sighed once again. If this was the case, should he simply just not interfere in this matter?

Chapter 680: Sudden Happenings

“Yunfei, are you awake?”

As Bai Yunfei was ruminating on the problems of yesternight, a knock on the door and a voice from behind signalled to him a visitor.

Snapping out from his thoughts, Bai Yunfei gave a small smile. Rising up to walk to the door, he opened it to see a young woman wearing a white-robe stand on the other side.

“You’re a little early, Xinyun. You must’ve been tired yesterday, a little more rest wouldn’t hurt.”

“We were only strolling yesterday, what is there to be tired about?” She smiled, “But what about you? Are....are you fine?”

She looked up and down at him, only to see how bright and energetic his soulforce was. Without any other wounds to be seen, Tang Xinyun sighed inwardly in relief and felt at ease.

A warm sensation filled Bai Yunfei from the chest up. He nodded his head, “Haha, I’ve said not to worry about me. You know about my circumstances. With all my ‘stuff’ on me, a little wound will heal quickly.”

“You say that, but weren’t you covered with bruises yesterday? You only went to investigate yesterday, so how did you get into a fight?”

“Ah....that—well, it’s a long story, but in short, I didn’t really have a choice.”

The two moved their conversation out to the courtyards where Tang Xinyun sat on a stool next to the central stone table. With a gentle wave of her hand, Tang Xinyun had bowls of congee and vegetables placed onto the table. “Let’s eat first or the meal will get cold.”

A little surprised at the prospect of having a meal, Bai Yunfei acquiesced nonetheless. Sitting at the table, he took a bowl of congee into his hand and drank a bit of it. As the grains flowed down his throat, Bai Yunfei smiled warmly at the taste—the congee was quite sweet to the taste.

He kept drinking the congee, never once touching at the vegetables on the table, much to Tang Xinyun's displeasure. She pursed her lips so that her dimples could be seen on her cheeks and deposited some vegetables into his bowl. Handing his chopsticks to him, she asked, "What....happened yesterday night? You said you were only going to look, but how did you end up like this? How did you end up fighting someone else?"

Bai Yunfei pinched at the vegetables with his chopsticks and washed the rest of the congee down in two gulps. Eating the vegetables afterwards, he wiped his mouth and looked around the area. "Yesterday was...." he spoke slowly, "is actually my fault. When I came to the Capital, I....came into a bit of trouble. I never thought they'd go after you. But it's fine now. I'm sure they won't be causing trouble for us again."

The eyebrows on Tang Xinyun's face rose in astonishment, "Did....did you kill them?"

There was only cold fury in Bai Yunfei's eyes. "They asked for it! I was so patient with them, but this time, I've gotten rid of the problem. They won't be causing any more troubles now."

Tang Xinyun looked at Bai Yunfei. There was something off about Bai Yunfei, she could tell that much. The aura of one who was prone to killing was more palpable to him now.

"But....won't this cause any problems?" She asked him in concern. "Who were those people? Won't you be at risk of revealing your identity? If someone finds out it was you who did it, won't they...."

"Haha, don't worry. I was very careful on how I did this. There

won't be any proof, they won't be able to find out anything."

Bai Yunfei thought for a moment before continuing on, "But...it's not like everything's right in the world. I can't guarantee that they won't dare do anything else, so I have to pay careful attention from here on out. It's best that you, Tingting, and Doraemon don't go off to anywhere beyond the busy parts of the Capital just in case."

Not quite assured by that either, Bai Yunfei said again, "How about this? I think it'd be best if you all live within Tianhun Academy for now. It'll definitely be safe there, haha...you can experience what life will be like as students."

"Live in the academy?" Tang Xinyun restated in surprise, "If that's what you want," she nodded. "I'll talk with Tingting and little Rui, I'm sure they won't mind much. We've done plenty of playing recently, staying in the academy won't be too bad."

"I'm sorry, Xinyun...." Bai Yunfei apologized, "You haven't even been in the Capital for long and I've already brought you all into danger. I'm...."

"Don't say it like that," Tang Xinyun reassured him with a smile, "What 'danger' is there? There'll always be things like this. Don't worry, we can take care of ourselves. We're Soul exalts too, don't take us for women that needs protecting."

"Ah, if you say so then, haha..." Bai Yunfei laughed, though he let out a sigh to himself. After fighting with a Soul King, Bai Yunfei no longer really thought a Soul Exalt to be anyone strong. There was probably no one within the Soul Exalt realm that was stronger than he was....

.....

"Yunfei! Yunfei!!! I've big news to tell you, big news I say...!"

A hurried voice called out to Bai Yunfei from outside the courtyard. A moment later, a person came running into the

courtyard—it was Zheng Kai.

He came to a screeching halt in the courtyards as soon as he saw Bai Yunfei and Tang Xinyun both sitting next to each other at the stone table. Embarrassed, he scratched his head. “Ah....was I...er....am I disturbing you two? Shall I wait outside then?”

Bai Yunfei’s lip twitched.

“Wait my ass, come on over, what are you so excited for? What big news have you got?”

“Hehe....” Zheng Kai walked over to the other open chair at the table and sat down. Kou Tingting and Huangfu Rui came from behind to sit next to Tang Xinyun. Huangfu Rui looked a little groggy, clearly having not yet fully wakened yet and leaned her head to rest on Kou Tingting’s shoulder to close her eyes to make for a rather laughable sight.

Bai Yunfei turned on Zheng Kai, “What is it, spit it out now.”

Looking as mysterious as possible, Zheng Kai whispered surreptitiously, “This is definitely big news. Something has happened to the sons of the Left and Right Ministers!!”

“Oh???” Bai Yunfei perked an eyebrow, “What kind of something? Should you be so excited about the happenings in the Royal Court?”

“It’s not like that, the next generation of the two families had accidents happen to them!” Zheng Kai pressed on, “The heir to the Xu, Xu Jiang, was attacked by someone yesterday afternoon!”

“Xu Jiang?” Bai Yunfei pretended to be curious, “Someone attacked him? What happened?”

“I heard he was taking care of a few things outside the Capital when he was ambushed. All of his guards were killed—even an early-stage Soul King!! Xu Jiang’s entire body was a bloody pulp, they said he would’ve been dead if not for his family getting there in time. No one saw the attacker either, and Xu Jiang’s still

unconscious. No one knows when he's going to wake up, but it looks pretty serious. I think it's going to take a year and a half for him to even heal.”

“It's that serious?!” Bai Yunfei exclaimed.

“It is. No one's sure just what kind of grudge his attacker had for him. What a shame, big brother Xu Jiang wasn't half bad a person. He gets along with my brother and was also one of his friendly rivals. He's on par with Cheng Yao almost, though I think I heard he was on the way to becoming a Soul King sooner or later. Him getting hurt like this will definitely set him a good ways back in his training, how unlucky....”

“Does anyone know who might've done it?”

“Who?” Zheng Kai frowned, “The majority of people are guessing that it's the Cheng, but those are just rumors. No evidence has been found yet, though the Cheng are the most guilty in my opinion. The Xu and Cheng have never gotten along, but they've never done something like this against one another. We can't rule it in either way....”

“Of course it's the Cheng. Their plans were supposed to be a lot worse than this....” Bai Yunfei thought to himself. He couldn't say what was on his mind, so he changed the topics, “You said something happened to both the sons, so what happened to the family of the Minister of the Right?”

Zheng Kai's eyes lit up brilliantly at that. Seemingly relishing at the impending news, he laughed, “Hehe, what happened to the Cheng was a lot worse actually. Do you remember the third son, Cheng Xin? That guy was killed yesterday night in his villa in the western outskirts!!”

Bai Yunfei and Tang Xinyun both looked shocked at this.

Bai Yunfei was of course, pretending to be shocked, while Tang Xinyun's emotions were genuine. While Zheng Kai wasn't looking,

she gave Bai Yunfei a quick look. Putting two and two together, she already had a good feeling Bai Yunfei and this person were connected, but....the one Bai Yunfei killed was actually the son of a prime minister! That was what she was shocked most over. However, she did a nice job in masking her emotions before Zheng Kai could see it.

“Cheng Xin was killed?” Bai Yunfei replied in ‘astonishment’, “How? By whom?”

“Not sure, but I heard the killer blew himself up at the end so we don’t even have any clues. The Cheng don’t know who it might be, or who might’ve done it.” Zheng Kai shrugged, “Other than that, the killer also killed a few other influential sons. Those who were killed were Li Chen, Peng Guanghua, Zeng Fei, and Zhu Yizhu!”

“They were killed too?!” Bai Yunfei exclaimed, ‘surprised’.

“Yeah, I heard they were all gathered for something, but they were killed right afterwards.

“In any case, those idiotic hedonists annoyed you before....” Zheng Kai stared at Bai Yunfei with a bit of a smile on his face, “Yunfei, don’t tell me you’re involved in this somehow?”

Chapter 681: Plans

Tang Xinyun and Bai Yunfei froze at this careful accusation with the latter giving Zheng Kai a strange look and smile. “Ah’Kai, you can’t just say things like that out of the blue. If someone overheard you, there’d be trouble if they misunderstood. What makes you think I had anything to do with this?”

Zheng Kai’s lip curled up into a smile. “I was just joking. There’s only us here, what are you acting so ‘scared’ about? If it was really you that did it, you’d be one amazing person, haha....”

“Ah...” Bai Yunfei muttered under his breath, preferring to say nothing else.

“Anyways, there’s been a big commotion since this happened to the two families. Both the Xu and the Cheng have been going into a craze, and so are the families of the four other victims. Even the Royal Family is getting involved. They’ve the Tianhun School sending plenty of people everywhere even. I heard from my brother earlier this morning that several of the earlier ‘suspects’ were dragged out by their heads almost. The Tianhun School have their own suspects, the Xu theirs, and the Cheng theirs....I wonder just how many more ‘suspects’ will appear.”

“Oh? They’re going full force so quickly?” Bai Yunfei remarked in surprise. Having people arrested already since last night was indeed a fast reaction to this information, but....to have arrested so many people, Bai Yunfei was really curious on what basis these people were supposed to be ‘suspects’.

Actually, Bai Yunfei was curious if he was supposed to be a ‘suspect’ as well? What Zheng Kai said about those five deceased people annoying Bai Yunfei was true, and many people knew about it. There would be no doubt people that’d be suspicious of him as well. This also meant there’d definitely be people who would want to implicate him in this matter. However, the fact that the Cheng,

Li, or the other houses weren't coming to him now meant they were afraid of moving against him without a solid plan.

Even if they had their 'doubts' about him, they didn't have proof. And if they did try to arrest him, Bai Yunfei wasn't a person they could simply try to do so without consequences.

He had his mind made up. He wouldn't say anything about this matter even if he died, and with how chaotic things were getting, Bai Yunfei was doubly assured that he wouldn't be telling anyone anytime soon. The conflict between the Xu and Cheng had nothing to do with him after all. While it seemed that the Soul Refining School was getting involved, Bai Yunfei was only guessing that, he had no proof that they were really involved or not.

With so many chaotic elements in the mix, it was best to simply stay out of the entire thing and wait.

After talking about the matters with the two families, Zheng Kai changed the topic, "Ah, Tingting, did you all have fun yesterday in the southern outskirts?"

"Haha, it was quite fun, the mountains and clouds were very beautiful to look at, it was very satisfying." Tang Xinyun answered on her behalf. She was afraid that Kou Tingting would say something about them being ambushed yesterday and wanted to divert the topic so that no suspicion would be had.

A little surprised by Tang Xinyun answered for her, Kou Tingting nodded her head and didn't say anything. She didn't even have any intention on talking with Zheng Kai, let alone tell him about what actually happened. The polite treatment she was getting from Zheng Kai had done nothing to sway her opinion for him in any major way. Whereas she used to think Zheng Kai was a decent person before, he was now only just an ordinary friend and nothing more.

As the daughter of the Crafting School's headmaster and disciple of an elder from the Water School, Kou Tingting had her fair share

of suitors. Even within the Water School, there was a large group of people vying for her attention, and a junior headmaster from the Fire School himself was trying to win her affection. Being as tactful as she could, Kou Tingting refused all that came to her, citing that she wanted to focus on her training and didn't have the time to pursue personal relationships. Soul cultivators had longer lives than ordinary people, so pursuing a romantic relationship in their thirties or forties was usually the norm. Therefore, even the 'Sex Lord' Zheng Kai wasn't able to captivate the heart of Kou Tingting.

“What a pity I wasn't there....” Zheng Kai sighed regretfully. “Though, the sunset at the eastern outskirts is a rather pretty sight. Every sunset, the lake near there is dyed almost a brilliant ruby-red. How about we head over there today to see it?”

Tang Xinyun replied for Kou Tingting again. “We are feeling a little fatigued from our times yesterday still and plan to rest in the Capital for the meanwhile. Thank you for your consideration, lord Zheng.”

“Ah?? Not going huh....” Zheng Kai folded his arms in thought, “Then we can stay in the Capital. I know of a decent theatre in the southern district. We can watch a play there and feel at ease.”

It was rather admirable how Zheng Kai was trying so hard to find an excuse to be with Kou Tingting.

Unable to hear this conversation any longer, Bai Yunfei shook his head, “Ah'Kai, I'm afraid we can't. I was planning to take them to the academy today to find them a place to stay. We don't have time to go elsewhere.”

“Finding a place to stay in the academy? Why?”

“I was curious on what life is like in the academy.” Tang Xinyun smiled, “Bai Yunfei offered to arrange for a few things as well. Tingting said before she was curious how classes were like in the academy, so we'll be living in the academy to see what being a

student is like.”

Kou Tingting flashed her a strange look, but the pinch Tang Xinyun gave her underneath the table was more than enough for Kou Tingting to get the message and nod her head in agreement to Zheng Kai.

“I see....” Zheng Kai sighed, crestfallen. There was a small tint of suspicion in his eyes when they flickered over to Bai Yunfei to give him a quick look.

The four of them continued to talk for a little longer until the sun was now fully visible in the sky. By now, Huangfu Rui was fully ‘awake’ and as energetic as ever. Prepared now, Bai Yunfei was ready to take Tang Xinyun and the others to their lodgings in the academy, and Zheng Kai was all too happy to tag along with them to see if he could help expedite the process.

He wasn’t actually very useful in this case. All Bai Yunfei did was find Mo Wanxia and Zheng Kai was suddenly nowhere to be seen.

Led by Mo Wanxia, Tang Xinyun and the other two girls were given a tour of the ‘dormitory’, which was basically a villa in size and a dormitory in name. It was wide and had a decent scenery where several other students from the crafting class like Fang Yong and Fan Tianmeng resided.

There was a wall that divided them from the male students from the crafting class. When they were first enrolled into the class, they all decided to move into this dormitory so they could all talk with one another when convenient, and leave for the mountain together to reach their crafting caves.

While Tang Xinyun and the others were getting acquainted with the area, Zheng Kai decided to give his antics a break. Since he couldn’t go find a young woman to chat up, he decided to chat with the males in the dormitory like Mo Chen, since he was already rather acquainted with the male students in Bai Yunfei’s class.

Likewise, Bai Yunfei didn't have anything to do while Tang Xinyun and the others were doing their thing. Without anything better to do, he walked up the mountain and entered his own crafting cave.

Once inside, Bai Yunfei sat down and waved his right hand. With a bang, the Lightningfire Cauldron came plopping out.

With another wave of his right hand, the two sections of the Devouring Chain came into view.

He was planning to try and see if the Devouring Chains could be reconnected to have the soul armament repaired for usage.

Chapter 682: Repairing a Soul Armament

The reparation of a soul armament differed greatly to the crafting process of one. In some cases, repairing a soul armament was even harder than crafting a soul armament of the same grade.

Bai Yunfei wasn't all too experienced with repairing soul armaments, for he had very little reason to be. All of the equipment he had—especially the earth-tier ones—were just fodder for him to upgrade and see. If they failed, they exploded into dust, and there was no repairing that.

But this time, Bai Yunfei was truly excited to tackle this issue of repairing the soul armament. The item in question was a heaven-tier soul armament.

If he could pull this off, then he'd earn yet another powerful equipment with an effect already on it.

As mentioned before, the stats of equipment that might've been broken wouldn't lose its stats. For example, if a sword has an attack of 100 and was broken in half, both parts of the sword would still have the same attack of 100 since the sharpness was still the same. At most, the biggest change was that the sword no longer had a tip to attack with. Defensive equipment were the same, no matter how defensive an armor was, it'd have the same defensive strength even after being split into several pieces.

Of course, this was in the case of a regular situation of 'damage'. If an upgrade failed and turned everything to dust, that was a different story.

In the case that a +10 piece of equipment broke, one of the two pieces would inherit the additional effect while the other part wouldn't.

First, Bai Yunfei tried to line up the two segments of the chain together. As it was right now, they were just two soul armaments.

Using the Upgrade Technique to get them to +10, Bai Yunfei would try and see if either of the two pieces would have an additional effect and then try to repair it from there. If both pieces had an additional effect and then were melded into one, it might mean that one of the two effects would disappear when it was put back together.

But the most important thing was that repairing it this way was a lot harder than usual!

So Bai Yunfei wasn't in much of a rush to try and upgrade the two parts of the Devouring Chain. He'd rather first repair the chains and then upgrade the finished product.

.....

Holding the Devouring Chains in his hands, Bai Yunfei took careful notice of each and every detail on the chain. Sending his soulforce into it to better his understanding, Bai Yunfei began to analyze its composition, structure, and break marks to ensure nothing was missed.

“These chains are a little....weird....”

There was a hint of confusion in Bai Yunfei's eyes the more he looked at the chains. Something to this soul armament was different to any other soul armament he had felt before.

But what was it?

It felt like.....the 'aura' was different, firstly.

Perhaps it was because of this equipment having the very rare element of 'darkness'. But that didn't seem to be the reason either. Dark-type soul armaments gave a person a 'shadowy' sensation, but these chains weren't giving off that aura. It was more like a....

“A bloodthirsty aura?!”

It took a moment for Bai Yunfei to find the right word to describe the aura he was feeling.

From this chain, Bai Yunfei could indeed sense an abnormally bloodthirsty aura!

It would appear that the chains had already claimed the lives of many, hence the aura it had to it now. Just touching the links would render any person uncomfortable. A deeper scan of the chains would reveal its bloodthirsty nature, and an ordinary commoner would certainly go mad if they were to be hit by this aura.

But there was something else strange to the Devouring Chains. As he was scanning the entirety of it, Bai Yunfei came across yet another peculiarity to the object.

The interior of the chains wasn't completely solid. There was some liquid in it that ran through a small 'passageway' inside of the chains.

Never met with such a case before, Bai Yunfei was surprised.

"What kind of liquid is this? What's it for?" Bai Yunfei asked himself. Thinking back to his battle with Wu Shang, Bai Yunfei remembered there had been a little detail he saw when he broke the chain....

"I remember at that time...." He started slowly, eyes inching open with surprise, "There was....blood?!"

"Is that possible? Isn't it too weird?" Bai Yunfei tried to clear his mind with a shake of his head, "Blood as a material in a soul armament—is this a method of crafting I've never heard before? Is there a usage for blood in a soul armament? Or is this a type of liquid material that I've never heard before?"

He sighed after a while to think. "Forget it, if this really is a rare material I've never seen before, I can't just break it open to research, that'd break the entire soul armament, it's just not worth it.....might as well try and repair it first. If I can't, then I can break it open."

.....

With a plan now in mind, Bai Yunfei called out his Cataclysmic Seal. The fireseed inside of it came out of it to go into his chest and replace the one with the companion lightningseed, which went into the Lightningfire Cauldron.

“Boom!!”

The Lightningfire Cauldron lit up almost instantly to bask the entire cave with a moderate wave of heat.

A string of materials came flowing out from the Violet Soul Ring next. One by one, Bai Yunfei picked out the ones to be used for this reparation and had them thrown into the cauldron.

Just the mere preparations of knowing which material to use or not took nearly an hour. Feeling that he had more or less prepared everything, Bai Yunfei threw in both segments of the chain into the cauldron.

“Clack! Boom.....”

There was a loud bang from the cauldron. Several of the supplementary materials he had in there had immediately gone up in smoke.

Bai Yunfei raised an eyebrow. Waving his hand, another pile of materials were thrown in—this time plenty of refined stones were thrown in and a single dark-type primal stone. Circulating his soulforce into the cauldron, he heated the flames a bit higher.

Time slowly ticked on by. Zheng Kai and Tang Xinyun came up to the mountains to call him out for lunch, but they were stopped by Xiao Qi right outside the cave, who told them that Bai Yunfei was in the middle of crafting and was not to be disturbed.

From there, time went on by again to become evening....

“Tsk!! It still doesn’t work? As expected from a heaven-tier soul armament.....repairing one is just too hard!”

Bai Yunfei cursed to himself in front of the the Lightningfire Cauldron, a bitter smile on his face. Beads of sweat were forming on his forehead and dripping down from his nose. Even with the spirit-increasing accessories and the Yun's Soul Ring to provide extra soulforce regeneration, Bai Yunfei was essentially out of soulforce almost. Everything he tried had already failed, and it seemed like an overall failure was all but imminent.

The chains were still in the cauldron. Upon first appearance, the two segments were connected without even a scar to be seen, but Bai Yunfei knew that once the fires went out, the two chains would break apart again. Trying to hold them together was essentially useless, and no amount of soulforce was enough to meld them together.

“It was going so well before, so why....why can't I get it to perfectly meld together now? Feels like I'm missing something....”

He was persistent on succeeding here. Reluctant to give up, Bai Yunfei knew that if he could just resolve this issue, then the chains would be fully repaired.

“What am I missing....just what am I missing....?” He bit his bottom lip in bitter annoyance.

A single sweat drop dripped from his eyelid and over his eye.

And when it passed, Bai Yunfei's eyes shined with realization!

“I've got it!! It's got to be....”

Chapter 683: Blood as the Medium

Bai Yunfei's head flew up. Raising both hands above the cauldron, his left hand extended out his index and middle finger together. Elemental energy formed around his fingers like a sharp blade, and with a careful cut, he sliced across the palm of his right hand!

“Pcht!!”

The blade of energy sliced apart the skin easily, creating a wound deep enough to see bone almost! And from the wound...blood came flowing outwards!

Was....was Bai Yunfei so disappointed in his failure to repair the chains that he was starting to cut himself?!

Of course not.

Just the look of concentration on Bai Yunfei's face was enough to tell anyone otherwise. As exaggerated the blood coming out from his palm was, it was simply just a result of Bai Yunfei's own actions.

A 'ball' of blood soon came to be on top of Bai Yunfei's palm. Enveloped in a bubble of elemental fire to sustain that shape, Bai Yunfei flicked his hand and had it enter the cauldron when he deemed the quantity to be enough.

“Hisss.....”

As soon as the blood touched upon the chains, there was a violent hissing sound of liquid evaporating and then a brilliant burst of crimson red light!

Rather than the usual color of fire, the colors of the light right now was as dark as blood!

“It really works!!!”

The light in Bai Yunfei's own eyes increased several times over in

delight. When his blood entered the cauldron, Bai Yunfei felt movement from within the chains he hadn't seen before. It looked almost 'delighted' in having a source of blood and absorbed the blood into its links!!

The blood submerged one of the links of the chain within its bubble for a moment. Shining darkly with its bloody light, the link began to shine an even darker color a moment afterwards!

In no time at all, the blood had been fully absorbed into the link. But that link in the chain had only light one-tenth as bright as the other links in the chain!

“Not enough?!” Bai Yunfei raised an eyebrow in surprise. “Then have at it then!!”

“Pcht....”

Pressing down on his hand, Bai Yunfei forced the wound on his hand to burst open again. As if a major artery was cut, a great volume of blood started to pour out!

This time, Bai Yunfei held his right hand over the cauldron and let the blood pour out from it like a 'faucet' over the cauldron!

“Bzzzz.....”

Rather than have its flames be extinguished with all the blood coming down onto it, the cauldron began to burn even more vibrantly than before! There was a faint humming sound coming from within the cauldron, but it was the chains that was doing the humming rather than the cauldron!

The reasons behind this strange occurrence wasn't something Bai Yunfei wanted to look into in this current moment. Right now, he had only one thought he was excited about—the repairs was about to be completed!

.....

Nothing out of the ordinary happened this time. Everything went

as Bai Yunfei expected, and the light within the cauldron grew more and more condensed with time.

The more Bai Yunfei's face paled, the more sweat gathered on it. He was looking a little fatigued, but it didn't seem like he himself had noticed it with all the excitement he had in his eyes. Staring intently at the contents of the cauldron, Bai Yunfei was using up most of his soulforce to keep the repairing process going and control the flames.

“Bang!!!”

There was a small explosion before a ring of light shot straight out of the cauldron and into the roof above. Disseminating through the cave, a wave of elemental fire started to bring about a scorching heat. Strangely enough, there was also a damp sensation in the cave as if there was a faint red mist of some kind.

Two seconds later, the red light within the cave started to churn in on itself. Several seconds later, it was ‘sucked’ back into the cauldron!

“Success!!”

Bai Yunfei cried out in joy. The fires in the cauldron were dispelled with a wave of his right hand, and the object within the cauldron flew out to be grabbed by Bai Yunfei's hand.

The temperature in the cauldron was starting to settle again, and the light fading away to return the cave back to its normal state.

“It actually worked. I actually did it.....” Bai Yunfei breathed out. He grasped at the chains in his hand with a great deal of excitement.

It wasn't because he was too weak that it nearly failed, it was because this object was just beyond strange!

But he had done it—he had repaired a heaven-tier soul armament!!

“Whew....” Bai Yunfei exhaled slowly to get rid of his nerves. Letting the chains slip away from his fingers for a moment, Bai Yunfei called out the second fireseed in the cauldron and activated the Dual Flame Arts to have his two fireseeds help him replenish his soulforce as fast as possible.

There was probably only a few people in the world that could match Bai Yunfei’s soulforce regeneration rate. It didn’t take long for Bai Yunfei to completely replenish his soulforce, though his face still looked a little weak. He might’ve regenerated his soulforce, but his body would still take some time to replenish the blood it had lost.

The amount of time Bai Yunfei allowed himself to bleed wasn’t very long, but there was a dreadful amount of blood that he lost. Any regular person would’ve died of blood loss a long time ago, but for soul cultivators, it wasn’t too much of an issue. He’d need a few days to recover, but that was it.

He finished up his recuperation after several more deep breaths. Taking the chains back into his hand, he gave it a closer look.

“So in the end, the special liquid inside the chains was blood....how unusual. There exists a soul armament like that....?” Bai Yunfei touched at the chains with a finger. He sighed. A soul armament like this was a very unusual one. It was a first for him to see blood being used to repair a soul armament.

“With the owner’s blood as the medium, the soul armament is imbued with the ‘sensation’ of being ‘alive’. This is a really strange and different method than to leave a soul imprint, but it’ll deepen the soul compatibility between the chain and the owner nonetheless.”

Basking in the sensation of ‘kinship’ he had with the chains, Bai Yunfei decided to turn his thoughts elsewhere and looked to the chains stats next.

Equipment Grade: Low Heaven

Elemental Affinity: Fire, Darkness

Attack: 2800

Soul Compatibility: 5%

Equipment Effect: Drain up to 10 soulpoints per second of any constricted target (One at the most).

(Amount is determinant on the difference in strength between user and target).

Amount of soulforce drained cannot exceed total soulforce reserve.

Upgrade Requirement: 180 Soulpoints

Everything was the exact same except for one line: a 5% soul compatibility.

“This must be because I infused my own blood into it, did I gain five percent soul compatibility with it then?” Bai Yunfei guessed to himself.

Now that he was done repairing the soul armament, Bai Yunfei had now one more special heaven-tier soul armament. But the most important part had yet to come....

Eyes shining with expectation, Bai Yunfei looked at the chains.

“Upgrade!!”

Chapter 684: Yet Another Powerful Equipment

In the Back Mountains of Tianhun Academy, Bai Yunfei was currently sitting in his crafting cave.

At this time of the day, the sun was already setting beyond the horizon so that only a few rays of sunlight could be seen. Several stars were already visible in the sky, barely shining from where they hung near the moon.

There was a weak sheen of light from Bai Yunfei's cave. Inside the cave, a single person could barely be seen, barely moving and deep in heavy thought.

This person was of course, Bai Yunfei. In his hands was the newly-repaired Devouring Chain, but right now, the chains looked dark like any other normal chain did.

Equipment Grade: Low Heaven

Elemental Affinity: Fire, Darkness

Upgrade Level: +8

Attack: 2800

Additional Attack: 1000

Soul Compatibility: 25%

Equipment Effect: Drain up to 10 soulpoints per second of any constricted target (One at the most).

(Amount is determinant on the difference in strength between user and target).

Amount of soulforce drained cannot exceed total soulforce reserve.

Upgrade Requirement: 180 Soulpoints

There was a glimmer of light from the Devouring Chains for a moment. Eyes flashing, Bai Yunfei stared at the chains with excitement.

+8.

He started upgrading the chains when it was already evening.

Two hours passed since then, but he was only able to get the chains to +8?!

From the looks of Bai Yunfei, he was actually extremely happy about upgrading it to +8?!

.....

Indeed. Bai Yunfei was quite happy with the results because of one simple thing. Rather than using the Upgrade Technique to get the Devouring Chains to +7, he had used....the manual upgrading method himself!

He wanted to used the manual style of upgrading for the Devouring Chains. Because of him upgrading through this method rather than the usual Upgrade Technique, it took a lot longer to actually upgrade.

Bai Yunfei didn't feel the passage of time, however. All he could think about was upgrading the chains in his hands. Right now, he was in the best 'state' of mind to upgrade.

As soon as the Devouring Chains was upgraded to +8, Bai Yunfei took a moment to think. Curling his lips as if coming to a decision, he gripped at the chains with his left hand.

“Upgrade.”

The Devouring Chains shined this time with light different before. He was using the Upgrade Technique.

He succeeded.

Bai Yunfei narrowed his eyes. Was he displeased even with upgrading the chains with his Upgrade Technique??

He exhaled slowly. “Upgrade.”

The moment he gave the order to upgrade, Bai Yunfei's eyes glinted with a strange light. Fast like lightning, his right hand rose up to the space above the chains three inches away from his left hand and swiped down!

It was a strange piece of motion, but also a fast one. In the moment he tugged at the chains, there was a small ripple of energy that seemed to appear in the area around the chains, as if agitated by Bai Yunfei's actions. As quick as it appeared, however, the ripple dissipated fast enough that if anyone was potentially looking, all they would've saw was Bai Yunfei swiping at thin air.

Upgrade Successful

Equipment Grade: Low Heaven

Elemental Affinity: Fire, Darkness

Upgrade Level: +10

Attack: 2800

Additional Attack: 1500

Soul Compatibility: 33%

Equipment Effect: Drain up to 10 soulpoints per second of any constricted target (One at the most).

(Amount is determinant on the difference in strength between user and target).

Amount of soulforce drained cannot exceed total soulforce reserve.

+10 Additional Effect: Add an additional target that can be drained.

Increase the amount of soulpoints drained per second to 15.

Targets lose additional soulforce equivalent to 50% of their soulforce drained when breaking free.

Upgrade Requirement: 180 Soulpoints

As a result of his strange action, a set of notifications popped up into Bai Yunfei's head afterwards.

“It worked!!”

His eyes lit up brilliantly in joy. In this one moment, Bai Yunfei had successfully ‘changed’ the upgrading outcome!!

The ‘Upgrade Failed’ notification had only just started to pop up into his head a split-moment before he did anything. But before it could fully appear, he had moved his hand and consequently changed the outcome. The notification—which had the failure message on it—‘flickered’ for a moment before it was turned into

the ‘Upgrade Successful’ message!

For a second time now, Bai Yunfei was able to change the upgrading outcome!!

“This is it! This is the feeling!” Bai Yunfei was lost in his own thoughts, muttering to himself about his new insights. The +10 additional effect of the Devouring Chains was already lost to him as he kept thinking.

“It can be done.....it really can be done....” Eyes still bright, Bai Yunfei felt his heart pound furiously against his chest. “Again!!” His eyes flew open in anticipation.

Honing in on the chains, Bai Yunfei lifted it up to eye level.

“Upgrade!”

His hand got ready to move as he spoke the two words. His mind was fully-concentrated on the chains, waiting for the right moment to act.

But....

Upgrade Successful

Equipment Grade: Low Heaven

Elemental Affinity: Fire, Darkness

Upgrade Level: +11

Attack: 2800

Additional Attack: 1950

Soul Compatibility: 43%

Equipment Effect: Drain up to 10 soulpoints per second of any constricted target (One at the most).

(Amount is determinant on the difference in strength between user and target).

Amount of soulforce drained cannot exceed total soulforce reserve.

+10 Additional Effect: Add an additional target that can be drained.

Increase the amount of soulpoints drained per second to 15.

Targets lose additional soulforce equivalent to 50% of their soulforce drained when breaking free.

Upgrade Requirement: 180 Soulpoints

.....

“Uhm.....” Bai Yunfei froze up. His right hand hovered in midair for a good two seconds as he stared strangely at the notification.

“It....the upgrade actually worked?!” Bai Yunfei cried out. He was in disbelief as he stared at the chains, and just a little bit.....disappointed?!

Even after a successful upgrade, he was feeling disappointed?

“Well, that’s what it is.....” He sighed and shook his head. The chains came up for him to take a second look at.

In all honesty, Bai Yunfei really did feel ‘disappointed’. He was prepared to use whatever insights he had on this ‘power’ to alter the outcome of the upgrade—

—but that moment never came. The upgrade stones weren’t even needed as the Devouring Chains was immediately upgraded into a +11 rather than fail. He had been so prepared for the Upgrade Technique to fail so he could relish in that power to change the outcome again.

Reality was reality in the end, however.....he had instead succeeded in upgrading the first time around! Needless to say, Bai Yunfei hadn’t anticipated that.

“Should I try again then?” Bai Yunfei muttered. There was hesitance in his voice.

“Nah....it’s too risky.”

He shook his head.

“But what a shame! What a great big shame....”

Being in the ‘state’, or ‘zone’, was as quick to go as it was to come. The spark of enlightenment that hit Bai Yunfei was now gone, and Bai Yunfei no longer felt confident in his chances to change the outcome now. If he were to try, he would most

definitely fail to succeed. And if he failed, then the +11 heaven-tier soul armament would be lost to him.

And that would really be a crying shame.

.....

Still, he learned a lot in these past few hours. That ‘power’ to be able to change the upgrading outcome felt a little more familiar to him now, and that was already a great big step in improvement.

There’d definitely be a day where he’d be able to grasp and use that ‘power’!

Calming down, Bai Yunfei this time looked at the chain to check on its stats.

“Another +11 heaven-tier soul armament, and its soul compatibility is forty-three percent somehow. If I upgrade it again, it’ll become a soulbound armament.” Bai Yunfei quirked a smile. “It’s additional effect seems to....increase the effects of the equipment effect and lower the soulforce of an enemy at the same time. Not bad....”

After a briefly study of the chains, Bai Yunfei stored it away into his space ring along with his cauldron. Stretching lazily, he strode out from the cave.

“It’s already night time huh....” He thought as he stared up at the starry canopus up above.

“You’re finally done, Yunfei! I was starting to think you’d be sleeping here for the night!”

Xiao Qi immediately came to greet him when he came outside.

Xiao Qi told him that Tang Xinyun and the others tried to come see him earlier in the evening, but since Bai Yunfei was busy repairing the Devouring Chains, they didn’t want to disturb him. Waiting a while, they decided ultimately to go back and rest. Crafting and repairing armaments was a lengthy process, and

sometimes it'd take multiple days to do. Tang Xinyun and the others were no stranger to such an event, and so they didn't find it weird.

“Ah, well, let's go back and rest then.” Bai Yunfei nodded and started for the road back to the academy.

At the foot of the mountain, Bai Yunfei was only just walking past the gates into the academy when he took in the sights. Since it was already late at night, the entire Tianhun Academy was deathly quiet and dim. As he walked across the paved ground, Bai Yunfei could even hear his own footsteps.

Up ahead was a building several dozen meters tall. It was chairman Mo's 'library'.

“Bzz.....”

Just as Bai Yunfei was a hundred meters away from the library, a strange sound started to hum into his ears. At the same time, the ground beneath him was starting to shake!

This sound was coming from down below!!

Chapter 685: Intruder

Bai Yunfei came to a sudden stop at this intrusion of sound and looked down to his feet.

“What powerful elemental earth....what’s going on?!”

If not for his power of perception, the sudden spike in elemental earth would’ve escaped his notice.

Two short moments after it went by, Bai Yunfei saw something from the left suddenly spark up in a brilliant shade of orange. The ground near the center of the lights rippled outwards like water for a moment before it started to rise and....let a single person explode out from it!!

The person ‘leapt’ out from the ground like a fish out of water. As the person slipped out, the two halves of the ground seemingly melded together to turn into solid earth once again.

The appearance of this person startled Bai Yunfei. Prior to this moment, he hadn’t thought someone else would be able to get this close to him without him noticing it beforehand!

He leapt backwards ten steps in precaution, adopting a defensive positioning against this person. “Who are you?!”

Having just appeared out from the ground, the man spat hatefully onto it when he resurfaced. When he realized Bai Yunfei was there, he looked surprised for a moment before immediately growing furious with killing intent! No sooner did Bai Yunfei shout out to him did the person bring their right hand up and thrust it into his direction!

A powerful amount of soulforce gathered around the palm before it disseminated into the air. The next thing Bai Yunfei felt was the earth around him starting to shake and glow with orange light. And then after several crackling sounds, nearly a hundred sharp points began to jut out from the ground to stab into Bai Yunfei!!

“Grrrrrrnnnnnnnn.....”

Like if the stone spikes were iron, they started to strike against each other with a chafing sound, completely encapsulating the area where Bai Yunfei was!

Whoever was standing in the center of it all surely would've been filled with more holes than a hornet's nest....

“Boom!!”

All was still for a second before a different shade of orange light started to shine between the cracks before blowing all the spikes apart. Clanging loudly, the spikes disintegrated away to reveal an orange sphere in the middle, and Bai Yunfei standing inside.

He stared at the enemy with an ominous expression. This person had tried to kill him without even saying a word. If not for his fast reflexes, Bai Yunfei would've lost his life here.

“Eh?”

Having planned on killing Bai Yunfei quickly, the person looked startled at their failure. The person hesitated for a moment, unsure of what to do. Then in a burst of orange light, the person took off to the left to try to escape from the area.

“Trying to run?!” Bai Yunfei's eyes followed after the person. “Xiao Qi!” He barked.

“Chirp!!!”

The bird took off from his shoulder at his command. Transforming larger in size, he flapped his wings once and sent five Spatial Edges at the person!

“Spatial tears!!”

The person cried out in astonishment and stopping dead in their tracks to allow the five Spatial Edges to fly past them. From their voice, the person was revealed to be a rather elderly person.

“Whoosh!!”

A red streak of light shot towards the elder at this moment of distraction. Moving swiftly like a snake, the light coiled around the elder's right leg!

“Ho!” Bai Yunfei exclaimed, surprised that he ‘caught’ onto the person so easily. He activated the Devouring Chain's effects as soon as he saw it connect.

The Devouring Chains shined darkly for a moment before seemingly turning into a pipe of some kind to transmit soulforce into Bai Yunfei.

The elder's eyes flew wide open as soon as they felt their soulforce start to be drained away into the soul armament. “The Devouring Chains!! You're from the Re—”

The person broke off from their sentence, their head turning abruptly to the left in panic. With another ‘tsk’, the elder revealed their aura at once. Orange light spilled out from the person's body as their power started to grow exponentially. With a small sneer, the person shook their right leg and shot upwards—the Devouring Chain had been shaken off without even a second of resistance!!

Bai Yunfei gave pause after the explosion of power, “A Soul King!”

He had thought the person was only a late-stage Soul Exalt before, but the person was actually a Soul King instead! But with an aura like that, this was only an early-stage Soul King and not a mid-stage one. That meant this was still a fightable battle.

The elder didn't even spare Bai Yunfei a second glance after the Devouring Chains was thrown off. Scanning the area, the elder took off towards the west as fast as possible, but the person didn't get far before a beam of light flew forward to slash down onto their face!

At some point during this altercation, a third person had entered the fight! This newcomer was relatively short and had a sword on

their back almost as long as they were tall. The moment when that beam of energy was blocked by the elder, the newcomer could be seen resheathing the sword back into its sheath.

This person was....the assistant chairman, Wu Dijian!

With their path forward blocked by Bai Yunfei, the other side by Wu Dijian, and a third by Xiao Qi, the elder glanced around furiously. Hesitating for a split moment, the elder immediately fled towards the one direction not covered!

The direction to the north of the academy where the Training Forest was!

.....

Wu Dijian looked around the area when he first appeared. He already saw that the person was trying to flee towards the north, but he was surprised to see Bai Yunfei here. “Bai Yunfei? What are you doing here?!”

“I....”

“It’s not safe here, hurry on back!”

Wu Dijian was already shouting for Bai Yunfei to go back though. Not even waiting for a response, the swordsman looked off towards the escaping person. “Hm....coming when the headmaster isn’t here, are they trying to get the attention of ‘that’? But having someone that isn’t even a mid-stage Soul King....they really aren’t treating me with any respect....”

With that, Wu Dijian took off into a blur of dark green light to give chase.

In the blink of an eye, the two people were beyond the Back Mountain. With them two gone, the area around the library was back to its normal quietness as if nothing had even happened in the first place....

Bai Yunfei stared at the two people flying away for a moment

before looking away, “Well....what’s going on here?”

“An intruder in Tianhun Academy? They’re clearly not here for anything good, but who are they?” Bai Yunfei muttered to himself, eyeing the ground beneath him where the elder had appeared from. “That person....was looking for something, maybe? What...was he looking for?”

He spread his soulsense out as he spoke, letting it travel towards the Training Forest.

“Eh?” No sooner did his soulsense reach a hundred meters away did he feel a strange energy prevent it from going any further!

“Strange...” Bai Yunfei narrowed his eyes. This barrier wasn’t something he could break. Did that Soul King from earlier fail to get across the barrier as well then?

“Forget it. Secrets of the academy are obviously secrets.....” Bai Yunfei sighed after a while. Preparing to leave in the opposite direction of Wu Dijian’s direction, Bai Yunfei decided that whatever was going on, it didn’t involve him.

.....

“Roar!!!!”

But several steps later, a faint roar could be heard from the north.

Bai Yunfei came to a stop several stops later at the sound. Turning his head back, he exclaimed, “This voice....

“That’s Xiao Lan!!” He cried out in surprise.

Stunned, Bai Yunfei whipped his head back to look at the direction of the cry, “Could this be....oh no! Xiao Qi, we’re going!!”

Waving his right hand, Bai Yunfei took out his Tempest Sword and took off into the skies in a blaze of green light. Xiao Qi took off after him, flying with speed no slower than Bai Yunfei.

Chapter 686: Xiao Lan's Battle

The depths of the Training Forest was normally a quiet place to be. But right now, it was a place filled with noise and light.

A giant beast three stories tall could be seen thrashing about in the forest. Cloaked in blue light as it thrashed underneath a giant mountain, the giant beast swiped out with its claws and swung its tail to fight.

This giant 'beast' was without a doubt a blue-eyes wyrm. Fighting with all its might, the wyrm was trying to attack what seemed to be an orange housefly flying around it.

“Roar!!”

Another furious roar exploded from the wyrm. Eyes glinting with a fearsome light, the wyrm leaned backwards and swung its giant tail out. It crashed against the mountainside with a resounding crash and sent dust and stone flying everywhere. Large pieces of stone shrapnel were sent out like a barrage from the impact zone to pelt at the orange figure.

“Hmph!!”

There was a sneer from within the orange light. A hand could be seen waving once, and then right in front of the orange light appeared a giant wall made of elemental earth. There was a crashing sound as the tail came smashing into it. Though the wall crumbled, the tail was sent flying back!

The right hand of the person within the orange light waved around again. A beam of orange light shot forth like an arrow to strike at the tail of the wyrm. Seemingly piercing through its elemental defense, the arrow struck into the wyrm's flesh with a sickening squelsh!

Blood poured down like rain as the wyrm let loose a pain-filled roar. Not at all weakening from its wound, the wyrm swept to the

right with a determined glare. Roaring loudly, it let loose a beam of elemental water to strike down the enemy!

The person in orange didn't seem like they were wanting to even fight the wyrm. Blocking the attack, the person cast a glance over to the left. Pausing for a moment, the person snarled and then flew to the left. From the looks of it, it seemed the person wanted to leave this place as fast as possible.

But no sooner did the person move did the elemental attack of the wyrm come into his trajectory to stop them!

“Damn!!” The person howled in anger. Killing intent kicking up by a notch, the person whirled around to stare at the wyrm and raised their right hand up. As if consolidating to become a sword, the energy around their hand then extended outwards to slash at the wyrm!

So much energy had gathered around the hand that it looked like a giant sword a hundred meters tall to strike down the wyrm!

“Roarr!!!”

The blue-eyes wyrm stared at the incoming attack with angered determination. Roaring loudly, it brought both its short forelimbs up and gathered as much power it had as a peak late-stage class six soulbeast. Elemental water converged all around the top of its head before forming a giant barrier to protect the wyrm from the incoming blade of elemental earth!

It was trying to stop the attack of a Soul King!

Even the earth-type Soul King was surprised the wyrm was trying to do so.

As was Bai Yunfei when he got within a kilometer of the two and saw what was going on.

“Xiao Lan!!” Bai Yunfei cried out in alarm. Pushing even more soulforce to his feet, Bai Yunfei called out his Cataclysmic Seal and had the fireseed inside it fuse into his own chest for preparation

for battle.

“Hold on you two!!” Suddenly, a person came flying out from the side to stop Bai Yunfei and Xiao Qi.

It was Wu Dijian.

Bai Yunfei looked incensed that Wu Dijian was stopping him, “Assistant chairman Wu, what do you mean by this?! Why are we not fighting that person? That soulbeast is a friend of mine, I must go help it, so don’t stop me!”

Wu Dijian looked a little unhappy at Bai Yunfei’s anger, “Bai Yunfei, what are you in a hurry for? Take a good look at the situation. With senior Long Zhen nearby, what right have you to interfere?”

“Senior Long Zhen?”

Bai Yunfei repeated numbly before staring to where Wu Dijian was pointing at. Two kilometers away to the right, there stood a single at the edge of the battlefield. This person was a little hard to see with it being night time, so if it weren’t for Wu Dijian’s pointing, Bai Yunfei would’ve missed this person entirely.

As if sensing that Bai Yunfei was looking at them, the person raised their head to stare back. At the same time, Bai Yunfei heard a gentle voice transmit itself into his mind.

“Have no fear. This old man is quite confident in his strength.”

This voice—it really was Long Zhen! Bai Yunfei nearly gasped at the voice.

This sensation felt extremely similar to the mental link his Charm Bracelet was capable of...Soul Communication! This was something only a late-stage Soul King was capable of doing!

That reassured Bai Yunfei almost immediately. Though surprised by how Long Zhen spoke, he was now completely confident that the blue-eyes wyrm was no longer in any real danger.

With Long Zhen there, Bai Yunfei didn't have to do anything.

“Yunfei, what is senior Long Zhen trying to do?! How is Xiao Lan even going to win against that person? Are we really not going to help him? Xiao Lan's going to get killed!”

Unlike Bai Yunfei, Xiao Qi was still in a flux. He observed the battle with unease as he spoke to Bai Yunfei.

“Can't you see? Senior Long Zhen is trying to draw out the the blue-eyes wyrm's latent power so it can breakthrough....is that wyrm close to becoming a class seven then? Fighting a battle like this is the best way to breakthrough then.”

Wu Dijian answered casually. He was watching the battle take place with some interest.

“I see.....”

Bai Yunfei understood the meaning behind that. It was in the moments of greatest danger that one would have a great chance to breakthrough. He himself was no stranger to opportunities like that, Bai Yunfei just never thought that Long Zhen would be employing a method like that to train the wyrm.

Compared to his own experiences, the wyrm was in an extremely 'safe' situation. With the master watching nearby, there wouldn't be any chance of danger getting out of hand.

.....

As they were speaking, the battle between the Soul King and the blue-eyes wyrm had already underwent several developments.

The barrier the wyrm put all its energy into had only lasted against the elemental earth for a scant few seconds before it burst apart with a loud bang. The force of the blow had been strong enough to cause the ground beneath the wyrm to crater even deeper, and the wyrm itself was bent down in fatigue. Blood could be seen dripping from its many wounds onto the ground like rain.

“Roarr!!!”

Another pain-filled roar erupted from the wyrm as it staggered two steps back, still reeling from the blow. It crashed against the mountain behind it, and the remaining energy from the previous blow had dissipated soon afterwards. Raising its head to look back at the enemy, the wyrm wanted to try and attack again, but it couldn't even gather any more soulforce anymore. Eyes brimming with reluctance, the wyrm gave a deep grumble from its bloody jaws and began to form elemental water in front of it. The convergence of the elemental water looked a little unsteady, as if it was ready to collapse at any second. But somehow, the elemental water grew denser and denser in color and energy and....had a tint of black in it!!

As if some sort of power had suddenly awakened inside the wyrm, everyone could feel a strange energy emanate from it. It wasn't very powerful, but it gave a very gloomy sensation to the senses.

But it didn't matter just what kind of transformation was taking place inside the wyrm—it was already in a state where it could hardly even stand. If the earth-type Soul King bothered to strike, the wyrm would be killed!

The eyes of the earth-type Soul King lit up at the opportunity. With another raise of their right hand, the nearby mountain started to tremble and the boulders on it started to avalanche. By his command, the boulders slowly rose into the air, encapsulated by elemental earth, and transformed into giant bullets as they sped towards the injured wyrm!

As soon as the boulders were sent out, the earth-type Soul King immediately took off in the opposite direction! The Soul King didn't even care to see if it hit, they just wanted to get away as soon as possible!

Chapter 687: The Power of Long Zhen: Soul Extraction!

The earth-type Soul King had only one goal, and killing the blue-eyes wyrm wasn't it. As long as the Soul King could get the expert watching the battle from far away distracted enough in trying to save the wyrm, the Soul King would hopefully be able to get away.

The Soul King felt so much regret that he wanted to die right now. He had only gone into the Training Forest because of an on-the-spot judgement call. As he was thinking himself lucky in not coming across any blockades, this damnable class six soulbeast came into his path. Though normally he'd be able to kill such soulbeasts with a flick of his finger, this one was somehow stopping him!

The many powerful soulbeasts in the Training Forest wasn't unknown to him, and he also felt it extremely fortunate that none of the class seven soulbeasts came over to him. He felt a little worried when the auras of Wu Dijian and Bai Yunfei came to a stop a little farther away, but the bigger fear on his mind was....he could feel an even greater danger somewhere in the nearby vicinity. It was just his 'intuition' speaking, but even for those in the Soul King realm, 'intuition' was something many people relied heavily on in order to live.

Hence why the Soul King was in such a desperate rush to leave this place.

The Soul King was also feeling a little furious at his current predicament.

While he infiltrated Tianhun Academy by himself, he had a comrade that was meant to coordinate and plan with him, but right now, neither rescue or support was coming!

But that wasn't very important right now. He had only one

thought on his mind, and that was to....escape with all his might!

The attack was just twenty meters away from the wyrm by now, and it didn't seem like either Wu Dijian or Bai Yunfei would make a move—this made the Soul King very happy.

But then a sneer immediately vanquished any single hope he had left....

“Hmph!!!”

A relatively silent voice spoke out from the skies, almost so faint that people thought they were just hearing things. But it was real. As if activated by that sneer, the entire area around the Soul King froze up!

It really was as if the world froze. Like a silent picture, everything went still in the air.

Even the giant boulders flying at the blue-eyes wyrm seemed to pause in the air just ten meters away. Likewise, the earth-type Soul King froze there like a statue. Even the light around his body wasn't moving an inch!

The world froze for a second before without warning, it went back into motion yet again.

“Boom!!”

An explosion rung through the area as soon as everything was back to normal. The boulder that had been so close to claiming the wyrm's life had suddenly exploded into fine dust! It scattered into the air and across the wyrm's face, but it did nothing to exacerbate the wyrm's wounds.

When the earth-type Soul King regained control over himself, the Soul King looked panic-stricken and remained stuck to his spot!

A single person had somehow reached the front of him!!

This person wore gray robes and had grizzly-white hair. Almost

as if he had been there the entire time, this person stared at the earth-type Soul King with a calm look.

This person was Long Zhen!

“You...” The earth-type Soul King’s eyes widened and his pupils dilated to the size of needles. Then like a coiled spring, the Soul King launched himself backwards with all his might to try and retreat backwards.

But before a single step could even be taken, the stare in Long Zhen’s eyes intensified for a moment with a glimmer of light. Simultaneously, the earth-type Soul King came to an immediate stop! Even the soulforce in the Soul King’s body was squashed down! There was a grunt from the Soul King, and then his eyes grew unfocused!

This was....a soul attack!!

If a soul attack could cause such a reaction from an early-stage Soul King like this one, it only stood to reason that Long Zhen was a terrifyingly strong person....

Then came an event that fully cemented just how terrifying Long Zhen was.....

Still staring at the frozen earth-type Soul King, Long Zhen slowly reached out with his right hand and pressed it against the Soul King’s head.

Then.....

“Agggghhhh!!!!!”

A shriek of pain erupted from the earth-type Soul King’s mouth! His eyes were as wide as dinner plates now, bulging so much that they almost seemed like they would pop out from his head. His jaw was stretched wide open to scream loud enough to make his throat hoarse, and his body was spasming as if shocked by lightning for an extremely grotesque sight!

This chilling sight continued for two seconds longer before Long Zhen grunted and took away his right hand and brought it upwards.

What Bai Yunfei saw next nearly saw to his heart coming to a stop almost.

When Long Zhen's right hand detached from the earth-type Soul King's head, it looked as if he was grabbing something out from the Soul King's head. Then when it pulled away, there really was 'something' being pulled out!

A black 'shadow' could be seen in his hand, seemingly coming from the interior of the Soul King's head to be pulled out by Long Zhen!

When this black 'shadow' was pulled out, the earth-type Soul King stopped screaming immediately. His body stiffened at once as if really becoming like a statue, and then....he dropped from the skies!

There was no soulforce left in his body!

“Soul Extraction!!”

Bai Yunfei heard Wu Dijian exclaim under his breath. Turning his head, he saw Wu Dijian staring at Long Zhen in shock. The older man looked as if he wanted to say something, but had thought the better of it and said nothing.

“Soul.....Soul Extraction??” Bai Yunfei rolled the two words over on his tongue in confusion.

Then his eyes flickered back onto the black 'shadow' in Long Zhen's hand, “Is....is that the 'soul' of the Soul King?!”

He wasn't seeing things—this black 'shadow' he was looking at right now looked exactly like that of a person's silhouette! But the most important thing was that he could feel an unbelievable amount of soulforce from the shadow!

It was soulforce at its very essence! An intangible state of being that could very much be said to be pure energy—the energy of soulforce!

.....

Just as Bai Yunfei was trying to digest this inexplicably amazing sight, Long Zhen gave one last look at the soul energy in his hand and then at the head in front of him with a small smile. With a shake of his hand, the soul was.....thrown away!

The black shadow sailed through the air and traveled several kilometers before ‘hitting’.....the blue-eyes wyrm! Rather than bounce off, the soul simply melted into its head!

Originally, the blue-eyes wyrm had been bent down low to the ground, growling slightly in fatigue. Its black and blue energy was flickering and trembling around its body, flickering as if they would be extinguished at any second. The moment when the soul entered its body, the wyrm froze up. The minute tremblings of its body started to grow even more fearsome, and then after a few seconds, it brought its head up to let loose a heaven-shattering roar!

“Roarrrrrrr!!!!”

Soulforce poured out from the blue-eyes wyrm like never before. The black and blue energies in its body exploded in intensity before taking material form as two twisters of energy to swirl and protect its body!

As Bai Yunfei looked on in both confusion and shock, he heard Wu Dijian right next to him sigh. “As expected of Long Zhen, he’s capable of something like ‘Soul Extraction’....Haha, with ‘luck’ like this, breaking through to become a class seven will definitely not be a problem for it....”

Bai Yunfei was even more surprised at Wu Dijian’s words, though his eyes lit up with a great deal of joy.

Was Xiao Lan really on the verge of becoming a class seven soulbeast?!

Chapter 688: Xiao Lan's Breakthrough

The black and blue energies that wrapped around Xiao Lan like twisters started to calm down almost immediately. Shrinking and wrapping around the wyrm, it soon became a giant black and blue cocoon about three stories tall to cover the wyrm completely. Cut off from the world, the only thing that could be felt inside it was the wyrm's soulforce and nothing else.

Bai Yunfei stared nervously at the cocoon, watching intently on just what was going on to Xiao Lan. He saw a person flicker to their side, and then Long Zhen's person came into sight right next to Wu Dijian. He hesitated for a second before taking Xiao Qi over to greet him.

When he arrived in front of Long Zhen, Bai Yunfei bowed and spoke, "This junior pays his respects to senior Long."

Long Zhen gave him a curt nod. Appraising Bai Yunfei, Long Zhen looked slightly surprised, "It has been but a moment since we last met, and yet you've become a peak late-stage Soul Exalt already? Hm...very good. You are as talented as I expected."

Bai Yunfei took the praise in stride, "Senior praises this one too much. It was but only a fortunate matter."

Wu Dijian took a second look at Bai Yunfei at this. Although he was surprised at the leap in Bai Yunfei's strength, now wasn't the time to be talking about it. Turning to Long Zhen, he spoke, "Senior Long Zhen, that person was hidden underneath the academy library, but we know not his identity...."

Long Zhen smiled. "Worry not, this old man scanned through his soul when I Extracted it and learned plenty enough. This person is a wandering soul cultivator from the Brocade Province. His name is Zhang Fanren. As you surmised, he was trying to infiltrate the academy and get 'its' attention. However, I was unable to find any information on the real mastermind. The most important

information was hidden deep in his soul and I was unable to retrieve it. He has a few comrades with him, but since they're not here, they must've fled by now....”

“Soul Scan!!” Bai Yunfei took a half-step back. Just as the name applied, the ability to scan souls meant one was able to look through one's soul and view their memories!

“So....something like that is possible!” He exclaimed to himself. He himself was capable of something similar to this—like in the case of Qiu Bailu. By using the effect of the Charm Bracelet, Bai Yunfei was able to sift through Qiu Bailu's memories. But he was only able to do that through a combination of luck and the application of his Charm Bracelet's additional effect. Long Zhen was able to do the same thing with just a lift of his hand!

He wasn't using the effect of an equipment or anything, this was just the application of his actual strength!

“When one becomes strong enough like that, will they be able to scan souls easily like that?” Bai Yunfei questioned, “But....what kind of level is that? A late-stage Soul King? Or maybe even....stronger than that?”

Wu Dijian narrowed his eyes at the name. “Zhang Fanren? I've heard of him before, but never did I hear anything about him joining any group....why is he here in the Capital? And if he was hiding underneath the library means he was prepared for this. His comrades....who are they?”

He looked over to Bai Yunfei. “Bai Yunfei, you were the first to see him, right? Was there anything out of the ordinary when you saw him?”

“Nothing.” Bai Yunfei shook his head. “I was only passing by the library when I saw him leap out from the ground. I saw him try to leave right before you came, but nothing out of the ordinary.”

“I see....then there's no clues then....” Wu Dijian sighed in

sorrow. “Forget it. I’ll speak to the chairman when he gets back. Not like this is the first time this happened. There’ll always be people who are plotting for ‘it’. Not strange at all....”

His mutterings surprised Bai Yunfei, ‘not strange at all’?! An intruder coming into the academy was....’normal’?!

And....’it’??

Bai Yunfei was curious. He already heard that there was ‘something’ underneath the academy, but to have people actually spying on ‘it’....what in the world was it??

As curious as he was, Bai Yunfei knew better than to think about things he didn’t have the answer to. Whatever ‘it’ was, it was a giant secret and a problem for the seniors to worry about. Bai Yunfei wasn’t nearly strong enough to be allowed in on this ring of seniors and had no right to know about whatever it was.

.....

Afterwards, Wu Dijian cleaned up Zhang Fanren’s body while Long Zhen observed the blue-eyes wyrm’s situation. Bai Yunfei and Xiao Qi both stood nearby to watch the wyrm nervously.

A group came by some time later to speak with Wu Dijian. They conversed softly to one another for a moment before leaving together, indicating that they were from the academy and were here to investigate the source of the intrusion.

Bai Yunfei had never seen these people before, but they were all Soul Kings!

As things would appear, the object underneath the library was something extraordinarily important if the strongest of the academy were all here to come investigate the matter.

Time went by slowly after that. The moon was already drawing to an end on the other side of the horizon when all of a sudden, the wyrm suddenly lit up up in energy!

The night sky was interrupted by a tremendous outburst of energy. Shining and dazzling in light as it shined, the energy illuminated the area for an entire kilometer. Countless rays of black and blue light shone from the wyrm and then reconverged back onto it.

“Elemental water and elemental darkness....? When did Xiao Lan have an affinity for darkness? I remember that it only had an affinity for water when I first met him....what in the world happened to Xiao Lan in that small moment we were apart in the Soulbeast Forest?” Bai Yunfei muttered to himself in confusion over the wyrm’s elemental darkness. He did notice before that Xiao Lan had a second affinity in it, but it wasn’t very clear before. Right now, Bai Yunfei could clearly tell this second affinity was for elemental darkness, and right now, it was almost as strong as its affinity for elemental water—which was very odd.

All of the elemental energy within a kilometer radius of the wyrm was forcibly attracted to where the wyrm stood. Before long, the wyrm was completely surrounded by a large ball of elemental energy so massive that Bai Yunfei took a step back in fear. Wisps of soulforce could be felt from within the ball of energy, and it was slowly growing stronger and stronger....

The owner of that soulforce was the blue-eyes wyrm!

“Roarrrr!!!!!”

A draconic roar exploded into the air from where the wyrm stood. Like a surging torrent of water, the elemental energy in the area started to whirl around with the wyrm standing at the center!

With every breath, Bai Yunfei could see a blue and black ball of elemental energy grow in size. Pulsating like a heart, the ball of energy had light shine from its body with each ‘pulse’. Slowly, the ball started compress bit by bit. From several hundred meters to a hundred meters, then from several dozen meters to just ten meters....

Finally, the bicolored ball of energy shrunk to about three meters in diameter, but still big enough to fully hide the blue-eyes wyrm from sight!

But its soulforce was completely hidden inside of the ball!

.....

Long Zhen smiled at the sight from his position far away. “Haha, it’s finally over.”

Bai Yunfei’s eyes lit up with excitement as he tried to see just what was going on within the ball of energy and light.

“Crack.....”

There was a sharp cracking sound as a single line ran through the ball of energy, shattering the silence that had been there before. A dazzling glow of light poured out from the crack, and with it, a tremendous wave of soulforce exploded outwards!

“Ahh!!!”

The cracks over the ball of energy multiplied before a joyful cry could be heard from within. Like two halves of a shell, the ball of energy fell apart to reveal a large but built man inside!!

Blue and black light shined from behind the man so his face couldn’t be seen. However, this man was gigantic in size in that he looked to be at least two meters tall. He was muscular in frame and was like a tower of intimidating muscle.

Needless to say, this man was the blue-eyes wyrm!

It....no, the wyrm was now a he....

He was finally a class seven soulbeast and was now capable of taking human form!!

Chapter 689: Long Lan

The massive flow of energy slowly started to ebb away from Xiao Lan as he observed his new body in delight. Seemingly trying to open his mouth, Xiao Lan looked as if he was trying to speak and say something in his excitement.

He snapped out from his excitement a brief moment later to turn his head and fly on over to where Bai Yunfei and Long Zhen were.

“Master.”

Xiao Lan spoke in happiness as he greeted his master respectfully. His voice was gravelly and a little deep-sounding, but also very straightforward.

There was a look of affection on Long Zhen’s face, who nodded in satisfaction. “Very well, you’ve done your master well.”

He retrieved a set of gray robes and handed it over to Xiao Lan, “But first put on some clothes.”

Xiao Lan was naked at this moment!

Xiao Lan lit up with excitement once again after being praised by his master. Taking the set of robes and putting it on, he looked to Bai Yunfei and Xiao Qi next with a rather silly-looking smile. “Yunfei, Xiao Qi, you’re both here too I see.”

Now could Bai Yunfei see his body clearly. Xiao Lan was quite obviously a head taller than he was and was of a stockier built. Both his arms and legs were quite thick, and his muscles were as hard as stone almost. Despite the ‘intimidating’ appearance he had, his aura was rather childish. His hair was short and was no longer than an inch all over his head. His eyes, while large, were more pure rather than ‘evil’, making him look a bit like a blockhead.

If not for the familiar soulforce he could feel from this person, Bai Yunfei would’ve refused to believe this person was the very

same blue-eyes wyrm. The transformation from soulbeast to human felt a little too sudden for him to take in.

“Haha, Xi....Xiao Lan, congratulations. You’ve finally become a class seven.”

To call such a ‘man’ ‘Xiao Lan’ felt far too strange, Bai Yunfei had barely been able to say it.

Xiao Lan didn’t seem to care, however. He merely smiled in response. “Haha!! I have! I didn’t think I’d really be able to breakthrough this quickly, but it was all thanks to master’s guidance! Haha....I forgot to tell you, master has already given me a name, I am now.....Long Lan!”

“Long Lan?” Bai Yunfei repeated the name before nodding. “Haha, then congratulations on having a proper name now. I’ll be sure to call you that from now on.”

“Xiao Lan, you’ve finally become a class seven, congratulations!” Xiao Qi flapped his wings on top of Bai Yunfei’s shoulders without at all caring for Xiao Lan’s new name. At the same time, the bird gave him an inquisitive look, “But....how’d you turn into something like this?? You’re like a mountain, stupid and heavy. You probably won’t be able to walk through some of the smaller doors, what’s so good about your new height then?”

Long Lan paused briefly for a moment, not expecting such an answer. A short second after, he smirked, “Che, what’s so bad about being tall? Don’t you think I look far more ‘formidable’ now? Haha.....I’m a class seven like you now AND I can take human form!! Didn’t you say before I wouldn’t be able to humanize? Well how about now? Hmph....”

Pleased with his retort, he gave a stunning smirk and stroked his chin.

“Hmph! What’s so good about humanizing anyways. I’ll be able to do that sooner or later!!” Xiao Qi chirped in annoyance.

“Besides, even if you’re a class seven and can humanize, it doesn’t mean you’re stronger than me!”

“Hey, that might not be true! I’m a lot stronger than I used to be, I’m sure I can beat you now!”

“Keep dreaming! You never beat me when we were both class six, it won’t be any different now!”

“The past is the past, and the present is the present. If you’re so scared, why don’t we fight?”

“Let’s fight then, I’m not afraid of you!”

“.....”

Bai Yunfei sighed and shook his head at the banter between Xiao Qi and Long Lan. “Alright you two,” he interjected, “you’ve both said your piece. Now that you’re both class sevens, you shouldn’t be acting like children, will it hurt if you two act more like your actual strengths? In any case, senior Long Zhen is present, stop being a bother to him.”

“Haha, it’s quite alright.” Long Zhen chuckled. “Don’t try to change who you are just because you’ve gotten stronger. A child as ‘pure’ as this is something this old man hasn’t seen in a very long time, how excellent....”

He turned to Long Lan.

“However, now that you are a class seven, you must earnestly try to cultivate and stabilize your strength. Say goodbye to your two friends for now, you can speak with them another da.”

Bai Yunfei immediately spoke to Long Lan in response, “Train well, Long Lan, go with senior Long Zhen and cultivate.”

“Alright.” Long Lan nodded. “I’ll be going back with master first then. I’ll come look for you two when I’m done.”

.....

The skies was barely starting to light when Bai Yunfei came out

from the Training Forest. Feeling a little fatigued, Bai Yunfei headed straight home and collapsed onto his bed to rest.

He had spent the majority of today trying to repair the Devouring Chains and then upgrading it, then in the middle of the night, he also had to look over Long Lan. He really wanted to sleep.

He fell into a nice and sound slumber soon afterwards. By the time he woke up and strode out from his room refreshed, it was already nearing the end of the day.

At a second glance, Bai Yunfei realized Xiao Qi wasn't here. By using their soul contract, he could sense that Xiao Qi was within the academy.

“That kid, did he go looking for Xiao Bai?” Bai Yunfei shook his head, a faint smile on his lips.

Exiting his compound, Bai Yunfei first headed for the Soothing Heart. He wanted to tell Dan Teng that the tear in his soul was fully healed, so he needn't come to the Soothing Heart twice a day for some Soul Consolidating Tea anymore.

After that, he headed straight for the academy.

The more he drew close to the academy, the more students he saw on the way. Clumped in groups of twos and threes, a greater number of students than usual were walking out from the academy, many of them bidding farewell to one another.

Today, as it seemed, was the final day of instructions for the year. Plenty of students were preparing to leave the academy and return home for a reunion.

Bai Yunfei prepared for this 'weekend' to be the final day of instructions as well. Telling his students there'd be a test, then the class would be adjourned for three months in observance of the break.

Bai Yunfei walked through the sixth year area on the way and straight towards where the dormitories of the crafting class were.

As he drew close, a group of people were just on their way out.

He could recognize most of them: Tang Xinyun, Kou Tingting, Fang Tianmeng, Fang Yong, Zheng Kai, Mo Chen, and even Ye Ming.

Likewise, the people in the group recognized Bai Yunfei when he got close. It was Zheng Kai who spoke out first, “Hey, you still came here, Yunfei? We heard about what happened last night from Xiao Qi, are you alright?”

“I’m fine.” Bai Yunfei smiled, “I didn’t take part in the fight, so I wasn’t injured. Where are you all going?”

“Ah, well, we were on our way to eat dinner.”

Bai Yunfei eyed the group, “And the others?” He asked Mo Chen.

“Big brother Ouyang and the others had to go.”

“Oh.” Bai Yunfei nodded. Suddenly realizing someone was missing from their group, he gave a double take. “Eh? Where’s Doraemon?!”

“Little Rui and the Fifth Princess went to the Palace to play, I think they won’t be back until later.” Tang Xinyun smiled.

“What?” Bai Yunfei blinked, “The Palace? And...with the Fifth Princess?”

“Yes, haha. The Fourth Prince came by earlier this afternoon with the Fifth Princess. She met little Rui at the time and the two got along great enough for the princess to invite her to the Palace, so they’re both there now....”

“.....” Bai Yunfei was astonished, Doraemon was with the princess Wu Ping?? Were the two of them really such good friends already? While he did want to introduce the two sooner or later, Bai Yunfei didn’t think they’d go ahead and meet by themselves and get along so easily.

And the two were already such good friends that they were both

in the Palace of all places for their playdate....

Chapter 690: Vacation Plans

The group chattered with one another as they walked out from the academy. Watching the students thin from here on out, Bai Yunfei looked back to Mo Chen and the others, “Now that the academy is in recess, do you plan on going back home, Mo Chen?”

“Yeah, most of us are going to go back home. My home’s a little far in the Prosperous Hill Province. Big brother Ye Ming and Zhang Zhifeng both live even farther. Even with an airship, it’ll take them ten days at least.”

Airships, as it was known on the continent, were ‘advanced’ forms of transportation. Like a Way Stone, airships were a relatively modern invention introduced to the continent. Simply put, they are flying-type soul armaments on a very large scale. While not relatively fast compared to their tiny counterparts, they were long-lasting and quite practical.

Even Soul Kings aren’t capable of flying several consecutive days non-stop. Their bodies would get worn down sooner or later, and their soulforce would have to be replenished. Airships on the other hand were powered by plenty of wind-type primal stones and the soulforce of multiple ‘aviators’ who’d switch off day and night to power it.

Of course, crafting such a massive vehicle like an airship required a staggering cost and were thus not available to the public for use. Even with the tremendous manpower the empire had, their continent had only a few major cities in which the airship would fly to. And even then, only the ‘honorable’ could ride upon the airship. ‘Admission’ onto the airship was so expensive that the majority of soul cultivators could only give up on their dreams to ride on one.

Aside from Fang Tianmeng who was an orphan, the rest of the students in the crafting class were all from important

backgrounds, the fourth prince Wu Yang and Mo Wanxia most especially. Their families were all powerful and thus why they sent their children to Tianhun Academy. It was in their hopes that their children would be able to distinguish themselves here in the academy and be invited into the Tianhun School, which would serve to boost their family's prestige even more.

So now that Tianhun Academy was done for the year, these students would naturally go back home and be 'interrogated' by their families. Since they were the ones to join the only class that taught the art of crafting, just how happy would their families be with them when they get back?

The gears in Zheng Kai's mind turned as he listened to Bai Yunfei talk about their vacation plans. Glancing over to Kou Tingting first, he spoke to Bai Yunfei, "Speaking of vacations, what do you plan to do, Yunfei? Stay in the Capital? Or go somewhere else?"

"Me?" Bai Yunfei asked. Now that he thought about it, he never really thought about it himself. There were plans to go back to the Crafting School, but right now....since the person he wanted to see was here in the Capital, Bai Yunfei didn't really feel the urge to hurry on back just yet.

He turned the question over to Tang Xinyun and Kou Tingting, "Xinyun, Tingting, what plans do you two have? Will you both be returning to the school?"

"Well...." Tang Xinyun's words trailed off. The three of them had only just came from the Crafting School, and none of them were really in any rush to go back. Not knowing what to say, Tang Xinyun looked to Kou Tingting for help.

"Let's not worry about returning back to the school for now. It took us a while to get here after all, let's stay a bit before anything...." Kou Tingting responded, "Why don't we take a look in the provinces around the Capital? The beautiful world we live in.....there's so many places we've yet to see! As soul cultivators

blessed with longer lives than commoners, we can't just waste it away in our training. We should travel and take in the sights. We've only one life in this world after all, what do you think?"

"Traveling, is it?" Bai Yunfei smiled. "I can agree with that. Now that I think about it, all of the places I went to were mainly for the sake of training. I never really took in the sights of the places I went to....we should go traveling like commoners do, then, and see just how beautiful the world can be."

He looked to Tang Xinyun, "What do you think, Xinyun?"

She nodded. "I would like that, we've....seen most of the Capital already. Traveling would be a nice change of pace."

Tang Xinyun didn't have too high of a favorable opinion of the Capital. She knew just how many times Bai Yunfei was in danger here, so she felt the Capital to be an unsafe place. To leave such a place like this sooner rather than later would only soothe her worries.

The three of them talked a little longer about their plans to travel. By the side, Zheng Kai was squirming a little bit. He was hoping that Kou Tingting would want to stay in the Capital so he could take her to a few more places. But with how things were developing, his chances of that were getting smaller and smaller, weren't they?

"Well then, which places are you all planning to visit?" He clapped his hands in interjection.

"I haven't really thought about it...." Bai Yunfei tapped his chin, "I think I heard the Southward River Province is a beautiful place. I've never been there either, why don't we go there?"

Having no objections to that, Tang Xinyun and Kou Tingting both nodded their heads in approval.

Zheng Kai's eyes lit up, "Southward River Province? That's a very good place to visit, and they say there's plenty of beautiful gi

—er, beautiful landscapes. Legends actually say that’s the place where the Founder Wu Tianhun was born. I’ve been there several times and I heartily recommend going there to tour.”

Bai Yunfei gave him a small cryptic smile, “What, do you want to come with us?”

“Hehe....” Zheng Kai smiled almost apologetically, “You have to have someone that knows the area in order to have a tour, don’t you?”

What he was going for was obvious for everyone to see. Both Fang Tianmeng and Fang Yong smiled behind their hands while Mo Chen looked on at him in admiration at his tactic.

“Well....” Bai Yunfei glanced over to Kou Tingting who had a strange look on her face. “I won’t be the one to make that decision.....”

“Don’t be—” A little panicked, Zheng Kai took Bai Yunfei aside. “Brother, don’t be so disloyal to me like that! The eternal happiness of your brother is fully dependent on your help, brother!”

Right as Bai Yunfei was thinking about whether or not he should help Zheng Kai, Tang Xinyun spoke up first, “Oh? Little Rui is back!”

Everyone glanced over to where she was pointing. Coming from the gates of the academy, a shade of pink light was flying quickly over to them with feet blazing red in light and face flushed with a red hue. Her skirt floated with the wind as did her pigtails, and a white pig could be seen in the young woman’s arms. With how she was traveling, plenty of people on the road turned to look at her.

Who else could this be but Huangfu Rui?

Bai Yunfei was excited to see Huangfu Rui at first, but then his smile faded away into surprise when he saw just how out of breath she was. “Doraemon? What’s wrong? Why are yo—”

Huangfu Rui thrust the little white boar up for him to look at before he could even finish his sentence, “Brother Strawhat—look!! Look!! Xiao Rourou can talk now!!”

“Ah?!”

Bai Yunfei didn’t even know what to make of the situation when the little white pig tried to squirm out from Huangfu Rui’s arms. A little peeved, it spoke, “Dai Dai, speaking isn’t something to be surprised about. I’m a peak late-stage class six, aren’t I? Being able to speak is normal, why are you trying to ‘show me off’....?”

Everyone’s eyes flew wide open as soon as the pig started to speak, Fang Tianmeng most of all. She pointed a finger at the pig, “Ah!! The little pig can speak!!”

Xiao Rourou glanced over in her direction, “So what if I can?? Are peak late-stage class six soulbeasts that can talk so strange? What a big fuss over nothing.....”

No one said a thing to that.

A few seconds later, it was Bai Yunfei who spoke up next. Still slightly surprised, Bai Yunfei gave the pig a suspicious look, “But....what’s....hold on, you say you’re a peak late-stage class six soulbeast? But how?!”

He could very clearly remember yesterday morning, Xiao Rourou had clearly only been a mid-stage class six! How did it become a peak late-stage in the span of a single day?!

“Hehe, isn’t he amazing??”

Huangfu Rui hugged Xiao Rourou to her chest and rubbed its head affectionately, “It’s all because of ‘Da Huang’ helping him. It only took a moment for Xiao Rourou to get so strong, and now Xiao Rourou can even talk!”

“Da Huang?!” Bai Yunfei asked, “What’s Da Huang?”

“Da Huang from Ping Ping’s house.” Huangfu Rui’s eyes shined

with admiration, “What a big....big tortoise!! It’s even bigger than old uncle turtle!”

She spun her hands around her head to emphasize just how large it was. With Xiao Rourou sticking to her right arm in order to stay on, the little pig rolled its eyes.

The ‘old uncle turtle’ Huangfu Rui was talking about was the soulbeast partner of her father (the second elder Huangfu Nan), a winged turtle from a long time ago....

“.....”

Bai Yunfei blinked several times before he finally made sense of what she was trying to say.

This ‘Ping Ping’ surely had to be referring to the fifth princess Wu Ping, and ‘Ping Ping’s house’ must’ve meant the Imperial Palace. So this ‘Da Huang’ was surely....

Now that he thought about there, he had heard of a ‘Da Huang’ in the palace somewhere. Wu Ping mentioned it before seemingly one of the times she brought Xiao Qi with her. They went to the stone area where Da Huang was said to live in the palace, but even with Wu Ping calling at the entrance for a very long time, Da Huang didn’t come out.

Claiming that Da Huang was ‘probably sleeping’, Wu Ping said it was best to not wake him up. Xiao Qi had his concerns about this amazing ‘Da Huang’, however, and felt that it was potentially a lie....

But now that Huangfu Rui had mentioned this ‘Da Huang’ again, it would seem to be that it was a ‘giant tortoise’? And....somehow it was able to elevate Xiao Rourou’s strength to a peak late-stage class six?!

With Huangfu Rui not going to be telling him anything important, Bai Yunfei stared at the little white in her arms still, “Brother pig, can you tell us what happened??”

Because the nickname of ‘Xiao Rourou’ was given to it by Huangfu Rui, Kou Tingting, and Tang Xinyun, Bai Yunfei would sometimes call it ‘brother pig’.

The pig was probably a lot older than he was, so calling him older brother wasn’t too wrong.

Xiao Rourou rolled its eyes, “Kid, before I tell you, there’s one thing I need to make clear. I just found out myself actually....”

He paused here to preen in the attention of the others, “Actually, I’m a dragon....”

Chapter 691: Dragon Boar.....

“Actually, I’m a dragon.....”

The faces of everyone froze up as soon as they heard what Xiao Rourou said. None of them knew how to react to something like that.

For a while, no one said a thing.

The fact that no one even gasped at what it said filled Xiao Rourou with discontent. “What, frightened? Snrk, is that it? Am I too amazing? I am a soulbeast who has the blood of the dragons running through my vein, it’s just dormant and was undiscovered. Senior Long Gui was able to see my potential and helped me awaken it, that’s why I’m suddenly so much stronger now. If I wasn’t afraid of rushing things, then I would’ve been a class seven already. But...I’ll definitely become a powerful being in the future!!”

It was trying to show off to everyone, but everything it said only made it sound very narcissistic and completely self-deluded almost. In its eyes, it already saw itself as a budding being to be beheld on the continent.

“.....”

Everyone looked at one another with a strange look on their faces. Bai Yunfei himself had a quirked smile on his lips as he ‘exclaimed’, “You’re....you said you’re a....dragon?!”

“That is correct!” Xiao Rourou stated in pride.

“Who told you?”

“Senior Long Gui.”

“Er...who is that?”

“That’d be Da—well, I cannot call him that name. The senior Dai Dai was just talking about. He is a ‘dragon turtle’, a soulbeast with

the bloodline of the dragon race in him. He is powerful beyond measure and one of the strongest in the world!”

“Are you talking about that ‘Da Huang’?!” Bai Yunfei cried out, this time in earnest. He could disregard the question about Xiao Rourou being a ‘dragon’ for now with this ‘Da Huang’ now back into play. Since Xiao Rourou was saying Da Huang was a ‘dragon turtle’, then there was a person—a soulbeast actually—that could somehow easily elevate Xiao Rourou’s strength due to being a super powerful soulbeast!

Zheng Kai’s eyes flew wide open. “Oh hell!!” He cried out in alarm, “You said ‘dragon turtle’ just now, didn’t you?! Are you talking about the legendary guardian of the Royal Family, the Dragon Turtle?!”

Bai Yunfei looked at him with a raised eyebrow, “You know about it?”

“Of course I know about it. Who doesn’t know about the legendary guardian of the Royal Family? But....who would’ve known the ‘Da Huang’ the Princess Wu Ping was talking about was that same being!” Zheng Kai exclaimed, “The Dragon Turtle is the ‘Guardian Beast’ the Royal Family has ‘worshiped’ for thousands of years. There’s a lot of stories about it, but I think the Dragon Turtle is one of the rare soulbeasts who can’t humanize and have one of the strongest defenses of them all. But how strong it is, no one really knows....people say that it’s been around since even before the Empire was founded, though.”

“It’s been living since then?” Bai Yunfei’s eyebrows flew up on his head, “Then....it’s been alive for at least two thousand years? Is that even possible?”

“Those are the rumors, how should I know?” Zheng Kai shrugged. “Even if they’re true, who’s going to know except for the Dragon Turtle itself?”

Bai Yunfei felt amazed. He never thought that the ‘Da Huang’ Wu

Ping was talking about would be such an amazing existence as the ‘Guardian Beast of the Royal Family’. That was by no means an appellation to take lightly. He had never heard of a dragon turtle before, but the fact that it was able to make Xiao Rourou even stronger in no time at all was proof of its strength. It was beyond what a class seven soulbeast should be capable of, so was it a....class eight? Or possibly even stronger maybe?!

Somewhat realizing everyone was now gossiping and talking more about the dragon turtle rather than itself, Xiao Rourou snorted in displeasure, “Hey hey, you lot. Don’t bother guessing wildly about what it is you’re thinking about. Even senior Long Gui doesn’t know how long he’s been living for himself. As for how strong he is....I don’t know myself. It’s definitely not what you all think it is though.”

Bai Yunfei reconcentrated his attention onto the little boar after that. “Then this Da....I mean ‘senior Long Gui’, said you have the blood of the dragon race in you?!”

Xiao Rourou stuck its chest out, “Correct! Senior Long Gui doesn’t know just how many generations it was hiding for, but he said that my body really does have the blood of a ‘dragon’. And....it’s as pure as senior Long Gui’s!! He said that with luck, I’ll definitely be able to ‘dragonize’!! I’ll become a soulbeast stronger than anything in the same class!”

“Dragonize??” Bai Yunfei raised an eyebrow, this was a relatively special sounding term. Xiao Rourou didn’t say that it’d be able to turn into a dragon, but it’d be able to ‘dragonize’. In other words, it wasn’t able to transform to become a true dragon, but it’d gain a few ‘dragon-like’ qualities.....

Still, there was an odd look on Bai Yunfei’s face at that. He stared at the snowy-white body of Xiao Rourou and then thought about how its body would turn crimson red like a ‘healthy boar’ whenever it fought. If the ability to Dragonize lead to things like that....the more such an ability felt amazing to Bai Yunfei.

But then came the hardest question to answer. How could a boar ‘Dragonize’?

The fact that Xiao Rourou was a magiboar was something that didn’t need verification. It was already a very rare soulbeast in its own right, but now that it was revealed it had the blood of the dragon race in it, then....

Bai Yunfei rubbed at his chin with his finger to think. “Well, in that case, you’re a....dragon boar?!”

Xiao Rourou rolled its eyes again, “I said I’m a dragon! Can you not add the ‘boar’ bit?!”

“Even if your relative is a dragon, that doesn’t change the fact that you’re a boar! You can’t just completely ignore one part of your ancestry like that!”

“.....”

Afterwards, the entire group listened to Huangfu Rui as she renarrated the ‘epic’ of her journeys in the Imperial Palace, her adventures with Wu Ping, and all the ‘beautiful’ things she saw in it. They continued out from the academy as she talked, and when Tang Xinyun told her about the plans to travel outside the Capital, all anyone could hear was Huangfu Rui’s excited shouts....

.....

That night in a dark room somewhere in the large compound of the Cheng.

“Damn it all!!”

A gloomy voice suddenly spoke out. There was a thud and then a flash of dark green light before the entire table was reduced to ashes. A single white-haired elder sat behind with his left hand holding onto a white jade slip, his eyes burning furiously as he stared at it.

This white jade slip was a recording slip. On the slip had but only

five words. “The plan has been postponed.”

.....

Outside the Capital, two figures in black soared through the night sky. The person on the left looked back to the Capital, which was growing tinier and tinier in the distance, “Are we really going to give up just like that? Mo Huangkong has gone to the Fate School, this is a rare chance to have. If we miss this opportunity, then just when will we have a chance like this again?”

The other person didn't look back. “Mo Huangkong might not be here, but there are still plenty of strong ones in the Capital. Now that things in the Capital have gotten tense, the Tianhun School are using what happened to the two Ministers' families to take action. All of our plants have been rooted out, we'll only be found out if we tried to stay. There'll be a time when we'll get 'that thing', but I can't guarantee our safety when we do.”

He paused for a moment to sigh. “That thing has already been sealed for a thousand years. We can afford to wait. But one day, it'll see the light of day and let the whole world know that the strongest type of soul armament aren't just the 'Regalia'!!”

.....

At the same time under a different part of the skies. In a completely unknown city countless distance away from the Capital.

The strongest person in this city was a person who hadn't been able to become a Soul King for the last few dozen years. It was more than likely this person would forever stay at the level of a peak late-stage Soul Exalt until he died. He was also the lord of the city's most powerful family.

Sitting alone in his ancient-looking room, the grizzly-haired man was meditating. Despite not being so sure about his future, the man always spent his days working towards to breaking through

and reaching his own personal goal of strength.

Suddenly, the old man felt something alert his senses. Eyes flying wide open, he suddenly realized there were two strangers standing there in the same room as him!

One of the two persons wore black robes as they stood there. This person's aura felt almost non-existent as if they were a ghost. The other person wore red robes, but it was a type of red that was stained with black shading. It was almost as if it was....the exact shade and color of congealed blood!

“Who—”

The old man was barely finished speaking when the person in the blood-colored robes disappeared from sight. All the old man saw was a withered hand suddenly spring up in his vision and latch onto his face!

Almost immediately, the elder's face began to shrivel up. Almost as if being sucked up, the man's vitality and life force began to decline sharply.

It didn't even take a minute for the very last vestiges of his soul force to be sucked up before the elderly man had been turned into a....dried up corpse!

Tossing the corpse away, the figure in red let out a satisfied groan. Turning his head towards a source of light, his eyes shined a strange red light that seemed to still thirst for blood almost.

Simultaneously, the ground beneath the place started to shake a bit, sending the previously silent compound into a loud commotion.

But rather than the commotion being that of confusion, it was that of....the howls of despair and anguish!

Chapter 692: Southward River Province

Known since the beginning of time for its beautiful landscape, the Southward River Province was the most scenic place in the entire Tianhun Continent. Two thousand years ago, the area was known as the 'Southern Nation', but with the founding of the empire, it was later called the 'Southward River Province'.

The weather in this province was beautiful all year round, and the scenery was almost supernatural in beauty. It was a veritable paradise of beautiful landscapes and wonderful mysteries.

At the borders of the Southward River Province was a giant mountain that towered over the land around it. There was a single road on this precipitous mountain, and right now, only a single group could be seen walking on it. There was a faint layer of fog around the mountain that made walking on the mountain road slightly dangerous. If one wasn't careful, then they'd find it very easy to make a misstep and go tumbling to the ground thousands of meters below where they'd die a violent death. But right at this moment, the group of people traveling on it seemed to be walking rather care freely, stepping across the road as if it was just an ordinary road without any dangers. They were even looking around the place and talking to themselves.

The group consisted of six people: three males and three females.

It was Bai Yunfei and his friends.

Leading the group from the front was the gray-robed Bai Yunfei. And right by his side was the just as young person, Zheng Kai. Behind them was Tang Xinyun, Kou Tingting, and Huangfu Rui. Walking behind those three were the stoically tall blue-eyes wurm who was in his newly-discovered human form, Long Lan.

Previously, the group made plans to go traveling as a vacation and left first from the Capital on an airship. They decided to walk the rest of the way after traveling across several provinces and take

their time in reaching the Southward River Province.

As brazen as always, Zheng Kai managed to tag along on the trip. All the finer details of the trip, such as where they'd eat, sleep, rest, and visit was handled by him, as was all the pampering of Kou Tingting. Through his unrelenting effort, Zheng Kai was at least able to have Kou Tingting have a slightly better opinion of him. As of now, she was at least willing to treat him as an ordinary acquaintance.

Long Lan on the other hand, was fed up with the past few days as of late. Ever since it became a class seven soulbeast, the entire Capital seemed to be in a buzz about it. With people coming left and right to the Training Forest to pay their respects to him, Long Lan had enough. When he heard Bai Yunfei was preparing to leave, Long Lan of course asked to go with him, as they used to travel before.

The 'circle' that was the Soul King community wasn't very large. The Soul Kings would come out to congratulate any newcomer and hopefully get to know them enough to establish a decent relationship. The case with Long Lan was slightly different, as when everyone came to him for their visits, most of them had the goal of trying to form a soul contract with him.

Many of the Soul Kings hadn't yet found a soulbeast to contract with. Most of the Soul Kings Bai Yunfei met for example, didn't have a soulbeast partner.

There was one big difference on how a soulbeast and soul cultivator got stronger; one of the biggest difference was in the aspect of 'time'. Soul cultivators had lives longer than a commoner, but they were still lacking in lifespan compared to a soulbeast. To make up for that, a soul cultivator had the inherent ability to learn even faster than a soulbeast.

A soul cultivator with decent talent for example, could get to the Soul Exalt realm within forty to fifty years and be considered

normal. A soulbeast on the other hand, would need almost a hundred years to become a class six.

And herein lied a problem.

If a soulbeast and soul cultivator of the same strengths were to enter a soul contract with one another, the soulbeast's increase in strength wouldn't compare to the soul cultivator's.

To better visualize the problem:

If there was a Soul Ancestor that contracted with a class five soulbeast, there'd be a chance for the Soul Ancestor to become a Soul Exalt, but the soulbeast would only become a late-stage class five.

Soul cultivators lived in a world of turmoil and danger. Any corner they traveled to would have their fair share of dangers, and battles to determine who'd live or die was unavoidable. Those soulbeasts who were weaker than their partner would always be in danger, and death was sometimes inevitable for them.

This rang extremely true for Soul Kings. Aside from the extraordinary few, just how many times did one have to struggle, fight, and kill for their lives to reach the height they were at now?? If the Soul King had a soulbeast partner, they were most likely not yet at the level of a Soul King yet. Class six soulbeasts were essentially useless in a battle where Soul Kings were involved, and at the same time, they were also very prone to dying.

Subsequently, those soul cultivators that had a soulbeast partner would often times find themselves losing their soulbeast partner by the time they became a Soul King.

A determined soul cultivator might then try to forge their own path on becoming a Soul King. Reaching the Soul King realm by themselves was comparatively harder than with one, and if they by chance failed to do so, then what was the point of going without one?

Therefore, the choice of having a soulbeast partner or not was a hard one everyone had to make.

On the other side of things, those who managed to become a Soul King without the help of a soulbeast partner would obviously try to find a class seven one to contract with. Class six and class seven soulbeasts were worlds apart in strength, and they were also a lot harder to contract with. None of them would contract with any soul cultivator without a good reason.

There was also a second consideration to take into account.

For those soulbeasts who didn't end up dying in a battle with their contractor, there was a chance that they'd simply outlive them. Since a soulbeast had a longer lifespan than a soul cultivator, they'd only grow stronger and stronger after time. But if their contractor was dead, then they wouldn't be able to contract with anyone else for as long as they lived.

So the fact that Long Lan was both uncontracted and a class seven soulbeast made him a veritable delicacy for everyone. Many Soul Kings came forward in hopes they'd be able to contract with him, or with someone from the younger generation of their families.

But Long Lan didn't care at all for these things. He didn't want to contract with any of them.

Long Zhen hadn't intervened on Long Lan's behalf, so Long Lan had to find Bai Yunfei out to leave. Long Zhen didn't intervene on that subject either and merely warned Long Lan to keep up with his training.

.....

“Wow!! Sis Yun, sis Kou, look!! Look! That boulder looks a lot like a pear! Eh?! And look at how beautiful that bird is! Look look! There's a strange cave!! Bro Strawhat, there's definitely treasure in there. We should go check it out! Or....I can go myself! Then the

treasure will be mine!”

Amidst all the chatting was the very loud but happy voice of Huangfu Rui as she hopped, skipped, and leapt forward on the road in excitement.

“Come back, Doraemon. That’s just a cave where snakes live in, there’s no treasure in there.” Bai Yunfei warned her right as the little girl was about to leap into the air after the cave.

Tang Xinyun took Huangfu Rui’s hand into her own to stop her from going anywhere. She looked up at the skies next, “It’s getting late, Yunfei. Should we start finding a place to rest for the night? We can just fly the rest of the way down the mountain instead of walking so we can find a place suitable to camp.”

It only made sense for them to travel like commoners if they were traveling, so everyone decided not to fly.

Zheng Kai took out an azure scroll from his space ring and unfurled it. Looking at its contents for a moment, he said, “According to this map, the closest city to us is Formagua City. It’s a little far still though. There’s a few villages on the way, so if we fly from here on out, we should be able to find one or two soon enough.”

Bai Yunfei nodded. As he was about to say something, he frowned and looked off into a distance just in time to see two streaks of light green light come flying at them.

He wasn’t the only one to notice the lights, “Xiao Qi and Xiao Bai are back.” Tang Xinyun mentioned.

They waited for both Xiao Qi and Xiao Bai to return before anything else. Pointing his right wing off into a distance, Xiao Qi spoke, “Yunfei, we saw an inn that way!”

“What??”

Everyone, Bai Yunfei most especially, was surprised, “What? There’s an inn up ahead?”

“There is!” Xiao Qi nodded, “It’s just up ahead on the mountain top, it doesn’t seem like there’s many people! But they’re all soul cultivators.”

Bai Yunfei was astonished, there was an inn on the mountain top?!

Thinking about it, Bai Yunfei turned to the others, “It’s a little strange but....since there’s an inn here, we don’t need to keep on looking. Let’s go up first and see if we can rest there for the night.”

.....

Unlike the perilous path before, the way up the mountain was exceedingly smooth. They arrived at the top of the mountain in no time to see a large area of flat ground and grass the same size of a plaza almost. In the middle of the land was a building that normally shouldn’t even exist in a place like this, a two-story tall wooden structure.

It was about a square kilometer in area, and pillars of ten meters in height were right next to the gates. A long strip of white cloth was hung between the two pillars, with just two words written on it:

“Vacancy Inn.”

Chapter 693: Vacancy Inn

“Hey, it really is a ‘vacant inn’! What a strange name, but there’s soul cultivators inside, let’s take a look then.” Zheng Kai laughed curiously before striding on over to the large gates to the place.

This inn was piquing the interest of everyone in the group. As one, they walked towards the inn. Before long, Huangfu Rui suddenly pointed out to the side in excitement, “Ah!! Look!! There’s a giant butterfly there! It’s so colorful!! I want to go capture it!”

Off to the flower gardens to the right was a butterfly about the size of a palm was resting on top of a flower. Its strangely colorful wings were changing color as it fluttered on the butterfly’s back.

Just like she said, Huangfu Rui immediately bounded over to the butterfly, leaving Tang Xinyun to call out helplessly behind her, “Ah, little Rui! Don’t run about like that....”

“Haha, don’t worry about it, Xinyun. Let her have her fun. She’s so close by anyways, let’s go in and ask the innkeeper about our rooms.” Bai Yunfei smiled.

He turned over to Long Lan, “Long Lan, look after Doraemon, alright?”

“Got it.” Long Lan nodded.

Leaving him to look after Huangfu Rui, Bai Yunfei and the others headed for the entrance of the inn.

Before they even got in, Bai Yunfei felt the aura of at least ten people inside, and each of them were decently strong—the weakest of them all was only a Soul Sprite.

They were all scattered about in the room, with some of them in their own rooms while five or six people were inside the lobby.

Crossing the gates, Bai Yunfei pushed open the gates and strode

into the lobby.

A gust of wind brushed into his face as he walked into the room along with the gaze of everyone in there.

The lobby was rather ordinarily decorated. There was a giant countertop and over a dozen tables, some of them already having people seated next to them. The moment when Bai Yunfei first entered the room, everyone in the lobby immediately looked up at him and scanned him with their soulsenses.

Scanning another soul cultivator with soulsense was a rather impolite thing to do in this world. So to have so many people do so at once in the same room already meant these people weren't very kind to begin with.

But their soulsense was only strong enough to tell them that Bai Yunfei and his group were all 'Soul Exalts' and nothing more. Not even the specifics of just how strong of a Soul Exalt they were could be found.

Xiao Qi for example, couldn't even be measured. Most of the people here probably thought he was nothing more but a class two or three 'pet soulbeast' at most.

Still, a group of four Soul Exalts wasn't exactly a group anyone in the inn would want to make trouble with. The people all gave Bai Yunfei and his group a quick look after that, but no reaction showed on their face other than their eyes lingering on the two women for just a moment longer than when they looked at the men.

After they walked into the lobby, Bai Yunfei strode up to the counter at the front of the lobby.

"Honored guests, welcome to this inn, how might I serve you all today?"

A man with a small smile on his face nodded at everyone from his spot behind the counter. He was a Soul Sprite in strength, but his

demeanor was hardly any different from from the waiter or receptionist in a regular inn.

If not for the fact that there shouldn't be any commoners here, Bai Yunfei really would've thought this was just an ordinary inn of some kind. "We'd like to rest here for tonight, four rooms, please."

One room for each of the males and Long Lan, and then a room for the three women.

The small man-servant smiled, "Four rooms? No problem at all! A single night here will cost five mid-grade primal stones. Four rooms will cost twenty stones in total, please pay up front."

"Damn! Twenty mid-grade primal stones, are you trying to rob us here?!" Zheng Kai cried out in alarm at what the man-servant was quoting.

But the man-servant continued to smile as if accustomed to such a reaction, "The rules of this inn is to provide those weary travelers a place to rest their legs for the night. This inn is in a special place, as you all can see, but that makes for hard business. Please understand, dear guests."

"Hm...." Zheng Kai suddenly hummed. No longer caring for the price of the room, he asked, "Then why did you open an inn here? Your boss has a great sense doesn't he, does this place even have guests usually?"

"The master enjoys living away from the mundane world, and this inn is merely just one of his whims and something for him to use to receive his friends in. As for guests....we are usually lacking those, in truth. Today is a rather special day, hence why we are almost at full capacity."

"What an interesting boss you have," Zheng Kai smiled. "Is he here? I'd like to see just what kind of person he is."

"I...the master is currently out and won't return until later tonight perhaps."

“That’s fine then, you can book us our room for now.” Zheng Kai nodded and handed twenty mid-grade primal stones over the counter. “We’d like dinner as well, will the food cost extra?”

“Haha, it will be free of charge. Please sit down, honored guests, we will bring out the food in a moment.”

The group of four took up a table on the right side of the lobby and sat down. As they sat, Zheng Kai whirled around to glare at the late-stage Soul Ancestor staring at Kou Tingting two tables down. Startling in his surprise, the man looked down at his table. He looked a little indignant at Zheng Kai’s action and seemed to mutter to himself.

Since no one was really paying attention to him, none of them heard him say, “Hm, two absolutely stunning women. What a shame they chose today of all days to come. They won’t die a good death if they meet the ‘Rapist Bees’....what a shame...”

.....

It was with a curious heart that Zheng Kai spoke to the others as they got comfortable, “Well, I really want to see just what kind of person would open an inn like this. It’s a creative idea, I’ll give him that. You can really find all sorts of things in this world....”

“Haha, people have their ambitions,” Bai Yunfei laughed. “Everyone has their own way of living their life. Plenty of older people like to live a life away from others, this place might be relatively ‘hidden’, but to open an inn for soul cultivators is an interesting idea. I’d like to meet him too and see just what kind of person he is....”

This ‘Vacancy Inn’ was a bit like Dan Teng’s ‘Soothing Heart’, but this was a whole new level of creativity.

Eyes lighting up suddenly, Zheng Kai whispered to Bai Yunfei, “I just thought of something, do you guys think this is a ‘black inn’....?”

TL Note: A black inn is an inn that kills/robs the guests that stay in it.

“Er....” Bai Yunfei blinked. “You’ve a rich imagination, Zheng Kai. Everyone here is a Soul Exalt, and there’s still at least ten other people in this inn. Do you really think even a ‘black’ inn would be able to take down this many people? Or are all these people in on the scheme to trap us?”

Somewhat embarrassed by his own thoughts, Zheng Kai chuckled, “I hope it’s not the latter. But if there really are people stupid enough to try and seek trouble with us, then we can just fight back and end this ‘black inn’. It’d be doing the world a favor.”

“Why must you always think about wishing harm on others?” Bai Yunfei asked helplessly.

“Why must you be always so trusting? Yunfei....your ‘gullible’ ways won’t do. Be wary of others. To live in our world is to always be thinking about the worst case scenario. This is the only way you’d be able to prepare yourself for the unexpected when it comes.”

Bai Yunfei shrugged, “Well....I just thought that the person back then was pretty honest. Doubting someone for no reason isn’t a good thing.”

“Ugh...” Zheng Kai shook his head in disappointment, “People as ‘naive’ as you aren’t very many in this world....”

Bai Yunfei laughed. Though he himself knew that such a personality trait wasn’t very suitable in the dangerous world of soul cultivators, or even the commoner world, Bai Yunfei couldn’t help it. It was in his nature. If he were to change that, he wouldn’t be him anymore. He didn’t want to change.

Changing the topic, Bai Yunfei and the others soon began to talk about their plans for the future of their trip. Before long, platters

after platters of food was brought out. “Xiao Qi,” Bai Yunfei nudged the bird on his shoulder, “can you call Doraemon and Long Lan in to eat?”

“Alright, I’ll go....” Xiao Qi took off towards the door.

But Xiao Qi wasn’t even fully out the door when Bai Yunfei and the others suddenly perk up towards the outside!

“Ahhh!!!!”

There had been a loud scream coming from the outside of the inn—the owner of the voice was Huangfu Rui!

Several powerful auras blazed up a split-second after, followed by a loud explosion!

“Whoosh!”

Bai Yunfei was the first to disappear from his spot to charge outside with Zheng Kai and the others catching up shortly afterwards. The disturbance happening outside was already catching the attention of the others inside, some of them already rising up to make their way outside to see what was happening themselves.

There was a total of five soulforces flaring up outside, one of them being Xiao Rourou, but its soulforce wasn’t yet in complete battle mode. There was also Long Lan who hadn’t fully revealed his own strength either. The other unfamiliar auras however, were all Soul Exalts.

By the time Bai Yunfei was outside, the battle was already coming to an end. The very first thing he saw was an alarmed Huangfu Rui standing behind Long Lan who had only just knocked out three people in front of him.

Long Lan was only just bringing his right leg up at that time to give a mighty stomp onto the head of the most injured scrawny person on the ground!!

Chapter 694: Hornets of Plum Valley

“Stop!!!!”

Watching as the foot of Long Lan was about to burst open the man’s head, Bai Yunfei cried out to Long Lan to try to stop him.

Without even fully understanding the situation, Bai Yunfei couldn’t have Long Lan kill anyone.

“Stop!!!”

Another voice cried out to Long Lan the same time Bai Yunfei did. From the right side of the second floor of the inn, a single person came barreling out from the window.

Long Lan’s foot came to a stop merely half an inch over the scrawny man’s head, but the wind pressure from his foot was more than enough to drive the man almost an inch deeper into the ground. The man’s eyes were filled with terror and his entire body was shivering with cold sweat to flow into the ground.

Bai Yunfei came to a stop in front of Long Lan. First looking to the safe and sound Huangfu Rui, he then looked to the three other men on the ground. “Long Lan, what in the world happened just now?”

The second person who had called out to Long Lan came descending from the skies. Landing a little farther away to where the other two men were knocked out, he stood there to stare at Long Lan and Bai Yunfei. It was a middle-aged man dressed in purple, but the strange thing to this person was that his head was abnormally larger than average, making him look comically unproportional. But the aura he was blazing out was anything but laughable. He was a peak late-stage Soul Exalt.

The man had wanted to break into a fight straight away, but seeing one of his own underneath Long Lan’s foot caused him to rethink his actions. He raised an eye to look ahead at the inn only

to see a group of people come flying out from it. Treading through the skies, they came charging over.

Long Lan drew his right foot back at Bai Yunfei's words. He pointed to the one by his foot, "This one tried to bully the little girl, so I knocked him out."

He pointed his finger to the two people slightly farther away, "Those two tried to help him out, so I knocked them out as well."

He then pointed back at the man beneath his foot. "Then this one tried to attack me when he was down, so I decided to stomp him to death."

It was a short and concise summary explained in three sentences. But the fact he spoke about killing a person so readily and without any emotion had been a little bone-chilling to hear.

Trying to bully Huangfu Rui??

Bai Yunfei's eyes narrowed at such a notion. Growing slightly frosty in the eyes, he turned to Huangfu Rui who was still holding onto the squirming Xiao Rourou, "Are you alright, Doraemon? Did he hurt you?"

Huangfu Rui shook her head angrily, "I was playing with the butterfly when this person came flying out of nowhere and scared away the butterfly! He said to come with him, but I didn't want to, so he tried to pull me away. He said something about being comfortable on a bed. His smile was so ugly that it scared me, so I screamed and that's when Giant came to knock him out."

She was an innocent girl who didn't even know the meaning behind the 'obscene' words being spoken to her, so it sounded innocent almost when she repeated the words, but Bai Yunfei and the others all felt themselves narrowing their eyes.

Eyes brimming with anger, Bai Yunfei was about to speak when Zheng Kai beat him to it, "F*ck!! A rapist!! I hate those type of people the most! How dare you try to do anything to little Rui!

You've a death wish!! Long Lan, don't bother with them, kill them!"

"Impudence! You wouldn't dare!!"

An even more furious voice called out after Zheng Kai finished his sentence. It was the middle-aged man in purple. Smiling coldly at Zheng Kai, the man spoke, "Brat! If you dare do anything to my sixth brother, I can guarantee that none of you will be leaving this place a live!!"

"Where'd this idiotic brat come from? You must be in a hurry to die if you're willing to anger us brothers! Big brother, let's just fight already! The innkeeper isn't here, so if we kill these brats, we can leave right away!"

"Yeah!! These people hurt fifth, sixth, and even seventh brother! We can't let them off so easily, we have to let them know just how amazing we are!"

"Heh! These two more beautiful girls over there, and this little one isn't half-bad. No wonder sixth brother took action first. But you'll have to pay for his injuries with her body! Kill the boys and take away the girls! We don't need this inn anymore, we can find a random place to enjoy the night, haha!!"

"Third brother's right, let's go after them big brother!"

"....."

The people behind the big-headed person started to jeer one after another. They were started to get rowdy, and every single word of theirs was practically an obscenity.

These men were devilish in nature and monstrous in appearance. Two of the people in the group were one of the people that had scanned at Bai Yunfei's group with their soulsense earlier in the inn.

There was a total of nine people in the group, three of them being the ones already knocked out by Long Lan and the other six being

the big-headed man and his group standing behind him. With the big-headed one being the strongest one as a peak late-stage Soul Exalt, the two people standing directly behind him were late-stage Soul Exalts. There were also another two mid-stage Soul Exalts, and the rest were early-stage Soul Exalts.

A group of nine Soul Exalts was definitely a considerable force of strength that could probably take on a medium leveled school or so. In the middling stratum of the soul cultivator world, this was a group that barely anyone would anger easily. In other words, they had the power to back up their arrogance.

Such a fighting force wasn't anything much in Bai Yunfei's eyes, though. Even Zheng Kai, Kou Tingting, and the others weren't very afraid.

What a hilarious situation. Even if he disregarded the fact that he was stronger than anyone in the same realm of strength as him, there was also Xiao Qi and Long Lan. Both of which were class seven soulbeasts who could very easily defeat the entire nine Soul Exalts.

Incensed on Huangfu Rui's behalf, Bai Yunfei was starting to feel the urge to kill these people and stop their lecherous words once in for all. With how they were speaking and acting, they were clearly people used to the 'shadier' side of life. And with people like that, Bai Yunfei's eyes increased in frostiness.

Holding a hand up to stop Zheng Kai from saying something, Bai Yunfei stared down the big-headed one. "Who are you people?"

"What?!" The man cried out as soon as the question registered to him. A look of disbelief was etched onto his face, "You....you don't know who we are?"

"Haha!! You hear that, second brother? He doesn't know who we are!! No wonder they're so eager to die, they don't know us! What ignorant children!"

“Hah, it’s true when they say ignorance is bliss! Consider it your bad luck to cross the Hornets of Plum Valley! We’ll have this lesson ingrained into your heads for the rest of your lives, but....the lesson probably won’t settle in until you’ve kids!!”

Several of them jeered with laughter in response to what Bai Yunfei said. These people were looking at him and the others as if they were idiots or if they were listening to the greatest joke they ever heard.

.....

Several more people were coming out from the inn by now. In smaller groups, they huddled around the entrance. Several of them narrowed their eyes with loathing when they heard the laughter of the group, but none of them said a thing or moved. Clearly these people just who the ‘Hornets of Plum Valley’ were and how strong they were, but they themselves weren’t willing to get involved on another person’s behalf.

“Sigh....what a reckless group of youngsters!! Though they were strong enough to knock out the three weakest of the Hornets, they’re no match for the Boss Hornet, the peak late-stage Soul Exalt! Their second and third brothers aren’t weak either. I can see those youngsters are quite strong, but they’re no match for the Hornets!! How unlucky of them....”

“Tch, I knew those people were going to get into trouble the very moment they walked in. The sixth brother of the group, the ‘Rapist Hornet’, is infamous for his lecherous deeds. Any beautiful girl that manages to get into his grasps won’t die a peaceful death. And if my prediction isn’t off, those people will definitely die a painful death for hurting their sixth brother....”

“How unfortunate boss Lei isn’t here. Those Hornets wouldn’t dare act the way they are now, let alone fight in the surrounding area of the inn. He could’ve saved those youngsters....”

“.....”

The people in front of the inn talked amongst themselves as they watched the two groups start to prepare for a battle. Behind them, the receptionist from the inn stared at Bai Yunfei's group for a moment before secretly releasing a small bird from his side. Spreading its wings, the bird took off towards the south direction into the night.

.....

“Hornets of Plum Valley??”

Zheng Kai snorted upon hearing the name of their group. Cleaning out his ear with his left pinky, he jeered, “To be proud of such a sh*tty group name like that, what a bunch of idiots you guys are....”

“What did you say you brat!!”

“F*ck! You looking to die?! Let's save sixth brother and kill them!”

The group of eight were incensed by what Zheng Kai had said. The two who had been knocked down by Long Lan earlier were already back onto their feets, and now the eight of them were more than ready to leap into action any second now.

“Che! Have at it then, you think we're scared of you?!”

“Sixth brother, get out of the way!!”

Just as Zheng Kai was about to ask Bai Yunfei if it was okay to fight, the ‘Boss Hornet’ took the initiative to leap forward. Grunting, the man clenched his right fist tightly. The muscles in his right arm bulged with power as the purple light around his body began to converge in it. Traveling from his left arm to his right, the man lashed outwards with a mighty punch!

“Boom!!”

There was a sound reminiscent of lightning as the fist came forwards. A thick bolt of lightning came out from his fist to go

charging at Long Lan!

The scrawny little man that had been underneath Long Lan's foot earlier, the 'Rapist Hornet', suddenly blazed to life with soulforce. Diving to the side by kicking off the ground, the man took off in retreat. The wretched state of pain the man was in earlier had all been a ploy to bide for time to make his escape!

"Hmph!!" Long Lan sneered. Having been waiting for Bai Yunfei's orders to attack, Long Lan had neglected to keep a proper guard on the scrawny man. With the powerful attack of purple lightning coming at him, Long Lan's lips curled in disdain before he clenched his right hand. A dreadful amount of energy began to rise up from his person as he prepared to take part in the fight.

"Long Lan, let me!!"

As he was about to make a move, a voice called out to him. Then, a streak of red light came flying past him to take on the bolt of purple lightning!

Chapter 695: Unable to Withstand Even One Hit

This bolt of red light wasn't a person, but Xiao Rourou who had managed to get away from Huangfu Rui's arms!

By this point, Xiao Rourou was no longer a pure white colored boar, but a completely red one. Even more remarkable, it was standing on its hind legs and adopting a combative stance!

And when it rushed past Long Lan, its true strength was revealed as a peak late-stage class six!

“Boom!!!”

There was a ringing explosion as the bolt of purple lightning exploded just five meters away from Long Lan. The red magiboar's body was like a crimson red blade that cleaved through the purple lightning bolt without resistance!

There had been around a hundred meters separating the two groups, but the red magiboar had somehow managed to traverse that distance in the blink of an eye. Not only had it stopped the Boss Hornet's powerful attack, it was now close enough to the enemy group to start attacking them from up close!

Blanching at the quickness of the boar, the big-headed man brought up both his arms to defend himself while moving back in retreat.

“Bang!!”

But his attempt was far too late. No sooner did he try to lift his arms did the red magiboar's hoof collide squarely onto his arm. There was a muffled crack from the Boss Hornet's arms before he groaned and flew backwards away like a bullet!

He slammed into one of his companions and carried him a few dozen meters away. His companion tumbled onto the ground while

he managed to reorientate himself back onto his feet. Still having to stagger backwards a few steps, the man steadied himself. His right arm was trembling violently. It wasn't a heavy blow, but the man was shocked that he had lost the advantage after the very first blow!

But even more importantly, he didn't even know what kind of enemy he was fighting!

He didn't have the time to even calm himself down though. No sooner did he come to a stop was the red magiboar already shooting off towards the side to where the others were!

The first one in the red magiboar's path was the second brother, the 'Horned Hornet'. Like his name implied, there was something like a wart on his head that looked a bit like a horn. Stunned by the fact his eldest brother was sent flying, this man almost nearly lost track of the red streak of light coming at him. Raising his arms up, an orange shield immediately appeared in front of them. It was a low-earth tier soul armament with very strong defensive properties due to it being an earth-type. In their band of nine, this brother was in charge of providing the defenses needed.

Feeling slightly better now that his shield was out, the man had his soulforce surge around his body. Orange light filled the air around him as his muscles started to bulge outwards. Almost as if he himself was growing in size, the man took a half step back with his right foot to try to take on the blow head on.

The other brothers were just starting to regain their wits now too. Without needing to be told once, they immediately pulled out their weapons one after another and prepared to strike back at the enemy attacking the Horned Hornet.

The defense of the Horned Hornet was practically impregnable in their perspective, so the enemy would definitely be rebuffed and be left wide open for a counter attack. And with that counter attack, the enemy would be killed!! This was a strategy that was

practically tried and true, and very rarely had they ever failed to kill their opponent after that.

Unfortunately for them, the enemy they were fighting today was the red magiboar.

“Gongggg!!!”

The hoof of the red magiboar struck the earthen shield of the Horned Hornet squarely at its center. The shield vibrated like a bell before it started to crack, leaving the Horned Hornet defenseless and sent flying away from the red magiboar’s kick!

“Crack....” The center most part of the Horned Hornet’s shield cracked as it and its owner flew away. A second later, the shield was completely into pieces!! There a strangled cry from the airborne person before a spurt of blood erupted from his mouth!

On the other hand, the red magiboar took advantage of the rebounding energy from the blow to dive towards the other direction to attack the next person!

“Be careful, third brother!!”

“How in the—!!”

“Retreat!”

“Ah!!!”

Cries all around the place started to fly out as the red magiboar descended upon them like a wolf onto a group of sheep. As arrogant as they were all before, none of them were even able to last even a single blow against the red magiboar!

The red magiboar didn’t even slow down at all from start to end, so none of the brothers were even able to see just who they were fighting!

The group of people watching from the entrance of the inn were flabbergasted. None of them could even think of what to say as they watched the scene develop in front of them. They weren’t the

only ones however, as Bai Yunfei and his group of friends were similarly surprised. They knew that Xiao Rourou was strong and all, but not so strong that it'd be capable of something like this. They had watched the red magiboar fight in close combat and use its own body to defend against the multiple weapons the brothers had. Such a terrifying prowess of strength like that was surprising to even them.

Not even a minute went by before the fight was more or less finished. The only person left standing was the 'Boss Hornet'. Everyone else was already knocked out on the ground.

“Bang!!!”

There was another colliding sound as the red magiboar struck at the belly of the Boss Hornet with its hoof. The man flew away into the air again, dropping his purple lightning-bolt shaped blade onto the ground and coughing out a mouthful of blood. His energy thoroughly spent, the man tried his best to stagger away in fright. Now that the red magiboar was no longer flying around from place to place, and he himself no longer foolish enough to attack so recklessly, he was now able to see just who it was he was fighting.

“What....what are you?! How are you this strong?!”

The man cried out in furious disbelief. He didn't know what a red magiboar was, and in truth, he and his band of brothers didn't really know that many soulbeasts. They were always traveling around the northern parts of the Southward River Province and rarely left the area, meaning they hadn't gone to the Soulbeast Forest before. This by extension meant none of the brothers had a soulbeast partner.

They thought they could kill these group of ignorant youngsters. But none of them thought that they'd be defeated without the youngsters even moving, and by a soulbeast they had only thought was a pet no less! It was a humiliating defeat that someone like the 'Boss Hornet' would never accept. But even if he couldn't accept it,

reality was reality after all. A soulbeast that wasn't as well-known as his band of brothers had not only defeated him, but his entire group of brothers by itself!

After living for so many years, today was finally the day they met their downfall!

“Damnit!! Retreat!!”

Furious, the man let out the command for them all to retreat.

Unable to even fight, his brethren struggled to their feet when they heard their boss' call to retreat. Trying to find whatever remaining energy they had in their bodies to stand up, they all fled towards the east of the inn to flee. But with their speed, it'd take them longer to run away than they had lasted in battle.

“Trying to run away?”

The red magiboar snorted out two hot bursts of air from its nose. It stepped gently onto the ground with its 'right foot'. Building up power, it kicked off against the ground with so much power it left a crater about a meter in diameter. Like an arrow shot out from its bow, the red magiboar flew towards the slowest one there, the sixth brother, the 'Rapist Hornet'.

It hadn't killed any of the brothers to avoid letting Huangfu Rui see such a bloody scene where arms, legs, or even heads would go flying. But now that these people were trying to run away, the red magiboar wouldn't let them go so easily. Catching up to the 'Rapist Hornet', the red magiboar prepared to strike at his legs with its 'right arm' and see if the others would want to have it apprehend the others as well.

On the other side, Bai Yunfei's eyes were shining brightly as he watched the brothers try to run away. He nodded his head to Long Lan to give him permission to stop the brothers from running away. Zheng Kai chuckled once before he disappeared from his spot next to Bai Yunfei and reappeared just a hundred meters away

to catch up with the people trying to run.

.....

“Halt!!!”

Just as the red magiboar and Zheng Kai were dealing with the brothers, and Long Lan getting ready to move to stop them as well, a voice suddenly called out to them from the skies. At the same time, a green burst of wind flooded into the area to sweep up Zheng Kai and the red magiboar. Under the effects of the wind, the two of them were frozen to the spot and unable to move!

Likewise, Long Lan was stopped by the sudden gust of wind. Narrowing his eyes, he looked up at the skies where the voice came from.

A hundred meters above the area they were in was a middle-aged man in green robes. Somehow appearing from nowhere, the man was enveloped in a bubble of green light to levitate in the air. Right behind him, a ripple in the skies was slowly starting to smooth out back to normal.

That was the sign of Teleportation—this man was a Soul King!

The gust of green wind stopping Zheng Kai and the others disappeared, allowing the two to retreat backwards. They looked warily up at the skies, unsure of what to do but wait until they could see if this new person was a friend or foe.

The middle-aged man scanned the area with some surprise before he smiled down at them all. “The Vacancy Inn has prohibited any fighting to take place within five kilometers of the area. Honored guests, please grant me some face and cease your fighting.”

Chapter 696: Boss Lei

The middle-aged man looked to Long Lan as he spoke, clearly thinking he was the one in charge of the group.

Since this person that had just shown up wasn't a weakling like the 'Hornets', Long Lan didn't have a look of contempt on his face. Instead, he looked to Bai Yunfei to see what should be done in this case.

His actions hadn't gone unnoticed by the man up in the skies who turned to look strangely at Bai Yunfei as well.

At first, Bai Yunfei had thought this Soul King was a comrade of the Hornets when he first appeared. But then he thought against that notion when he heard what this person was saying. Bai Yunfei looked back to the fleeing Hornets. By now, they were all escaping down the mountain. And with that moment of hesitance, they were already gone from sight.

Bai Yunfei sighed. Shaking his head, he spoke to Long Lan, "Forget it. Chasing and killing those people is pointless now. Since this senior is asking us to adhere to the rules of the inn, we should accept."

It wouldn't do to be overbearing while residing in the territory of another, especially if it was in the territory of a Soul King. Bai Yunfei didn't want to risk trouble with a Soul King over a group of inconsequentials like the Hornets.

That didn't mean he forgave them. Bai Yunfei had already memorized their faces so that he could properly pay them company the next time they meet.

Cupping his hands in salute towards the middle-aged man in the skies, Bai Yunfei spoke, "Greetings, senior. We didn't wish to cause any trouble outside your inn, but those people started it first. If senior will please forgive us, we will leave matters at this as you

say.”

There was a strange light in the man’s eyes. He never thought that the one making all the decisions in this group would’ve been the youngster there. And the fact that this one was so polite was even more surprising to him.

“Haha, what a reasonable young man you are. Thank you for sparing Lei Xi some face, youngster. I should be the one thanking you. Since those trouble starters are gone now, let us not get off on the wrong foot because of them. Let us please return to the inn, I’ve a few vats of hundred-year wine on hand for everyone to sample. Please accept it as our apologies for the disturbance just now.”

Bai Yunfei smiled. “Boss Lei is very kind, we will take boss Lei on your offer then.”

He waved to the people behind him, “Let’s ignore those people and go back in.”

As unsatisfied as they were about the group of nine fleeing, Tang Xinyun and Kou Tingting weren’t the type of people to hold grudges. Since they were gone, the two were far too lazy to bear a grudge or go after them. Huangfu Rui was fully satisfied herself since Xiao Rourou had beaten them up on her behalf. Only Zheng Kai was looking a little angry still, feeling as though they should’ve at least pulled out their tongues if anything. But since Bai Yunfei wasn’t going after them and a Soul King was here, Zheng Kai only sighed to himself on the luck of the nine before walking with Kou Tingting back into the inn. Lei Xi followed the group as well into the inn.

The people who had been watching the spectacle at the front of the inn were all astonished by the upturn in events. But since it was over and everyone was going back to the inn, the soul cultivators all began to voice their greetings to Lei Xi.

Most of them had never seen Lei Xi before, but after the

receptionist greeted the man, everyone realized that Lei Xi was the innkeeper of the Vacancy Inn. Some of them had heard rumors of the man before, and the fact that he was a Soul King was already more than enough to earn him their respect. They all bowed and greeted him as ‘boss Lei’, but the man himself didn’t have the aura of that of a Soul King. Instead, he felt more like an ordinary innkeeper who smiled and returned the greeting back.

“Is this really the very same person known as the ‘Evil Faced Thunder Lord’? He doesn’t seem very similar to the one capable of killing without even blinking.”

“Shh....those are only the rumors from a long time ago. Boss Lei gave up that life more than twenty years ago and dissolved the Lightning Gang he created. He opened the Vacancy Inn after that to help serve the soul cultivators in the world.”

“The rumors said that boss Lei changed from being a man of evil to being a man of virtue, guess it’s true then. I heard it was because of a woman. Tsk tsk....never would’ve thought the infamous ‘Evil Faced Thunder Lord’ would be turned by his ‘emotions’....”

“.....”

Several people within the inn were gossiping quietly to themselves now that everything was settled. Bai Yunfei, who had been listening in, was slightly surprised to hear that information.

Lei Xi gave a self-deprecating smile. “Haha, I am quite ashamed,” he sighed. “I was up to no good in the past and did many evil things. Sigh....I cannot bear to return to such a past...”

As he spoke, his eyes glazed over a bit with those memories, his expression changing slightly as well.

Lei Xi sat down with Bai Yunfei when they were back in the inn. Ordering the receptionist to prepare few more dishes, Lei Xi turned to Bai Yunfei, “I believe I never heard mention of your names?”

“This junior is Bai Yunfei, and these are my friends, Zheng Kai,

Tang Xinyun, Kou Tingting, Huangfu Rui, and Long Lan.”

The man didn't have a change in his expression at all when he listened to the names, meaning he had never heard of them before. As amazing Bai Yunfei was, his name was hardly on a level yet where the entire world would know his name, and neither would someone who lived in solitude like Lei Xi would know him either.

Lei Xi nodded to Zheng Kai and the others one by one before finally reaching to Long Lan. Unable to stop himself from his curiosity anymore, the Soul King cupped his hands, “Haha, forgive me for my boldness, but I can see you are not quite like any ‘ordinary’ soul cultivator, brother Long....”

Long Lan never thought his identity to be something of a secret, and neither did he believe that he had to hide anything from someone who was as strong as he was.

“I am a class seven blue-eyes white wyrm.” He confirmed.

“As I thought.”

Lei Xi's eyes sparkled. He could tell that Long Lan was a Soul King in strength, but he just couldn't confirm if he was a soulbeast or not. And now that he had confirmed his own suspicions, the man was a little surprised. There weren't many class seven soulbeasts that roamed the world of soul cultivators, so it was hard to see them. Not only was Lei Xi able to see one today, the class seven soulbeast was actually traveling with a group of Soul Exalts. But the most important thing was that it looked like it was traveling with Bai Yunfei as a type of ‘bodyguard’....

“These youngsters are all of considerable strength, they all must be from a powerful school or family then? These soulbeasts are quite unordinary too. That soulbeast with the young girl must be one of the rumored ‘red magiboars’, it's even stronger than she is....is the class seven blue-eyes wyrm the contracted soulbeast of Bai Yunfei?”

Lei Xi's eyes swept across Xiao Rourou and Xiao Bai's bodies for a second before landing upon Xiao Qi on Bai Yunfei's shoulder. His eyes paused there for a moment, Lei Xi's expression betraying his surprise. "Hm?? This....this is...."

Xiao Qi winked an eye at him, "I was thinking you had forgotten about me, uncle. Hehe, I'm Xiao Qi. I'm also a class seven, but I can't take on a human form."

"Also a class seven."

Lei Xi's eyes betrayed his surprise again at that statement. In all honesty, he really did think Xiao Qi had just been an ordinary pet soulbeast when he first looked at it. But now that he could sense the power of a class seven soulbeast from it, Lei Xi was thoroughly shocked.

"These youngsters.....just who are they?" He sighed to himself. Having two class seven soulbeasts travel with these youngsters was even more particular than having Soul Kings act as guards. Lei Xi had to admit, he was very curious to see just who these youngsters were affiliated with--as far as he knew, there was no family with this much strength in the Southward River Province.

Since they had only just met, Lei Xi didn't want to be asking questions beyond the social norms. Instead, he asked a few questions such as if Bai Yunfei and his group were from the province or not before telling them a bit about the local traditions and cultures in the province. He also recommended them a few noteworthy places to go to to see the scenery there, but throughout the entire conversation, Lei Xi didn't seem to have that 'air' a Soul King had and felt more like a regular innkeeper.

.....

"Ah, pardon me for asking, young brother Bai, but does your group have any considerations to go to the Crushed Stone River?"

In the middle of their conversation, Lei Xi suddenly asked a new

question to Bai Yunfei.

“What?” Bai Yunfei asked, “What kind of river is it, boss Lei?”

“Crushed Stone River.” Tang Xinyun whispered to him.

“Crushed Stone River?” Bai Yunfei repeated, “What kind of place is it? Why do you mention it, boss Lei?”

A hint of confusion crossed Lei Xi’s eyes for a moment. “Oh, it’s nothing, just merely asking.”

He changed the topic then, remarking on a few wonders not too far away from the inn. Though they noticed how abrupt the question had gone and went, no one in the group said anything about it and said nothing about it.

Bai Yunfei however had committed the name to memory since he had never heard about it before.

Crushed Stone River.

Chapter 697: Formagua City

In the forests just north of the Southward River Province, the bushes could be heard jostling with movement as a group of men and women came walking out from behind it.

Looking at the sun setting behind the mountains, Bai Yunfei turned to Zheng Kai, “Ah Zheng, are you sure it’s this way? Didn’t you say there’d be a city here?”

In Zheng Kai’s hand was a map in which he was studying. Turning around to look at the place, Zheng Kai pointed a slight ways right. “Don’t worry, look there, that’s ‘Teapot Mountain’. It’s a local landmark that has Formagua City right next to it. It’s a small one, but we should be able to reach it by nightfall. In any case, Teapot Mountain is a nice tourist spot, so we can rest a few days here.”

“Wow, it really does look like a teapot pouring water! How interesting!” Huangfu Rui cried out with great interest at the mountain.

A great distance away was a single large mountain. It was circular from bottom to top and had a large ‘bump’ on the top and upper right side so that it looked just like a teapot. Even more strange was the fact that on the left side, there was a singular large pillar that stemmed outwards like the spout to pour water from.

But the most prominent feature to this landmark was the fact that water was actually pouring out from the ‘spout’ of the teapot.

The water pouring from the spout of the teapot was tinged slightly red like the tea water of a teapot. Combined with the setting sun behind it, the water sparkled with a shining luster as it poured out from the spout, making for an amazing sight for everyone to wonder over.

“Let’s hurry along then, it’d be great if we can find an inn in the

city to rest for a few nights.” Bai Yunfei nodded.

Three days had passed since they left Vacancy Inn. For those three days, the group had been camping in the great outdoors for the night. Both Bai Yunfei and Zheng Kai were well accustomed to camping in the outdoors, and so were the girls for that matter, but neither of the two wanted them to go for so long without a proper bed and such.

“Finally we can sleep in a nice bed! Sis Kou, sis Yun, come on, let’s go!”

Huangfu Rui was the happiest to hear that bit of information. Skipping ahead, she called out to the others to catch up.

“Whoosh.”

While the group was walking and minding their own business, a sudden gust of wind blew across the area. Then, a streak of green light shot out from up ahead and flew towards the left of the group.

“A late-stage Soul Exalt....”

Bai Yunfei raised an eyebrow as he stared at the streak of green light fly away from them.

“A peak late-stage Soul Exalt using a flying soul armament to fly. Wonder what he’s in a rush for?” Zheng Kai wondered aloud.

“He looked like he was running for his life.”

Xiao Qi piped up from on top of Bai Yunfei’s shoulder.

“He also looked injured, and quite badly too.” Said Bai Yunfei.

“Hm, you think someone is trying to kill him?? Must be some sort of grudge match between him and an enemy. That other party has to be strong if they can make a peak late-stage Soul Exalt run away like that. But why aren’t we seeing anyone chase after him yet?”

Zheng Kai was staring in the direction the man had come from.

There should've been at least someone here by now, but as he said, no one was here.

Bai Yunfei shrugged, "Who knows? Maybe they don't care to chase him? No point in thinking about it, we're not involved in their mess. Let's just get going."

.....

A great distance away from Bai Yunfei's group, a single figure was flying as fast as he could on top of his flying sword. It was a middle-aged man with his right hand pressed against his stomach. Pained from his wounds, the man was doing his best to urge his flying sword to go faster.

"Cough....cough...." Excess blood dribbled from his mouth with each cough. Turning his head back, the man looked in the direction of Bai Yunfei's group. He looked indecisive for a moment, as if wanting to go back, but he ultimately looked away and continued flying in the same direction he was going.

"Forget it, I don't know them, I've no obligation to warn them. Their deaths have nothing to do with me.

"What the f*ck was that? I nearly died back there.....Since when did Formagua City become something like that? Why hasn't anyone said anything about it yet? Did....were there no survivors?"

"Tch. I shouldn't stick my head into this. The Tianhun School should take care of it..."

.....

The sun was now gone, and the moon was rising up in its place. Bai Yunfei and his friends finally made their way from Teapot Mountain to see a giant city a little ways away.

Though Zheng Kai had said Formagua City was a 'small' one, it still looked decently large to everyone else. They couldn't even see the other end of the city from here. Plenty of tall buildings littered the place with most of them alight with beacons of lantern light.

“We’re finally here.” Bai Yunfei sighed when he saw the outline of the city.

“We are.” Tang Xinyun smiled. “We’re close now, I didn’t think it would take this long to reach it.”

“That’s why I said we should fly,” Huangfu Rui muttered from the side, “but everyone said we should walk. We could’ve been eating by now.”

“Haha don’t be so impatient, little Rui. We’re here now aren’t we? Let’s go in and find the best restaurant there, I’ll treat you to whatever it is you want to eat.” Zheng Kai laughed.

“Really? Then let’s hurry up and get going! I want to hurry up and eat!”

It was with smiles and laughters that everyone picked up their paces to reach the city. But when they reached the gates, Zheng Kai frowned, “Hm? Why aren’t there any guards here??”

Bai Yunfei thought it was odd too. Motioning for Tang Xinyun to hold Huangfu Rui, Bai Yunfei slowly stepped forward to look around the place first.

“It’s not just the guards,” Kou Tingting spoke, “why aren’t there any people on the streets? It’s night time and all, but surely they can’t all be resting for the night?”

Now that the group was fully in the city and could see the inside streets, they all noticed that not even a single person could be seen on the streets.

Not only that, they couldn’t even sense the auras of anyone in the buildings on the side of the streets.

“It’s far too quiet...” Bai Yunfei muttered. Indeed, the city was extremely silent. Ever since they entered the city in fact, absolutely nothing could be heard.

Throughout the entire city, not even a single peep could be

heard.

Zheng Kai's soulsense was being used to search the surrounding area. "I don't sense anyone here. Strange, is everyone gone from their houses to go somewhere or something?"

"Is today a special holiday? Why isn't there anyone here?" Zheng Kai sent his soulsense even deeper into the center of the city.

"Wait, I found someone!"

He spoke up in excitement, "And a decent amount of people too. There's probably something going on in the center of the city. Maybe an event or something? But everyone's over there."

Bai Yunfei looked to where Zheng Kai was pointing at. With his own soulsense, he could see several auras over there as well. With how weak they were, they were most likely just commoners, but there were also a few soul cultivators there too.

"Strange." He muttered, "What kind of event would bring everyone in the city there?"

"Heh, who cares? Why don't we look ourselves?" Zheng Kai shrugged, "I want to see what it is that's got everyone looking. Let's go take a look."

"Alright." Bai Yunfei nodded, "Let's go over and see what's going on, and then we can find ourselves a place for the night. Come on...."

Now that they had a plan, the entire group headed for the city center. Two steps ahead of Long Lan, Bai Yunfei turned his head back, "What's wrong?" He asked him.

Long Lan had been staring at a well just two hundred meters away from the right of the gates the entire time. Looking back to Bai Yunfei when he was called out to, Long Lan shook his head and walked back to the group, "It's nothing, just felt something was strange."

“Strange?” Bai Yunfei asked, “Is there something else about this place strange to you?”

“It’s nothing.” Long Lan shook his head. “The atmosphere here feels uncomfortable. But I can’t tell what it is....”

“It’s a little strange, but we should figure it out when we get to the center. Let’s find someone and ask to see what’s going on.”

Long Lan nodded and took his place behind Bai Yunfei so they could continue down the streets to the center of the city.

.....

At the bottom of the well Long Lan had just been staring at was a small body of clear water. Unmoving, the water was clear and calm enough to reflect the stars up in the sky on it.

Then, a series of bubbles started to form underneath. Popping as they reached the surface of the water, the bubbles began to pick up in quantity and churn the waters. Originally clear on the surface, the water began to turn a murky red....

“Blip blip blip....”

Even more bubbles started to form now. A murky black figure rose out from the waters for a moment before submerging itself back into the depths....

Chapter 698: A Strange City

“Yunfei? Why am I getting a bad feeling about this?? We haven’t seen a single person yet, it feels like this is a ghost city....” Zheng Kai’s face was starting to pale a bit.

It had been ten minutes since they entered the city, and they had yet to come across a single person. “There’s definitely people up ahead right, or am I sensing things wrong?”

“There’s definitely people up ahead, and a whole lot of them.”

The tense look on Zheng Kai’s face loosened up a bit, though he was still feeling a little uneasy about things. “Xiao Qi, your soulsense is stronger than mine. Can you sense what’s going on in the center?”

He was given an annoyed glance in return. “You’ve already asked me this so many times. There’s definitely a lot of people up ahead. They’re all pretty weak, so they have to be commoners, but there’s as many people as there are stars in the skies. With how they’re moving, it’s definitely an event or something.”

Zheng Kai didn’t look convinced at that. “But that’s what so strange about it!!” He exclaimed.

“Even the biggest national holiday in the empire wouldn’t bring out so many people like this! What kind of event is going on in Formagua City to have a turnout like this? It’s suspicious, we should definitely be careful about this....”

“Ah’Zheng’s right. We should be careful.” Bai Yunfei turned away from a nearby building. “The beacons up in the buildings are all lit up, but there’s no one in them like if they all had to leave suddenly. Some of the buildings are using light stones, but there’s a few using candles and oil lamps to light up there places. I can tell that most of them are almost out of fuel. If it was just one or two buildings like that, it’d be a coincidence, but there’s at least twenty

houses on this street alone like this. It's definitely strange.....”

“You noticed even that? But...then that means.....” Zheng Kai trailed off.

“That means a long time has already passed since they were lit up. Most of the oil lamps and candles are made from fat, so they can burn for a decent amount of time. I'd guess that it's been at least a day and a half....” Kou Tingting picked up after him.

“Then there's definitely a problem here, isn't there?!” Zheng Kai exclaimed.

Bai Yunfei continued forward. “We'll get our answers when we get to the city center. Let's be careful until then. Don't split up no matter what and be prepared for anything.”

Seeing that everyone was nervous, Bai Yunfei smiled to cheer them up, “Haha don't be nervous. We've a strong party here. Even if there is danger, we can handle it.”

Zheng Kai blinked. “Oh...I nearly forgot we had two class seven soulbeasts with us. And with us, we'd be able to fight off one or two Soul Kings together. Why were we even worried....”

Clearly much more relaxed now, the group continued onwards to the center of the city.

.....

It took another ten minutes before the group were nearly at the heart of the city. The auras of those inhabitants of the city were getting clearer and clearer as they drew close. Most of them were just commoners, and there were definitely a few soul cultivators, though their soulforce was on the weaker side of the spectrum. This meant they were either quite weak as soul cultivators, or they were trying to suppress their auras.

The auras of those in the center were fluctuating nonstop almost like the dancing embers of a flame.

Even for such a tremendous amount of people in one small area, this was very strange.

At last, Bai Yunfei and his group came to a stop right next to a three-story tall building. In the street beyond this building would be the area where everyone was at.

“Finally here.” Zheng Kai sighed, “How mysterious, I’m dying of curiosity here. Wonder what kind of event is taking place here.”

As Zheng Kai was about to cross the street to look, Bai Yunfei suddenly called out to him. “Hold on! Something’s wrong here!!”

“Eh?” Startled by his cry, Zheng Kai turned to look, “What problem?”

“Listen!!” Bai Yunfei’s face looked grim, “Do you realize we haven’t heard any voices or sound ever since we entered the city?!”

“Voices?” Everyone blinked at first, though they too quickly looked grim when they realized Bai Yunfei was correct.

He was right!! No one in the group had heard even a peep since they entered the city! It was one thing to not hear a thing at the city gates, but to be so close to the center where tens of thousands of people would be, it was still deathly quiet here!

That was....far too suspicious!

Everyone had been far too focused on trying to sense for any auras in the buildings as they walked down the streets. Because they had been used to not hearing any sound since the beginning, they had practically forgotten how strange that was!

“Don’t move you guys. Xiao Qi and I will go in first. Long Lan, pay attention to the surroundings.”

Bai Yunfei spoke to the group after two terse seconds. Stepping forward, he leapt several dozen meters into the sky to take a closer look.

“.....”

As soon as he did, Bai Yunfei suddenly went as still as a board. His eyes widened in abject shock as if he had seen something unbelievable.

No one moved as they watched him.

It was Zheng Kai who finally couldn't handle the suspense. "Yunfei, what in the world is going on? What can you see?"

Bai Yunfei blinked a few times, startled by Zheng Kai's voice. "There's....there's no one...."

"What?" With how quiet he was, Zheng Kai didn't hear him. "There's no what?"

Eyes still straining wide open in shock, Bai Yunfei repeated what he said, "There's...there's no one here at all!!"

"No one?" Everyone spoke. "What kind of joke are you playing at?" Zheng Kai cried out, "There's thousands of people here, how can there be no one? Forget it. I'll go myself."

He leapt up into the air to get to where Bai Yunfei was. When he looked over, his jaw immediately dropped wide open to be as stiff as Bai Yunfei was. "What....what the f*ck!! There really isn't anyone! What is going on here?!"

The reactions of the two confused Tang Xinyun and the others. Leaping up into the skies, they went to look for themselves.

And when they looked down to where the center of the city was....

There really wasn't anyone there!!

A giant plaza stood at the center of the city. Where everyone felt the auras of the inhabitants, not even a single person could actually be seen there!!

Even though they couldn't see it, everyone could clearly sense that tens of thousands of auras were right where they were looking at!

Sensing a person's aura and not seeing the actual person was one thing. But to sense the auras of tens of thousands of people and not see them was another!

This was a freakish situation of the utmost proportions. Even as inexperienced as they were, no one in the group had no idea what in the world was going on here and were shocked.

Several seconds went by as Bai Yunfei tried to process what was going on in his head. "Xiao Qi, Long Lan, scan the area!" He called out to the two.

The Charm Bracelet on his left hand pulsed with light as he connected to the minds of the two so they could combine their efforts.

Xiao Qi and Long Lan nodded and spread out their soulsense throughout the city center.

They weren't simply scanning the area like they normally did, but were now completely focused in their actions. With the Charm Bracelet combining their minds together, the three's perception could be enhanced greatly. With their efforts, they could scan the entire Formagua City!!

Even a mid-stage Soul King would have to exert a great deal of energy in order to replicate what the three were doing.

With their senses heightened to their extremes, Bai Yunfei and the other two were able to sense the abnormality of the auras in front of them!

The auras of everyone here looked different to one another at first. But now that they were all focusing on it, the three realized that at the very root of all the auras, the way they were all fluctuating were....identical to one another!

"Bzz....."

As if touching upon something when they looked closely at it, the three started to hear a buzzing sound, and then, something began

to stir!!

Chapter 699: Saving a Young Girl

It was as if something realized the intrusion on the auras. Like a flickering television signal, the auras flickered for one last time before disappearing!!

In a single instance, tens of thousands of auras had disappeared all at once as if they hadn't existed in the first place!

Everyone was so startled by the sight that some of them let out a strangled cry. They scanned the area but felt nothing in response. It was as if the auras they sensed earlier had only been an illusion.

“F*ck! What is going on here!! This is freaky, Yunfei, far too freaky. We shouldn't be here, let's leave right now!”

Zheng Kai pleaded to Bai Yunfei as he looked back down at the now deserted city center.

Tang Xinyun and the others had the same ideas well, but Bai Yunfei was still looking off into a distance at a large building in the center of the place as if thinking about something.

“Yunfei, what's wrong?” Tang Xinyun noticed what Bai Yunfei was looking at and asked.

Bai Yunfei pointed at the large building after several seconds, “There's....people in the lord-mayor's place.”

“What?” Zheng Kai's eyes widened, “There are?!”

Bai Yunfei nodded. “Just one person, and most likely a commoner judging from their aura....”

With the combined efforts of Xiao Qi, Long Lan, and Bai Yunfei, the three of them were able to sense the aura of a single person in the lord-mayor's mansion. And since all of the other auras were gone now, that one aura was all the more obvious.

At Bai Yunfei's prompting, everyone else started to look around with their soulsense as well.

“Save me....”

A voice suddenly called out to them, a weak voice that was just barely loud enough for them to hear!

Someone was calling for help!

“Save me....someone save me....”

Straining their soulsense in trying to pinpoint the aura, everyone could sense the exact same thing. This wasn't an illusion, someone really was calling for help!

And this voice clearly belonged to a young girl!

It was a very weak voice and wouldn't have been heard by the group if they weren't Soul Exalts. The voice was very strained as if the owner was in pain and filled with terror. In fact, the voice was practically being murmured as she was falling out of consciousness.

“What's going on here....now we find a person, and they're at the very center of the city. What's going on here? So many auras disappeared at once, and now someone's calling for help....” Zheng Kai muttered to himself. “Yunfei, what do you say we should do? Should we just leave this place? Or....”

“Of course we'll go save that person, are you really just going to ignore someone in need of help?” A cross Kou Tingting interrupted, looking unhappy at his question.

“Er....no, of course I was planning on saving them. I just wanted everyone's opinions first. I want to save that person too....” Realizing that Kou Tingting didn't like her response, Zheng Kai moved to correct himself. He sighed to himself though, “If we really are going to save somebody, is it really wise if there's something strange afoot?”

Silent for a moment to think, Bai Yunfei sighed. “Something strange is out here. Leaving would be the safest idea, but if there really is someone asking for us to save them, we can't just leave

them to die. It's a small child too, we should try to save her no matter what...."

"Maybe it's a little girl hiding on her bed?? There doesn't seem to be anything else around her. We can just go in and take her and leave, can't we? It seems pretty simple....." Xiao Qi suggested.

"It'd be great if it goes that way...." Bai Yunfei sighed.

"How about this, Xiao Qi and I will go in to save her. You all wait on the outside. If something happens, then leave at once. Everyone's safety is the most important thing here."

"Just you two? That's not good, is it? I think we should all stick together. It's not too far away, and we're all in the middle of the city anyways. Waiting outside or sitting here isn't too different." Zheng Kai objected.

"Zheng Kai is right," Tang Xinyun agreed, "We should go together, Yunfei. It's a young girl, so Tingting and I would be of some assistance. It's best if we all go together."

"I...." Bai Yunfei seemed to want to object, but he acquiesced. "Fine then, we can go together."

.....

With their plan set in stone, everyone headed off for the large mansion. They flew over the walls and then into the large hall to walk into the receiving room.

This was where the young girl was calling from. Standing by the door, the group scanned the building again with their soulsense to hear the girl call out again.

Bai Yunfei was looking through the place as carefully as he could. There was nothing out of the ordinary it seemed, and the entire place looked empty, aside from the young girl hiding on the upper floor.

Both Kou Tingting and Tang Xinyun looked worried as they

listened to the weakened cries of the young girl, and even Huangfu Rui looked a little pained at it. Pulling at Tang Xinyun's hand, she whispered to her, "Sis Yun, she sounds like she's in pain....we should hurry up and save her...."

"Yes, we'll be in there shortly." Tang Xinyun nodded and sent a glance over to Bai Yunfei.

Bai Yunfei glanced in turn to Long Lan to tell him to stay in the back while he went up first. Walking up to the right door, Bai Yunfei pressed his hand against it and pushed it open.

"Creak...."

The door was pushed aside without anything else inside the room activating, meaning Bai Yunfei was able to peer into the room without a problem.

It was slightly dark inside of the room with there only being a single candle inside. Up to the left side of the room was a single bed where Bai Yunfei could see her.

A scrawny young girl was huddled on top of the bed, shivering with terrified eyes to look at Bai Yunfei.

She looked to be around seven or eight years old, though with how frazzled her hair was it was impossible to see what she looked like properly.

The moment the door opened saw to the young girl starting. She looked to Bai Yunfei in terror, but when she saw his friendly face, hope began to resurface in her eyes. Opening her mouth, she managed to say two words.

"Save me...."

Looking a little concerned for the young girl, Tang Xinyun side stepped past Bai Yunfei to hurry into the room towards her with Bai Yunfei right behind her.

"Little sister, are you alright? What happened?"

Quickly arriving at the little bed, Tang Xinyun reached out to give the young girl a hug.

“Xinyun—watch out!!”

Suddenly, Bai Yunfei stepped out from behind her. Grabbing onto Tang Xinyun, he swung her behind and quickly stepped back away from the bed!

“Pow!!!”

The bed underneath the girl immediately started to shake. Tendrils of shadows came flying out from underneath with one tendril wrapping around the little girl on the bed and pulling her under! The other two tendrils shot forth like snakes to coil around the retreating Bai Yunfei and Tang Xinyun!

“Ayahhh!!!”

At the same time, the high-pitched scream of Huangfu Rui could be heard outside the room!

Chapter 700: Surprise Attack From Underneath

“Little Rui!”

It was with great concern that Tang Xinyun detached herself from Bai Yunfei’s back to leap out from the room. Huangfu Rui’s cry from outside the room had startled her so much that she tried to leave the room. But she turned her head back around to look at the young girl as she was being dragged underneath by the dark tendrils, “Yunfei!” She cried out, “The girl!”

“Don’t worry, I got it!!” Bai Yunfei called back. Pushing Tang Xinyun out of the room, he stepped further in. “Xiao Qi, protect Xinyun!!”

Xiao Qi had just started to fly into the air towards the tendrils when he was stopped by Bai Yunfei’s command. Turning around, it flew back towards Tang Xinyun.

“Bang! Bang!!”

The Cataclysmic Seal appeared in the room when Bai Yunfei shook his right hand. It struck against the two tendrils coming at him and rebuffed the two with a slight sizzling sound. The two tendrils curled backwards before shrinking back as if hurt.

Bai Yunfei arrived at the front of the bed in a flash. There was a single hole that extended from the middle of the bed down into the ground where he could see the young girl be brought away through a small drop of about thirty meters before turning a small corner and out of sight.

“Tch!!”

Bai Yunfei clicked his tongue. Without thinking twice, Bai Yunfei erected a barrier around him and dropped down the hole after the young girl.

.....

While Bai Yunfei and Tang Xinyun were both dealing with the interior of the room, Long Lan was busy smashing apart a black shadow and getting ready for battle along with the red magiboar. While Huangfu Rui hadn't been paying attention, a dark-red object had coiled around her waist. Since she hadn't been expecting to be attacked, Huangfu Rui let out a scream when she realized what was going.

It was however a good thing Long Lan was there and took care of the issue before anything could happen.

By the side, Zheng Kai had used his black fan to cut apart at the two tendrils coming at him and Kou Tingting with a burst of spatial attacks.

“Chirp!!”

While Tang Xinyun was rushing outside in her panic, Xiao Qi let loose a loud chirp. Shining brightly with light, he unleashed a wave of wind blades towards the right and tore apart at the shadows there which dripped dark-red liquid from them.

Xiao Bai was getting ready for battle too. It flapped its wings to provide a protective layering of elemental wind around Tang Xinyun's body to protect her.

As quick as they came, the 'things' that came out from the ground were quickly smashed apart and left to shrink back into the ground.

Aside from the tendrils Xiao Qi had torn apart, the rest of the tendrils fell back down to the ground with a bang where everyone could see 'what' exactly it was.....

“What...what is this?!” Zheng Kai cried out in bewilderment. Eyeing what it was in front of him closely, he saw something as thick as his own arm and several meters long. It was shaped like the tail of a snake and was dripping red with something.

Bewildered, Zheng Kai managed to find his voice a little later, “Am I seeing things right?! An octopus?!”

He was right! The thing that had attacked everyone just now had been the tentacles of an octopus!!

There over a dozen of these tentacles with suction pads stuck all over them that looked like mouths almost. Even now, the suction were still opening and closing!

“An octopus that....that can hide in the ground?!” Zheng Kai remarked, “If the tentacles are this big, just how big is the octopus itself?! And...how did we not notice the octopus earlier?!”

Now that everyone was back together, Long Lan peered down towards the ground. “I didn’t even sense it until it attacked. This place is....a little strange. It’s preventing my soulsense from entering....”

Xiao Qi nodded his head from above their heads. “I didn’t sense it either. That thing was hiding deep in the ground as if it was one with it. I can’t even sense where it’s gone now.”

Kou Tingting frowned. “Then what....what should we do now?”

“The very first thing we should do is get out of here. We’re not sure what’s going on here, it’s not safe if we stick around.” Zheng Kai voted.

“But....Yunfei dove into the hole to save that girl....” Tang Xinyun said.

“What?!” Zheng Kai whirled around to look at the room Bai Yunfei had been in. “I can’t sense him....damn! He really did go down that hole?!”

Try as hard as they might, no one in the group could sense Bai Yunfei’s aura from down the hole! It expanded for several hundred meters down and was like a swamp where one could hardly make head or tail of the geographical layout underneath.

“I know where Bai Yunfei is! He’s right now nearly six hundred meters down deep into the ground!” Xiao Qi suddenly spoke up. He was different to Zheng Kai due to his soul contract with Bai Yunfei and could tell the general area Bai Yunfei was in.

“Really?” Tang Xinyun spoke, “How is he doing right now?!”

“I can’t tell that,” Xiao Qi shook his head. “But he’s still chasing....no! I have to go in after him!!”

And just like that, Xiao Qi disappeared from the room to dive deep into the hole after Bai Yunfei.

I’m going too!!”

Growing panicked, Tang Xinyun moved to go down to but was stopped by Kou Tingting holding onto her arm.

‘Don’t be rash, Xinyun. It’s too dangerous down there, you can’t go.’ She shook her head.

Tang Xinyun didn’t look convinced, “But....”

“I know you’re worried about Yunfei, but we don’t know what’s down there. It could be a trap, if you can’t help out Yunfei, you might end up getting trapped yourself.”

“Tingting’s right,” Zheng Kai backed her up, “I think it’s best if we leave this place for now. Believe in Yunfei and Xiao Qi. The two of them are a lot stronger than even I’m aware of. Even a mid-stage Soul King won’t easily win against them, believe in them.”

He thought about it a little more. “How about this, if you’re still not convinced, then we can have Long Lan go help them when we get to a safe spot.”

“Sis Yun, why is bro Strawhat gone? Where did he go? And what was that just now, it was so scary....can we leave this place? I’m scared....” Huangfu Rui clutched at Tang Xinyun’s hand as she trembled.

“I....” A little hesitant, Tang Xinyun finally gave in after a while.

“Fine then, we can leave.”

But as everyone prepared to leave the room and take to the skies, yet another development started to take place!

“Bzzz.....”

The ground beneath their feet started to tremble as if an earthquake was starting to take place. Cracks and crevices started to open up, threatening to plunge them down into the earth!!

“Watch out!!”

Zheng Kai cried out to the others, pulling Kou Tingting with him as he did to take off into the skies.

But even as he tried to stabilize a foothold in the air by making use of the elemental energy to do so, Zheng Kai came to the startling realization that he couldn't! As if there was something from the hole draining their energy, it started to pull everyone towards the ground!

He wasn't the only person affected. Aside from Long Lan, everyone else was started to be sucked in to the ground!

Long Lan was astonished. He had thought the enemy had already retreated for now and hadn't thought another surprise attack would come so soon. He crossed over to Tang Xinyun who was the closest and pulled her to him. In another moment, he made his way to Zheng Kai and Kou Tingting a few meters away.

On the other side, Xiao Bai was try to make the most of its flying advantage by pulling Huangfu Rui up with its leg, but it was no use.....

The group fell down beneath the earth and quickly disappeared from sight down the pitch dark hole. There was only a faint crumbling sound as the hole slowly started to squirm a bit. Its mouth grew smaller and smaller until....it closed up on itself!

From what used to be a hundred meter large hole, a completely

intact piece of ground was left on it! Not even ten seconds had gone by before the ground was back to normal! Even the sod and stone tiles that had previously been there was back to perfect condition, and it looked like nothing even happened in the first place!

Under the night sky on this earth. In this small courtyard, the mansion, and the city, everything was deathly quiet.....

With Chapter 700 finished, the next chapter will mark the beginning of Book Six, though the last few chapters are actually a part of the chronology of Book Six, I felt it best to not make the split yet. The next installment will have plenty of new stories, such as: A legendary medicine will resurface, a mysterious area will be explored, even more Regalia will appear, and even more prodigies will come out into the spotlight.....What kind of dangers and adventure await Bai Yunfei?

Please look forward to Book Six: Pill Royale!

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