

Reincarnated as an Energy with a System

- Chapter 281: DeathWing Butterfly

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"Alright, here it is," Maeve said as she placed a giant cage in front of everyone. Inside was a bluish bird with cascading feathers and an unusually long beak with was fully golden in color.

It was around a meter and a half tall and about 2 meters in length.

"Your next beast is Indigold Toucan. Since teacher Gonez lost last, he will choose who starts off this match," Maeve said.

"Uh, yes. He will go first this time," Gonez didn't hesitate at all.

"Ok," Ning said in a relaxed manner. "Can I start?"

"Go ahead, teacher Ning," she said.

"Let's see, Indigold Toucan's fur is actually separate red and blue, only that Blue is the dominant color in the mix and nearly twice the amount of red," Ning said.

Maeve nodded and looked towards Gonez.

"Indigold Toucans can grow as much as 4 meters when they are fully grown," Gonez said.

Maeve looked towards Ning again. Back and forth the two of them started going off on the facts about the bird. This time, it seemed that Gonez knew a lot more about the birds so he didn't stop answering facts about it.

However, Ning still wasn't letting up. Even when it seemed like he would no longer have any more info, he would bring out something that was obscurely listed in books Maeve had.

After nearly 25 minutes of stating facts, however, Gonez started to feel the heat, and slowly, but surely, he couldn't come up with any more information.

He racked his brain for facts that might not have been said yet.

"Indigold Toucans, once adult, fly in pairs. so if you ever meet one, you need to be ready for another one to be extremely close by," Gonez said.

"Indigold Toucan's favorite food to eat is the fruit that grows on a Blackwater Vine," Ning said.

Maeve looked up the information and awkwardly smiled. "Teacher Ning, that was a wrong fact. They actually like to eat Fire grapes the most," Maeve said.

Gonez immediately couldn't help but exclaim happily. "Hah! You made a mistake," he said. On the inside, he was feeling relieved as he couldn't come up with another fact at all.

"Umm, are you sure?" Ning asked. "Because they certainly do like the fruit more than the grapes."

"It's written here in the book by teacher Keng. He is the highest authority on beasts in the Academy, so forgive me if I believe his writing more, teacher Ning," Maeve said.

Ning was about to argue but decided to leave it. There was still another beast to come.

"This round goes to teacher Gonez," she announced and went to get the next beast. When she returned, there was a beast on her arm, but it wasn't in a cage or anything. It was instead calmly sleeping on top of Maeve's arms.

Gonez's eyes went wide when he saw the beast. "That's... senior Keng's Deathwing Butterfly," Gonez said. People around the audience started gasping when they heard that.

"Deathwing Butterfly? Isn't that a beast that can kill you if you look at its entire body?" someone asked.

"That's an exaggeration, but people with low mental strength do fall unconscious when they see the pattern on its body," someone else explained.

Even Ning looked at it curiously. That was when he noticed something strange. "Oh!" his curiosity only got bigger.

"Teachers, let's start. Since teacher Ning lost last time, he will choose who goes first," Maeve said.

"He can go first," Ning said while not removing his gaze from the butterfly.

"Very well, I will start. Deathwing Butterflies will passively attack your mind when they unfurl their wings," Gonez said. He used the same fact that was just going around in the audience.

However, Maeve couldn't fault it as that was not against the rules. So, she nodded and looked towards Ning.

Ning however wasn't moving his gaze from the butterfly at all and didn't pay attention to the match.

"Teacher Ning? It's your turn," she said.

"Huh?" he was distracted from his thoughts and processed what Maeve just said. "Oh, uh... did you say that was Teacher Keng's beast?" he asked.

"Yes, that Deathwing Butterfly is something teacher Keng got not many years ago. In terms of age, it's still a child, but once it grows, it will become a formidable opponent that not everyone can stand against," Maeve said.

"You are not wrong about that. It will certainly become a formidable opponent to anyone in the future, I can't argue against that. However, it seems Miss Maeve, you are wrong about something."

"Not just you though, teacher Gonez, the audience, and even teacher Keng himself seem to be mistaken. In fact, you could say that teacher Gonez already lost this round since he got the very first fact wrong," Ning said.

"Oh," Maeve got curious, "and that is?"

"That's not a Deathwing Butterfly," Ning said.

"Huh?"

"What?"

"How is it not?"

"Oi, teacher Ning, what crap are you spewing out right now? If that is not a Deathwing Butterfly, then what is it?" Gonez asked.

Ning didn't answer. Instead, he turned around to look for the teacher Keng who was in the audience. He called him to join the conversation right now.

"Teacher Ning, you say some fascinating stuff that I find hard to agree with," the old man said as he walked forward.

"I wouldn't doubt it, teacher Keng. It's very unlikely you heard about it since it was supposed to have disappeared during the war thousands of years ago."

"It seems, however,... it was not. I might have to improve my knowledge a bit," Ning said out loud, but he really just said it for himself.

"Teacher Ning, you are not making much sense," Keng said.

"Oh right, Do you know the defining feature of every Deathwing Butterfly's wings?" he asked.

Keng's eyes suddenly changed.

"You've noticed it, haven't you? But you couldn't make sense of it. The patterns are supposed to be symmetrical, but they are not. You assume it's just a one-of-a-kind Deathwing Butterfly, but that's where you are wrong. You don't have enough information, so you assumed incorrectly," Ning said.

"Y-You mean?" Keng's body started shaking, looking for answers.

"That's not a Deathwing Butterfly. That's a ShadowGod Butterfly that evolves from a Deathwing Butterfly."

Chapter 282: The War

"ShadowGod Butterfly?" Keng got a little confused. "I'm afraid I have never heard of it, teacher Ning."

"Don't listen to him, Senior Keng, he is just spewing crap to not lose this com—"

Keng put up his hands to stop Gonez from speaking. "Please, tell me more about this beast, teacher Ning."

Ning nodded. "Do you know about the massive war that engulfed the planet ten thousand years ago, senior Keng?" he asked.

"War... I don't think so. Although, I have heard about some beasts going extinct around that time frame," Keng said.

"Ten thousand years ago, when cultivators were few and far in between, the world was ruled by the beasts. Strong beasts that were descendants of dragons, phoenixes, and other legendary beasts were the true masters of this planet."

"Then one day a monster was born from those legendary beasts, a beast that contained the bloodline of 4 different legendary beasts. Somehow, their bloodline didn't interfere with each other, and instead improved that beast's talent," Ning said.

Everyone quietly listened to Ning explain the past.

"The beast had great potential, and in just two centuries, reached the highest peak of cultivation it could on this planet, he famed pseudo-Spirit Transformation realm."

However, it wasn't satisfied with that. So, to reach a higher realm, it started killing other beasts and devouring it to gain more Qi."

"When the beasts at the time learned about this, they started a war against this single beast."

"Alone, the beast killed the majority of the strong beasts at the time and single-handedly wiped nearly all of the beast population. This was why humanity managed to flourish so much today."

"The ShadowGod Butterfly was a beast with the bloodline of a legendary beast known as the Abyssborn Butterfly. They had the powers of charm and hypnotism as well as direct mental attacks at the time. Due to its powers, they were ones of the first ones the lone beast hunted down."

"However," Ning said as he turned towards the butterfly in Maeve's hand. "It seems not all of them died that day. A small number of those butterflies must have survived and are hidden somewhere steadily increasing their numbers. This little one must have accidentally escaped."

"Senior Keng, can you tell me where you found him?" Ning asked.

"Uh, it was inside a tomb near the Grime Oasis of the Sun Empire," Keng said. "I found him there during our last Decennial Student Exchange that was held in the Sun Empire's Burning Spirit Academy."

"I see. You were extremely lucky there wasn't an adult butterfly nearby, or you would not have left the tomb safely at all," Ning said.

Keng started to sweat when he heard that. "Is-Is it really that bad?" he asked.

"It's a legendary beast, teacher Keng. I shouldn't have to explain to you how lucky you were," Ning said.

"Y-Yes, you are right," Keng said. "By the way, teacher Ning. You said there were beasts with the bloodline of the legendary beasts. What about the legendary beasts themselves? Did they not exist during the battle?"

"Uh, I too am unsure about that, teacher Keng. From what I know, they really did exist, but then they stopped existing suddenly. There must have been some event that happened even before this, during a time so far away that the bloodline of theirs got muddled to the point that their memories don't exist anymore," Ning said.

"I see, that does make sense," Keng said.

"Wait, you are believing him? He could be spouting nonsense for all you know. He didn't even say anything about the butterfly itself," Gonez said.

"ShadowGod butterfly has irregular, asymmetrical patterns on their body. They can use charms and hypnotism just by unfurling their wings. Adult ones can even make the opponent hallucinate the battle. Their wings are strong, but not strong enough to withstand anything stronger than a level 4 body cultivator. They have 8 eyes but only use 4 of their eyes to see. The remaining 4 they use to see the mental state of their opponent directly...."

Ning continued for a while explaining in detail every single fact he could remember about the ShadowGod Butterflies. It wasn't until Keng asked Ning to stop that Ning halted his information dump.

Gonez looked with wide eyes at the sheer amount of knowledge Ning knew about the beast. 'What the F*ck?! How the F*ck does an alchemist know these things?' Gonez couldn't comprehend what was happening.

"I... think that means teacher Ning wins this round, right?" Maeve asked as if she was looking for approval from Keng. Keng too was unsure what to think.

"That can't be," Gonez interfered. "I was given the wrong beast to speak about. If it was any other beast, I wouldn't have made such a mistake. Even Senior Keng didn't know about it."

Keng felt some truth in what Gonez said and was about to ask Maeve to redo the 3rd round when Ning walked forward.

"Teacher Ning?" he spoke, but Ning did nothing. "Miss Maeve, can you open this cage for me please?"

"Uh, the toucan's cage? Sure" Maeve said and walked forward to the Indigold Toucan. She then opened the cage and the nervous toucan walked into the midst of the hundreds of cultivators and started to get scared.

"Don't worry. We are not going to hurt you," Ning said to the toucan. The toucan got a little less scared when he heard Ning speak.

Ning then pulled out two objects from his storage. Keng and Maeve got a little confused at first, but when they saw the objects they understood.

Ning placed the first object on the right and then the second object on the left. "Choose!" he said.

The toucan looked to the left and it started getting happy when it saw the Firegrapes. However, just as it was about to move, it smelled something, and as if it had fallen onto a trance, it started salivating and moving towards the black fruit.

It didn't hesitate a moment before it devoured the whole thing. After it was finished, it moved back towards Ning instead of the Firegrapes to ask for more.

Ning smiled and gave him another black fruit which it ate slowly this time.

"This proves it right?" Ning asked.

"Y-Yes," Maeve said with a daze. She couldn't believe that Keng's book was wrong. Keng too looked apologetic.

"Teacher Gonez, if you can come up with a fact for the toucan, I might consider making the 2nd round a draw," Maeve said.

"Yes! Yes, I will say it," Gonez said and started to furiously rack his head. However, there was no way he could. His last answer was the best he could come up with after so many other facts.

"Uh..." he tried to stall for time but Maeve saw through it quite easily. She waited for a few seconds more, but after understanding he didn't have an answer, she decided to call it.

"It seems you couldn't continue teacher Gonez, so the 2nd round goes to teacher Ning. Since he won the first 2 rounds, the 3rd round is unnecessary. Thus, this duel has been won by teacher Ning."

"As per the agreement, you will now stop interacting with the disciple as per teacher Ning's bet. That's all."

As soon as Gonez heard it, he fell on his knees, unbelieving of his loss.

Chapter 283: Badge

"Congratulations on the victory, teacher Ning. That was an excellent display of knowledge," Keng said as he shook Ning's hand.

"Thank you, teacher Keng. You really helped me too. If you weren't here, I can't imagine how many of my facts would've been dismissed as impossible," Ning said.

"Haha, I'm happy that this old man's years of obsession became of some use to you," Keng said. "By the way, teacher Ning, where did you learn all of this information about the beasts? You don't look that old to me."

"I don't know what to say, Senior Keng. I got this information from a friend in exchange for all of my information on alchemy. I have been reading these for a hundred years or so," Ning said.

"I see," Keng said, sort of satisfied with the answer.

The students and teachers watching the duel started dispersing.

"Let's go. No need to keep listening to the liar," the teacher in green said and left.

"What's wrong with Miss Eleonora? She seems unusually cranky," a teacher said softly.

"No idea. I haven't seen her like this ever," another teacher said and walked behind her.

After everyone left, the only people remaining there were a few students and the main dueling group. Nilo walked forward to Ning and bowed a little towards him.

"I'm sorry, teacher. Because of me, you had to take part in something like this," Nilo apologized.

"It's alright, it wasn't your fault," Ning said.

"Thank you, teacher Ning," Nilo said and looked over to Gonez. "Teacher Gonez, you selfishly thought you could decide what I needed to do without asking me at all and even challenged teacher Ning when he had nothing to do with my decision. If I knew you were such a person, I would've never joined your classes."

"Thankfully, you made sure I never can anymore," Nilo said and left.

Gonez was on the ground, still distraught at the fact that he lost in a beast-related battle against a teacher who taught alchemy.

"Gonez!" teacher Keng loudly called out his name.

"Y-Yes," Gonez came out of his stupor.

"How many students does your class have?" Keng asked.

"Uh, some two hundred," Gonez said.

"How many do you have remaining if you remove a single student from this number?" Keng asked.

Gonez understood what Keng was trying to say and put on a meek little smile. "It... isn't about the number, senior Keng. It's about the status of the single student," he said.

"Oh, and what status does this student have?" Keng asked.

"Uh... never mind, I'm leaving," Gonez left before answering the question.

"Sigh, he thinks we don't know," Keng said softly as he looked at the leaving figure of Keng.

"Oh, does senior Keng know about Nilo's lineage?" Ning asked.

"Ah, yes. His mother was a gold starred Beast master who retired only two decades ago. If she were still teaching, I would have a hard time calling myself the best," Keng said with a chuckle.

"As for his father..." Keng thought for a while and said, "It might be better If I don't talk about senior's relationship so openly. Sorry about that, teacher Ning."

"It's alright," Ning said. "I will take my leave now, senior."

"Wait a second, teacher Ning," Keng said.

"Yes?" Ning stopped.

"Would you like to become a teacher for the Beast Master Wing as well?" Keng asked.

"Uh... don't I need to take an entrance test next year for that?" Ning asked.

"That's just to evaluate the teachers that come in. I have already seen your performance and have thus evaluated you already. You would make for an excellent Beast Master teacher," Keng said.

"I see," Ning said and thought for a while. "Okay. I see no problem with your suggestion, teacher Keng."

"Good. However, I can't make you a teacher immediately. You will need to come find me once you get at least get your silver badge. That's when you are allowed to teach other classes," Keng said.

"Sure. I will see you tomorrow then, teacher Keng," Ning said and left this time.

Keng turned around to get his butterfly with excited eyes when he was puzzled by something.

"Why tomorrow?"

"Alright, that's it for today. I will see you all in two days. Have a great day off," Ning said and left the class with a happy smile. He hadn't realized how good his duel with Gonez actually was.

Just the publicity he got from that fight upped his student count to nearly a thousand from the low 300s. If he could do well in the upcoming lecture in a few days, he would surely get a very large number of students.

He walked back to the staffroom and saw that there were dozens of teachers standing around.

"It started already?" Ning asked softly.

"No, you're in time," Boel answered.

The teachers stood around for a few more minutes as more and more teachers joined in. After a while, Jezeere walked in and looked around.

"Sigh, is the old man not coming?" he asked.

"I don't think senior Aram cares about this little ceremony," a teacher said with an awkward smile.

'Aram... is that the name of the 2nd Gold starred alchemist?' Ning wondered. From what he heard, the 2nd Gold starred alchemist no longer taught on a daily basis, so Ning had yet to see the person.

"Very well, we will start without him," Jezeere said. "This month, we have 5 teachers who managed to go up from their previous rank. Congratulations to you all."

The group of teachers started clapping. Jezeere started handing out the teacher's badges. Ryuger managed to get a bronze badge at least and was super happy.

Finally, he came to Ning.

"Teacher Ning, you have shown quite a remarkable growth in just a single month. I hope you continue growing in the coming days. Here you go," Jezeere said as he placed the badge on Ning's clothes.

"Congratulations on the Silver badge. The Alchemy Wing is glad to have you with us."

Chapter 284: Exams

Two months passed before Ning could even realize it.

"So, make sure to make the paste as smooth as possible to have the highest effect. You can only achieve that with a really good mortar and pestle. So, make sure to not be stingy when buying one. Get one that is good, even if you have to spend a lot of money," Ning explained to the Physician class.

"Alright, that's it for today. Due to the exams coming up, there won't be another class next week."

Ning waved to the students and walked out of the class. He was currently wearing a red robe since he was still in the Alchemy wing, but his clothes had 4 different badges.

He had 2 silver badges with a leaf and a claw imprinted on them for Alchemy and Beast Master classes as well as 2 bronze badges with a mortar and pestle, and a ladybug on them for teaching Physician and Bug handling classes.

He was starting to get a lot of students regularly, however, since he split his schedule into 4 separate classes, he couldn't get any higher badges.

He walked over to the staffroom and sat down. It was now time for him to come up with problems for his students to solve. Since the academy was quite strict, every 3 months, they would have an exam to test the students. If they failed, those students would fail and thus be directly expelled from ever taking that class again.

So, Ning had to come up with problems that were easy for the students, but not so much that they all passed without a problem. He didn't have to worry about it though, since his problems would be crosschecked by other teachers to make sure they are up to par.

Since he taught 4 different subjects, he needed to make up 4 separate test problems. That was a headache for him.

He spent the next 3 hours just thinking of the problems and finally felt like he was okay with them. He searched for Aikon, the handler for Alchemy wing's teachers, and gave him both the Alchemy and Physician-related questions.

"Teacher Ning, please check these questions too. If you find anything too easy or too hard, mark it as such," Aikon said as he handed him the questions.

Ning spent another hour looking through all the questions and marking what he thought of it. Once that was done, he went to the Beast Master wing and did the same thing.

He gave his questions and marked the other questions.

He would get the feedback from those questions pretty soon and he would change it per those feedbacks.

As such a few days went by in a flash.

Ning walked into an exam room and looked at the many students he was in charge of.

"Alright, settle down everyone. I will begin your test very soon," he said as he looked at the different students. Some he recognized from his class, some he was seeing for the first time.

"Alright, everyone takes out your mortar and pestle, the exam will consist of you making some medicines," Ning said. The students did as asked and brought out their tools.

Ning suddenly threw a bunch of bags towards the various students and said, "There are exactly 13 ingredients in the bag. You will write down their name for 10 total marks. You will write down at least 5 facts about those ingredients for 20 marks. Then, you will make the one possible medicine out of those ingredients for 50 marks."

"Finally, you will name the medicine and list down its usage for another 20 marks."

"In total, there are 100 marks you can get from this, and you need to get 70 marks to pass."

"For each ingredient you name wrong, you lose a mark. For each fact you write wrong, you lose 1 mark. For the grade you reach with the paste you make, you get 5 marks for each grade. Finally, for each mistake on the last one, you lose 1 mark."

"Mistaking the name of the medicine will immediately fail you. Understood?" Ning asked.

Everyone nodded.

"You have one hour to complete it all. Your time starts now."

Everyone frantically started looking at the ingredients that were in their bag and started noting down the answers. Ning looked at all of them to make sure they didn't cheat, but given how they weren't allowed to use their Divine sense, it was unlikely they would cheat.

He waited for about 15 minutes before one of the students started to pour the ingredients into their mortar and pestle. Ning smiled when he saw the order of ingredients the student was crushing them in. That was the correct order.

He was happy that they weren't going to flop it majestically. Soon everyone started crushing the ingredients and started making a paste out of it very fast.

Ning looked at the time and saw that there were only 10 minutes left by the time everyone was done making the paste. One of the students stood up and walked to the front.

She then handed the small jar with the paste and a talisman with the answers to Ning and bowed towards him a bit before leaving.

Ning looked fondly towards the student as she walked away.

This was one of his best students in the Physicians class. Ning had yet to learn her name, but she was always active in the class and learned everything he taught the class. She even asked questions he thought were impossible for normal students to come up with.

He looked at the talisman she just handed and read it.

"I see. So her name is Daisin huh? Sounds like a flower," he thought. After that, students came up one by one, handing him their papers and bottles.

Ning made sure to separate them accordingly and not let them mix up. Once all the students were done with the exam, Ning also left the room and went back to his underground room to check the results as well as prepare for tomorrow's beast master's test.

Chapter 285: Beast Master Test

There were a bunch of people gathered behind the student resident, in front of the giant forest that encircled the deserts of the Sun Empire.

Every one of these people looked relatively young, except for one of them wearing 4 different badges on their chest. That person was Ning.

Ning looked at the nearly 50 people that he was in charge of for this test and nodded.

"Alright, I hope all of you are here since we will be starting your tests now," Ning said. His Qi amplified his voice so that it reached every single one of the students standing there.

"You have a single task in this exam, and that is to tame a beast. You have to tame a beast that's in the Foundation Establishment realm at least," Ning said.

The students looked around at themselves, wondering why the task was so simple. Since they were in the Golden Core realm at least, it was impossible for them not to be able to tame beasts in the Foundation Establishment Realm.

"There are 2 things you aren't allowed to do, however," Ning said. A few of the students smiled when they heard that; they had been waiting for this.

"First, you only have a single day to capture these beasts. You have to go, tame, and return with a wild beast all in a single day," Ning said.

"Second, you can only go as far as 3 kilometers in. Any further and you will be directly disqualified from the exam and thus fail. And unfortunately for you guys, I've scared away all the beast in a 5-kilometer radius," Ning said as he smiled.

"Your time starts now. Good Luck."

The information came too fast for the students.

"Wait, how are we supposed to tame any beasts if there aren't any?"

"Teacher, this is unfair."

"But the beasts are nowhere in the 3 kilometers radius."

The students started crying out. However, the good ones directly ran into the forest. They understood that a momentary fear wouldn't stop the beasts from returning back. If they went to the 3 kilometers line, they would find the beast's return.

If not, they had ways to lure the beasts in.

When the rest of the students saw that, they too understood what was happening and ran in. In less than a minute, there was no one in the area except Ning.

A teacher flew in and stood next to Ning. "Are they going to be okay, teacher Ning? The Broken Forest has a lot of hidden danger," the teacher said.

"No worries, teacher Yoka. I have my divine sense on them, nothing will happen to them," Ning said.

"What good will your divine sense that only go up to a few hundred meters do in this case, Teacher Ning?" the other teacher asked. He could feel the Golden Core realm aura from Ning since that was the facade Ning had decided to keep since the very beginning.

"Uh, my divine sense goes up to a few kilometers due to a secret technique I have. I can see all the disciples from here," Ning said.

"I see, well, my group of students is just listing down information about the beasts in the cages. I will go back or they will start cheating. See you later, teacher Ning," teacher Yoka said and left.

Once Yoka left, Ning waited for a few moments as he checked the disciples that were in the forest. Some were making sounds to attract the beasts, some were using ingredients to make a special scent, and some were even using widespread techniques. Everyone was doing something to attract back the beasts and very soon the beasts would be back.

'That can't happen,' Ning thought to himself and smiled. "Come out," he said and suddenly 3 beasts appeared in front of him.

Night dimmed the light of any place he appeared in. His eyes showed the resolute and stoic beast he was. Aegis was more innocent and immediately called out "Master" when he saw Ning. Blue on the other hand still had the arrogant look on him, but none of it was directed towards Ning.

"Is there some work?" Night asked. After eating a pill that Ning had made a few weeks ago, all of them had been healed to a considerable level. So now that Ning brought them out, they expected there to be some fighting.

"Yes, but it's not what you are thinking of," Ning said. "Alright, all 3 of you, drop your cultivation base to low level of Foundation Establishment realm."

The 3 of them were confused but did so without hesitation. "Now change your size down to what you would have at around that realm," Ning told them.

Night dropped his body's size until he was around half a meter in height. Blue changed his body accordingly until he was small and looked like a serpent more than a flood dragon.

Finally, Aegis stayed the same since that was what his adult size always was. Only he changed his features a little to make his golden body a little less attractive.

Once they were all done, Ning explained what the disciples were doing in the forest. "Your job is to go and distract them. Don't attack, don't interfere directly. Just go around them, move a little until you catch their attention, and run away when they try to capture you."

"Do that with every disciple until its midnight," Ning said. "Remember, do not retaliate. Those are students, and you aren't allowed to harm them at all."

"Finally, once midnight hits, don't show up anymore but stay around to protect them just in case," Ning said. "Understood?"

"Yes, Master," the 3 of them said in almost unison.

"Alright, good. Now go, I will also go in very soon," Ning said with a mischievous smile. The 3 beasts nodded and flew into the forest.

Before long, the students were starting to get distracted, thinking that their lure was working, and started following the three to try and tame them.

Chapter 286: Mischief Managed

"Come here, little beetle. I will give you this fruit," a student said as he brought out a berry. He waved it around in front of the giant beetle trying to lure it in.

The beetle looked at the berry as if entranced by the food and slowly walked towards the student. The student had a warm smile on his face, but the emotion in his eyes gave away his intentions.

As soon as he walked towards the beetle to give it the berry, however, the beetle got scared and ran away.

"Hey, wait," the student immediately followed behind the beetle, but the beetle went into a dense part of the forest and disappeared. Since using divine sense wasn't allowed at all, he couldn't even search for it anymore.

"What the hell? Where did it go?" the student asked, unable to find any signs of the beetle.

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"Ughh! Why is a snake here? I hate snakes," A girl said as she looked at the small, blue-colored, slithering snake. "What type of snake even is this? Have I even learned about it yet?"

The snake didn't bother with the girl and slithered away from her without stopping.

"Goddammit, Wait!" she shouted and went after the snake. The snake was quite slow, so she had no problem catching up to it. The snake turned around to look at her and saw the girl make some weird motions with her hands.

A green light was released from her hands and fell onto the snake. "Come with me, you damn snake. I will give you some blueblooded mice. You love those right?" she asked.

Suddenly, the snake turned around and slithered away.

"What?" the girl said in shock and followed after the snake, but the snake was already gone.

"Huh? How did my charm not work on it? Did it break through it?" the girl couldn't help but wonder.

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"Hmm, that looks like a Night Snatcher. If I remember correctly, they love snakeskins, right?" the young man said to himself as he looked at the bird in the tree.

"I'm quite lucky to have found a Night Snatcher this early into the day. If I remember correctly, they are only supposed to show up at night, right?" he thought.

He slowly walked towards the bird, but it was getting darker and darker as the evening got closer.

"I thought we started just a few hours ago. Is it really evening by now?" he wondered but didn't think much about it. He quickly brought out a book from his bag and flipped it around.

He could see words like 'Snake Tongue', 'Feline Tongue', 'Bug Tongue', and many other beast tongues. He stopped on a particular page that had the words 'Bird Tongue' on top of it.

"Alright, let's see. How do I greet," he said and quickly read through it. "I see."

He put down the book and took a deep breath. Slowly, his lungs started glowing as they filled with Qi. Same for his neck which was also getting filled with Qi.

Then, he opened his mouth with his jaw unhinged and didn't close them. Suddenly, the Qi and air in his lungs went up through his neck and a bird-like chirp started sounding from within him.

The Night Snatcher was surprised and looked towards the student. The student had just said the words "Greetings, how are you?" through the bird's chirp, he had just made.

The Night Snatcher chirped back with its back eyes as well.

"Oh, what did it say?" the student quickly flipped through the book to find a sound that was similar to the one the bird just made.

"Hmm... 'friend', huh? Haha, yes Friend," the student said and immediately went 'Ah!' before saying that he was a friend in the bird's tongue.

They back and forth went on for a little bit longer when suddenly, the Night Snatcher simply left and flew away.

"Wait!" the student shouted, but he couldn't see the Night Snatcher anymore. All this time he spent talking to the bird was wasted just like that.

"What did I do wrong?" he thought as he looked around. "Huh? Why is it so bright all of a sudden."

* * * * *

"Hey, stop!"

"It's you. Come here."

"I will kill you if you don't come here."

"Hey buddy, do you want some meat?"

"No, it ran away again."

"Oi, no, come. I need you to pass the test."

Ning could hear such voices as he walked through the jungle unassumingly. He currently looked like a tiger's cub with purple stripes instead of black ones.

Thanks to a skill he bought a century or so ago called 108 Transformations. Thanks to that skill, he could turn to change his appearance into anything he wanted.

He purred trying to get the attention of the students. One of the students came up to him, trying to give him food. Ning got close to the student, ate the food, and ran away.

Another student came to him a little later. At that time, the student tried to lure him using some leaves. Ning spit next to him and ran away.

Similar to his beasts, he was also making trouble for the student until it was midnight. Once it hit midnight, however, he returned back out of the forest and called back his beasts too.

Night, Blue, and Aegis came out of the forest and immediately changed their forms back to their real ones.

Blue kept complaining about how annoying the students were, while Aegis didn't really agree with that notion. The students were very friendly towards him.

Night just stayed stoic and didn't speak at all. "Alright, go back inside. Finally, I can let these students tame the beasts," Ning said.

The 3 of them went back into the beast space inside of Ning.

Ning still had his senses spread up to a few kilometers away and was looking at the students. He could also see the beasts he scared away slowly return back as well.

'Alright, that should be enough. It's just a waiting game now,' he thought and sat down on the ground.

Chapter 287: Intruders in the Forest

Ning closed his eyes and waited for the night to pass. He had his divine sense in the forest at all times to make sure the students weren't in trouble at all times.

Thankfully, the weaker beasts were coming back. The stronger beasts were always hesitant to come so near to the outside lest they get targeted by some strong individual.

A few of the students had begun the taming process about 3 hours after he had left the forest.

"Oh, she got lucky. That's not a bad beast at all."

"Ah, he knows that technique, huh? Not bad. Works quite well for him."

"Ahh, no, idiot. That's the herbivore version. Why is he trying to lure them with meat?"

He had fun looking through the different students trying to tame the beasts. He was waiting for the students to finish taming it all when something entered his range of divine sense.

Normally, thanks to a skill of his, his divine sense could reach out to about 3 kilometers around him, which was 3 times as wide as a normal Nascent Soul 1st Realm cultivator's divine sense.

Since he was focusing on the students, he had been sending it all in front of him, so he could see up to 6 kilometers in front of him right now.

'What's that?' he thought when he saw sensed the things walk inside his divine sense. 'Are those men?'

As they walked a bit inward, Ning could see that they were in fact men. The men sensed his divine sense on them and sent out their own divine sense, but theirs only went as far as a kilometer or two, so they couldn't see anyone.

They didn't have the skill to focus on a single area to increase their range of divine sense like Ning did. The men were starting to get flustered.

Suddenly, something appeared in their senses out of nowhere. As they looked, a young man with the cultivation base of what looked like a Golden Core realm walked out from beyond the bushes.

Ning had teleported there to see who these men really were. When he did see them, he was a little surprised. From what he could see, every single one of these people had the same face.

'What's going on? They are clearly different people. Did they eat some pills?' Ning wondered. However, that didn't matter to him much.

"Gentlemen. My students are taking an exam behind here. If you would be so kind to either go around from here or fly up high. Thanks," Ning said to the men.

The men looked around at each other, a little confused. Just then, one of them saw the robe and badges on Ning's and whispered something directly to them using their Divine sense.

The other people looked at Ning would some sense of urgency as well.

Ning on the other hand frowned. Thanks to his superior divine sense, he caught the message being transferred between the men.

"So what if I am a teacher from the Academy? Does that have something to do with you people?" Ning asked seriously. He had lived enough to realize something wrong was going to happen due to these people.

The men realized they had been caught and immediately shouted, "Capture him!"

One of the men jumped at him and tried to catch him with his arms. Since he thought that Ning was a Golden Core cultivator, he didn't expect him to be able to dodge.

However, the reality was different. Ning directly caught the face of the man and held him tight, not letting him move at all.

"Who are you, people? What do you want with the academy?" Ning asked.

"Let go of him!" the men shouted and came close to attack Ning. They no longer seemed interested in capturing and tried to actually kill him.

One person sent out a red attack, another one punched at him, the next one brought out a sword and slashed, another one used a spear.

All of the attacks landed on Ning at the same time. However, none of it did a single scratch worth of damage.

Ning looked at all of them directly in their eyes and saw nothing but fear. "You really did well sealing your fate like this," he said with a demonic smile.

Suddenly, aura flared from him, showing his true cultivation base to the people.

The fear in their eyes got stronger when that happened. "Monster!" one of them shouted.

"Doesn't matter what you call me. All you guys need to do right now is die."

He crushed the man's face he was holding and with the same hand caught the nascent soul of the man before crushing it too. The other four men immediately jumped up and flew in four different directions, choosing to abandon whatever they were doing.

Ning simply shook his head and disappeared. He appeared in front of the man with the spear that was flying away and caught him by the neck. Without hesitation, he crushed his neck and took the spear from his hand before slicing the nascent soul in two as well.

Suddenly, blue light started glowing from the spear as he channeled his Qi into it. He looked to the side towards where the other person was flying away and immediately tossed the spear.

The spear flew away with incredible speed through the night and accurately hit the naval area of one of the men flying away and killed both him and the nascent soul in a single attack.

Ning then teleported over to another area and used a claw technique to shred one of the flying men into pieces. Finally, only the man with the sword was remaining.

Ning teleported next to him and stopped him by catching his head.

"ARRGGHH! Let go of me, you bastard!" the man started to shout and slash at Ning, but nothing fazed Ning. He didn't let him go at all.

"I will ask you this one time. Who are you? And Why are you here?" Ning said with a serious voice.

Chapter 288: Exams Canceled

"I- I- I- I—" The man only stuttered without answering and immediately bit something in his mouth. Suddenly, Ning felt something happen to the man.

His face deformed as it started melting. Ning immediately let go of his head and the man's body fell through to air until it hit the ground with a hard thud.

Ning went to the ground to check and saw that the man was fully dead. Even his nascent soul didn't survive whatever he bit.

"Was that a pill? Who made such a vicious pill?" Ning thought. He tried to look for the man's storage bags and whatnot, but everything was destroyed along with his body.

"That was a pill meant for him to kill himself when he falls into such a situation, isn't it?" Ning thought. "Just who can use Nascent realm cultivators as fodder and force them to have a pill in their mouth that kills them?"

Ning didn't wait until he figured out these answers.

He immediately flew back and appeared on top of the forest with the students.

"Everyone!" Ning's voice resonated throughout the forest. "Your exams are canceled. Please gather outside the forest at once," he said.

"Huh? Canceled?"

"Eh? Did I fail?"

The students started to get curious about it all and left the forest. When they finally saw Ning, they were shocked.

"Teacher, You were hiding your cultivation base all this time?" someone asked.

"Huh? Oh yeah," Ning said nonchalantly. This was not something he could care about right now. "Everyone stick together and follow me. We are going back to the academy," he said.

"Huh? What about the exam?" someone asked.

"Screw the exam," Ning said. "The academy is under attack from strong individuals, and I need to get you to someplace safe."

"Under attack?"

"Are we in trouble?"

"Who dares attack the Five Professions academy? Don't they know that they make the enemy of all four surrounding empires?"

"SHUT UP!" Ning shouted. "Follow me silently."

He turned around and started walking away. The students slowly followed behind him and walked towards their quarters. However, Ning didn't stop there.

Since the people were targeting the academy, or at the very least, the teachers, they were sure to come for the students as well.

'Do they really want to kill the people in the academy? That didn't seem like it. Those men's first instinct was to capture me, not kill me. It was only after they knew I was strong that they changed the approach. Which means, they likely haven't hurt anyone that didn't try to fight back.'

'Since almost all of the students are weak, it's unlikely any of them could put up a fight against these people. The teachers, however,' Ning frowned.

It would certainly become a problem if the teacher started fighting back. From what they could see, the teachers in the Academy weren't the strongest physically since they mostly spent their time just studying.

'Sigh, I hope they are alright,' Ning thought and walked along. He had his divine sense out but was being careful not to alert anyone that they were coming.

However, with so many students behind him, and the attackers themselves being in the Nascent Soul realm, it was going to be bad.

Ning immediately turned around and said to the students, "if you feel someone's divine sense passing through you, act like you didn't realize. Act dumb."

The students quickly nodded and Ning continued walking. He reigned in his divine sense to just a kilometer in front of him and continued walking towards the academy.

As they were walking up the stairs, Ning saw 2 people through his divine sense, but let it move as if he didn't notice them at all.

Suddenly, two different divine senses landed on him, but he didn't bat an eye. The students also didn't bat an eye at all.

He then noticed the two of them move towards him and suddenly drop in front of him.

Ning acted surprised when he saw the two of them. The students, however, were genuinely surprised when they saw the two of them.

'Nascent Soul 2nd Realm and 3rd Realm, huh?' he thought. He then looked at the two people and felt something weird when he saw the two of them have the same face.

"That's..." One of the students gasped as he was too shocked to finish his statement at all.

"Who are you?" Ning asked, trying to act scared.

"Hehe, thanks for acting like a dog and rounding up these sheep. We will take care of you from here," the man said.

Ning looked at the two of them and said, "Alright, don't hurt us."

"Hehe, come," the man said and gave them the way.

Ning looked behind and said, "Alright, students. Follow me slowly. You don't have to be scared." He then turned around and nervously looked at the two of them and started walking up the stairs.

The two of them had menacing smiles on their face as they watched Ning walk past them. However, Ning suddenly turned towards the two of them and punched one of them.

He hit that person's naval area so hard that his body was blown to bits with the Nascent Soul nowhere to be seen.

Ning then caught one of the flying pieces of the man's body and immediately shoved it onto the other man's mouth.

"No killing yourself so early, Ok?" he said as he pat on the man's face. The man tried to struggle, but suddenly 3 different auras appeared from around Ning as 3 beasts came out of him.

"Ah, here it is," Ning said as he finally sensed something from his pat. He quickly used his Qi to pull out the pill from the man's mouth and kept it into his storage space for now.

"Hmm, I still don't know if you have something on you that you can use," Ning said and suddenly grabbed the man's head.

Supreme Domination.

The man screamed as Ning's spirit overpowered his own to write his dominance over him.

"Finally, I can get my answers," Ning said with a smile.

"Who are you? And Why are you here?"

Chapter 289: Undying Oath

"My name is Dougeo Iref, Master. I came here under orders from my superior to take hostage of the academy with everyone else," the man Ning had just made his servant speak.

He got onto his knees as he bowed in front of Ning, fully accepting him as his master.

"Take hostage of the Academy? You don't plan on killing anyone?" Ning asked.

"We kill if we can't capture them. The superior asked that there should be no information about this takeover that gets out of this place. If we feel anything will hinder against that, we are ordered to kill."

Ning started to get suspicious about what was going on. Taking hostage of anything meant that the criminals wanted something in exchange.

"What's the reason for the hostage? What does your superior want?" Ning asked. Ning tried to think of anything one could get from this academy, but money and knowledge were the only 2 things he could come up with as a possible answer.

Anything else would be non-existent, especially power given that this academy was a profession-based academy and not a combat-based one.

"Sorry Master, my Superior made no mention of anything about his reason for doing so," he said.

"Who is this superior?" Ning asked.

"I do not know, master. He always wears the Emperor's face to mock him and never reveals his own name or face to us. I've ever only seen this face of his," the man said as he pointed towards his own face.

"Huh? Emperor's face?" Ning asked in surprise. "That's the face of the Emperor?"

"Yes, Master. This is the face of the Emperor of the Wyan Dynasty, Reen Wyan" the man said.

"Wow! He looks kind of ugly," Ning said without thinking much.

Sounds of gasps rang out from behind him. The students were surprised that their teacher said something bad about the Emperor.

"Teacher Ning, talking bad about the emperor is a crime punishable by death in extreme cases. Please be careful," a student advised.

"Hah, let that ugly guy come and try to punish me if he dares to," Ning said. He then turned back to Dougeo and asked, "What else can you say about this whole operation? How many people? What are the plans? Do you have any specific targets?"

"I don't know a lot, master, as we were only given part of the information. I do know that there are about 70 Nascent Soul cultivators currently trying to take over the academy."

"Everyone is divided into groups of 5 and made to do specific tasks. My task was to look over the western stairs with this guy," Dougeo said as he pointed to the soulless body next to him.

"The other 3 are on the east stairs trying to stop people from coming up. As for the rest, I do not know master."

"Although, I do know that the superior has a cultivation base that is really high. It's nearly at the 9th Nascent Core realm from what I can tell," Dougeo said.

Ning thought for a moment as Dougeo kept on kneeling in front of him. The students on the side were quite anxious, but Ning didn't hurry at all.

"Why are 70 Nascent Soul realm cultivators willing to risk their lives for such a simple thing as attacking an academy? That doesn't make sense at all. What did this superior of yours promise you guys?" Ning asked curiously.

"Superior promised us a single thing, master," Dougeo said.

"And that is?" Ning asked.

"Immortality. He said that if we helped him with this, he would help us learn the secret to gaining the long-lost path to Spirit Transformations realm and then help us gain immortality after that," he said.

Ning got irked unnecessarily. "Idiots!" he said. "How are you a Nascent Soul realm cultivator and not know that Spirit Transformation is impossible?"

"But master, Superior took the Undying oath and told us that he in fact knew the truth behind Spirit Transformation and Immortality. For us older folks who don't have a lot of time to live, that is absolutely alluring," Dougeo said.

"Sigh, you guys are still idiots. He must have done something sneaky to fool you, and here you are trying to die for his cause," Ning said.

"Whatever, if you plan on dying then do it with a bang. Go to the three on the other side and blow up through Nascent Soul. Make sure you don't get any student or civilians mixed up in it," Ning said.

"Yes, Master," Dougeo replied and flew away.

"Alright, we will have a small opening to get inside and find you guys someplace safe," Ning said and immediately started walking up the stairs.

The students were horrified at the things Ning was doing but knew it was necessary and quickly followed him, leaving the dead corpse behind.

Suddenly, a single feather landed on the body and it suddenly started burning with black fire. Within seconds, there was nothing remaining.

Just as they were going up, a massive explosion rang out that shook the very ground the students were running upon.

"Alright, come on fast. That should create an opening for us to get in," Ning said and quickly walked into the Formation Wing of the academy.

Ning had already reined in his divine sense to a few hundred meters so that people wouldn't sense him at all.

However, that didn't work as the people still used divine sense and caught them.

"Night, go kill them," Ning said without hesitation and waited. A few moments later, the students heard 2 different sets of crying sounds followed by silence.

Then, the 3 meters tall Night returned back to Ning and flew next to him.

Ning was confused for a second as to where he should have been going, but then he noticed someone with students gathered around them and decided to go there.

Finally, he and the students made their way to a lecture hall where the students were huddled together in fear, and a single teacher was with them at the front.

When the teacher saw who had just entered, her eyes went wide, and immediately got hostile.

"You!" Eleonora sounded angry.

Chapter 290: System

"Oh, it's you. Why do you always sound angry?" Ning asked with a slight chuckle.

Elenora immediately put her hands to the side around the students as if to protect them. Ning got a little confused when he saw that.

"You finally showed your true self, didn't you? It must be you behind this attack too. Acting like you were a weak little cultivator when in truth you were this strong."

"I told the staff members but they didn't believe me. Hah, now they are going to be the doom of us all," Elenora said.

Ning got a little confused. "Wait, wait, wait. Do you think all of this is my doing? Are you an idiot?" Ning asked.

"No need to keep up the facade. I can see how strong you really are. No person without an objective would hide their cultivation base while entering a new place," Eleonora said.

"Huh?" Ning was surprised this time. "You could see my cultivation base even when I had it hidden? That's weird. How could you..."

Ning suddenly used his Qi Analysis to check her status and saw nothing special about any of her skills. That was when he thought of something and used an Analysis he had bought a long time ago but hadn't used due to its exorbitant amount of mental strength required.

Omni-Analysis

Suddenly a whole lot more of her information was delivered directly into his mind. Her name, her parent's names, her siblings' names, her birthday, her birthplace, her cultivation, her techniques, her physique, and finally something he had been curious about... Her special skills.

Ning's head hurt like a bitch, but it was worth it. He finally got to see something even remotely close to what he had.

A System.

"You... are a system user too?" Ning asked without both a pained and a shocked expression.

The moment the words left his mouth, Eleonora's face started changing too. It started to border the territory of terror.

"How... do you know? I have never told this to anyone. How do you know?" She screamed and asked.

"Who's there?" a voice came from outside, but it was immediately snuffed out as the man screamed and died.

Ning looked at Eleonora and said, "I'm not the bad guy here, you can ask these students. I am going out to fight them. Take care of the students."

"As for your system... we will talk about it later."

Ning left the students in her care and left Aegis behind to guard them. Then, Ning walked outside to search for people to fight.

Now that he didn't have students to worry about, he could freely go fight whoever he wanted to.

He sent out his divine sense and immediately saw a crowd on the front stairs checking the ruins left behind by Dougeo's nascent soul explosion.

They also noticed him once they sent out their own divine sense to check who was using theirs.

"There's a teacher there," they started shouting, but suddenly, Ning appeared right in front of them.

They all stopped in surprise and couldn't help but wonder how someone could possibly cover such a long distance in such a small time.

"Okay, before we fight," Ning spoke. "Does anyone of you have any information of this superior of yours? Tell me now and I might let you live with your nascent soul."

"Capture him," one of them shouted and all the people with the same face ran towards Ning.

"Sigh, I guess you won't speak unless I prove to you that your life is in danger," Ning said as he shook his head.

Suddenly, his arm started glowing purple as Qi gathered all around it.

"Hah!"

He suddenly punched outward as a massive amount of energy was released from his arms towards all of the men.

Half of them managed to react in time and moved aside, but the other half were caught in it.

When the energy disappeared, all that was left was half burnt men, down on the ground, and grunting in pain.

"Tsk, that's not enough to kill them huh? My Qi cultivation really needs some work," Ning said to himself.

Meanwhile, the ones that managed to escape were dumbfounded.

"How did a person in the 1st realm of Nascent Soul realm just defeat them all?" one of them asked in terror.

"Are you guys still not talking?" Ning asked.

"We can't capture him. We need to either work together and kill him or run away from here. But we don't have that last choice, do we?" one person said.

"Yes, kill him," another man shouted and they all came at Ning with all of their attacks.

Ning however wasn't amused. He wanted answers and it seemed these people didn't want to say anything.

"Fine, then. Die."

Minutes later, there was only one person on the ground still grunting. When he finally managed to open his eyes again and looked around, he only saw blood and gore.

The people he came with weren't there anymore. "What ha—"

Suddenly, someone grabbed his head, and immediately he felt a force fight through his weak mind and put itself as his master.

Once that force disappeared, the man looked back towards Ning and called out, "Master."

"Don't waste my time, and speak everything you know about this operation."

The moment Ning said that the man started spewing out every information he knew about what was happening here.

The man didn't know any information about this superior, but he did know a thing or two more than Dougeo since his mission here was different from Dougeo's.

According to the man, he was supposed to guard one of the 5 entrances to the teacher quarters and keep them there.

Since they had attacked at night, most of the teachers were stuck inside their living quarters in the underground area. So it was obvious they needed people to make sure they stayed there.

"Wait, where are they keeping the students then?" Ning asked.

"Students who were in their quarters should have been sent underground where the main academy staff stays at," the man said.

"Any other information?" Ning asked.

"No, Master," the man said.

"I see. Then go die," Ning said.

"Yes, Master."

The man suddenly bit the pill in his mouth and died.

Chapter 291: Superior

"Sigh, there are probably too many down there. I need to do something first," Ning thought and walked towards the Teacher's quarters which were guarded by only 2 people right now.

The rest of them were amongst the people that died at the east stairs.

Ning swiftly took care of the two of them and walked into the Alchemy teacher quarters.

"It might be better to keep the teachers from learning about the intruders being dealt with. Who knows what sort of reckless things they would do if they knew it was okay for them to come out," Ning thought.

He quickly entered a furnace room and brought out his Hollow Jade cauldron. He immediately heated it up and started preparing the ingredients.

"Let's see... Emerald Ashes, Shadow Silver, Bonding worms, The God Metal's shard, Color-changing hair locks, Horneater's tendons, Eyes of Mist Wraiths, Unflammable stick, and... Black and White Sands. I have it all," Ning said and got ready to make the pill.

Once the cauldron was sufficiently hot enough, he dropped the ingredients all at once and gently moved them inside. There were different techniques to making good pills, but this one was the fastest for him.

He waved his hands for a few seconds and the powder inside the cauldron was ready. Then with another wave of his hands, the powders turned into 7 pills and escaped out from the cauldron.

All in all, it took him less than 2 minutes to make the pills.

Ning looked at the pills and saw that all of them were Grade 7 pills, except for one that was a grade 8 pill.

Ning smiled when he saw that. "Well, can't expect the best when you take the easy route," he said to himself and ate the grade 8 pill.

Suddenly, all of the auras around him including and not limited to his cultivation base disappeared. Not only that, he became untraceable by people and hidden to divine senses too.

"Damn, the Spirit Concealing pills really do work like they advertised," Ning thought and teleported outside.

He spread out his divine sense and looked underground. There were in fact teachers and students huddled in an open space with many of the invading armies.

"That's... 40 people down there? Hmm, given that I killed about 20 myself and Night and Blue killed a few themselves too, then these should be all the people," Ning thought.

The people inside noticed Ning's divine sense and sent out their own to check who it was, but they didn't see anyone.

The people all were surprised at first when they didn't notice anyone that could be the source of the divine sense. They didn't realize where the divine sense was coming from.

Instead, they did realize however that their people were missing and that there was a large number of students in the middle.

"Shit, there are too many to do any surprise attacks, and they might hurt the staff and students," Ning thought and walked towards the stairs that took him downstairs to the underground area where the academy's main staff worked from.

"Go check what's happening," somebody asked from inside the underground.

"Yes, Superior," one of the men said and started walking up the stairs.

'Superior?' Ning thought as he focused on the man giving orders. He had hit the jackpot.

"Finally found you, superior," he said as he walked towards the cave door opening. Apparently, all of these people had left to see Dougeo's explosion and thus died. So now Ning had easy passage down the door.

He walked down while keeping an ear out on whatever the superior talked about through his divine sense. However, the superior guy didn't seem that invested in the conversation and instead tried to find Ning.

Ning however was untraceable. He noticed that the man coming up to check was right next to him, so Ning dashed forward and touched the man. Then, they both disappeared.

Ning teleported to the sky behind the cave and immediately killed the man before returning to the same spot, and made sure not more than 2 people saw him at any given time.

The Superior saw that his subordinate vanished and sent more people this time.

"Tsk, why are these people so late at responding. You all better pray they respond or you will all die," the Superior said.

"Why are you doing this? The academy doesn't have any enemies," an old man with long white hair and a long white beard said.

The old man looked remarkably fit for someone at his age. He was currently the only person standing amongst the staff and the students, and not huddled up in fear.

"Hehe, we never said you did, principal Singeer. In fact, you made a lot of friends, friends who will do anything if someone harms you," the Superior said.

"We are using those friends of yours as a threat by taking you hostage," he said.

"What do you mean? How could our friends possibly help you if you harm us," the old man said.

"Hah, who said anything about helping?" the Superior said.

Finally, something buzzed. The Superior's eyes went wide and he quickly took a very old and unusually large talisman from a desk nearby.

"Professor Singeer, do you want to hear what the Wyan family thinks about your little school? Listen to this," he said and responded to the person on the other side.

"Who is this?" a similar voice to the one used by all 70 people came through the talisman. "How do you know to connect through to this talisman?"

"Your highness, you shouldn't speak to them."

"Yes, Your highness. They seem to be threatening us."

"Shut up and let me talk," the Emperor shouted and got back to the problem at hand.

"Explain yourself, citizen," The Emperor said.

"Hehe, I'm not a citizen of yours, and nor do I ever want to be one again," the Superior said.

"Bastard Wyan, You have exactly one day to declare to your people that you no longer rule over them and they are free."

Chapter 292: Ultimatum

"Huh? What did you say?" The Emperor asked from the other side.

"You heard me. Give up on your royal status and leave," the Superior said with a nasty smile on your face.

"Hahaha, is this some kind of joke? Why would you try this? Did you think I would just say 'Okay, I give up? Of course not, idiot. Hah! Useless bastard, disturbing me for no reason," the Emperor said and was about to close the communication.

"You can choose not to do what I say, either works for me actually. Only, I wouldn't want the blood of the innocents on my hands before becoming the next Emperor."

"But then again, I am willing to do whatever it takes to ruin your life," the Superior said.

"What? What do you mean by the blood of the innocents?" the Emperor asked.

"See for yourself," the Superior suddenly turned on the visual capabilities of the talisman and showed what was in front of him to the Emperor.

On the emperor's side, he saw dozens of staff, and thousands of students sitting down inside a large underground hall.

"What is this? Who are they?" The Emperor asked.

"Hah! The emperor doesn't know his own empire? Look closely," the Superior said as he pushed the talisman next to the principal's chest wherein the Emperor could see many gold stars and silver stars.

"My God! Yo-You took hostage of the Five Professions Academy?" The Emperor finally realized what was happening.

"Haha, you finally understand the severity of the situation, don't you? Good. You have less than a day to give up on your royal status and return to being a commoner."

"If that happens, I will spare these people. If that doesn't happen, I will kill all of these people with bright futures here and leave the mess for you to clean up," The Superior said.

"You dare threaten me, The Emperor?" the Emperor shouted from the other side of the communication.

"Yes., what will you do about that?" the Superior then cut off the communication leaving the Emperor on his own to make some decision.

"We will find out soon what the Emperor thinks of you and your people, Principal Singeer," the Superior said.

"Who are you? You don't want anything with us. Your grudge seems entirely on the emperor. Why bring us into the mix?" The principal asked.

"You should know what importance your academy has, Principal Singeer," The Superior said.

The principal thought for a bit and suddenly his eyes went wide. "You gave the emperor an ultimatum," he said.

"Yes. I don't really wish to kill you people; I will need some good men after I become the emperor. However, that also doesn't mean I'm not willing to get rid of what will be important to me later on just for what I can gain today," The Superior said.

"You... Do I know you?" The Principal said. The superior's eyes flashed for a second before looking elsewhere, not choosing to answer.

Ning had heard all of it. 'How is threatening to kill the academy members an ultimatum,' he wondered.

However, as soon as he added the context of wanting the emperor to leave his throne into the mix, he immediately got the answer.

'If he were to kill the people here... that would incite the anger of all the neighboring 3 countries who look at these students as the pillars of their future.'

'If they all die here while learning that the Emperor could have done something about it, then they will get together to attack the Wyan Dynasty. That would mean the fall of the emperor.'

'I see. So either way, he wants to see the Emperor no longer be an emperor. So... does he have some sort of undying grudge against the emperor?' Ning wondered.

The two men the superior had sent after Ning finally saw him.

"Huh? Who are yo—"

Suddenly, they both disappeared. When Ning returned back to the same spot, they were both gone.

"Shit!" he said.

The superior had already noticed something weird with the first person disappearing, and now suddenly two of them disappeared only confirming his suspicion that there was something wrong.

"Everyone, take care. We might have a guest down here along with us," he said.

Everyone got alert as they sent out their spiritual sense, but no one could see anything.

"You can come out now. I know you are out there," the superior said.

Ning however didn't say anything. He was still thinking about how to get out of this situation.

"Alright men, get ready to attack the crowd without any hesitation if that person doesn't show themselves in 3 seconds," the superior said.

"One!"

All the people encircling the thousands of academy folks got ready with their weapons.

"Two!"

The academy folks got scared for their lives. With their measly cultivation base, they couldn't survive dozens of Nascent Soul cultivators attacking at once.

"Thr—"

"I'm here," Ning showed himself just in time.

"Teacher Ning?" Maeve, who was in the group, said in surprise.

The students made whispers about who he was. Most of the Alchemy and Beast master wing's students already knew about Ning even though they didn't visit him.

"Oh, and who might you be?" the Superior said.

"I'm a teacher here," Ning said.

"I... see," the Superior said as he scanned through Ning using his divine sense but couldn't see anything with it.

"This is most curious. How are you in front of me, yet I can't sense a single thing about you?" the Superior asked.

"Alchemy," Ning said.

"Ah, I see. You do indeed have the Alchemy badge. Then, where are my subordinates that I just sent up the stairs?" The Superior asked

"Dead," Ning said without a single hesitation.

The superior's eyes flashed in surprise. The other people were surprised too. They didn't know what to do so they kept the weapons targeted at the hostage.

"Hmm, what about my people up there?" the Superior asked.

"Dead as well," Ning said.

"I see," the Superior said. "That is very problematic for me."

Chapter 293: The Oath

"Oh, I hoped it would be," Ning said. "With what you are doing, a 'little problematic' is the least of your worries here."

"Haha, surely you don't mean yourself, right?" the Superior asked with a bit of a smile.

"Well, only time will tell I guess," Ning said. "However, do tell me. Did you fake the undying oath?"

The superior's eyes suddenly got sharp. "What?" he asked.

"You know... the whole 'I die if I don't fulfill what I promised' thing? I heard you made an Undying Oath to everyone here that you would tell them about Spirit Transformation realm if they helped you with it," Ning said.

"They are going so far as to kill themselves with a poison pill. That means they definitely do believe you took the undying oath."

"Which then means one of two things," Ning said as he looked directly into the superior's eyes.

"You are either faking that you took the Undying oath, or you were prepared to kill yourself after this job is done from the very beginning," Ning said as he kept on staring.

The Superior's face was the same as the Emperor's so it was hard to tell if emotions seeped through those changing faces, but the eyes never lied.

Ning could see confusion and fear in them.

The superior then took 3 deep breaths and calmed himself. He closed his eyes and took one final breath before releasing the breath and opening his eyes.

"How did you know all this?" The Superior asked.

"Some of your subordinates told me," Ning said, a little surprised at how well the superior was handling himself when caught off guard.

"Well, they shouldn't have been speaking about it in the first place," The Superior looked at the remaining subordinates he had in this place. He felt a tinge of sadness when he learned that he had lost half of his subordinates already.

He then looked back to Ning and asked, "how strong are you?"

Ning was taken aback by this random question. "What?" he asked.

"I can't see your strength at all. Whatever pill it is that you have eaten doesn't let me see you, let alone your cultivation base," the Superior said.

"Ah, well, I only entered the Nascent soul realm a few months ago," Ning said with a smile.

The Superior looked at him with wide eyes. "... you are joking, right?"

Ning chuckled and said, "I can say the Undying Oath if you want me to."

"How did you kill half of my subordinates then?" he asked.

"I have my ways," Ning said.

"Would you like to join me?" the Superior asked.

"Huh? Of course not. Why would I want to join you?" Ning asked.

"Because I can teach you the secrets to the Spirit Transformation realm," The Superior said.

"Huh? I'm not stupid like your subordinates to believe you," Ning said.

"Okay then. I guess I will have to take drastic measures," the Superior said. Qi sprang forth from him as they started gathering around his finger.

Ning stood silent, waiting to see what he would do. He was ready for any sort of attack, whether it be on himself or the staff and students.

However, the Superior did something surprising. Instead of attacking anyone, he attacked himself. He took the finger and pierced his own chest.

"What are you— Can't be," Ning said as all emotions in his face were replaced by his seriousness.

When the superior brought out his finger, there was blood on the top of its tip that did not want to mix with the other blood on his finger.

"What are you doing with your essence?" Ning asked.

"Trying to buy you in," the Superior said with a forced smile. He then put the finger on his forehead and started writing on it.

"I make this Undying Oath to the land that I do in fact know a way to enter the Spirit Transformation realm in this planet. If my mission of destroying the Wyan Dynasty is successful in the next 2 days, I will reveal it all to those who helped me," the Superior shouted.

A large thunderclap sounded from right above them, even though they were deep underground.

The Superior huffed as he said, "See... I wasn't... lying."

"You... you really made the undying oath. How did you learn about Spirit Transformation?" Ning asked.

"Hehe... you will have to help me with that. Only then am I willing to speak," the Superior said.

"No, You will tell it all to me right now." Ning was done playing games. The Superior had in fact truly made the undying oath and knew about ways to go into the Spirit Transformation realm.

"You are getting a little ahead of yourself—"

"Trebor Gassain, You will speak about the Spirit Transformation realm now," Ning threatened.

"What?" the Superior said with shock in his eyes. "How do you know my name?"

"Trebor Gassain... is that you?" the Principal asked from the side as he looked in absolute shock.

"Teacher Trebor?" Maeve called out as well.

People who knew about the name 'Trebor' started speaking in a low voice, but the people who spoke out when they heard the 'Gassain' were truly very many.

So, even when they tried to whisper about it all, it became a large noise as everyone spoke over each other.

"Gassain, I think I've heard that name before," A disciple said.

"Yes, that was one of the high-ranking noble houses in the empire just a century ago," another disciple replied.

"I heard that they tried to rebel against the Emperor."

"I heard they were getting too strong and wanted power for themselves."

Students and teachers talked left and right about what they had heard regarding the Gassain name.

"Teacher Trebor, I see life had not fared you very well," the Principal said. "You were one of our best and brightest, how did you lose it all. You would have become a Golden starred teacher very fast too."

"Shut up," the Superior said. "I don't want your sympathy. I just want your life now."

Chapter 294: Veil of Darkness

The Superior immediately turned around in a fit of madness and struck out at the Principal.

"DIE!" he shouted. With a cultivation base in the upper Nascent Soul realm, he could easily kill Singeer if he wanted to.

However, just before his hands reached the principal, Ning appeared between the two and took the blow to the face.

"Oh, I could almost feel that. You're really quite strong," Ning said without taking single damage.

"Huh? How—"

"Let's not fight amongst these poor folks even more, okay? Let's take this outside," Ning said.

Suddenly, a divine sense was released from inside Ning as it traveled to each and every corner of the underground, falling onto all of the attackers there.

They all got alert and were ready for any attack. Ning raised an open palm into the air, scaring the Superior into moving back.

Then... he closed the palm.

Massive pulling force erupted with Ning at the center. People all around him got pulled towards him. However, surprisingly the people that got pulled were only the attackers.

The staff and the students watched as the attackers flew through the air towards Ning without their own volition.

Even the superior with his high cultivation base was pulled towards Ning without being able to stop himself.

Ning's had to give up a large amount of energy to do just this, but thankfully, he had caught the people while they were relatively unaware, so he didn't have to spend more than he did.

He didn't want to think how much mental energy it would have taken him to move nearly 40 Nascent Soul realm cultivators if Telekinesis had instead used his mental strength instead of Energy.

He knew from back in Vilmore that multiple objects, so long as he used Telekinesis on them at the same time, counted towards one single weight.

Still, he had to use extreme mental focus to grab onto 40 different people at once and pull them together.

Once everyone collapsed together on top of him, he vanished.

Up above the forest to the northeast of the student's quarters, a massive ball comprising of 40 different individuals appeared.

"What?"

"How are we outside?"

"What technique is that?"

People started being surprised as they quickly got their footing when Ning stopped using Telekinesis.

Even the superior looked in horror at what was happening. 'Was there a teleportation formation inside that huge hall? How come I never knew that?' he wondered.

"Alright, since you all are out. Let's be civil and just talk it out, okay?" Ning said. He then turned to the Superior and said, "Trebor, tell me what you know about the ways to reach the Spirit Transformation realm."

"I'm not Trebor anymore. Trebor died a century ago. I am just a husk of my former shell, looking for a way to get my revenge," the Superior said.

"And I will have it. One way or another. You are strong, but you can't stop all of my people from leaving, can you?"

Ning smiled when he heard that. "I won't lie. If it wasn't for catching your people off guard, it will be impossible to stop all of you by myself," Ning said.

"See, so you better mo—"

"That is... if I was by myself," Ning said with a smile. "Tell me, Trebor. What good do you think your subordinates here will fare when they have to fight in total darkness?"

The superior was confused. "What?"

Suddenly, as if a veil covered over their eyes and divine sense, none of the men could see anything.

"What's happening, Superior. I can't see anything."

"I can't use my divine sense to look at anything."

"Did I go blind?"

"AAAHHH!"

One person cried out, and then he stopped. People who were close to that person stopped feeling his aura anymore. Not of his cultivation base, not of him as a human being.

The man disappeared as if he never existed. Without a shadow of a doubt in the other men's hearts, the man had died, and they couldn't see how.

Another person cried out as well and soon his voice vanished too. People started to get scared.

SWISH SWISH

A sound appeared as if some objects had been shot through the air towards the men.

"Arghh!" men cried out in pain but didn't stop speaking like the other time.

More and more attacks flew out into the air targeting the men. The men got scared of fighting with no sense and started sending out their own attacks everywhere as well.

"Stop!" the Superior shouted when he heard his men's scream.

The mindless attacks of the men were starting to hurt each other more than it was going anywhere close to hitting the main perpetrator.

"Stop fighting. Arghh— Stop," the Superior shouted but the veil didn't lift. The sounds of people bleeding and dying kept ringing out from around him.

"Please stop! Don't kill my subordinates. I am the one you want, let them go!" The Superior cried out.

"Stop," Ning softly said.

Suddenly, the veil lifted revealing Night and Blue there, but the people didn't care about them. When they finally could see what they did, they wished the veil hadn't lifted at all.

Half the people were dead on the ground, the other half wounded. The Superior himself wasn't well either. He seemed to have gotten hit by quite a few attacks as well.

Sadly, Most of the attacks were from their own people getting scared to die and attacking whatever sound they heard.

The Superior turned around to look at his remaining people, and how close to death they were. He then looked at people dead on the ground.

"I'm sorry, brothers. I... didn't think it would end this way. I thought my plan was foolproof, but it seems in all of my planning, I couldn't foresee the existence of this monster."

The Superior then turned around towards Ning and said, "Let my remaining people go and I will give myself up."

Ning looked at him with cold eyes, but there was a tinge of humanity in them. The fact that he could kill them meant these people weren't innocents at all and were definitely guilty.

However, just because they weren't innocents didn't mean that they were the bad guy. Ning felt conflicted.

Finally, he made a decision and said.

"Sure. They can go, but..."

Chapter 295: Failure

"Sure, they can go, but... they will have to make an Undying Oath to never attack the academy again or take revenge for what happened today," Ning said solemnly.

Seeing the Superior care for his subordinates made Ning feel a little bad about hurting them like this, but it needed to be done.

"Superior, we can't..."

"Do it, you fools. You will live," the Superior said.

"What about you, superior?" they asked.

"Don't worry, I will be fine. Just make the oath and leave. He is not a man we can ever hope to beat," the Superior said.

The men hesitated and made their hesitation known for a while, but after the Superior's constant insists they succumbed to it and made the oath.

"I make this Undying Oath to the land to never attack or seek revenge against any of the academy staff or students over what happened today."

About 20 or so people shouted out the Undying oath in a sonorous voice.

Multiple sounds of thunderclaps overlapped over each other to create a single deafening thunderclap that rang out in the sky.

"Good, you all may leave," Ning said.

"We can't leave without superior," the men said.

"Go!" the superior shouted.

"But—"

"Just go. Leave this place and never return. Never let anyone know who you were or trouble will come looking for you. The Wyan dynasty is nothing but trouble," the Superior said.

"Go!" Ning said.

The 20 or so people suddenly got scared.

"Thank you for all that you've done for us, Superior," the 20 or so people suddenly flew far away and disappeared into the horizon.

Ning looked at the direction they went and said, "They seem loyal. I didn't get the same feelings from the one that guarded the outside."

"I took my most trusted with me to the underground for the main mission," the Superior said.

He then kneeled onto the ground and fell into a daze. "This was a failure, wasn't it?" he asked.

"Yes," Ning said.

"Haha, so much planning, and it all fails because there is a single person standing between me and my revenge," he said. "Was I always destined to fail in life?"

"Is that what life wants from me? To fail, and fail, and fail again. Every time I am a step away from victory, it puts immovable rocks in front of my path to stop me from getting there," the Superior said.

"What did I ever do to deserve this?"

"I know not what you did. All I know is that you have something that I want and that you need to give it to me," Ning said.

"Here," the superior said as he took out a ragged looking book from his storage bag.

"I found it in a remote location inside the sun kingdom," the Superior said.

Ning took it, but didn't open it at all. He kept on looking at the Superior who simply slumped on the ground on his back.

"I'm sorry father, your son couldn't fulfill his promise to you. I'm sorry mother, this world is a cruel one. When I leave it, I hope I get to see you again."

The superior started bawling, with tears coming out of his eyes without stop. He wiped them as he spoke, but the tears didn't stop.

"I'm sorry senior brother, you protected me, but for what? I couldn't do anything with the life you had given."

"Little sister, I couldn't get to those murderers of yours. Your brother was a failure."

His feeling of helplessness made even Ning feel a tinge of sadness. He didn't know Trebor Gassain's story, but whatever was happening right now would certainly be called a tragedy.

"My clan members who look at me from the heavens, I'm sorry. I failed you all. I promised I would get revenge, but I couldn't. And for that I'm sorry. I hope... you will at least accept me with open arms now that I am finally coming to you."

Ning's eyes went wide. "Wait, No—"

CRACK

The Superior bit the poison pill in his mouth and died. Before Ning could even do anything, his body physically rotted and fell to the ground in a pool of gore.

Unable to live his life with all of the failure, he opted to taking his own life.

He seemed to have been holding a lot of pain and anger with him, and the feeling of helplessness was weighing on him a lot, but he was holding on.

But when Ning was thrown into the mix, it was just too much and it all collapsed on top of him.

Ning didn't know what to say and simply shook his head. He then looked down at the book in his hands and flipped through it.

The book had some information about the world of the past, but nothing substantial at all.

However, there was a line in it that caught his eyes. It was a half torn page with the front part of the sentence missing, but the second half himself gave enough information to make the whole book worth it in Ning's eyes.

"...since then, one can only enter the Spirit Transformation by cultivating at the Origin."

"I now he took the Undying Oath, but... to think he wasn't lying," Ning thought. He decided to think about the book later on, and instead went back to the academy to check on everyone for now.

He teleported to the stairs going down the underground hall and entered to see the group of staff and students up on their feet, but clearly too afraid to leave.

"Teacher Ning."

"Teacher."

People shouted when they saw him.

"The bad guys are gone. You can all leave now," Ning said to the students and teachers.

When they got the news, they immediately started celebrating. Many thanked Ning and left, except for a few staff members.

"Teacher Ning... What happened to the Superior guy, the one you called Trebor Gassain," the principal asked.

"He's dead now," Ning said, hiding nothing.

"I see... what a shame," the principal said. "He could've had such a good future as an alchemist, but instead... sigh."

Chapter 296: Power Corrupts People

"Can you tell me a little more about him, senior? What happened to him?" Ning asked.

"Sigh, it's the age-old tale of power corrupting people," Principal Singeer said as he shook his head.

"Gassain family was a family of merchants in the beginning. They had made their name known quite wide and within a century, the then head of the family, Clive Gassain managed to get a noble status from Emperor Reen."

"Once he became a noble, Clive started to make his only son cultivate. Surprisingly, his son, Horom had great talent in cultivation, and thanks to his father's knowledge in merchant became great in both."

"By the time that Clive died, Horom had already become the head of the family and started getting bigger and bigger."

"After a few years, he sent Trebor to study with us. The boy showed great talent in alchemy and was going to be one of the finest for sure."

"While his family increased in power, Trebor got better here too. In fact, Trebor even ended up as a teacher in the academy."

"Within 5 years of joining, he had the Silver badge, and was getting close to becoming a Gold Starred teacher, that was how good he was."

"However, that was when tragedy struck. Since Horom had been gaining more and more power, he thought he could be the next Emperor, and one day took his entire family and friends to go attack the current emperor."

"Thankfully, the Emperor was ready for the attack and successfully defended himself. Horom died in that battle as well as a lot of the family members. His wife and daughter who had remained behind were captured and publicly executed for defying the throne."

"Trebor killed the two royal guards that came to capture him in the academy as well and then disappeared. We never heard anything about him after that."

"That was 80 years ago. I don't know where he had been all this time, but it seems he had been plotting to take revenge."

"He wanted to use us as the leverage to destroy the Emperor's current status, and perhaps even take over the throne, just as his father did."

"Sigh, he could have been such a great person if only his family didn't stupidly attack the emperor," Singeer said while shaking his head.

"I... see," Ning said. "That is indeed quite tragic."

"It is what it is, teacher Ning. Let us go too," Singeer said and the remaining staff members followed behind them.

Ning took his leave once he came outside and went to the classroom where everyone was hiding.

The students and Eleonora jumped when they heard him walk in.

"W-Where are they?" She asked.

"They're all dead. The threat is gone," Ning said. "You guys can leave now."

"We're saved."

"Thank god."

"I thought I was going to die."

"I'm going back to meet my parents."

The students shouted left and right as they made their way outside the room and soon everyone was gone except Eleonora.

"You saved us all?" she asked with wide eyes.

"You could say that," Ning said.

"I see... I guess I should apologize then. I'm sorry for all the times I have been rude to you," she said.

"That's not needed. You were only trying to protect your brother," Ning said.

"Still, I wrongly assumed you were trying to hide your cultivation base for something malicious. I'm sorry," she said.

"Yeah, well that wasn't why I did that. I assumed there wouldn't be that many people with the Nascent soul realm in the central continent. So I had to lower my cultivation base so as not to stand out."

"Who knew that there were so many of them here," Ning said.

"Central... continent? Are you saying you've been to the other continents?" Eleonora asked with a surprised look.

"Yeah, of course. Wh— Ah right. I forgot travel between continents is impossible right now. Well, it's not for me," Ning said with a smile.

"Anyway, it's been a rough night. You should go get some rest. I will find you sometime soon to talk about the system in detail. Goodbye," Ning said and left.

He too felt unnaturally tired, mostly just mentally. He did use up quite a bit of mental strength in that fight. Also, he wanted to look up the Origin, so he went back to his room.

He opened up the book once more and read through it. The unnamed book really didn't give much information at all.

'Maybe the full book has more information,' he thought and looked up through the interface. Without the AI, it took him nearly half an hour to even find ways to search for this current book.

'Damn, I didn't realize how bad it was at finding existing stuff,' he thought and finally bought the information.

When the whole book came to his mind, he finally read it all. The book seemed to be actually written a little before the war from ten thousand years ago.

The fact that half of it even survived was a mystery of its own. The full thing seemed to be the daily life of a cultivator, mixed in with an understanding of his own.

Finally, Ning got to the sentence he had been waiting for, and it read...

"I heard the beasts could breakthrough once they reached the peak of Nascent Soul realm whenever they wanted to. That was only in the past however... since then, one can only enter the Spirit Transformation by cultivating at the Origin," Ning read.

"Tsk, that didn't add much information at all. Also, what is the Origin? There's nothing like that in the map of the planet?" Ning thought. He tried searching for it through the interface, and all he could find was a single piece of information.

Origin referred to the location on the planet where Qi originated from. As for the location itself, it didn't say.

Ning sighed and gave up on finding any more information about it for now. It was too early anyway.

He then thought of something else and bought another piece of information. He bought the memories of Trebor Gassain.

For some reason, Ning couldn't put Trebor's sadness and Singeer's story together. So, he decided to find out the information on his own.

Once the knowledge of Trebor's past was in his mind, he took a peek at it.

Chapter 297.1: Trebor's Tragedy - Part 1

BAM

"Ah," young Trebor fell to the ground after losing a sword fight with his elder brother, Roid, the firstborn of the house.

"I told you, Trebor. You are much more suited to studying. Leave the fighting to people like me. It's not like I won't be there to protect you when you need me," Roid said.

"Stop teasing brother Trebor and fight him seriously," Leia shouted from the side.

"Come on little sister, I am your brother too. Why do you always only take his side?" Roid said.

"But you are already 20 years old. While brother Trebor is only 15 years old. I will obviously take the side of the weaker ones," Leia said.

Trebor's heart hurt a bit when he heard his little sister call him weak. "Once more, brother," he said and continued fighting with the wooden sword.

"Ah, did your cultivation base increase once more, Trebor? You are hiding your power, aren't you?" Roid said.

"Yes, I reached the 7th Qi Condensation realm yesterday," Trebor said.

"No wonder! You will catch up to me in no time. But..." Roid hit him on the leg with the sword and dropped him to the ground.

"Sigh, you win brother," Trebor said.

"Hehe, go study your plants. I'm late for my merchant studies," Roid said and left.

"Are you okay, brother?" Leia asked. She was barely 7 years old and looked so cute.

Trebor patted her and said, "I'm fine. Big brother will never hurt me."

Trebor then went to study the Alchemy ingredients like he always did.

The business was booming for the Gassain. Years passed in a flash and they gained more and more, both in money and in power.

Roid was now the commander of their private army, while Horom was still the head of the family with his high cultivation base and merchant skills.

"Son, are you ready?" a woman spoke to Trebor. She looked young at a glance, but her age showed through her wrinkles.

"Yes, mother. I promise you I will pass and make the family proud," Trebor said.

"Don't worry about that child. You already make us proud," his mother said.

"Hoho, where is our little alchemist?" Horom walked into his room with Leia behind him. She was now a fully grown lady.

"I can't believe brother Trebor is going to join the academy. He got a direct admission too," she said.

"Of course, that's my son for you," Horom said.

"I should leave now father," Trebor said.

"Yes, good luck son."

Trebor left his family's house and went to the Five Professions Academy. There he spent his days going into the different classes, learning about alchemy, growing as an alchemist.

He spent years in there, while occasionally returning back home. His family was going at a tremendous rate and this was truly great news for him.

After a few years, he finally graduated from the academy and chose to take the Teacher's examination. He passed it with flying colors.

He then went on to teach the school. Within a month of joining, he got the bronze badge. He was so popular beforehand as a student, that it translated into him being popular as a teacher too.

Things were going well for him, incredibly well... until he went back home one day and stumbled upon his father and brothers arguing.

"We can not let this go on for much longer, father. The Emperor keeps making new laws, closing ports, and attacking our shipment just because he can't see us growing?" Roid asked in anger.

"I know you are angry, son, but anger only ever brings one to doom. Think with a calm mind. We are currently the strongest noble family. We have both the finance and the strength to rival the throne."

"Not only that, but we also have the backings of the other family, and that scares the emperor. He thinks that because we are strong, we will go for his throne," Horom said.

"What? Why the hell would we want his throne? We are doing fine on our own," Roid said.

"But he doesn't know that. The Emperor is a jealous man, but he is also a powerful man. If we do anything that seems threatening to him, he will bring his entire army on us."

"We are treading on a slippery slope here, son. We take a single wrong step here and we will slide down to the bottom of the slope," Horom said.

Trebor was in the room, but he was not part of the conversation at all. He only listened to his father and brother speak up on the problems. He never had the political expertise at all, so speaking wasn't a very good choice for him here.

"Then what can we do?" Roid asked.

Horom thought for a moment and said, "Sigh, I will go and talk with the emperor. I will let him know that we do not wish to fight for the throne and that our loyalties have always lied with the Wyan Dynasty. I will even offer up tribute if I have to."

"At least, that should be enough to calm the Emperor's jealousy for now," Horom said.

"Sigh," Roid took a deep breath and said, "I'll go. The people in the family are ready to go to war. You take care of them, father."

"I want to help too, brother," Trebor said.

"No, you go back to the academy. Father and I were the ones who made this happen, and we will be the ones who fix this."

And so, Roid went to the emperor to speak to him about how harmless the Gassain were, while Trebor went back to the academy.

Trebor went on a 4-day long Alchemy session and when he came out, he finally checked a message from his father that he got on his talisman. A message that would change his life for the worse.

"Your brother is dead. He was killed by that damned Emperor. We are going to attack the emperor and take revenge for your brother."

"Should anything happen to me, take care of your mother and sister."

His father, who advocated peace between the Gassain family and the Wyan dynasty was now taking a path of violence for his dead son out of anger.

And that anger was going to doom them all.

Chapter 298.2: Trebor's Tragedy - Part 2

'It's the Emperor's shadow guard. They are here to kill me, father. I haven't even had the chance to talk with the emperor, yet he is already looking to kill me. I don't know how long I can hold on, father. These men are all very strong.'

'But don't worry, I will make you proud.'

Those were the last words Roid had sent back to his father before being brutally assassinated.

Roid could no longer be contacted, nor could his retainers, letting the family know that their eldest son had in fact been killed.

In anger, Horom took most of his family's force to attack the emperor. The only ones he left behind were his wife, daughters, and the weaker members of his family.

That was part of the message delivered to Trebor through his talisman.

'No!' he thought and immediately left the underground quarters of the academy.

When he walked out, he saw two Royal guards talking to principal Singeer. The principal saw Trebor and immediately came towards him.

"What's going on, Trebor? Why do I hear the news of your father trying to attack the Emperor for the throne?" he asked.

"What? My father isn't doing that!" he said. He wanted to explain more, but the next words that left from Singeer's mouth made him unable to speak.

"Your father and all of your family's forces died while attacking the Emperor. The emperor, along with the other families quelled the rebellion."

Trebor stopped. "My father is dead? No, that can't be, it was only just—" he finally remembered that he was in a closed alchemy session, so whatever message he got... was something he probably got days ago.

Meaning, his brother had been dead for days, and his father went to take revenge days ago as well. And now he was dead too, along with a majority of his family members.

"No!" he said and walked up to the Royal guards. "Senior, there has been a mistake. My father didn't start a rebellion. It was the emperor who—"

"That's the boy?" one of the guards said the moment they saw Trebor.

"Yes, capture him, or better yet just kill him."

The two guards immediately attacked Trebor who was unprepared. They managed to hit him square in the chest, but the most they did was a flesh wound.

"What?" they were surprised.

"You really tried to kill me?" Trebor got angry and flared his cultivation base.

"Oh god! Nascent Soul 3rd Realm. How is he so strong?"

"Run!"

Trebor in his anger killed the two guards and left the Five Professions city. He flew as fast as he could and returned back home. But all that was waiting for him back home was a scene of horror.

A fire raged in his family home as the Royal Guards surrounded the remaining family members from escaping.

"We already took the 2 women away, we will just kill the rest of the members and be done with," one of the guards said.

"No, no, no, no, no!" Trebor's mind started going blank as he saw his house and family members being burnt alive for a crime they did not commit.

"Look, people. This is what happens when you try to assassinate the Emperor and take the throne for yourself," the guard shouted.

"NO!!!!!!" Madness took over Trebor as he took out a sword and cut the guard where he stood. The other guards were suddenly alerted and there began a massive fight.

Trebor fought as much as he could, but even with his strong cultivation, fighting dozens of people at once was hard. He took a lot of wounds on his body.

One of the guards hit him on the side with a spear, destroying his storage bags.

By the time Trebor was done with the fight, he was beaten and bloody. Some of it was his own blood, but most was the blood of his enemies.

His anger lowered and he started thinking with a calm mind. '2 women. They must have taken mother and Leia to the capital,' he thought and dragged himself to the capital.

Along the way, he found herbs that could heal him a little, but he was still heavily wounded when he reached the capital.

And when he did, another sight of horror lay in front of him. The Emperor had created a scaffolding on top of which laid his mother and sister, ready to be executed.

"No... NO!" he shouted.

"Kill," the Emperor orders, and the guillotine fell. 2 heads rolled down onto the ground, with their eyes open.

Up close, Trebor could see that they had been tortured before they were killed.

"No!!!!" Madness overtook him again as he killed his way through the crowd, regardless of who anyone was, and made his way to the emperor.

But the emperor's shadow guard appeared out of nowhere to stop him. Trebor was strong, but not strong enough. He was beaten very easily and was one step away from being killed when a blob of light appeared in between them.

"You are the only family I have left right now, please don't die." Roid's voice came out of that blob of light.

"Brother, I—"

BOOM

Roid who had somehow survived his assassination by escaping with his Nascent Soul chose to explode his soul to save his brother.

Just before exploding, however, Roid used a one-of-a-kind teleportation talisman on his brother to send him away.

The Shadow Guards were heavily hurt, while Trebor was nowhere to be seen. So, the Emperor believed that was the last of the Gassain family member was dead as well. He finally believed he had succeeded in removing the thorn from his side.

When Trebor opened his eyes, he was in a desert. There, he cried for days on end after which only anger was left in his heart.

He went around the desert for years, he found an old book, he cultivated, he learned more alchemy, and he gathered people, loyal people to follow him.

All the while, he crafted a plan to take revenge on the Emperor. What better revenge than to force him away from the same throne he killed his family to protect. He could later publicly execute the bastard and his people once he was the Emperor.

He had a perfect plan; one he worked 80 years to form.

Only, he couldn't finish it because of Ning. Seeing that the world was never going to do anything good for him, Trebor no longer wanted anything to do with it and killed himself.

Chapter 299: Sleeping Friends

"Fuck," Ning said quietly.

That was all he could say after he read through Trebor's past. The man had a really bad thing happen to him, and just when he was going to enact his revenge, Ning had stopped him.

"Damn it. I feel really bad right now. Urgh!!" he said to himself.

He tried to stop thinking about it, but the information was etched onto his memory, his eidetic memory. It was impossible to remove.

He hated what the emperor did to them, he hated the had god dealt with the Gassain family.

Emotions he shouldn't have been feeling, amplified by the system, raged inside him.

"Calm down, Ning. Learn from the other's mistake. Don't let anger take over your heart," he said to himself and started calming down a little.

"Sigh, I will at least do this for you," Ning thought and teleported out. He appeared next to where Trebor's molten body lay and started digging all around him.

Within minutes, he had managed to dig a circle of land. Ning then closed his eyes and thought. He was looking into the map, and once he found it, he used his Qi to pull the land from underneath the body.

Ning then touched the land and they both disappeared. When they reappeared, Ning was flying in the sky. He looked down and saw that there was a house down there.

Ning looked left and saw a small hill back there. People saw him appear but did not dare do anything as he looked very strong.

Ning slowly landed on top of the land and saw a small stone propping up, fully covered with dust.

Ning wiped the name off the stone and read what it said.

"Here lies the progenitor of the Gassain Family, Clive Gassain," Ning read. "We're here."

Ning took out his tool and started digging once more. He didn't use his cultivation or his system. He simply dug with his own strength.

It took him 15 minutes to fully clear enough plot to put in the piece of land he had brought.

He slowly brought it down onto the hole and sighed once again. "I'm sorry I couldn't bury you with a complete corpse," Ning said.

He then started filling back the dirt onto the grave. Once it was all covered, he looked for a few stones and cut them to the shape of headstones.

He took the few headstones and started carving names on them. Trebor, Roid, Leia, Horom, and Garvia.

Once he was done, he propped those headstones around the mountain, next to Trebor's grave.

"I couldn't help you while you were alive and only got in your way. I was the part of the reason for your death, so the least I could do is bury you in your home."

"You were separated and killed by those weaker than you because they feared you."

"I hope... at least in death, you found each other and are on your way to being reincarnated as a family once more. I pray for you."

Ning bowed in silence for a few minutes.

RUSTLE RUSTLE

Ning checked with his divine sense to see what was making the noise. Without even turning, he started talking.

"Young man, it's not nice to sneak up on people, you know?" he said when he saw a 7-year-old kid look at him from behind a small bush.

"What? How did you see me?" the kid asked.

"Hehe, I have eyes on the back of my head," Ning said as he turned around.

"Oh, mommy was right then. You are a monster. Are you here to eat me?" the young boy asked a little scared.

"I'm... a monster? Did your mother say that?" Ning asked.

"Yes. She said that a monster has gone to the mountains and that we should hide away. I wanted to see what the monster looked like so I sneaked up here," the little kid said.

"Oh, and what do you think he looks like?" Ning asked.

"You look just like a normal person," the little boy said, a little disappointed.

"Most monsters do," Ning said silently.

The little boy slowly walked up and saw the 5 headstones. "What are they?" he asked.

"That's... the resting place of some brave men and women," Ning said.

"Why are they sleeping next to my great-great-grandfather?" the little boy asked.

"Huh?" Ning got surprised. "What did you say?"

"That," the little boy pointed at the dirty grave and said, "That's where my great-great-grandfather sleeps. Or so my mommy says."

"You mean 'Clive' is your great great grandfather?" Ning asked. "Did your mommy say that to you?"

"No. I heard it once when mommy was talking with grandma. Mommy asked grandma about how grandpa was like and that was when I learned about great-great-grandpa," the little boy said.

Ning was a little confused, so he asked, "What's your name, kid?"

"Roid, Roid Blevins," he said.

"Roid... huh? Hah, hahaha. I see," Ning said. He then quickly looked up something on the interface and turned around towards Trebor's grave.

"Would you look at that? Who knew your brother was having an affair with the young lady of the Blevins house."

"I hope you find solace in death in learning that your bloodline did not die with you," Ning said.

"Not everyone forgot about you people. Some still remember the good you did, some still know the wrong you were done to."

Ning then turned around looked at the little Roid. "You have a good name to live up to, kid. I hope you don't disappoint these people in front of you. Him, especially," Ning said as he pointed towards Roid's headstone.

"I hope we meet again," Ning said and left.

Roid stayed there for a few minutes, just looking at the headstone.

"Roid! Roid!" a worried mother's voice sounded soon enough.

"Mommy, Mommy," he called out.

"Dear God, child. You gave me a scare. Didn't I say there was a monster outside?" she asked.

"You did, and I met him. The monster wasn't as scary as you told me though. He was just spending some time with his sleeping friends," little Roid said.

"Sleeping friends?" the worried mother finally looked ahead and saw the gravestones. When she saw the names on them, she couldn't help but gasp.

Chapter 300: Medal of Honor

Ning teleported back to his room underground. He didn't really know how much time had passed since he read through Trebor's past, but given that it was close to evening time outside, it must've been over 12 hours.

His mood was a little better after learning about little Roid. So, he smiled and went outside. It was time to talk about the system with Eleonora.

He walked out of the underground and was met with almost a hoard of people walking out of the academy.

'All the students are leaving?' Ning thought in surprise. He looked around and saw Jezeere seeing over the leaving students.

"Senior Jezeere, what's going on?" he asked.

"Oh, teacher Ning, we've been looking for you," Jezeere said.

"What's this?" Ning asked first.

"Oh, the students are leaving for home, and we're overseeing to make sure one of those attackers didn't hide somewhere by some chance," Jezeere said.

"Oh, is the academy closing down? Or..." Ning asked

"Yes, for 3 months. In the next 3 months, we are looking to improve the security of the sect. Trebor managed to bypass our formations and enter the academy just because he was once allowed to."

"That led him to turn down all the other security formations too. We're are going to take the time to fix those sort of overlooks," Jezeere said.

"I see. Well, it's not a bad idea to send the students back home after such a traumatic experience either," Ning said.

"Anyway, principal Singeer is looking for you. I believe he has a very important message for you," Jezeere said.

"Oh... okay. Do you know by chance where teacher Eleonora is?" Ning asked.

"Teacher Eleonora? She... I think she left with her brother, not really sure," Jezeere said.

"She left with her brother? Aw man, I really wanted to talk to her about something. Whatever, I will go check what the Principal wants to say," Ning said and went over to the underground hall.

He spread his divine sense and quickly located Singeer.

"Principal Singeer, I heard you were looking for me," Ning said when he ran up to Singeer.

Singer was with a few people looking at some broken rocks and was quietly talking with them.

"Ah, teacher Ning, you're finally here," Singeer said.

"What happened here?" Ning asked, looking at the mess.

"Oh, just something that Trebor did. He couldn't shut down some of the defenses, so he opted to destroy it instead," Singeer said.

"Anyway, where have you been? I got great news for you," Singeer said.

"Oh? Great you say," Ning smiled, looking forward to what it was.

"Yes, after learning that you defeated the evil men and especially defeated Trebor, the Emperor wants to award you," Singeer said loudly.

"...what?" Ning's smile suddenly dropped as his face turned serious.

"Yeah. We told the emperor that you had taken care of the threat, so he decided to have a ceremony where he awards you with a medal of honor," Singeer said excitedly.

'Fuck!' Ning thought.

"Can I not go?" Ning asked.

"Huh? But it's one of the most prestigious things you can get. Not only will it help you, but it will also help the academy," Singeer said.

"I just... don't want to go there," Ning said.

"Um, is there a reason for that? Are you injured and can't go?" Singeer asked worriedly.

"No, I'm fine," Ning said.

"Then..." Singeer thought for a moment and asked, "do you have a grudge with the Emperor. Did he ever do something bad to you?"

Ning thought for a moment and the answer was obvious. 'Sigh, I'm judging a person before even meeting him. Maybe he's different from how he was 80 years ago.'

'Maybe he's not the same jealous old man, maybe he's changed as a person,' Ning thought.

"Sigh, No," Ning answered. "Alright, I'll go."

"Very good. The ceremony is in 2 days. It will take place in the capital," Singeer said.

"Alright, I will leave today," Ning said.

"Wait, you won't be going alone. Haha, I will be going with you too," Singeer said.

"Ah... well..." Ning wanted to go find Eleonora to talk for a bit, but it seemed that would have to be pushed further back.

"Okay, when do we leave?" Ning asked.

"In a few hours," Singeer said. "I still need to judge the level of damage that we've suffered."

"Alright, let me help you too," Ning said and walked along with Singeer, looking at the damages.

Singer asked a few questions to Ning, which he answered as truthfully as he could.

Ning told him about his time roaming around the world and how he came to learn a lot of things as well as how he trained to be so strong.

"Oh, so it's not Qi cultivation but body cultivation that made you so strong?" Singeer asked in amazement.

"Yes. I've been cultivating my body longer than I've been cultivating my Qi, so it's somewhat gotten stronger than my cultivation base," Ning said.

"I see. Are you from the Sun Empire?" Singeer asked.

"No, but I do believe my body cultivation technique originated there," Ning said.

"Must be. Who else could love the body cultivation techniques other than the barbarians of the desert," Singeer said.

"Oh right, what about the teleportation and the attraction?" Singeer asked.

"Those were a one-time use artifacts I got during my journey. Sigh, I can't believe I had to use them like that," Ning lamented.

"You are still young, teacher Ning. I'm sure you will find a lot more of such treasures," Singeer said.

They looked around a little longer and documented all the damage. Once that was done, he handed the documents to one of the staff and left the underground.

It was already dark outside and none of the students were there. Only a few staff members walked around.

"Sigh, I think it's time we leave. It will take us a little over a day, so we should reach there half a day before the ceremony," Singeer said.

"Okay," Ning said. "Let's leave."