

A World Worth Protecting

Chapter 1: I Want to Lose Weight!

On a scorching summer day, east of the Federation, fog emanated through Pond Cloud Rainforest like thin chiffon. Ancient towering trees interlocked each other, and birds would occasionally flit through the lush tree crowns, chirping as they flapped their wings and flew across the horizon.

High in the sky, the sun, which had seemed capable of existing eternally, no longer appeared anything like how people remembered. Instead, it had been penetrated by an ancient greenish-bronze sword—one so indescribably massive—many years ago! Only a small portion of the sword's tip was exposed!

The ancient sword had come from the cosmos and seemed to express its antiquity. There was a potent suppressive force that formed a halo, which enveloped the firmament as though it held the land in place, letting all life revere it!

The Sword Sun and the rainforest looked picturesque from afar but was disturbed by a humming sound that came from a distance. A red hot-air balloon flew slowly toward the rainforest.

The hot-air balloon's hull was very large, capable of holding hundreds of people. In there, many young men and women in groups of three or four chatted happily.

They were new students of Ethereal Dao College, one of the four great Dao Colleges in the Federation. They hailed from Phoenix City and were onboard Ethereal Dao College's cruiser, traversing thousands of kilometers, to seek higher education.

Perhaps because they were all greatly anticipating their upcoming education—not to mention the unspoken attraction between men and women—the students had plenty of fun on the five-thousand-kilometer voyage.

Due to the long distance, the cruiser was equipped with dining halls, cultivation chambers, medical facilities, and many other amenities.

There were quite a number of students in the cruiser's dining hall. Sitting at a table was a young fatty with his belly bulging out.

He was about seventeen years old, and he wore a blue baggy robe. His tiny rotund face could barely be considered to have intricate features. As he created smacking sounds while patting his belly, he gazed at the eight empty plates in front of him, a little regretful.

I'll have gained another one and a half kilograms after this meal. Why didn't I bear with it? I can't die early if I want to become the Federation President. The fatty frowned with a grimace as he felt filled with regret, burping in the process.

The young fatty's name was Wang Baole. He was also one of the students who had recently been accepted into Ethereal Dao College. His lifelong dream was to become an official, or more precisely, become the Federation President. The reason he had such an ambitious dream was intricately tied to a childhood experience of his.

In his memories, his father would frequently pat him on the head while speaking earnestly and sighing wistfully.

“Baole, being an official is the best. Remember, although money can solve everything, you can still be bullied by others. If you do not want to be bullied, the only way is to be an official, becoming a person who lords over the rest.”

Wang Baole did not understand his father’s words until he entered elementary school. One fateful day, he failed to hand in his homework on time and ended up being berated by the class monitor. Despite giving the class monitor two sweets, his name was still jotted down, and the class monitor snitched on him. All of this left a permanent mark in his young heart.

Hence, he wished to become the class monitor from that moment forth. It was not to bully others, but to ensure that he would not be bullied by others.

But as he grew up, he realized that many people bullied the class monitors. Therefore, he felt that only by becoming the highest official—the Federation President—could he ensure that no one would dare bully him. The reason he had racked his brains to enter Ethereal Dao College

was because all the Federation's high officials had graduated from the
four great Dao Colleges.

However, he did not lead a blessed life. His family clan's bloodline was quite an oddity. He even remembered that night one year ago when his father, who could be described as a bag of bones, had shown him the
family tree.

It was the first time Wang Baole had seen it. He realized that all his ancestors had died early—before the age of thirty-five—if their body weight exceeded a hundred kilograms.

That night, Wang Baole had a dream... He had reunited with his fat forefathers before he successfully became the Federation President.

The matter of losing weight was elevated to something of great importance over the following year. The Spirit Inception Era meant rich Spirit Qi and a renewed interest in ancient martial arts; therefore, there were many weight-loss techniques. However, Wang Baole's weight remained stable, despite the new era. He even experienced a slight rise in weight even after he attempted all of them.

As his memories surfaced, Wang Baole gritted his teeth, steeling his resolve to begin losing weight the next day.

Having made up his mind, Wang Baole immediately felt relieved. As he picked his teeth, he hummed a tune while looking at the distant blue sky outside the windows. His mind became active again.

I wonder if Physician Lu likes the gift I gave him. That is an antique I got from home. That old geezer will probably like it. Wang Baole comforted himself and guessed that if he managed to win Physician Lu's favor, it would be equivalent to him having a tiny backer in the Dao College.

Teachers have limits to their authority, but I still have to give them some gifts in the future. Being so old, Physician Lu definitely has quite a wide social circle. I have likely taken the right step. Upon thinking of this, Wang Baole felt delighted. In his mind, he was one step closer to the position of the Federation President.

In regard to becoming the Federation President, he was very confident.

This confidence stemmed from his research of the autobiographies of high officials, which he had gathered from a young age. He had even figured out a few trump cards needed in order to become a high official.

He was in a good mood as he looked at the blue skies outside the window, finding it especially beautiful.

But then, his eyes suddenly widened. He noticed that a black cloud was gathering in the distant sky. It spread out, covering the sky as lightning bolts flashed within it. The cloud slowly approached, and it also gained the attention of many as they exclaimed.

“It’s an electromagnetic pulse!”

Wang Baole was alarmed as well. After the Spirit Inception Era was ushered in, the appearance of Spirit Qi caused many stunning phenomena to arise in the world. Flying crafts from the past could no longer ensure safe travel. It resulted in the production of hot-air balloon cruisers propelled by Spirit Stones.

Amid constant exclamations, a rumbling thunder suddenly boomed. The black electromagnetic clouds burgeoned in size rapidly as the lightning within began spreading outward. Like a black net, it illuminated the horizons in a dazzling manner, causing the hearts of the spectators to race. Even the cruiser slowed down.

Just as people were feeling apprehensive, the door to the dining hall was pushed open. As though a cool wind had rushed in, a white-robed elder entered. His face was covered in wrinkles, but he had an ethereal air to him. His appearance exuded a feeling of propriety, especially his shimmering eyes, making him look like a person of righteousness. The moment he arrived, his domineering voice resounded throughout the dining hall.

“Everyone is to immediately report to the Spirit Cultivation Chamber. Wear your Magnetic Spirit attire, for we will be entering the electromagnetic domain in less than three minutes!”

The moment he spoke, all the students in the dining hall hurriedly stood up reverently.

Wang Baole’s eyes lit up. The elder in front of him was Physician Lu, the person he had previously gifted. From how he walked with flair, Wang Baole was increasingly convinced that his investment from before was right. He thought to himself that the old man was likely someone extraordinary, and he had really made the right move.

Just as he was reveling in his delight, the old physician swept his gaze across the room and saw Wang Baole. With a snort, he walked over, took out half a black mask, and threw it at him.

“Don’t waste your efforts on such inane acts when you are still so young. To think you have already learned the art of gifting before you’ve even entered the Dao College. I’m quite a learned person with experience. Keep the mask for yourself.” The old physician’s expression was solemn. He reprimanded Wang Baole with an honest and upright demeanor, as though he expected better from him.

Wang Baole received the mask as his heart skipped a beat. He turned somewhat worried, as he could tell that the old physician was angry. Just as he was about to give an explanation, he suddenly recalled one of the trump cards he had learned from the high officials’ autobiographies. One of them was that it was wise to thicken one’s skin to admit one’s mistakes in front of a superior. Typically, that would reduce a major issue to a minor one.

Therefore, he took a deep breath and hurriedly took on a contrite and penitent look to admit his fault.

“Teacher, you are right; I was at fault!”

The old physician turned a little intrigued. He could not deliver his planned tirade when the student had admitted his mistake so readily.

Wang Baole heaved a sigh of relief when he saw the old physician’s expression. He felt a little smug, thinking how useful the high officials’ autobiographies were.

The old physician snorted, raised his head, and scanned all the students in the dining hall. He raised his right hand and pointed at them.

“And all of you. All of you are future students of our Ethereal Dao College, but look at what you have been doing the past few days. You have to forever remember that, as warriors, we should first establish ourselves, watch our speech, and finally mind our conduct!”

The vice-abhorring physician’s words resounded through the dining hall. Everyone who heard it could not help but lower their heads in shame. As for Wang Baole, his eyes immediately lit up. He felt it was the appropriate moment for him to shine.

He quickly took out a tiny notebook and began writing on it. From time to time, he would raise his head to look at the old physician with a diligent and attentive look on his face. At times, he would even nod seriously as though he was trying to remember every single word. Obviously, this was also from the teachings in the high officials' autobiographies.

When his other classmates saw this, they looked at Wang Baole as though they were looking at a man of God.

The old physician momentarily fell into a daze when he saw this. An unprecedented sense of oddness arose in his heart. This was the first time he had encountered such an oddity after enrolling so many batches of students. He could not help but take a few looks at him before he slowly sneered.

“Little fellow, it’s not that easy to suck up to me. You ought to thank the electromagnetic pulse. If not for that, I would have reprimanded you for three days and three nights. I would be rather interested to see if you can write all of that in your tiny notebook!”

The moment he said those words, the mood immediately changed. The aura of an expert emanated from his body as it seemed to manifest as a

suppressive force that blanketed the entire dining hall. Every student became alarmed. They all felt that the old physician clearly had the upper hand in the battle of wits.

Wang Baole blinked as he touched the recording jade slip in his pocket. After weighing the situation and noticing how they were approaching the electromagnetic pulse steadily, he gave up the thought of taking it out.

He felt that backing down in front of a superior was nothing embarrassing.

The old physician became delighted when he saw the expressions on everyone. He generously threw them a few more words of motivation.

“Remember, put all your effort into cultivating. In the future, you must not be greedy or deceitful. Don’t even think about finding girlfriends. I have to make it known to you that lust and danger are just two sides of the same coin! The way all of you have been acting for the past few days has been preposterous!”

Just as he said that, a sweet voice suddenly sounded from the old physician’s voice transmission bangle.

“Grandpa Physician, where are you? Where do the Magnetic Spirit clothes go on? What should it cover? Quick, come and help me.”

The charming voice made the old physician tremble involuntarily. He barely forced a dry cough as he stared sternly at everyone. Only then did he turn around in a rush, and at the same time, he spoke excitedly into the voice transmission bangle. “Oh, I’m coming. Baby, don’t fret. I’m coming to help you right now.”

The turn of events had simply happened too quickly, and the contrast was striking. Everyone was dumbfounded, and even Wang Baole was taken aback. He drew a deep breath moments later. Following that, there was an uproar as Wang Baole clenched his teeth and cursed.

Shameless! What that old pervert said was utter bullshit! There are only so many female schoolmates. There aren’t enough for all of us, but he is actually trying to snatch resources from us at his age. Isn’t it all because he’s some kind of official?

Wang Baole became more infuriated the more he thought about the matter. He joined in the conversations with the classmates around him. It only strengthened his determination to become an official.

Another alarm sounded, ending everyone's conversations. All of them immediately rushed to the Spirit Cultivation Chamber.

The Spirit Cultivation Chamber was located in the core region of the cruiser, and like its name, it was a place for students to cultivate. At the same time, it was the place where the most security was deployed whenever the cruiser crossed any special zones.

As people gathered in the Spirit Cultivation Chamber, they were made to sit in rows under the direction of the Ethereal Dao College teachers. They were dressed in the Magnetic Spirit clothes that Ethereal Dao College had handed out.

Wang Baole was still dwelling on his anger toward Physician Lu even after he changed into the Magnetic Spirit clothes. He casually looked up and surveyed his surroundings. His depression immediately turned for the worse when he spotted a certain someone. He could not help but furrow his brows as he gave a look of disparagement.

Sitting where his sight had landed was a girl with long, slender legs. She looked charming, but she had her brows knitted and a look of disgust,

too. Clearly, they were very familiar with each other but also hated each other from the looks they were giving one another.

What bad luck!

Both of them grumbled inwardly as they looked away. It was as though just a glance of each other was a sore sight.

“I see that flat-chested Du Min, everywhere I go. How irritating!” Wang Baole muttered under his breath. He had been classmates with the girl, Du Min, ever since he began schooling. She was usually proud and aloof, and she constantly made things difficult for him as her role as class monitor. She also happened to be the receiver of the two sweets he had given back then.

“What’s so impressive about her? Isn’t she just some lame class monitor? When we arrive at the Dao Colleges, I’ll use the teachings of the officials and get some kind of official role!” snorted Wang Baole.

Soon, everyone had changed their clothing. The teachers in the Ethereal Dao College cruiser checked everyone’s attire and explained certain important matters. They also warned everyone that things could become

dangerous once the cruiser entered the electromagnetic domain. The risk of death was not negligible.

After everyone's expression changed, the teachers left solemnly. The door to the Spirit Cultivation Chamber was sealed as the lights dimmed.

Although there were murmurs in the Spirit Cultivation Chamber, the nervousness people felt turned more intense over the passage of time.

Gradually, no one spoke as the chamber fell into silence.

It got so quiet that they could hear their own heartbeats. Even Wang Baole, who still felt disgruntled, turned nervous. As the remaining minutes counted down, the entire cruiser suddenly shook, signifying its entry into the electromagnetic domain!

Outside, the black electromagnetic clouds looked extremely grand. It resembled a huge mouth that seemed to devour the tiny hot-air balloon cruiser.

This phenomenon contained a destructive might that could sweep away everything. Perhaps only the stunning Sword Sun above the heavens

could ignore such destruction, as though it could weather that turmoil and anything else thrown at it for millennia to come.

This year was the 37th year of the Spirit Inception Era.

In A.D. 3029, Earth's technology progressed rapidly, and the world was united with no national borders. It entered a federation era, and it was during this period that the massive sword flew from the cosmos and penetrated the sun, sending shockwaves across the world.

The hilt of the sword might have been damaged from the beginning, but the powerful impact shattered it into numerous fragments, which scattered across space, with portions of it landing all over the Earth.

Accompanying the arrival of the greenish-bronze sword and the falling of the fragments, the Earth suddenly had a perpetual new source of energy that permeated everywhere. It was later named... Spirit Qi!

Spirit Qi was like air. Some places were denser and others thinner. The Federation and other factions obtained the scattered fragments, and through them, found the relevant information needed for cultivation training and cultivation artifacts, pill refinement, and Spirit Stone

refinement. The text on the fragments looked ancient, which made people's interest in ancient texts become mainstream.

The appearance of Spirit Qi quickly eliminated the need for all existing resources. It changed the lives of people and formed the Spirit Internet.

It also changed the progress of Earth's civilization. It initiated a cultivation civilization all over Earth.

From then on, ancient martial arts became popular as a revolutionary change happened throughout the world. Thus, the era of immortal cultivation began.

History called it the Spirit Inception Era.

In the black electromagnetic cloud, the red hot-air balloon cruiser slowly proceeded forward. Lightning flashed continuously as bolt after bolt struck the cruiser incessantly. Thankfully, there was a soft halo surrounding the cruiser, allowing it to fly stably.

As for the Spirit Cultivation Chamber in the cruiser's core, all the students, including Wang Baole, were in there. They had unknowingly

fallen asleep as though there was a strange power that pulled them into
a dream.

At the cruiser's helm were eight teachers. Some of them were drinking
tea while others were smiling. They were having light-hearted
conversations, looking completely different from when they frightened
their students.

Their leader was an elder with a face covered in wrinkles. He held a
smoke pipe as he sucked on it. If Wang Baole was here, he would
definitely have recognized him as the shameless Physician Lu.

The old physician smiled faintly when a middle-aged teacher asked,
“Chancellor, everything is in order. Shall we begin the trial for this
student cohort?”

“Begin!”