

## Bigshot 341

### Chapter 341: Follow the Expert Will Truly Benefit a Lifetime

Ao Cheng hurriedly brought Li Nianfan to the palace and said, “Mr. Li, please, have a seat.”

The material of the furniture in the palace was extraordinary. They were all made from special ocean wood or carved from rocks. They were glistening and sparkly.

Li Nianfan truly understood the saying, ‘When in Rome, do as the Romans do’.

There were not a lot of things in the ocean but they had a lot of sparkly items and a lot of seafood.

Everyone sat down. Li Nianfan casually picked up a crystal glass at a table and examined it.

The crystal glass was small, dainty, and smooth to the touch. There was some translucent alcohol in it. There were ripples in the alcohol as it emitted a nice aroma.

Li Nianfan sniffed it gently, then drank it in one go.

He smacked his lips. He realized the alcohol was not strong and it had hints of sweetness. It was considered decent alcohol.

Ao Cheng said, “Mr. Li, my wine’s far off from yours, I hope you don’t mind.”

“You’re too courteous, Brother Ao Cheng. This wine’s a rare and beautiful brew,” said Li Nianfan. They both knew Ao Cheng was not wrong, but he could not say it as it was. It would also be inappropriate for him to take out his wine.

Clap!

Ao Cheng clapped gently.

A lot of clam demons and Sirens immediately rushed in. They gathered at an empty spot of the palace and started to perform hard.

The Sirens were as skinny as water snakes. They looked nimble as they were swaying and dancing in the water, their bodies as light as the rippling water.

The instruments were minimalistic. A few clam demons were blowing on snail shells by the side. It was quite enjoyable.

Li Nianfan watched the performance and felt sentimental. Previously, he had watched the performance by the female ghosts. It was interesting that he was now watching a performance by the Sirens.

Female ghosts were humans in the past, so their performance was humane. However, the Sirens were different. Li Nianfan thought it was exotic.

The performances of the oceanic kind were splendid. The clam demons danced, the dolphins and the sharks performed tricks as an interlude, which was followed by an interactive performance from a whale.

Li Nianfan cheered internally. It was worth the trip.

Li Nianfan asked curiously, "Brother Ao Cheng, is the Carp family so powerful across the ocean?"

"Um..."

Ao Cheng was stumped for a moment. He quickly formed his sentence and said, "Mr. Li... It's mainly because of our ancestors. As the popular saying goes, 'The carp has leaped through the dragon's gate'. Our ancestors were real Dragons."

"I see." Li Nianfan could understand that. It was like a cultivator who had an Immortal ancestor. Cultivators without an Immortal ancestor were not on the same level as a cultivator with an Immortal ancestor.

Carp Demons were related to Dragons. No wonder they were living lavishly.

Li Nianfan raised his glass and said, "Let me pre-celebrate your future as a Dragon then, Brother Ao Cheng."

In Ao Cheng's ears, that sentence hit differently. He was emotional hearing that. 'The expert's willing to change our status. He's about to define us as Dragons!'

He was already a Dragon. However, he needed the expert to feel that way, too.

The expert was willing to see him as a Dragon. He felt an odd sense of accomplishment. It was as if he was a child receiving approval from his parents. Anyone could tell a child that he was brilliant, but he would not think much about it. If a parent told the child that he was brilliant, then he was truly brilliant.

'My recent behavior must've pleased the expert.'

Ao Cheng felt touched, he even wanted to cry. He said in a serious tone, "Don't worry, Mr. Li. I'll work hard to become a Dragon soon!"

Suddenly, a clam demon walked in. "King, the crabs are ready."

Ao Cheng hurriedly said, "Quickly serve it. Serve Mr. Li first."

Soon, a bunch of Sirens dressed in pastel chiffon clothes and had their hair up walked in. They had scales of different colors on their bodies. Apparently, they were different Siren species.

They had small plates in their hands with red crabs on them. The crabs died with their pincers pointing upward.

Li Nianfan said, "I forgot to tell you. When steaming crabs, you need to tie the crab up for firmer meat. It would taste better."

Ao Cheng instantly frowned. He hurriedly said, "Mr. Li, I'm so sorry about that. The servants didn't know that. I'll have them redo it."

"No need for such trouble, it's just a small technique. Be mindful next time." Li Nianfan simply shrugged it off. Then, he focused on the crab.

His first thought was, 'What a nice fat crab!

'Look at that big strong claw. Look at that wide back. Look at those thick and pointy hairs. In my past realm, this would be considered a hairy crab of the best quality!'

He picked it up. It was bigger than his palm.

However, it was not tied up as Li Nianfan said. Because of that, the shell of the crab was slightly raised and the texture of the meat was affected. For a perfectionist like Li Nianfan, it was slightly imperfect.

It was not a big deal.

Li Nianfan took out the seasoning that he carried with him. It was not a complicated blend, just vinegar and some ginger. He smiled at everyone and said, "The crab's better with vinegar."

Ao Cheng replied, "I... I see."

Everyone looked at their crabs and did not know where to start. They could only watch Li Nianfan at the side and follow what he was doing.

Thankfully, they were a smart bunch. They were fast learners.

Crack, crack!

They all started to crack their crab shells.

Everyone soon realized that underneath the hard crab shell was snow-white meat. They were shocked at how much tender meat was hidden underneath the strong shell. Moreover, it was steamed without any seasoning but it had a nice aroma. They did not expect that at all.

Ao Cheng copied Li Nianfan. He dipped the crab meat in vinegar and ate it slowly.

First, his taste palette was instigated by the sour vinegar. Then, the tender crab meat was bouncing in his mouth. The wonderful flavor of the crab meat exploded and overpowered everything else. There was not a lot of crab meat but the strong aroma was there. It almost took over his senses.

Soft yet bouncy. Fresh yet delicate. The aroma was long-lasting and it was delicious!

‘How could ‘yum’ even begin to describe it?’

“Delicious!”

Ao Cheng widened his eyes and looked at the crab leg in his hand. He was in disbelief.

“Who would’ve thought that such a delicacy was right here this whole time?!” He took a deep breath. He suddenly felt like his years of living were a waste. He was such a failure.

Li Nianfan smiled and said, “That’s not it. If you crack open the shell, the crab butter of the male crabs and the crab roe of the female crabs are the best.”

“How can it be so delicious?!” Ao Yun was also astounded. He felt his worldview turn upside down.

He suddenly felt miserable. He started to tear up.

‘Why? Why let me taste such delicacies before I die?’

It was happiness and torture at the same time. He had missed out on multiple delicacies before his death. He realized now that it was not just one missed opportunity. That was the worst pain in his life.

He had only one thought in his mind, ‘Eat. I have to eat as much as I can to repay myself before I die!’

Daji peeled open a crab leg and fed it to Li Nianfan. She said softly, “I peeled this for you.”

Li Nianfan opened his mouth and ate it. He said, pleased, “Yum, delicious. That’s so nice of you, Daji.”

Daji smiled and said, “Hehe, thanks. Let me peel a crab claw for you.”

“Brother, check this out.” Dragin cast a spell. Water ripples were formed out of thin air. Then, the crab shell was easily separated from the crab meat. Li Nianfan looked at the white crab meat and felt envious.

‘Legendary skill. That’s a legendary skill for eating crabs!’



He was in awe. A lot of people wished they could eat mouthfuls of crab meat in one go.

However, Dragin was not going to share. She opened her little mouth and instantly devoured the crab meat. Her small cheeks were puffed up. She looked at Li Nianfan, waiting to be complimented.

Li Nianfan looked at his crab. He instantly felt like it was not as delicious anymore.

However, he still said, "Crab meat's delicious because of the deshelling process. If you don't remove the shell bit by bit with your hands, the crab meat won't taste as good."

Then, he continued to focus on deshelling his crab.

Ao Cheng and the others who were about to deshell their crabs with their powers instantly stopped in silence. They followed Li Nianfan. They calmly deshelled their crabs bit by bit with their hands.

Deshelling was a boring process. However, everyone soon realized they were more focused when they were deshelling. They even grew calmer gradually.

There were only two simple thoughts in their minds. One of them was to deshell it, the other was to eat it.

They subconsciously became arrogant as their powers grew because they could achieve things easily. It caused them to lose focus. They also lacked discipline in their minds because they could do a lot of things with ease.

However, they suddenly reclaimed themselves. They felt as if they had safely returned to the shore.

‘This isn’t just deshelling, this is clearly training our mentality!’

‘The expert’s truly the expert. His state of mind makes us sweat. No wonder he can do anything. He’s talented and can blend in as an ordinary man.’

‘If it were us, we would’ve been arrogant and endlessly snobby. How can we be ordinary people?’

‘A lesson learned from the expert’s enough to benefit us for a lifetime!’

Everyone cheered internally.

The oceanic performance continued.

Li Nianfan was surprised that a bunch of seafood was on the stage.

The Australian Lobster, King Crab, Squid, Salmon, and more. There were a lot of performers, but they did not dance. They joyfully swam around instead. They seemed to be displaying themselves.

“Mr. Li, this is the Seafood Get Together Show. It’s a performance we personally prepared for you.”

Ao Cheng smiled and continued, “They’re the elites of seafood. Their meat is top-notch. Mr. Li, if you have your eyes on any of them, you can just tell me. You can bring it home to make a nice meal. That’d be nice, right? If you want, you can bring it all back with you.”

“Thanks for everything, Brother Ao Cheng.”

“Oh yeah, the hairy crab’s such a delicacy. We can’t let it go to waste!” Ao Cheng suddenly recalled something. He ordered his minions, “Minions, hurry up and get the Hairy Crab Demon King. Tell him to pick a few fat and juicy hairy crabs as soon as he can. Also, list the hairy crab as a delicacy of the Carp Palace. Raise them well from now on.”

Then, everyone changed the topic. They started to comment on the seafood performers. They were discussing which part of their bodies would taste better.

Cough!

Suddenly, Ao Yun coughed again. He could not stop coughing, and he ended up coughing up a lot of blood.

He forced himself to say, "Excuse me. My bad, my bad."

Li Nianfan noticed that Ao Yun's blood was slightly dark. The damage to his organs must be extreme. He could not help but say, "Brother Ao Cheng, I'm afraid your brother's injury isn't looking good."

Ao Cheng sighed and shook his head. "Mr. Li, to be honest, my brother's been poisoned. I'm afraid this might be his last moments."

'It can't be helped?

'Ao Cheng and his brother are going to let it be?'

Li Nianfan stared at Ao Yun for a while. He did not see any signs of poisoning. He asked in a weird tone, "Do you mind if I check your pulse?"

Ao Cheng immediately said, "No, we don't mind at all. Feel free to do so, Mr. Li!"

He was naturally excited. He looked at him with devotion.

Soon, Li Nianfan put his hand away and frowned. As expected, he could not detect anything except for a weak pulse.

Li Nianfan asked curiously, "What poison was it?"

Ao Cheng replied, "Poison from a demonic bug that likes to suck on blood, flesh, and powers. Once it's in the body, it'll be like a bone parasite. It'll never be full until it completely devours a person from the inside."

"A bug like that exists?" Li Nianfan was shocked. That was beyond his medical expertise. He could not help him.

'It's normal. After all, even Immortals can't do anything about it.'

Li Nianfan asked, "Is there no way to force the bug out?"

"Impossible. The bug sucks on flesh and blood. The blood and the powers between the heart and the abdomen are the tastiest. So, it'll always stay there. If we remove it by force or attack it, Ao Yun will be injured."

Ao Cheng paused, then said, "As the parasite feeds, the host will gradually become weaker. The immune system will no longer be as strong as before. His wounds won't heal and it'll only become worse until he reaches a painful death."

It was like a virus in the past realm, feeding on the host until the host died weakly.

Ao Yun had a huge injury, but he would recover in no time if only he was not poisoned. However, the poison prevented him from healing and the bug was feeding on his blood and powers. A situation like that was truly hopeless.

Ao Cheng noticed that Li Nianfan was silent. He felt miserable.

He never doubted the abilities of the expert. He knew that the expert was not willing to help.

‘It isn’t unusual. It’s not something to complain about or blame him.’

All hope disappeared from Ao Yun’s eyes. He smiled and said in a carefree tone, “Haha, I’ve been ready for my death ever since I was poisoned. I can still live for a while. To be able to eat such a delicacy like the hairy crab before my death makes it all worth it. So what if I die? I’m content.”

‘Parasite bug...likes to devour blood and powers.’

Li Nianfan suddenly had an idea. He groaned for a moment and suddenly said, “Actually... There is a way, but I don’t know if it’ll work or not.”

Chapter 342: I Am Sorry, I Did Not Know My Meat Is so Tasty

‘There’s a way!’

Ao Cheng and Ao Yun felt their hearts racing. They looked overjoyed. They automatically ignored whatever Li Nianfan had to say next.

'The expert says there's a way, which means it's going to be good. How could he be unsure if it'd work or not? He's being too humble.'

Ao Cheng gulped. He nervously asked, "May I know what you had in mind, Mr. Li?"

"The method...is a bit, um, weird."

Li Nianfan hesitated. He had thought of the idea all of a sudden. It had nothing to do with medical methods and it was very weird. He already regretted speaking about it.

"Mr. Li, just say it, it's alright. I'll go along with it as best as I can!" Ao Yun immediately had the desire to live again. He saw hope, even his eyes were beaming.

Li Nianfan was silent for a moment. He could only say, "Actually, my method is...to grill it!"

"Grill?" Everyone was taken aback. They had weird expressions on their faces.

Ao Yun was baffled. 'Perhaps the expert thinks I'll die for sure. Is he going to roast and eat me after I die?'

“Mr. Li, this...grilling seems inappropriate.”

Ao Cheng fell into deep thought. He quickly formed his sentence and then ripped Ao Yun's clothes open. With his chest exposed, they saw a bump between his heart and the abdomen. The bump was slightly pulsating as if it was breathing.

Ao Cheng analyzed and said, “The demonic bug's leeching around here. It's controlling the heart and the abdomen area. Plus, it's violent in nature. It's currently stuck here, but if it senses any movement, it'll attack like crazy and swallow the heart whole along with his powers!”

The body of an Immortal was strong and powerful. They could survive even if half of their bodies were disabled. Usually, they could easily slice their bodies open to retrieve a bug. However, the method was not useful on the Dragon Killer Poison Bug.

The bug would allow an Immortal to live for a while if they did not do anything about it. However, if one tried to attack it, it would easily kill the host in an instant. Even a Dragon was not an exception.

“Of course, I know it's not that simple. I'm not too knowledgeable about this situation either, but I'm just offering a hypothesis.”

Li Nianfan shook his head and continued, “This bug's a pain to deal with because of its leeching area. It leeches at the most delicious part of the body. If we can create a more delicious area, will it be lured over to that area?”

‘This...’



Everyone fell into deep thought. 'Why does it sound like...it could actually work?!'

Ao Yun said, "Then, Mr. Li, the grill you speak of is..."

Li Nianfan replied, "What I meant was... Choose a body part and I'll grill it into something delicious. Thus, the demonic bug will probably be attracted to the smell and hopefully, it'll swim over to eat the meat."

Daji finished his sentence, "Then, we'll cut it off cleanly along with the bug!"

"This...this..."

Ao Cheng and Ao Yun's eyes were wide. They were shocked by the odd idea.

'You can do that?!'

It was slightly ridiculous but it also seemed to be a sensible method.

'The expert's truly an expert. He can even think of such weird ideas.'

Ao Cheng licked his lips and said, "Mr. Li, I'm afraid only you can execute a method like that."

The Dragon Killer Poison Bug was too difficult to deal with. Once it leeches onto a host, it would be restless until the host died. Nothing could make it move an inch.

Absolute temptation was required to attract the Dragon Killer Poison Bug. They had tried the delicacies made by Li Nianfan and knew that his cooking was one-of-a-kind. If it could make them lose control, it might be able to tempt the Dragon Killer Poison Bug.

"Probably." Li Nianfan looked at Ao Yun and said, "This is just a theory. As for execution, it's all up to your will."

Ao Yun bit down and said, "I'll die either way. I trust you, Mr. Li!"

Sizzle!

At the side, the Fire Phoenix quickly cast a spell as soon as he said it. Red hot flames appeared out of thin air.

The Fire Phoenix said in an indifferent yet slightly merry voice, "Pick a body part. Grill it nicely."

Ao Yun looked at the Fire Phoenix with anger and sadness on his face. 'This vigilante. This is an act of public revenge for a private grudge.'

The Fire Phoenix smirked, "What are you looking at? Remember to pick a good part. If the meat isn't good enough, the demonic bug might not be tempted. If you can't tempt it, you might have to choose another body part to grill."

The Dragons and the Phoenixes had a grudge-filled history since the beginning of time. Although it was washed away by the passage of time, it was still a very enjoyable experience to taunt each other.

By the side, Ao Cheng suggested, "Brother Ao Yun, how about the tail? I think tail meat's the most tender part of the body. It must be delicious."

Ao Yun was pissed. "Shut up! We'll have to chop it off in the end. If my tail's cut off, would I still be a...carp?"

He hesitated for a while then put out his arm. He rolled up his sleeve and said, "Come on!

"It's just an arm. I can grow it back after a few thousand years."

"Nice and tough!" Li Nianfan complemented. "Guan Yu once scraped his bones to remove the toxins. Now, we have Ao Yun grilling his arm to remove a bug. What a legendary story! Please, put your arm over the fire."

Ao Yun looked at the Phoenix fire that was burning in front of him. He flinched.

‘Never in my dreams have I once thought that one day I’d willingly grill my arm with Phoenix Fire. What a shame, I’m a shame to the Dragon kind!’

He teared up and put his arm over the fire. He jumped.

Li Nianfan had already taken out his barbeque seasoning. He looked serious.

He had a small brush in his hand. He dipped it in oil and brushed it on his arm. “Quick, turn your arm. Make sure the meat’s evenly grilled.

“Don’t use force. Relax. Yes, loosen your grip. Ensure the texture of the meat’s good.

“Your powers. Transfer your powers to your arm and into the meat. The demonic bug might be more tempted.”

Li Nianfan focused on grilling while teaching Ao Yun the techniques of how to cook himself more deliciously.

Gradually, Ao Yun had a red arm.

Sizzle—

Oil started to seep out, covering his arm. It was glistening. Meanwhile, oil started to drip into the fire, causing a nice sizzle.

Gulp.

“Brother Ao Cheng, you seem to be gulping.”

“Nonsense, it’s not me. I’d never!” Ao Cheng protested loudly with a straight face but the saliva at the corner of his mouth kept dripping out.

Gulp!

Gulp!

Gulp!

There were a lot of gulps. Everyone looked calm and innocent but their gulps exposed them.

Aside from everyone in the room, the clam demons outside of the room were also acting weird. They started to peek inside with saliva dripping from their mouths.

“You! You all...”

Ao Yun was flushed from anger and embarrassment. He hid his head inside his shirt as if he were an ostrich. He was too shameful.

Then, he started to gulp like crazy, too. He had too much saliva in his mouth so the gulping sounds were pretty obvious.

Ao Cheng had to say, “Brother Ao Yun, stop hiding. We heard it. It’s your arm anyway. You can eat it if you want to.”

Ao Yun was still hiding like an ostrich. He said weakly, “Excuse me, I didn’t expect my meat to smell so good. Boohoo, I’m too embarrassed to live...”

“The meat’s almost done.” His meat did smell good, even Li Nianfan did not expect that. ‘Carp Demon meat smells this good?’

“Add some cumin. Perfect,” he said while sprinkling a layer of cumin on the meat like a pro.

Fume!

Instantly, the aroma of the meat was heightened like a tsunami, covering everyone and everything.

The entire palace was an ocean of aroma. Endless sea creatures came over because of the delicious smell. They surrounded and crowded the place.

Ao Cheng was trying his best to stop Dragin. He yelled, "Dragin, calm down, calm down! That is your Uncle Ao Yun, you can't eat him!"

Daji was also pulling on Dragin who had stars in her eyes.

"Boohoo, Sister Daji, just one bite, just let me have one bite!"

Nanan had waterfall-like saliva dripping from her mouth. She was hungry. "Brother Nianfan, we can't keep it since it's cooked. How about we cut it and share it?"

Ao Cheng noticed that a lot of sea creatures were appearing. He did not look happy at all. He scolded, "What are you all doing? Hurry up and scram! Are you all trying to commit treason just for food?!"

The Dragon Killer Poison Bug moved slightly. It jolted and started to breathe heavily.

Then, it squiggled and started to move toward the arm.

It was careful at first, but then it was lured away by the delicious smell. It had one word in its mind, 'eat'. It started to sprint toward the arm at high speed!

#### Chapter 343: What a Bunch of Hard-Working People

The demonic bug was fast. Clearly, it could not wait anymore. They could not see it but they could feel its excitement.

It was lured to the arm and was ready to eat up.

The Fire Phoenix focused and turned the fire into a sharp knife. A red light flashed.

Slash!

Ao Yun's arm was chopped off cleanly. It flew out.

They could see the long black bug in the delicious-smelling arm. It was like a giant leech.

It was engulfed in delicacy. It felt as if its bug life was worth it. Blood and powers were lousy compared to this meat. 'This is what a bug life's supposed to be!'



Daji calmly glanced at it. Then, she used her powers. White crystal-like ice attacked the arm, freezing it into an ice sculpture.

Splat! It fell to the ground.

The ice sculpture was very hard. It was not even damaged when it fell to the ground, it even glistened. However, the splat sound sounded cruel to everyone.

“Delicious food, my delicious food!” Nanan and Dragin stared at that arm and instantly burst into tears.

The others felt like their hearts were empty. It was as if someone had wasted a rare treasure.

“My arm, my delicious arm!”

Ao Yun was also out of it. He felt extremely emotional. He went over to hug his detached limb, examining it.

‘Too tragic. First, it was grilled over a fire. It smelled so delicious. Then, it was immediately turned into ice. My arm has been through too much.’

The air still smelled like delicious grilled meat. It was unreal.

Li Nianfan could not refrain from comforting Nanan and Dragin. He laughed and said, "Why are you crying? That's Brother Ao Yun's arm, you can't eat it. Moreover, the arm has a demonic bug in it. You still want to eat that?"

Nanan sobbed and wiped her saliva away. "But...it smells too good."

Ao Yun stood up and genuinely thanked him, "Mr. Li, thank you so much. My life is saved. Thank you for your generosity, if you need anything in the future, feel free to let me know!"

"It's not a big deal." Li Nianfan smiled then asked curiously, "Brother Ao Yun, aren't you hurting?"

Ao Yun smiled and replied, "I was distracted by the smell just now so I didn't realize it. It hurts a little now, but I was mentally prepared. I can handle it."

He cast a spell on his wound as he spoke. Ripples formed on the tips of his fingers. Then, they attached themselves to the wound and formed a water shield.

Li Nianfan did not understand the purpose of the water shield, but he knew that it was the right thing for him to do.

He saluted and said, "Brother Ao Cheng, it's getting late. We should go."

“Mr. Li, why don’t you stay the night? Let me treat you well as the host.” Ao Cheng naturally tried his best to make him stay. He said with sincerity, “We have a lot of sea creatures, and there are a lot of performances and entertainment for you, Mr. Li. The beautiful views of the ocean are countless. Fish and prawns are everywhere. Why don’t you stay and stroll around?”

Li Nianfan groaned for a moment. He smiled and replied, “No thanks. Thank you for everything, Brother Ao Cheng.”

“Fine,” said Ao Cheng. “Mr. Li, I prepared some seafood for you, as well as the hairy crabs. Please, don’t reject it. If you want to eat seafood in the future, just inform Dragin. We have a lot of seafood here!”

“Haha, alright!” Li Nianfan accepted it.

They chatted for a while. Then, Li Nianfan and the others left the Carp Palace.

Ao Cheng and Ao Yun stood at the door to see them off.

“The expert...is truly an absolute expert!”

Ao Yun sounded sentimental. “That was the Dragon Killer Poison Bug. For millions of years, no one could cure a poison like that. He removed it in such a mysterious way. He simply made a miracle! I’m afraid no one would believe us if this gets out.”

Ao Cheng brushed his beard and laughed. "Ha, why the fuss? Did that scare you? The expert's unimaginable. It's the blessing of the Dragon kind to be able to befriend him!"

"My arm...was worth chopping!"

Ao Yun suddenly caressed his rock-solid arm. "This is the arm that was personally grilled by the expert. The Dragon Killer Poison Bug's so lucky. It was frozen with my delicious arm, what a breakthrough! I have to frame this and display it at my place. Who would dare to disrespect me now? Haha..."

Ao Cheng looked at that arm and said with envy, "Your West Ocean Dragon Palace is gone. How can you laugh?"

Speaking of that topic, Ao Yun suddenly sounded like he was in pain. He said in a low voice, "The Dragon Door reappeared this time. I was thrilled at first. Who would've thought the South Ocean Dragon King would be a traitor to the Dragons? I was poisoned. However, I have even worse news."

Ao Cheng arched his eyebrow. "What news?"

Ao Yun replied, "The South Ocean Old Dragon King didn't die after the big tribulation! That old scum with a dark heart!"

Ao Cheng had a change in his facial expression. He kind of smirked as he said, "Brother Ao Yun, speaking of that, I have to tell you a huge secret."

“Secret?”

Ao Cheng looked at Ao Yun mysteriously. Then, he said smugly, “Not to flex but the Old Dragon King of my East Ocean...is also alive! Haha, envious, right?”

...

Li Nianfan strolled around in the ocean. He suddenly felt like his worldview was expanded. His life was interesting and colorful.

‘Now, this is a proper journey. Such a leisurely life. This is the life of an Immortal.’

It was dark out when he got back to the four-part architecture. The sky was covered with flickering stars. There was a thin veil of mist beneath the starlight.

At the Above Immortal Realm.

The Ice Palace was no longer there. The ice had melted in a day and grass grew on the land. Everything smelled like flowers.

Ziye looked at the familiar yet unknown sight. She felt conflicted. She looked up at the sky with excitement and nervousness.

She sighed and said, "Now that the Underworld has reappeared, I wonder when the Heavenly Palace can return."

Taoist Xinghe was standing behind her as he said respectfully, "Seventh Princess, the expert's moves are starting to show. The realm's changing. The Heavenly Palace will return sooner or later!"

"Hopefully," said Ziye softly. She floated along the sky pillar and was back at the Southern Sky Gate again.

The two Daluo Golden Immortals were nowhere to be seen. No one stopped her either.

She stepped into the Southern Sky Gate. She was quick-paced because she was familiar with the place. She easily found her way to the Palace of the Seven Princesses.

Ziye took a deep breath and calmed down. She pushed the door open and walked in.

The room was very tidy.

So tidy that it surprised Ziye.

She stood outside for a long while. It was as if she was brought back to a time where nothing had changed.

She walked in and made a turn at the end of the living room, passing through a circular door carved out of wood. The five figures that suddenly appeared made her jolt.

The five figures were sitting at different places in the room. Some were playing the zither, some were drinking tea, and some were smiling. If they were not stone statues, it would have been a beautiful sight to behold.

“Big sister, Third Sister, Fourth Sister, Fifth Sister, Sixth Sister!” Ziye exclaimed. She hurriedly jogged over and hugged the stone statues. She burst into tears.

Taoist Xinghe sighed at the sight. He was also tearing up.

He did not interrupt Ziye. Instead, he silently backed away, walking alone in the Heavenly Palace.

In the Yue Lao Pavillion, an elder had red strings in one hand and clay in the other. He, too, was turned to stone. The Love and Fate Abacus were also turned into stone.

Two stone statues of children sat next to Dan Furnace at the Tossiya Temple. They were holding fans and seemed to be chatting with each other.

In the Lingxiao Palace, the Throne of the Jade Emperor was also turned to stone. No one was on it. Beneath it were some stone statues. They seemed to be attending a gathering.

The entire Heavenly Palace was deserted and creepy.

Taoist Xinghe passed by the Lingxiao Palace and went to the edge of the observatory. He looked upon the dark sky and searched for the star that he used to be in charge of. He could not hold it in anymore. Tears streamed down his face.

Time passed, days went by.

Li Nianfan was living a peaceful and leisurely life. Nothing much changed apart from his mindset.

He was unrestricted. He could fly, and he had the protection of his Deluxe Merit Flesh. His connections were wide and were still expanding. He felt like he could go anywhere in the Immortal Realm. His life was far more entertaining than before.

The Holy Emperor came on the fifth day after the City God Temple was built. He came along with an elder and a general. However, they came as souls so they could naturally be chummy.

The elder was quite famous around the area. The general was a fearless leader that died on the battlefield. They were the first civil servant and war general of the Fallen Town City Castle.



They were chosen. They came here instantly to report to Li Nianfan. They told Li Nianfan everything including their life achievements. They were clearly there for his approval.

The Underworld respected Li Nianfan, so naturally, he would not be picky. He would go along with it and give a nice speech as long as the candidates were decent.

At the same time, Li Nianfan got information about the outside world from the Holy Emperor.

Zhou Yunwu was busy ruling the humans. Meng Junliang was working hard at creating schools. Yuecha was successful in preaching Buddhism while Gu Xirou seemed to be scheming. Ao Cheng seemed to be busy, too. Li Nianfan guessed he was probably working hard on becoming a Dragon.

Oh yeah, Ziye and the others said they were going to rebuild the Heavenly Palace. He wondered how their progress was.

In conclusion, everyone seemed to be busy working hard on achieving their goals. He was a bit of a useless bum in comparison.

“What a bunch of hard-working people!” Li Nianfan laid in his rocking chair. He was lying on top of a silky green wolf king’s hide. He also had a grey bear fur blanket on top of him. He was enjoying the warmth even in the winter.

Daji was feeding him fruits at his side. His life was endlessly joyful.

Li Nianfan smirked and said, "Good. Wait until they become super bigshots, I won't have to do the work anymore."

On the same day in a familiar place at the Above Immortal Realm.

A masked fox slowly appeared. She leaped into the city and kept walking.

The little fox looked around, wagging its nine tails. She would look back from time to time. She seemed anxious.

Soon, she was at a store in the depths of the black market.

The store was still the same. It was dark inside. A black curtain draped over it creepily.

'I can't act like I'm too used to this. I have to act like I'm troubled and anxious.' The little fox recalled the instructions her sister gave her. She stopped in her tracks when she reached the door. Then, she turned around and ran away. Then, she ran back again and stood at the door, seemingly hesitant.

She repeated that three times before leaping in.

The figure hidden in the dark grew impatient from that. He instantly said with a hoarse voice, "Are you here to trade?"

The little fox nodded.

"Been here before?"

The little fox shook her head.

"You're the Nine-Tailed Fox, can't you speak?" The hoarse voice paused for a moment. Then, it continued, "Who would've thought that I would be able to see a Nine-Tailed Fox? Alright, show me your items."

A weak light started to shine in the room. The elder felt a déjà vu.

The little fox waved her paw and a small bucket immediately appeared in front of her. The bucket was filled with milk. There was also a bundle of chives.

"Milk and chives?"

The elder was stumped for a moment. Then, he exclaimed, "Milk from the Five-Colored Sacred Cow! Nice, it's a wonderful item!"

Then, he picked up the bundle of chives out of curiosity. He observed it for a while and sniffed it. He instantly realized, "Spiritual Plant? The chives are Spiritual Plants?!"

He was beyond shocked. 'The orange I received previously was a Spiritual Fruit, too. How do we have a Spiritual Plant version of chives now? The realm has changed, something's off!'

All Spiritual Plants had extraordinary properties.

He could not help but nibble on the chives. He carefully nibbled it and closed his eyes to enjoy it.

Soon, the old man blushed. He suddenly opened his eyes and said in a pleasantly surprised tone, "This is good stuff. These chives are rare and precious!"

He looked at the little fox, "These two items are rare. What do you want in exchange?"

The little fox replied meekly, "I'm looking for a Spiritual Item from the eldritch eras."

"Spiritual Items from the eldritch eras again?"

The elder felt his heart thumping. He was sensitive about that phrase. That was the third time he encountered a situation like that in such a short time. Most importantly, something would happen every time.

He clapped and a brocade box instantly appeared in front of the little fox. A decent yet uneven gold ball was in the box. It seemed ancient and mysterious.

“You can feel the aura in this. It’s an item from the eldritch eras and it’s extremely valuable.” The elder smiled and said, “Where did you get the chives from? Tell me and I’ll give you another Spiritual Item from the eldritch eras!”

“I won’t tell you!” The little fox panicked and ran away. She leaped away quickly.

The elder looked at the little fox and fell into deep thought.

“Clearly, the fox knows where the chives came from! The chives are far too extraordinary, I have to get some!”

The elder sounded determined but he felt like something was off. He thought about it and said, “I feel like something’s going against me. Could this be related to my previous two encounters? Third time’s the charm, I won’t let tragedy reoccur! I’ll do it myself this time just to be safe!”

Chapter 344: Cultivator, Do You Want Chives

The little fox leaped and hopped away quickly. Her nine tails seemed to be rubbing against the clouds. She was feeling quite merry.

Soon, she blended in with the faraway mountains.

Her eyes flickered. She seemed to be talking to herself, “Here comes the chives, here comes the chives!”

She was about to leap into another hill when three figures suddenly swooped in and surrounded the little fox.

“Cultivator, please, wait!”

The three figures were three Real Immortals. They were cool and powerful. They had friendly smiles on their faces.

One of them said, “We’re very interested in the chives you brought us, cultivator. As long as you tell us the source, we’ll ensure your safety and we’ll give you lots of benefits!”

The little fox stood on her hind legs. She looked up at three cultivators riding on clouds. Her black eyes sparkled.

“Stop joking, cultivators. We’ve been waiting for you for a long time!”

Along with a soft chuckle, Gu Yuan, Gu Xirou, Pei An, Ding Xiaozhu, and the others quickly surrounded the three cultivators. The six powerful cultivators ambushed them.

Those three cultivators were calm. They did not appear to be frantic. They looked up at the cultivators that had appeared out of nowhere.

“Haha, I guessed it. Someone’s indeed against us!”

They heard a burst of loud laughter. The elder from the black market store rode in on some clouds along with two Golden Immortals behind him. He felt like an emperor walking in, dismissively looking at everyone with a cold smirk.

He carefully examined Gu Xirou and Gu Yuan and he instantly realized something. He yelled, “It’s you guys! I knew it, I knew it! You guys are scheming on me, Ma Yunming. This time, I’ll capture you all! Haha...”

Gu Xirou and the others looked at the elder calmly, too. They were cool. Some were even smirking.

‘Huh?’

Ma Yunming felt his heart thumping. He had a bad feeling.

“Capture us all? Have you asked for permission from the sword in my hand?!”

Xiao Chengfeng stepped on a sword. His demeanor was cool, his robes were flowing behind him, and his gaze was sharp. He stared at the elder.

Then, Ao Cheng, Ziye, the Fire Phoenix, and Daji revealed themselves.

The aura in the air changed. The place was filled with the Power of Law. Too many powerful cultivators had appeared at the same time. It was wicked.

Ma Yunming froze in place. He jolted and went blank. He could not believe what was happening.

‘Taiyi... Golden Immortals.

‘So, so many Taiyi Golden Immortals! I’ve never seen so many Taiyi Golden Immortals in my life!

‘Did I just trespass a nest of Taiyi Golden Immortals?

‘Is this necessary? I’m just an owner of a small black market store. Do they have to bully me to this extent?’



He was dumbfounded. He looked up and felt his skin crawl. 'Scary, it's too scary! Not even nightmares can compare to this.'

After a while of feeling dizzy, he plopped to the ground, headfirst.

Cold sweat formed on his forehead. He forced a friendly smile and said while trembling, "This is a misunderstanding, this is all a misunderstanding. I... I... I'm just a store owner, everyone. This isn't necessary, it's really not necessary!"

The little fox sneered and scolded, "It's a black market store!"

"I was wrong, I was wrong. Please, don't kill me, bigshots."

The elder knelt on the ground and bowed down. He begged on all fours, "My business is legit. The trades are fair. I was just curious about the odd items. I shouldn't have thought twice about it. Bigshots, please, spare me."

Ao Cheng asked, "What else do you have on you? It better be a Spiritual Item from the eldritch eras."

"Nothing, I don't have anything else."

The shop owner cried, "Spiritual Items from the eldritch eras are already rare. It all depends on luck, too. My only three items were traded away to you guys. My most valuable possession as of now is an Intermediate Heavenly Spiritual Treasure. Feel free to take it."

He took out a gold shield as he spoke. It was most probably a defense Spiritual Treasure.

Xiao Chengfeng was pleasantly surprised. "Woohoo, an Intermediate Heavenly Spiritual Treasure. How luxurious of you."

The corners of Ma Yunming's mouth twitched. He hurriedly said, "I've been at the Above Immortal Realm for a long time. Treasures are rare but I did get some nice items over the years."

Daji asked, "Where did you get the items from the eldritch eras?"

Ma Yunming replied, "I have someone who works for me that can seek treasure, often at Immortal Relics. That's how I got some treasures."

He hurriedly added, "If you want Spiritual Treasures from the eldritch eras, we'll do our best to help you search for it."

Daji nodded, "I don't see why not."

"Actually..."

Ma Yunming saw hope for survival. He was immediately thrilled. He hurriedly continued, "Everyone, if you have more chives like that, I can help you out secretly. I can trade for the Spiritual Items with the chives. Most Immortals would be willing to trade because the chives...are useful to Immortals!"

Gu Xirou was surprised. "Oh? They'd be willing to trade?"

"Yes, a lot of Spiritual Treasure's ancient. Most of them got it by luck but have no idea how to use them. They're also unaware of its value." Ma Yunming groaned for a moment and said indirectly, "The chives...are attractive!"

Immortals lived for too long. Hence, they were also bored. Otherwise, there would not be so many Immortals who would dress themselves up to look like cool elders.

They had lost their passion. The chives could help them regain their passion for cultivation!

The chives would be popular once it was out!

Ziye said, "If that's the case, it's a great plan."

She was hoping to gather a lot of Spiritual Items and Spiritual Treasures from the eldritch eras. The eldritch eras were far away but the items were related to the Heavenly Palace.

Daji said coldly, “We don’t want your Heavenly Spiritual Treasures. We hope you won’t let us down. If you offer us a good trade, we’ll reward you.”

Ma Yunming was exhilarated. He hurriedly thanked them, “Thank you, superior Immortals! Thank you for having mercy on me, wise Immortals! I’ll do my best in your honor. I won’t disappoint you all.”

Gu Xirou looked at Pei An and said, “Cultivator Pei, you have a lot of chives. Give some up.”

“This...” Pei An looked troubled and in pain. Then, he turned to look at Ding Xiaozhu. He quietly said, “Bamboo, look... This...”

Ding Xiaozhu sighed softly. Hesitantly, she picked out two bundles of chives. She thought about it and tossed a bundle at Ma Yunming. “We don’t have many chives left. Take this.”

Xiao Chengfeng was confused. “Huh? Cultivator Pei, why did you let cultivator Ding keep your chives?”

Pei An coughed softly. He replied, “You’ve been single for all eternity. You wouldn’t get it.”

...

Ma Yunming excitedly rushed back to the store with the chives. He opened the door and was back in business.

Soon, a cool white-robed elder with a horsetail whisk in hand slowly walked in.

The elder looked around carefully at first. Then, he hesitated before walking into the shop nervously.

Ma Yunming followed his usual routine. He slowly walked out with chives.

“Cultivator, do you want some chives?”

“Cultivation is fleeting. Joy could be right in front of you. Why not seize it? These chives can bring you absolute joy.”

Soon, the elder walked out of the store as a satisfied customer. He quickly left.

A while later, a beautiful lady in a palace costume walked in. She had her hair up and was incredibly well-dressed. Her ribbons flowed in the wind. She looked cool and gorgeous.

He followed his usual routine again.

Ma Yunming slowly appeared. He smiled and asked, "I wonder if you have a companion, Goddess?"

The beautiful lady in the palace costume frowned. She asked in an unfriendly tone, "Why's that any of your business? Are you trying to hit on me or something?"

Ma Yunming took out the chives. "I wanted to ask your companion if he wanted some chives?"

Soon, the beautiful lady merrily walked out of the store. She looked excited as she left in a hurry.

Chapter 345 Nice Management, a Different City

At the four-part architecture.

Li Nianfan was holding a Chinese ceramic cup with tea in it. He used the cup's lid to push away the tea leaves that were floating on the surface of the tea. Then, he gently blew on it before taking a sip.

He said sentimentally, "It's best to drink hot tea during the cold winter. Goodbye ice popsicles and soda."

Of course, that did not apply to the two brats, Nanan and Dragin. They were happily sucking on their ice pops.

Suddenly, Dragin seemed to recall something. She said, "Brother, the gourd vine in the backyard sprouted another gourd."

"Oh, really?"

Li Nianfan put down his teacup and walked to the backyard.

"It really grew!" He smirked. He approached it and saw a gold gourd hanging on a gourd vine.

The golden gleam reflected under the sunlight. Its size was about the same as the Purple Golden Gourd that was hanging on his waist. However, their appearances were different. The Golden Gourd looked fantastic. It looked like an accessory made from pure gold.

Li Nianfan picked it up and held it in his hands. He felt like it was weightless.

"This gourd vine's awesome at growing gourds. I wonder if it's some kind of amazing Spiritual Plant."

Li Nianfan suddenly had a thought. "This was a seed given to me by Goddess Gu. It makes sense if the gourds are extraordinary. It looks cool, but it's probably not that powerful."

Li Nianfan went back to the four-part architecture. He wondered what he could do with the Golden Gourd.

Creak.

The door of the four-part architecture swung open.

Daji and the Fire Phoenix walked in quietly. Li Nianfan had to laugh. "You two. Snuck out to play outside this early in the morning?"

"Hehe, we brought you something."

Daji smiled beautifully. Then, she lifted her hand and out came a gold rock. She passed it to Li Nianfan.

"Gold?" Li Nianfan was slightly taken aback. He took the rock and examined it in his hand.

"It's quite heavy. More dense than gold!" Li Nianfan arched his eyebrow and turned the rock over in his hand. He looked at it closely under the sunlight. The surface of the rock was very smooth. There were no sharp edges but it was not even either. The edges were a little crooked and uneven. However, it was not disorderly. It was quite nice to look at.

Li Nianfan asked curiously, "Where did you get this from?"



Daji replied, "It looked interesting so we traded it with someone."

"It's indeed interesting. I don't know if this rock's natural or man-made." Li Nianfan smiled and nodded. "It's very intriguing."

He put the rock aside and said, "Daji, I noticed that ever since you started to cultivate, you can't stay put anymore."

Daji blushed slightly. She replied coyly, "I just wanted to do more things that would entertain you."

"Haha, it's natural. I myself can't stay put either." Li Nianfan laughed. "No one likes staying at the same spot once they're capable. It'd be awful if we just remained here in the four-part architecture."

Transportation in the Immortal Realm was poorly developed and dangerous. Previously, he was an ordinary man so he could only stay in one spot. He only moved around the four-part architecture, the Clear Moon Lake, and the Fallen Town. However, he was one of those people with a cloud vehicle now, so he obviously could not stay put.

Speaking of that, Li Nianfan felt blessed to have Deluxe Merit Flesh. Otherwise, Daji would be forced to stay with him in his tiny four-part architecture. He felt like it would be wrong. Daji hurriedly said, "The four-part architecture's the best place in the entire realm. I'm willing to stay here until I die. I'd be happy to!"

She sounded very sincere and honest.

Dragin and Nanan jumped. They thought Li Nianfan was going to chase her out. They teared up and ran to hug his legs. "Us too. Brother's four-part architecture's a hundred times better than anywhere else in the realm! We won't go out so recklessly anymore!"

"What silly nonsense." Li Nianfan was entertained. He was also touched. He scratched their noses and said while smiling, "How can our tiny four-part architecture compare to the vast realm? Even a canary will be depressed when trapped inside a cage, right?"

He stood up and continued, "Actually, I can't be tamed either. How about we all go on a trip together?" He felt like an ordinary person with a car. If an ordinary person did not have a car, they would only stick to one place. However, once they did, it would be convenient to go around visiting different places. How could he stay put?

"Go out? Really?!"

Nanan and Dragin were instantly energetic again. They smiled widely.

Li Nianfan smiled and said, "Let me think of where we should go."

He always waited for guests to visit him in the past. Now, he could go visit them. At that moment, he realized the importance of connection. He could go to a lot of places if he had the right connections. He could also go visit an old friend.

He did not want to go to the Carp Palace because he had already visited it recently. The Ganlong Immortal Dynasty was too close by. He still had...the Linxian Palace, Azure Ville, or the Xia Kingdom. "Oh yeah, let's go to the Xia Kingdom! Let's have a spontaneous trip."

Li Nianfan had a spark in his eyes. "Let's see how Zhou Yunwu's handling the country. And Meng Junliang, too. Didn't he open up a school? I have to check it out!"

Moreover, the Xia Kingdom was the kingdom of humans. Li Nianfan was more familiar with the locals.

Dragin and Nanan did not care where they were going. They nodded without a second thought. "Alright, alright."

Daji also smiled and said, "It's all up to you." "Let's go then." Li Nianfan started to form a cloud with his Deluxe Merit Light. "Come on up. Get on my cloud, let's fly."

The golden cloud floated away from the four-part architecture and beamed towards the horizon.

Li Nianfan naturally could not mistreat his close friends. His golden cloud was as huge as a house. Everyone could lay down on it and there would still be enough space.

He could do whatever he wanted because he had Deluxe Merit.

Li Nianfan had an idea on the cloud. He smiled and asked, "Daji, you gave me a gold rock. I have a Golden Gourd here. It must be fate. Do you like this gourd?"

Daji looked at the Golden Gourd. She was in awe. She could feel how important the gourd was. She replied, "I do."

Li Nianfan smiled. "As long as you like it, it's

yours."

"This..." Daji was surprised. She took the gourd and said in a touched tone, "Thankthank you."

She had pretty eyes. They were squinted from smiling. She suddenly looked a lot softer and feminine. Li Nianfan instantly felt his heart race.

Li Nianfan smiled and said, "Why so courteous?"

He paused for a moment before he continued, "Alright. Since we're bored, how about we play a game I just invented?"

Li Nianfan took out a deck of wooden cards. The wooden cards were thin and refined. It was not made from hardwood. Instead, it was soft and bendable. It felt nice to the touch.

Everyone knew Li Nianfan was working on that over the last few days. However, they could not tell what he was making. They guessed it was extraordinary.

Nanan asked curiously, "Brother Nianfan, what game is that?"

She looked at the wooden cards and noticed the strange patterns carved on them. She did not understand it at all.

Li Nianfan smiled and replied, "Poker, an easy game. You'll learn it after one go."

He felt helpless.

Li Nianfan never had a worthy opponent when he played chess. Daji could accompany him but she was not good enough for him to take her seriously. It was a pain for him so he had to invent a new game. Hence, the birth of Poker. Due to limited materials, making poker cards was much more complex than making chess pieces. However, he finally finished it.

Soon, the golden cloud was filled with playful laughter.

The cloud was not fast nor slow. Half an hour had passed by when they arrived at the Xia Kingdom. Li Nianfan parked his cloud outside the city to avoid attention. Then, he walked into the city.

The Xia Kingdom was completely different from when he last visited. It was busier than ever.

The last time Li Nianfan was at the Xia Kingdom, the entire city was dead silent because it was affected by the plague and the war. People were fleeing from the city, and no one else entered the city at that time. Everyone looked hopeless then.

WO

The weather was cold but the crowd was still bustling. Moreover, you could tell from their gazes that they loved their country very much. You could tell they were excited about the future from their conversations.

Soldiers stood along the city wall. However, there were just a few of them. They stood guard on simple order. Cultivators flew by from time to time in the sky. They were quite familiar with the Xia Kingdom.

Even the city door had been renovated. It looked opulent with its doors wide open, guarded by a guard on each side. People could easily go into the city after some basic questioning.

They entered the city. The streets were bustling, and the sides of the road were filled with stalls. It was crowded.

The crowdedness was different from Fallen Town. The stalls were not random. Most of them were stores. It was much more organized and tidy. The streets were clean and easy to pass through, probably because they had a 'city manager' type of person in charge of the streets.

Li Nianfan nodded continuously on the way. He had to compliment, "That Zhou Yunwu's ruling over this place quite nicely."

The Xia Kingdom made Li Nianfan feel like it was a big city in the Immortal Realm. It was bustling and successful.

Li Nianfan paused. He looked interested as he said, "Xia Kingdom Bookstore? A bookstore in the Immortal Realm? I wonder what it's like."

He smiled and walked into the bookstore.

The bookstore was not huge. The owner of the bookstore was an elder with half-white hair. He was brushing his beard with his hand while reading a book. He was living a leisurely life.

He noticed Li Nianfan and the others. He smiled and greeted them, "Welcome, everyone. May I know if you're interested in purchasing some books or reading them?" Li Nianfan replied, "Just looking around."

He noticed that a lot of people were reading books while sitting on the floor. They were obsessed.

The bookstore made Li Nianfan feel like it was a public library. He wondered if the owner could profit from this store.

Li Nianfan asked curiously, “Elder, you let others read books for free. Aren’t you worried that people will just read them without buying?”

“Haha, I’m not worried.”

The elder smiled and said, “Only the locals can stay here long enough to read. Now that the Xia Kingdom’s bustling, there’s a continuous crowd. They don’t have the time to spend all day reading here. Therefore, most can only buy my books. And I promise, whoever reads my books will most probably be willing to pay for it.”

‘Who would’ve thought that this was the elder’s business strategy? Free at first, pay later. Awesome.’

Li Nianfan arched his eyebrow. “So confident?”

“Of course. My books are good quality!” The elder smiled. “You guys must be outsiders, right? Let me show you around.”

The elder looked old but was very energetic. He showed Li Nianfan over to a bookshelf.



There were a lot of repetitive books on the bookshelf. There was not much variety. “Sir, look at this one. ‘Journey to the West’, written by Wu Cheng’en, a cultured Immortal. How else was he able to write such a magnificent story of Gods and Monsters?

“And this, ‘Divine Farmer’s Herbal Classics’. This Divine Farmer’s a living Saint. He’s rescued countless lives. If it wasn’t for him, the Xia Kingdom wouldn’t be this successful. It’d be a dead city by now! Buy this book. It’s beneficial and super worth it!”

“I don’t need to introduce this one, the ‘Jiang’s Six Secret Teachings’. Written by a legendary anonymous person. This was the key to our victory in war. Buy this for kids to study and they’ll become a general in the future!

“And this, ‘West Journey Record’ written by the army advisor of the Xia Kingdom. All his revelations and knowledge are here. It’s a good read.”

The elder was extra proud of the books. He excitedly introduced them. Perhaps he always introduced them to everyone who visited the store. He had an admiring glint in his eyes.

Li Nianfan sighed in relief. He noticed that the books on the bookshelf were mostly related to himself. He retold the stories, and Meng Junliang probably shared a more refined version based on his stories. Either way, Meng Junliang did as he was told to. He did not mention his name and used an anonymous pen name. It was a nice move.

The elder finally sighed and said, “These books saved the Xia Kingdom. They saved the people! They are the basis of our knowledge!”

Li Nianfan nodded understandingly. He exclaimed, "Elder, what a nice speech."

The elder added, "Do you want to buy a few books, sir? I can give you a discount." "Ha, no thanks." Li Nianfan shook his head.

The elder was instantly baffled. He did not expect Li Nianfan to reject his offer.

He was dumbfounded as he said, "Sir, it's good morale to respect your elders. I'm already so old, and my mouth has gone dry from the speech. That's hard work on my side. You're troubling me if you don't buy some."

"Elder, I'm just joking," laughed Li Nianfan. He then said, "Give me a set of these books. I like supporting original publications."

"That's very generous and wise of you, sir! I knew you were extraordinary at first sight!"

The elder was instantly energetic. He excitedly started to pack up the books.

Li Nianfan accepted the books as souvenirs. He was about to leave.

Suddenly, another elder walked in. He said to the bookstore elder, "Old Man Lin, school's almost over. Let's go to pick up our grandchildren!"

The bookstore owner smiled happily and said, "Let's go, let's go together." "Yo, someone purchased a lot of books from you," teased the elder. Then, he looked at Li Nianfan and jumped. He looked at Li Nianfan and the others who were leaving the store, completely baffled.

The bookstore owner frowned. "Old Man Sun, what's wrong with you?"

"It's him. That's him. I'm sure that's him!"

Old Man Sun hurriedly rushed out. He looked and searched amongst the crowd. "Who is he?"

"That's the Divine Farmer! I'm sure of it. At that time, right here, my son was about to be captured for quarantine but I wouldn't allow it. He was the one who appeared!" Old Man Sun teared up from being emotional. He mumbled, "He told me he wasn't an Immortal. He's an ordinary man, but he cured...the plague!"

"Are you sure you recognized the right person?"

Old Man Lin widened his eyes. He had goosebumps all over. He looked in the direction where Li Nianfan disappeared as if he was a frozen statue. He felt regretful and emotional. "I talked to the Divine Farmer. I accepted money from the savior. I... Yikes!"

Chapter 346 Smells Like a Bootlicker

Li Nianfan continued to head to the city center once he left the bookstore.

It was busier than the Fallen Town. Li Nianfan noticed a very important factor as to why it was so. It was because of the school.

A lot of people came here to send their kids to school. Some of them were even kids of cultivators. Apart from that, Li Nianfan also saw a lot of monks.

He continued forward. There was a City God Temple with many people inside it.

They were almost at the city center. They would arrive at the school and the Xia Kingdom Palace soon.

They stood outside the school and listened to the teachings and readings that were going on inside the classrooms. Through the window, they saw a bunch of kids looking up at Meng Junliang as he was teaching. Li Nianfan had to smile at such a sight.

Meng Junliang sensed something while he was teaching. He turned and looked. He was instantly overjoyed. He subtly bowed at Li Nianfan and continued with his lecture.

The class ended earlier than usual because the teacher did not delay the class any further. The kids were excited, acting like birds flying out of their cage. They cheered joyfully.

Meng Junliang walked over and said respectfully, "Greetings from Junliang to Mr.

Li!"

Li Nianfan had to compliment him, "The Xia Kingdom truly changed a lot. It's absolutely successful now. Seems like you and King Zhou made a lot of effort."

Meng Junliang hurriedly said, "It's all because of your good teachings, sir."

He was not being humble. He was speaking from the heart.

"Nah, executing the ideas is harder than coming up with them," Li Nianfan shrugged it off. He smiled and said, "We've been bored recently so we decided to go out and about. Pardon the disturbance."

"Not at all, not at all!" Meng Junliang shook his head continuously. "Your visit is a blessing for the Xia Kingdom, sir. Please, follow me."

Meng Junliang felt like he was a student presenting his work to the teacher.

It was much more convenient with Meng Junliang as a tour guide.

“Mr. Li, this is the General Training Class.” Meng Junliang introduced class after class. He brought everyone to a yard and said, “The students here are older in comparison, and they study war strategies daily. At the same time, we train them to fight and grow stronger. The students with good performances are promising future generals.” Li Nianfan nodded. “Nice job.”

They could hear the sounds of people yelling before they even reached the class. They sounded legit.

“The students are probably going through battlefield training at this time.” Meng Junliang smiled while he waved. A soldier immediately made way for them. The soldier was quiet. He had dark skin and a knife scar on his face. He was respectful towards Meng Junliang.

The training field was huge. The kids were about the same age as Nanan, which was why Nanan was so intrigued. She observed thrillingly.

However, she had to chuckle and laugh after a while.

Li Nianfan slapped the back of her head.

Slap!

“What are you laughing at? So disrespectful.” “I can’t help it.” Nanan rubbed her head and pouted. “Their training’s too basic. I thought it was ridiculous.”

"It's simple but effective. We soldiers naturally don't go for glamorous spells like cultivators do!" said the soldier with the scar. He sounded pissed. He did not like what Nanan said.

Nanan scrunched her nose. She immediately debated, "I'm not talking about spells. If I was an ordinary girl, none of you could defeat me either."

The soldier with the scar did not look happy at all. He sneered, "This set of moves come from the cumulative experiences of our countless soldiers that fought in the bloody battlefield. Cultivators without spells are like tigers without teeth. How would you match up with

us?"

He was mindful of Meng Junliang so he was already being polite about it. Otherwise, he would have blown his top off. In other words, he was not convinced at all.

He was mad. 'How could the army advisor bring someone like that in here? This is one of the most important places in the Xia Kingdom. The bigshots of the kingdom can come in anytime but outsiders are forbidden.'

Suddenly, Meng Junliang said, "Lin Hu, apologize!"

His voice was not loud but it sounded like he meant it without hesitation. His voice was low. Anyone who knew Meng Junliang knew that he was truly angry. "I..." Lin Hu looked like he was wronged. However, he still saluted and bowed. "I'm sorry!"

Li Nianfan also said, "Nanan, you should quickly apologize to General Lin, too."

Nanan also did not want to apologize. Still, she said, "Sorry."

Then, she quietly told Li Nianfan, "But brother, they're indeed poorly trained. It's far from what you've taught me."

Li Nianfan shook his head. "This is the basic respect between people! Remember to be kind, don't be that rude ever again."

Nanan had special training. She learned more about fighting strategies than spell strategies.

Li Nianfan taught her some martial arts skills. It was not comparable with learning spells but it was suitable for Nanan. It should be useful for her to learn it.

"Oh." Nanan drooped her head and batted her eyes.

They could not stay at the General Training Class after that small dispute. Meng Junliang brought them to the palace. Meng Junliang felt guilty and said in a regretful tone, "Mr. Li, soldiers are usually straightforward and reckless. I truly am sorry for offending you."



Li Nianfan shook his head. "You don't have to apologize. It's Nanan's fault."

Meng Junliang continued, "Mr. Li, I've already ordered someone to inform King Zhou. He should be here soon."

Li Nianfan said, "King Zhou must be busy right now. It's not necessary."

Meng Junliang said without hesitation, "No, your arrival's of the utmost importance, Mr.

Li."

Meanwhile, at the palace.

Zhou Yunwu was standing in front of a sandbox. By the side were the generals and advisors. They were discussing the opposing strategy against the Southern brutes.

Next to the sandbox was a map of the Xia Kingdom. They had separated the city areas and marked down the general situation.

They analyzed the war as if they were attending a morning meeting to discuss politics. They were busy. It was of national importance. Normally, no one could simply disturb them.

Zhou Yunwu was frowning hard. He looked very tired. He yelled in a low and frustrated voice, "Half a month. It's been half a month. This is what you all can give me?!"

An elder looked troubled. He slightly pursed his lips and said softly, "King, the situation of the city's too vague and broad. Population, food, money, family. Even the traffic of visitors is incalculable in such a short amount of time."

Zhou Yunwu stopped him with a wave. "What about the situation on the frontlines? It's also been half a month, there are no more reports! Not only that, it seems that our attacks have turned into defense. What's going on with that?"

A general said in a helpless tone, "King, the more we go on, the longer the war will be delayed. It's truly to our disadvantage. Also, we have to attack and send troops for defense. It's a bit hard to focus on both sides."

Zhou Yunwu glared at everyone. He rubbed his temples and asked, "These problems are the same old problems. Does anyone here know how to solve it?"

Everyone went silent.

Huff

Zhou Yunwu sighed. He plopped on the bench and said, exhausted, “As the saying goes, ‘it’s easy to attack a city, it’s hard to defend a city, it’s even harder to manage a city, and it’s the hardest to rule a country’! It’s indeed so, it’s indeed so!”

It was naturally harder to rule as his country expanded. There were too many issues at hand. They could not solve the issues without more issues coming up. Zhou Yunwu felt his mind was in disorder. He did not know how to deal with it at all.

“Think. Think about it. No one will step out of this room until we reach a solution today!” Suddenly, a soldier ran in. He broke the tension in the air. “Report.

“King, the army advisor sent me to deliver a message. He says that Mr. Li’s here.”

Everyone frowned. They felt like they had been disturbed.

Only Zhou Yunwu stood up suddenly. He exclaimed, “Mr. Li’s here? I have to go greet him!”

Then, he was ready to go out. He ignored everyone in the room.

“This...” Everyone was stumped. Mainly because of the way Zhou Yunwu was acting. They felt as if he smelled like a bootlicker.

That was not a good sign.

An elder had to go and stop him. “King, it’s a crucial time for our country right now. I think we should place importance on the big picture. Now that we’re all here to discuss something serious, any guests, even the important ones, should be held off until later.”

“Agreed, Your Highness,” someone immediately agreed. “Now that the Xia Kingdom’s considered a successful country, we are like the sun in the sky. Even Immortals have to impress you, Your Highness. There’s no need to personally greet whoever that visits, no matter how important they are.”

“Your Highness, you represent the humans. Please, be mindful of your image.”

“Ugh, what do you all know?!” Zhou Yunwu glared at everyone and scoffed. He left.

Chapter 347 The Sir Is Going to Bless the People Again

The last time Li Nianfan came by, he did not take his time to properly stroll around. He could do it much more leisurely now.

Moreover, the Xia Kingdom Palace had obviously been renovated. It was much more luxurious.

Suddenly, he heard footsteps. Then, he saw Zhou Yunwu rushing over. He instantly smiled when he saw Li Nianfan. He saluted and said, “Greetings from Yunwu to Mr. Li.”

Li Nianfan also saluted, “King Zhou.”

Zhou Yunwu genuinely said, “Previously, the Xia Kingdom was a disaster and I couldn’t properly show you around, Mr. Li. I always felt guilty about that. Now that you’re here, I have to show you proper hospitality.” Then, Zhou Yunwu showed Li Nianfan around the palace. He had a friendly attitude. The workers and maids of the palace all glanced at them weirdly. They wondered who they were.

They knew that King Zhou would never bow down to anyone. He had the aura of a king. He came up with the theory of being an elite even as an ordinary person. He had never acted like that before.

Humble. That was the word. He had never acted humble before!

They went to the back of the palace, then went for a stroll around the jail to gain knowledge. Then, they went to the back garden. They leisurely strolled around the entire Xia Kingdom Palace.

Zhou Yunwu introduced various things as they walked while he explained all the happenings of the Xia Kingdom. He mainly talked about the happy citizens and the positive state of the country.

He was a king but he felt as if he was a reporter. Li Nianfan said, “Nice job.” Zhou Yunwu was instantly overjoyed by that.

Everyone went to the back garden. The garden was filled with flowers. There were pavilions and terraces there. There was also a small bridge with a flowy river underneath. A few huge Koi fishes leaped and swam around.

Li Nianfan was enjoying the view. He smiled at Dragin and said, "Dragin, look. It's your kind."

Dragin rolled her eyes in response. Nanan was chuckling at the side.

Meng Junliang looked at Zhou Yunwu behind him. He had to step forward and ask quietly, "King, aren't you facing a lot of issues recently? Why are you only reporting the positive things but not the worries?"

"Mr. Li has already helped us enough. How can I ask him to help us with everything?" Zhou Yunwu shook his head and continued. "Since the expert gave me the important task, I have to be responsible for it! I have to do as the expert wishes. I can't talk about issues every time I speak."

Meng Junliang went silent.

He understood what he meant.

Zhou Yunwu said, "Mr. Li, we've been walking a lot. Let's sit down and rest. I'll have someone make some tea." "Alright," nodded Li Nianfan.

Nanan was impatient at the side. She said, "Brother Nianfan, I want to go out and look around."

Nanan and Dragin were not a tad bit interested in what Zhou Yunwu and Li Nianfan were talking about. They were already bored.

Li Nianfan could tell. He smiled and said, "Go. Stay out of trouble."

Zhou Yunwu hurriedly called for a maid. He said with seriousness, "Take the two ladies out for a good spin. Remember, don't mistreat them in any way!"

Everyone sat down. Zhou Yunwu gulped. He asked excitedly, "Sir, what do you think of the Xia Kingdom now?"

"The citizens are peaceful and happy. The country's successful and bustling. It's very good."

Li Nianfan smiled but he paused to say, "However...something's lacking."

Zhou Yunwu and Meng Junliang were both dumbfounded. They looked confused.

The Xia Kingdom was indeed facing an issue, but they were still considered the best city in the Immortal Realm. How could something be lacking?

Zhou Yunwu said with a serious face, "Please, teach me, Mr. Li."

“Ha, it’s not something serious. It’s just that it lacks entertainment.” Li Nianfan smiled. “When superficial things have been perfected in life, only entertainment could make it a more satisfying life.”

He was half-joking but it was also a fact.

Entertainment could rule the world sometimes.

“Entertainment?” Meng Junliang and Zhou Yunwu fell into deep thought. They were both smart, so they noticed the meaning behind his statement. Meng Junliang had to ask, “But...how should we improve on entertainment?” “With this, poker cards!” Li Nianfan once again took out the poker cards.

The cards were freshly made so Li Nianfan loved taking them out. It was one of his rare entertainment projects.

Li Nianfan smirked harder when he saw how confused Zhou Yunwu and Meng Junliang looked. “Say less. Let me teach you both how to play. Fancy a round?”

“I dare not request it but it has at each moment been mine own wish.”

Instantly, a Human Sovereign, an army advisor, and a Deluxe Merit Saint gathered around to play poker...

Outside of the back garden.



A bunch of chancellors waited there. They were mostly old men. They looked inside bafflingly.

Suddenly, a palace maid walked out from the back garden.

They immediately surrounded her. They were anxious from curiosity.

“How is it? What’s the king doing in there with the army advisor?”

That palace maid flinched. She said in a trembling voice, “They are...killing it at poker in there.”

“Killing poker?” Everyone was stunned. They looked at each other with confusion and shock. “Who’s Poker? I want to kill him too just by hearing his name.”

“How can the king do such a tedious task himself? Who’s this Poker? We should be the ones to kill him.”

“I know!” An old chancellor suddenly looked like he realized something. He started to deduce, “Wasn’t the king going to greet an important guest? That’s most probably it. Poker must be the name of that important

guest!”

dSA

“That makes a lot of sense now.” “Makes sense, most probably the case.” “Good job, kill that disturber!” The chancellors brushed their beards and smiled proudly. The king had gone off the bootlicker route. That was worth celebrating.

“You’re all mistaken.” That palace maid shivered at the side. She almost teared up. She said meekly, “Poker’s a type of game. The king and the guest are ‘killing it’ at the game.”

“Game? They’re playing a game?”

“What a lousy choice! The Xia Kingdom’s going through such a crucial time that will affect the future of our country, and he chooses to play poker?” “He lost his mind to games!”

The chancellors looked miserable. They were in pain and they wanted to risk their lives by going in to stop the king.

“Sigh, the king’s important guest is truly... going to affect the future of the Xia Kingdom!”

An old chancellor suddenly sighed. He could not stop shaking his head. He sighed and said, “I did some questioning on the way. Do you guys know that the king wasn’t acting like a king at all? He was mindful of whatever that important guest had to say, and was extremely humble. Most workers even thought he was the fake king, an imposter!”

“Really? He must be cursed or under a spell! The king isn’t behaving like a king. That would be the doom of the Xia Kingdom!”

“What about the army advisor? What’s the army advisor doing? Is he under a spell, too?”

“The army advisor? Don’t even mention him!”

A general walked over with grief on his face. He said with a teary face, “Not long ago, the army advisor brought that important guest to the General Training Class. They...they... boohoo...”

Everyone was out of it. “They what? Spit it out!”

“They mocked the training of our General Training Class. General Lin spoke out of defense. Guess what? The army advisor ordered him to apologize!”

“What? Really?!”

“Mistake. That’s a mistake!”

“That person will be the downfall of our Xia Kingdom!”

The chancellors teared up. Some of them were weeping from being emotional, they felt miserable.

“This can’t go on any longer. Everyone, please, follow me to talk some sense into them!”

“That’s right. This can’t go on. Let’s go together. So what if we die?!”

Everyone agreed and walked towards the back garden.

Clang!

A row of soldiers pulled out their swords at the same time. Their swords were shiny and sharp.

“The king’s greeting a guest. Trespassers will be killed!”

This...’

“Well, we can wait. It appears that this can go on, we don’t have to rush.”

“True, so true!”

“Pair of threes.”

“Nope.”

“Pass.”

Li Nianfan placed his final card. “A four. Sorry, I win again.”

“Again, again!” Zhou Yunwu felt extremely aggrieved. He could not accept that he always lost in such a lousy way.

He had to look at Meng Junliang. “Army advisor, why do I feel like your mind’s somewhere else?” “Oh, sorry. I’m thinking of something. I’ve lost focus.” Meng Junliang had a frown the whole time he was staring at the cards. He felt like he missed out on an important factor but he did not know what it was.

‘What is it exactly?’

He was dumbfounded. He watched Li Nianfan shuffle the cards and distribute them. Then, he picked up the cards and stared at the numbers on the cards in a daze.

Zhou Yunwu teased, “Army advisor, you’re the starter of this round. What are you going blank for? Don’t tell me you haven’t memorized all the numbers on the cards?”

‘Numbers?’

‘Oh yeah, numbers!’

Meng Junliang jolted as if he was woken up from a dream. He stared at the numbers on the poker cards with wide eyes.

He recalled Li Nianfan’s teaching of the tutorial of the game. ‘This is one, this is two, this is three...’  
“This—this is...”

He started to tremble to his core. He had goosebumps all over. He almost scratched his scalp off.

Bam!

He stood up all of a sudden. The chair that he sat on flew away and fell over.

“Simplified numbers! Of course, to calculate our population, food, and everything else. Why don’t we calculate them with simplified numbers? It’s clear and easy to understand. Even elders and children can easily identify them!”

It was as if he was introduced to a whole new world. His lips were trembling and he was flushed. He said in a trembling voice, “Why didn’t I think of it? Why didn’t I think of that before?! A legendary idea, this is a legendary touch!”

His voice was hoarse and high-pitched. Zhou Yunwu was also astounded at that idea. He felt his heart thump.

Bam!

The chair that Zhou Yunwu sat on also flew away. He stuttered, “Army...Army advisor, you... What did you say? Come again?”

Meng Junliang said in an excited tone, “King, these are simplified numbers. If we apply this method to our calculations, it’ll be much more simple and easier!”

“Yeah, simplified numbers. This is a blessing for the Xia Kingdom!” Zhou Yunwu could not help being emotional. He felt as if a huge opportunity was waving at him. He hurriedly took a deep breath and faced Li Nianfan. He bowed with the utmost respect, he was extremely devoted and genuine. He thanked him, “Thank you so much, Mr. Li. You have blessed the people again!”

Meng Junliang also placed his hand on his waist and bowed deeply. “Sir, I see that we aren’t just playing games. You’re clearly trying to give us advice! Pardon me for being slow-minded. I just realized it now. I

truly am embarrassed about that! Thanks for everything you've taught me, Mr. Li!" 'What are you embarrassed about? I'm the one that's embarrassed!

'I just wanted to play poker in peace.'

Li Nianfan bafflingly looked at the two trouble-minded humans. He moved his lips but no words came out. In the end, he could only say, "Nicely done, my beloved students! As long as you get it!"

'Fine. Since he already bowed and thanked me, I can only pretend to be cool in this awkward situation.'

Zhou Yunwu said with respect, "Mr. Li, you're truly talented. You can think of such an idea. You invented a new numbering system. We have to pass it on for generations."

Meng Junliang also suggested, "Mr. Li, the numbers should have a name. Why don't we name it after you?"

"No!" Li Nianfan immediately raised his hand to stop him. "Call it Arabian numbers. It's nice and catchy."

"Arabian...numbers?"

Meng Junliang and Zhou Yunwu were stunned. Then, they nodded at the same time. "Good name. It sounds deep and mysterious but also catchy. So good, Mr. Li! Even the names you come up with are



unique.” “Alright, settle down.” Li Nianfan waved it off. He felt like the two humans were jokers. He had to laugh, “You think that’s all for Arabian numbers?”

“There’s more?” Zhou Yunwu was intrigued. He said with respect, “Please, teach me, Mr. Li.”

“Sit. Sit down, let’s learn it slowly.”

Li Nianfan gestured for them to sit. Then, he said, “Daji, take out our pen and paper.”

He started writing.

“Let me teach you basic addition and subtraction. Look carefully at this. One plus one equals two.”

“One plus one equals two?” Meng Junliang frowned and fell deep into thought. He was confused. “Why so? I don’t get it.”

“This is a symbol, it’s for calculation conveniences...”

“I see. One plus one equals two. I finally learned it.”

“Next, let me teach you the Nine-Nine Multiplication Table. Memorize it with me.”

After an hour, the cheeks of Meng Junliang and Zhou Yunwu were numb because their jaws were on the floor for the entire hour.

As Li Nianfan ended his lecture, their minds were blown. They felt as if a magical door opened for them.

“Eureka, revelation! Mr. Li, your explanations are the words of a Saint!”

Zhou Yunwu was extremely emotional. His entire body was shivering. The method taught by Li Nianfan was enough to change the Xia Kingdom entirely. It was a blessing for the people!

“Indescribable. That’s indescribable!” Meng Junliang did not know what to do. In the end, his legs gave in. He knelt to the ground and said, “Only being on all fours can express my admiration towards you, Mr. Li!”

‘He can’t be blamed for acting like that.

‘As the saying goes, ‘having heard the way in the morning, one may die content in the evening’.’ Meng Junliang was an educated man. He always looked for knowledge. Li Nianfan showed him a whole new field of knowledge. If it was not for Li Nianfan, he would have never heard of such a thing. He owed Li Nianfan for the blessing!

He was behaving like that because he got too emotional. He was worshipping the knowledge that Li Nianfan showed him.

Li Nianfan helped Meng Junliang up. He smiled and said, "Alright, settle down. This is just a new field of study. Call it Mathematics from now on. It's important. Let the kids learn it. Focus on practicing!"

Meng Junliang and Zhou Yunwu nodded with seriousness at the same time. "For sure. For sure!"

Chapter 348 Shallow, We Were Too Shallow

Meanwhile.

At the General Training Class.

Nanan and Dragin reappeared with cheekiness in their eyes.

The general with the scar, Lin Hu, did not want to see them at all. However, he had orders to not offend them. So, he could only ignore them and pretend that they were not there.

"They're just two immature brats. I don't have to be mad at them. I don't want to be so angry that I hurt myself."

Lin Hu comforted himself. He instantly felt much better. He was in a better mood.

However, before he could smile about it, the two brats smugly walked over to the training field.

Nanan had her head up as she looked down on everyone. She slowly stepped forwards while everyone was staring at her. Her voice was like a child's as she said, "I can back up my statement. I don't want people to underestimate me. I also don't want my Brother Nianfan to be looked down on! I said I could take on all of you, I meant it. Fight me!"

The training field went silent. The kids looked at that girl with ever-changing facial expressions.

They heard about what happened earlier so they were naturally pissed.

Lin Hu frowned. "Little girl, what are you trying to do?"

"I'm not up to anything. I just want to show you that I'm not bluffing!"

"No spells?"

"No need for that."

“You’re the guest of the king. I can’t be responsible for hurting you.” “Hurt me? I think you’re still dreaming. Stop delaying, come on and finish it.”

“Okay! I have to change my impression of you just because you dared to come back here!” complimented Lin Hu. Then, he yelled at everyone, “You’ve been underestimated by a little girl, what do you do?!”

“Fight!” yelled everyone.

Lin Hu nodded with satisfaction. “Good, use that energy. On my mark, fight!”

“Go!”

The bunch of kids sprinted at Nanan with seriousness.

Nanan took it more seriously, too. She stepped forward and bent down slightly. She lifted her arms and was ready to attack.

Her attacks were fast and clean. Her opponents won in numbers but they were useless. Their moves were also clumsy and weak in comparison.

Bam!

She knocked them all out in one go.

Soon, everyone in the training field was unconscious. The kids who previously looked enraged were groaning on the ground. "This... This... This..."

Lin Hu was stunned. He felt thunderstruck. He could not believe his eyes.

He was watching from the side. Everything became very real to him. That was why he was so shocked. He was petrified.

Nanan did not have complex moves. However, the combination of her moves made her agile. She looked good while fighting. She was clearly different from the kids who only knew how to yell and punch. He hated to admit it but he had to. The kids...were not on her level.

He recalled what Nanan previously said. He initially thought that she was mocking them. It appeared that she was merely telling the truth.

IS

"You really didn't use any spells. Then...what was that?"

Lin Hu stood there, bewildered as he mumbled, "I'm too shallow. I'm too shallow!"

"That was... Kungfu!" Nanan stood up straight while she answered his question. "Kungfu?" Lin Hu remembered that word in his heart. His eyes were slightly red. He asked, his voice trembling from excitement, "Can... ordinary people learn it?"

Nanan wheezed and thought about it. "Brother Nianfan said this was something to learn for a healthy and strong body. Even ordinary people can learn it."

Plop!

Lin Hu plopped to the floor without a second thought. He looked hopeful and begged in a sincere voice, "Please, teach me, lady!"

Meng Junliang and Zhou Yunwu quickly walked out from the back garden. They looked emotional and excited.

'Arabian numbers. Plus, minus, multiply, and divide. What incredible inventions.'

They could not wait to tell everyone about that so they had to momentarily excuse themselves from Li Nianfan.

The chancellors were crying and discussing what to do next. They suddenly saw their king and the army advisor walking out from the back garden. They instantly jolted and walked up to them.

“Your Highness, you finally came out. If this goes on any longer, I’ll have to commit suicide to prove a point!” “Your Highness, please, wake up. Don’t be fooled by others.”

“Army advisor, how can you mess around along with the King? The Xia Kingdom’s at risk!”

Zhou Yunwu and Meng Junliang could tell what they were up to. They looked at each other and sneered internally. They glanced at them quietly. Zhou Yunwu scolded them in a low voice, “Guards, who said they’d die to prove a point? Pass him a sword!”

Instant silence.

“What did I say before I left? I said none of you knew anything! Got it?”

Zhou Yunwu scolded them with a cruel voice, “Do you know who visited us today? If Mr. Li had a bad tolerance, what you all did today would be considered treason! Sinning with death penalties! I’m not going to lie to you, if Mr. Li’s slightly displeased because of you, you’ll all be killed!”

Everyone flinched and went cold. They could tell he was being serious. He was not joking.

An elder had to ask, “Your Highness, who’s that person that could make you act like this?”



“That person...”

Zhou Yunwu took a deep breath and said, “IS the savior of the entire Xia Kingdom. The Xia Kingdom’s the way it is now because he gave it a new life, and it also became successful because of him! To me, he’s the masterful savior!”

Everyone was stunned by that comment. It was beyond them. Their ears were ringing from that.

“I’m not going to keep talking about this. Mr. Li must have come here because he knew about the problems of the Xia Kingdom. He came here to give us advice.”

Meng Junliang stepped out and said, “The Xia Kingdom’s successful but not perfect in any way. We’re like a huge blank canvas. We don’t know where to start. However, one of our biggest issues can be solved. Please, have a look, everyone...”

He took out the paper Li Nianfan scribbled on and carefully laid it out in front of everyone.

“Stop, don’t reach for it! Don’t touch it! Don’t touch that cursed thing, kill it!”

Everyone quickly retracted and looked at the paper out of curiosity. They saw a bunch of symbols that they did not understand. They all frowned and looked miserable. They sighed. ‘This is it? It’s over. They’re indeed under a spell, they’re cursed!’

“Listen up, this is a brand new technique. It’s also a brand new era!” Meng Junliang sounded serious.  
“Listen to me carefully!”

Half an hour later, the chancellors started to fall deep into thought.

Someone started to gasp after half an hour. After another hour, half of the chancellors had wide eyes.  
They gasped.

Another half an hour later.

Gasp

Only a few of them still looked confused. The others were amazed as they gasped at the same time.

“I can’t believe it. Awesome, truly awesome.” “One plus one equals two. Nice, nice!” “If we use this system, everything related to the city can be easily understood on sight!”

“Moreover, it’s closely related to the lives of the people. It’s widely beneficial for future developments.  
The success of our Xia Kingdom’s upon us!”

“That important guest...thought of this idea? Legend. He’s a true legend!”

Everyone was instantly convinced. They were in awe and could not calm down. “But, Your Highness...”

A general stepped forward. He felt hurt by not being intelligent so he said angrily, “Even if this guy’s a genius, he still mocked us at the General Training Class. I truly can’t tolerate that!”

“Report.”

A soldier ran over quickly. His face was flushed from running and he had tears in the corners of his eyes.

“Report for the King. Good news, great news!” The soldier was stuttering. He said in a trembling voice, “That little girl has a legendary skill known as Kungfu. Ordinary people can learn it. It makes our soldiers fight better. They’ll be able to take on ten opponents at a time! General Lin Hu’s currently begging the little girl to teach him. He sent me to pass on the message for his apology. He said that he was uneducated and too shallow!”

Yikes

“Kungfu? Fight ten opponents?”

“She wasn’t bluffing!”

“If we learned Kungfu, we’ll be able to attack and defend. Our big issue has once again been solved!”

“This person...is magnificent. Magnificent!” “It’s the Xia Kingdom’s blessing to befriend that person. I previously spoke out of disrespect. I was wrong!”

“Your Highness, we can’t mistreat such a person. What do you think about me? I’m absolutely humble and polite. I can be quiet at the side, too. I’m the right person to accompany you.” “Your Highness, why are you still standing here? Hurry up and accompany him. Don’t act boastfully!”

#### Chapter 349 The Talented Buddha

Li Nianfan wanted to stay at the Xia Kingdom.

For him, the Xia Kingdom was like a big city of humans. Their lives were convenient and happening. Moreover, the people were all friendly and nice. Zhou Yunwu, Meng Junliang, and even the chancellors were all humble. They would stop and salute him. It was very suitable for him to stay.

He did not stay at the Carp Palace because first of all, that was the bottom of the ocean. He was not used to it. Second of all, it felt awkward and uncomfortable. Thirdly, no one could accompany him. Humans were creatures of the community after all.

Li Nianfan could not deny that he was a simple man. He was far from that isolated lifestyle. He very much enjoyed crowded places.

Zhou Yunwu realized that the expert was interested in staying. He gave him a huge house in the city center without hesitation. He did not send palace maids and servants over because he knew that would be a bad idea. However, he did send a lot of silver to him. Li Nianfan was just going to stay for a few days but it was the honor of the Xia Kingdom.

Li Nianfan accepted the house. It was nice.

He stayed for ten days.

Li Nianfan stayed in the mountains for five years. That was his first stay in a successful city. He instantly felt different.

The Xia Kingdom was successful. There were cultivators that slew demons and there were Buddhists who helped lost souls by preaching. The guards also warded off thieves. The city management was much safer than the previous years.

It reminded Li Nianfan of the Tang Dynasty in “Journey to the West”. The humans had been living lavishly by then. However...since the realm was a legendary fantasy realm, how did it end up like that?

Li Nianfan had to think about it. Buddhism was gone, the Heavenly Palace was gone. The Underworld recently reappeared. It seemed like most people, including the cultivators, had no knowledge of their history when he was reciting his stories.

He could see that the realm was too far into the future of his familiar fantasy realm. Most people forgot about that part of history. ‘Most likely a million years after ‘Journey to the West’.’ Li Nianfan analyzed in his mind, ‘Buddhism was most likely destroyed by Demons. As for the Heavenly Palace and the

Underworld... Weirdly, they faced problems. Also, do Saints exist in this realm? What about Goddess Nuwa, primates, or Gods?’

Li Nianfan had to piece it together. After all, he had to be familiar with his surroundings. A familiar worldview was an important factor to not end up like Xiao Bai. He would have missed out on a lot of opportunities.

There was no harm in knowing more. A loud bell could be heard early in the morning.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

The bell rang three times. The echoes were clear. The source of the sounds was from the Buddhist temple of the Xia Kingdom.

Li Nianfan was not sure if he was thinking too much but he felt like the whole city was livelier.

The lively crowd started to go in two directions. One went to the temple, the other went to the city door.

“What are the Buddhists up to?” Li Nianfan did not pay attention to the outside world so he did not know what was going on. However, he wanted to join the crowd. “Let’s go, Daji. Let’s check it out.”

The bells were probably a reminder for an official event. Everyone was waiting for it.

“Brother Nianfan.”

Nanan and Dragin were both wearing armor. They walked over smugly. Clanging sounds could be heard.

They were too small so their armors were too big for them. They looked kind of funny in the big armors. They had two rows of soldiers behind them. Li Nianfan had to laugh.

The armors were given to them by the General Training Class. Ever since Nan'an promised to teach them Kungfu, the soldiers of the Xia Kingdom were overjoyed. They worshipped her and appointed her the title of a general.

Nanan was having the time of her life with her new title.

Lin Hu hurriedly saluted Li Nianfan. He said with respect, “Greetings to Mr. Li, Lady Daji.” “Morning, General Lin.” Li Nianfan nodded. Then, he asked Nan'an, “Why are you out today? Aren't you supposed to teach Kungfu at the General Training Class?”

“It's so crowded outside so I snuck out to check it out,” Nan'an pouted and said. “Also, I just taught them the Lightning Fast Five Stroke Combo. It's not easy to learn. Let them practice for a while.”

Then, she curiously followed the crowd with Dragin.

She had a spark in her eyes. “Candied Haws!”

Nanan and Dragin immediately ran over to buy some Candied Haws.

They were adorable but they were wearing armor. The old man that sold Candied Haws was baffled. He almost turned around and ran.

The two armored kids happily licked their Candied Haws. It was an odd sight. Li Nianfan shook his head and laughed awkwardly.

After a while, more people came, but nothing seemed to be happening. Someone familiar walked in. “Greetings from Junliang to Mr. Li.”

“Morning, Brother Meng,” saluted Li Nianfan. He asked curiously, “Do you know what’s happening? Why is it so crowded?”

Meng Junliang replied, “Mr. Li, if my information’s accurate, a Buddha has arrived.” “Buddha?” Li Nianfan was taken aback. He was slightly weirded out. ‘Awesome, they have a living Buddha.’

“Yeah, I heard that the person’s kind and can influence others to be kind. Even mountain tigers were affected by that Buddha. They stopped hurting others. Cultivators once thought he was talented. They took him as a student, taught him cultivation, but realized he was average. There was nothing special about him.”



Meng Junliang paused before he continued, "Then, he was discovered by Buddhists. This person converted to Buddhism and became an elite. He became a Buddha afterward."

"Seems like a talented genius," nodded Li Nianfan. He was shocked but not surprised.

Talented people could be found anywhere, especially in the Immortal Realm.

Nanan's small mouth was open. "Wow, so many people waiting for the Buddha. What a grand event." "Buddhism can be influential. A lot of people resonate with it. They're willing to believe in Buddhism." Meng Junliang studied Buddhism before.

Li Nianfan asked curiously, "Is the Xia Kingdom going to accept Buddhism?"

"We aren't against it, but we won't convert to Buddhism." Meng Junliang shook his head. "The Buddha must be here to invite the King for a Buddhism event or something. But the King will surely reject their offer. At most, he'll just send someone over."

'Wow, he even set up the plot.'

Li Nianfan was intrigued. He could believe that was going to happen.

Zhou Yunwu had his Xia Kingdom, Meng Junliang had his Dao, Yuecha had Buddhism. They were three different concepts. They seemed related but they were not. The three concepts existed because of him. They were starting to turn on each other. It was going to be interesting.

Li Nianfan smiled and said, "That's because the Xia Kingdom isn't opposed to the concept of Buddhism. However, it'd be a different case to openly support it. Therefore, the Xia Kingdom's going for the neutral route."

In reality, Buddhism was beneficial for the Xia Kingdom.

"Right on, Mr. Li." Meng Junliang nodded. "Now we have Demons and Buddhists. One of them is vengeful, evil, greedy, and competitive. The other one's all about peace, no distractions or desires, and to kill them with kindness. These two religions are naturally opposed to each other."

When people have different mentalities, they would debate. However, if their ideologies were complete opposites, they did not need to debate. They would just fight.

Suddenly, Buddhist hymns could be heard from afar.

They looked over at the horizon. They saw a shiny bald head at first. It was very bright.

Then, they saw a monk with a shawl on. He was very young.

He did the Namaste gesture with his eyes closed. He was wearing a pair of shoes made from bamboo. He slowly walked over.

'That's so anticlimactic, boo!'

Creak!

The temple door suddenly opened. A row of monks walked out, looking serious and strict. They stood at the city door to welcome him.

They waited for the Buddha to walk over. Then, they said at the same time, "Amitabha."

A chancellor hidden amongst the crowd stepped out with two servants. He smiled, "Welcome, Buddha. Pardon us for the simple greeting."

"Amitabha," said the Buddha. He did not say anything else.

The chancellor smiled and led the way, "Ha, the King's already waiting for you at the palace. Please, follow me."

Nanan and Dragin had been waiting for a long time. They instantly felt disappointed. "Huh? That's it? How boring." Li Nianfan smiled and said, "It's boring for you but not for his fans."

“Let’s go, it’s more fun to train those soldiers.”

Meng Junliang watched as the Buddha left. He did not look like he wanted to go greet him.

He invited Li Nianfan, “Mr. Li, do you want to go to the palace?”

Li Nianfan nodded and smiled. “I was just about to.”

“Please.”

Zhou Yunwu was sitting on the throne when they arrived at the palace. He was greeting the Buddha. They looked like they were getting along “Mr. Li, army advisor, you guys have arrived. Please, have a seat.”

Zhou Yunwu hurriedly greeted them. He stood up from his throne and walked over.

The Buddha looked at Li Nianfan and Daji with shock in his eyes. They looked ordinary but their auras were immaculate. He knew they were extraordinary.

“That red sparrow, too. Although it’s a sparrow, it is giving off a regal vibe.’

He had to ask, "I wonder, you're..."

Li Nianfan smiled and said, "My name's Li Nianfan. Greetings to the Buddha." "You're Mr. Li!" The Buddha stood up and did the Namaste gesture. He said with respect and caution, "Mr. Li, you can just call me Jiese." 'Jiese?'

Li Nianfan, Zhou Yunwu, and Meng Junliang were all stunned.

Very few people knew the Buddha's name. He most probably kept it a secret because it differed too much from his image.

After all, it caught them off guard that a living Buddha had a name like that.

Thankfully, everyone knew to be polite. They did not burst out laughing and create an awkward situation.

Li Nianfan placed his hands together to do the Namaste gesture and said, "Nice to meet you, Jiese."

Chapter 350 Temptation Training, Red Clothes

Jiese looked calm on the surface.

However, he felt very awkward deep down.

He possessed the Law of Gaze. Li Nianfan and the others looked normal on the surface but he could feel that they were secretly making fun of him.

‘Whatever. Fine. Thankfully, I don’t care much for my image.’

Jiese explained, “Buddhism requires resistance to desires and temptations. At first, there’ll be a lot of temptations that will test you along the way. Therefore, I gave myself the name.”

Zhou Yunwu nodded with seriousness, “Understandable. Jiese, you’re quite handsome. Although you shaved your head, your handsome face still stands out. Understandably, you gave yourself a silly name to avoid temptations.”

“Amitabha. A handsome flesh only brings me trouble.”

Jiese shut his eyes and chanted Buddhist scriptures. He invited, “I came here today to invite King Zhou to our Religious Ceremony. It’s located at the Wanshan Ridge in the West. It’s now known as the Spiritual Mountain.” He looked at Li Nianfan and also invited him, “Mr. Li, we Buddhists are indebted to you. We hope you could visit us.”

Li Nianfan smiled and said, “I have nothing to do anyway, I’ll go check it out.”

Jiese was overjoyed. He hurriedly said, “We’ll be ready to welcome you then.”

Zhou Yunwu said, “Jiese, Buddhism’s in the far West. Please, forgive me for being unable to show up. However, I’ll be sending a representative to pay our respects.” Jiese tried to convince him, “We’ve invited all sorts of cultivation sects for the ceremony, and a lot of Immortals from the Above Immortal Realm will be there. Even Immortals of the Underworld will be showing up. It’s a rare ceremony and it’ll be such a shame that you can’t show up, King Zhou. If you think the location’s too far, we’ll send someone over to escort you there.”

Zhou Yunwu shook his head and said, “No need for that. I’m too busy managing the Xia Kingdom. I’m afraid I’ll have to miss out on it.”

“Too bad.” Jiese did the Namaste gesture. “If that’s the case, I shall stay here for a few days. Sorry for the disturbance. Maybe you should reconsider, King Zhou.”

Li Nianfan felt a déjà vu when he heard that sentence.

In translation, he meant, ‘If you don’t say yes, I’ll be staying here and I’m not going to leave.’ ‘Who knew the Buddha was the scoundrel type?’

Zhou Yunwu gestured to him to leave. “Please, Jiese.”

Jiese left.

After a short while, a soldier frantically ran in. Something was off. “King, the Buddha went to the Red Brothel.”

Red Brothel?

‘That’s a brothel.’

Li Nianfan sneakily said, “Daji, you should go back with the Fire Phoenix first. I have something to discuss with King Zhou and Junliang.”

Daji nodded obediently. “Okay.”

Daji left. The three guys did not need to say anything, they looked at each other and headed towards the Red Brothel.

At the Red Brothel.

The brothel was full of beautiful and seductive ladies.

Li Nianfan and the others arrived. As expected, Jiese the monk was already surrounded by a bunch of prostitutes.



“What a handsome monk. Why are you just standing by the door? We sisters want to preach your ‘sermon’.” “Our lives are hard. How about we have a heart-to-heart conversation? We won’t charge you.”

“Yeah, we don’t have to talk about expense, let’s just talk about ‘dispense’.”

Jiese was not affected by such vulgar statements. He was surrounded but he did not care. He still chanted Buddhist scriptures.

It had to be said. Jiese was indeed a handsome monk. The ladies for the Red Brothel fancied his shiny bald head.

Classic Jiese. He was not tempted by the prostitutes that offered to service him for free.

Zhou Yunwu gave some orders, and a row of soldiers immediately chimed in to arrest the ladies.

Jiese was saved. He stepped out with colorful lipstick stains on his face.

He looked serious. “Your Highness, you don’t need to do that next time.”

“I’m trying to help you.”

“You don’t understand. I’m undergoing temptation training. I don’t need to be saved.”

Jiese placed his hands together to do the Namaste gesture and said, “My name’s Jiese. The meaning of my name implies trouble in my life. I have to train myself to be free of temptation before trouble arrives.”

He sounded sincere but no one could tell if he was telling the truth.

Jiese warned, “Don’t do that next time.”

Zhou Yunwu replied, “Excuse me, sorry for disturbing you.”

Li Nianfan curiously observed Jiese. ‘Won’t he hurt his body if this goes on?’

For the next few days, Jiese would head towards the Red Brothel. He would not go in. Instead, he just stood by the door. Every time he went, he would be swarmed by ladies.

Those seductive ladies would go and tease that emotionless monk. They would not get bored of it.

Li Nianfan always watched from afar. Not because he was jealous, but because he was surprised by how well he could control himself.

'Jiese, are you free from temptation once you're impotent? Truly a Buddha. What a legend!

On the sixth day, Jiese did not show up at the brothel. He opened the temple door and sat on a high tower. He announced to the public that he was going to preach Buddhism. Moreover, he was willing to accept constructive criticism. He was going to convince the public with Buddhism. The Xia Kingdom was once again lively. A lot of people went to visit the temple. The temple was crowded and they were busier than ever.

Cultivators, chancellors, and students were driven by their curiosity. They also visited the temple and were all convinced by Jiese.

Li Nianfan smiled and asked, "Aren't you going too, Junliang?"

Meng Junliang replied, "Sir, people like us are stubborn with our ideologies. I won't be easily swayed by words. I know my place in the realm. There's no reason to go and debate."

"But that monk's converting your people. You're not going to do anything about it?"

Meng Junliang replied, "He's staying here like a scoundrel just for King Zhou to accept his invitation to the ceremony at the Spiritual Mountain. If I show up, I'll only make it worse. I don't want to go along with his wishes."

They stood on a high tower and observed everything from above. They did not get bored of observing daily. Three days passed in the blink of an eye.

Jiese had not started the debate on that day. He was preaching Buddhism at the tower. A red figure flashed by in the air and landed in the temple. It was a lady in red clothes.

Her eyes were pretty and her teeth were white. She had snow-white skin and flaming red clothes. She looked like a white rose engulfed in flames. She wore golden bells on her wrist, and with a flick of her wrist, chimes could be heard.

The chiming of the bells was not loud. However, it caught the attention of Jiese the monk. He suddenly stopped in his tracks.

That young lady looked at the Buddha with her beautiful eyes. She smirked, "Jiese Monk, I finally found you!"