

Chapter 151: Weird, It's Really Weird...

"Yes... Half Kan-level," Hao Ren said.

"What is... Half Kan-level?" Zhao Yanzi looked at Hao Ren and asked.

"That is, not fully at Kan-level yet, but my level is higher than before," Hao Ren explained. However, he wasn't clear about this himself. He said this only because Su Han said so.

"Oh. That means you haven't reached Kan-level yet!" Zhao Yanzi put on a solemn face again.

"Zi, Ms. Luo is leaving!" Zhao Hongyu yelled from downstairs.

Zhao Yanzi immediately lay on the bed and covered herself with the blanket, acting like she didn't hear anything.

Luo Ying had embarrassed Zhao Yanzi in front of Hao Ren with all the bad things that she said about Zi during her visit. Zhao Yanzi hated Luo Ying to death because of that.

As Hao Ren saw Zi's reaction, he had no choice but to go downstairs and say, "Zi is not feeling well. She is resting in her room."

Of course, Luo Ying knew that Zhao Yanzi was having a tantrum.

However, she didn't want to argue further as she was visiting her student's house. She said, "Alright. Let her rest."

"Take care, Ms. Luo." Zhao Hongyu walked Luo Ying to the door politely.

"Anyways, as I said, I know you guys are very busy, but as parents, don't neglect your child's education. The reason I am here today is to communicate with you guys. I still have a few families to visit, so I won't bother you longer," Luo Ying turned around and said.

"Thanks a lot, Ms. Luo," Zhao Hongyu answered politely.

Luo Ying nodded as she grabbed her small backpack and walked out of the door.

Suddenly, a man with a dark face appeared outside the door and almost scared Luo Ying to death.

"Ms. Luo, are you leaving now?" Zhao Kuo said with his rough voice as his eyes were wide open.

Zhao Kuo's appearance had always been vicious and scary. However, it was even more terrifying since it was night time and he was making a scary face. Luo Ying was so scared that she took a few steps back subconsciously.

"I still have something to do, so I am going to leave now!" Luo Ying walked by Zhao Kuo, sped up, and ran away as if she was trying to escape.

"Zhao Kuo, why did you scare Ms. Luo like that!" Zhao Hongyu scolded.

“She’s just an ordinary human. So what if I scared her!” Zhao Kuo came in angrily. “I heard everything from the outside. She kept saying bad things about Zi. She is lucky that I didn’t beat her up!”

“Continue with this nonsense, and I will remove your Elder Status!” Zhao Guang said angrily.

“But it’s true! She is just an ordinary mortal being. She has no right to tell you and Zi what to do!” Zhao Kuo was not convinced as he continued.

Zhao Hongyu stared at him and was too tired to argue with him. She walked up the stairs and wanted to check up on Zi.

Zhao Guang wanted to scold Zhao Kuo further, but he hesitated for a moment and decided not to argue. He walked away glumly towards his study room.

There was only Hao Ren alone in the living room now, so he yelled, “Hey kid, come here!”

Hao Ren didn’t bother to acknowledge him and started walking towards the stairs.

Zhao Kuo was furious as he was not respected. However, he couldn’t take out his anger on Zhao Guang, Zhao Hongyu, nor Zhao Yanzi. When he saw that Hao Ren was ignoring him as well, he immediately threw out a dash of blue light to block his way.

In the moment of desperation, Hao Ren formed a sword energy on his palm and threw it towards Zhao Kuo.

“You haven’t even reached Kan-level yet!” Zhao Kuo didn’t even bother to look as he waved his hand.

However, the moment his hand touched the sword energy, a crackling noise was made. Zhao Kuo felt strange and immediately drew back his hand.

He looked down and found a small black spot on his arm with a few burned hairs.

“Five Elemental Lightning?” Zhao Kuo was so surprised that he forgot to teach Hao Ren the remainder of the lesson.

Hao Ren, on the other hand, didn’t know what the Five Elemental Lightning was. He walked around Zhao Kuo and continued to step up the stairs.

Zhao Kuo wasn’t willing to let it go. He stopped Hao Ren and said, “Hit me again with that!”

As Hao Ren ignored him once again, he turned into a blue light and flew to the middle of the stairs, blocking Hao Ren’s way.

“Hit me again!” Zhao Kuo said in a threatening tone.

Hao Ren has never heard requests like this before. He thought about it for a moment, formed a sword energy on his right hand, and threw it towards Zhao Kuo.

Zhao Kuo waved his hand and created a watery blue-wave sphere to catch Hao Ren’s sword energy. As he blocked the stairway with his thick body, Zhao Kuo looked down at the sword energy and asked suspiciously, “Light Splitting Sword Shadow Scroll?”

“What else could it be?” Hao Ren replied.

“But this sword energy, it is like a cloud of lightning...” Zhao Kuo mumbled to himself. He then suddenly slapped his thigh and said, “Oh, I understand now! This Light Splitting Sword Shadow Scroll is not a sword technique! It is a Five Elemental Lightning Technique!”

Because of Zhao Kuo’s shouts, Zhao Guang walked out of his study room.

When he saw Zhao Kuo blocking Hao Ren on the stairs, he thought Zhao Kuo was trying to embarrass Hao Ren. He yelled, “Zhao Kuo! You better stop now!”

“Brother, it’s not what you think...” Zhao Kuo was at a loss for words. “He, this kid, can release Five Elemental Lightning...”

“Who are you calling kid? Watch your language! Um? Five Elemental Lightning?” Zhao Guang suddenly stopped being furious as he processed Kuo’s comment and started walking towards the stairs.

“You see!” Zhao Kuo opened his palms, and a grey sword energy wrapped in a blue water ball appeared.

Zhao Guang looked carefully and found that the sword-shaped energy was sparkling like a cloud of mini lightning

“This...” Zhao Guang frowned.

“Light Splitting Sword Shadow Technique is not a sword technique. We are all fooled by its name! This technique basically uses the five elements to create lightning! Forming a sword is a bonus, but creating lightning is the main point! It is not as simple as releasing a sword, but creating lightning within the sword energy!” Zhao Kuo said.

Zhao Guang nodded and fell into contemplation.

“I will contact Premier Xia and ask him to change this Light Splitting Sword Shadow Scroll to a Blue-Grade cultivation technique!” Zhao Guang quickly went to his study room.

Zhao Kuo started to get serious even though he rarely does. “That’s why there was no improvement when I was cultivating this technique. I was in the wrong direction! The sword energy without the basis of the five elements was useless, only to look good!”

He was crazier than Su Han about cultivation. Zhao Kuo was seized with remorse when he found out the secrets behind the Light Splitting Sword Shadow Technique. However, since he has reached the top-grade Qian-level already and the fact that he was weeks away from the Heavenly Tribulation, he did not have the time to re-cultivate and learn the Light Splitting Sword Shadow Technique.

“This isn’t right,” Zhao Kuo mumbled to himself again while touching his chin, “Balance between the five elements. My body is all water element, how can I balance it? Furthermore, how can it be this easy to balance it this delicately?”

His burly body almost blocked the entire staircase. Hao Ren coughed lightly and asked, “Can I go now?”

“Um, you can go,” Zhao Kuo moved aside, then he continued to stand still and mumble to himself, “Perhaps this is the cultivation technique of human cultivators?”

“Thank God, Su Han is not as crazy as him about cultivating...” Hao Ren thought. He walked to the door of Zhao Yanzi’s room and pushed it gently as he walked into the room.

All he could see was Zhao Yanzi laying on her bed, and Zhao Hongyu was hugging her head. At the moment, Zhao Yanzi was saying something bad about her Class Advisor angrily.

“What was happening out there? Was Zi’s Third Uncle giving you a hard time?” Zhao Hongyu, who was hugging Zhao Yanzi, asked.

“Nothing happened. He was just trying to see my cultivation progress.” Hao Ren smiled gently, then he looked at Zhao Yanzi and asked Zhao Hongyu, “Is Zi okay?”

“She is shameless. Of course, she is fine!” Zhao Hongyu laughed.

“Mom!” Zhao Yanzi complained.

Zhao Hongyu smiled softly again and pinched Zi’s cheek. She then asked Hao Ren, “I heard from Zi that you have reached ‘Half Kan-level’?”

“Um, I had a little breakthrough after learning the Light Splitting Sword Shadow Technique,” Hao Ren replied.

“I was wondering why your temperament seemed different today. It turns out you had a breakthrough again,” Zhao Hongyu said.

“Mom, how is he different?” Zhao Yanzi sat up from Zhao Hongyu’s arms and asked. In front of Hao Ren, she felt embarrassed acting like a little girl in her mom’s arms.

“When Hao Ren came to our house today, I could feel that his spirit was strong, and his eyes were clearer,” Zhao Hongyu answered.

“I don’t feel that...” Zhao Yanzi said while she inspected Hao Ren.

Hao Ren, on the other hand, has never been looked at by her like this before as his face started getting hot.

“This Uncle... Really, his temperament does seem better than before. His eyes sparkle like the stars. Seems like he is even better looking than those celebrities on TV.”

Zhao Yanzi thought secretly as she continued to look.

On the other hand, Hao Ren wasn’t used to Zhao Yanzi staring at him. As he felt uncomfortable, he tried to avoid eye contact with Zi and said to Zhao Hongyu, “Aunty, I don’t think I will come and tutor Zi for a few days this week. I have midterms on Thursday and Friday, as well as next Monday and Tuesday. I have exams for my foundation courses on the first two days and specialized courses on the last two days. I need to study during those days.”

“Sure, no problem. Don’t neglect your education to tutor Zi.” Zhao Hongyu considerately nodded. She continued, “Oh yes, I also want to ask you about something.”

“Auntie, please ask.”

“Last time when you and Zi came to my studio, I thought if you were interested in housing design. The studio has been quite busy lately, and we wanted to recruit a university intern. The main responsibility is to handle some general stuff during weekends. But you must know about design graphics. I was thinking, rather than recruiting someone I don’t know, we might as well find someone we know. Our studio is a little famous in the country. If we hired someone who is not responsible, some important information might be leaked...”

Zhao Hongyu was being humble when she said her studio was a little famous within the country. Note that her studio was ranked within the top six design studios. Zhao Hongyu’s team was even involved in designing some of the famous buildings outside the country.

Hao Ren answered immediately without any hesitation, “If it’s not too hard, I can help.”

“Great. Thanks a lot! We are really shorthanded recently. Once you finish all your exam, I will pick a time to teach you some basics.” Zhao Hongyu smiled gracefully.

“Okay, Auntie. Seems like it’s pretty late already. I think I will start heading back now,” Hao Ren said.

“Okay.” Zhao Hongyu nodded.

Hao Ren walked over and picked up some of the teaching materials he left behind from last time. Then he went downstairs and said goodbye to Zhao Guang.

While Hao Ren was leaving, Zhao Yanzi, who was sitting cross-legged on the bed, suddenly turned to Zhao Hongyu and asked, “Mom, all those smart university students who specialize in design couldn’t even get a chance to work at your studio, why him?”

Zhao Hongyu avoided answering her question directly and said with a gentle smile, “Isn’t Ren becoming more handsome?”

“Huh! He is not handsome at all!” Zhao Yanzi pouted her lips.

Chapter 152: Valuable Treasure!

Hao Ren got on the bus and went back to school; he had no idea how surprised Zhao Guang and Zhao Kuo were.

Zhao Kuo, as a tier-tier Qian-level cultivator, had almost an immortal body. Even a full attack from a Xun-level cultivator wouldn’t be able to hurt him. However, Hao Ren was not even on Kan-level yet, and he could burn a few hairs off of Zhao Kuo.

It was the difference between heaven and earth from Kan to Qian-level!

If there was a real fight, Zhao Kuo, who was on Qian-level, could easily eliminate tens of thousands of Kan-level cultivators!

Hao Ren fondled the sword energy in his palm as he solidified and dissipated it continuously. Although his cultivation realm couldn’t be improved at the moment, the technique of forming Nature Essence into sword energies could be practiced.

That was the difference between techniques and realms. In order to level up one's realm, one needed to absorb more Nature Essence continually. However, the improvement of realm relied on both the cultivator's foundation and the proficiency with the technique.

Su Han was in a higher realm than Qin Shaoyang, but her technique and actual combat power weren't as strong. Just as Premier Xia mentioned, technically, even someone with lowest Red-Grade technique could reach Qian-level. However, the power of a Red-Grade technique would be far weaker than other grades.

Similarly, Hao Ren's realm was not comparable to Zhao Kuo's, but his technique was something that Zhao Kuo had to be careful of.

Lightning Technique that could break through other elemental techniques was more than enough to intimidate Zhao Kuo!

The bus arrived at the school very soon, and Hao Ren walked to his dorm carrying his tutoring materials.

Zhou Liren and the guys didn't play cards today, and Zhao Jiayi didn't go for his training at the stadium. They were all 'reviewing' the materials for their courses in the dorm.

The mid-term exams would be starting on Thursday, so they were all tensed up, especially Zhao Jiayi. He had failed University Physics two semesters in a row during his freshman year. Therefore, he couldn't afford another failure.

Hao Ren put the materials on the desk, freshened up, and climbed into his bed with a textbook.

However, he wasn't in the mood to study. Secretly, he summarized the remarkable abilities he had acquired after breaking through the first level of the Light Splitting Sword Shadow Technique.

The cultivation method was not that difficult; it was about absorbing the five elements in nature into his own body. It was a fairly slow process even though he had the assisting accessories on his necklace.

One of the fantastic things that it allowed Hao Ren to do was to dissolve the five elements in nature with the balanced Five Elemental Array Formation in his body. That was how he opened Zhao Yanzi's door; he quickly absorbed and dissolved the metal elements in the doorknob. However, this kind of absorption could not be turned into the five elements that he could store in his body.

The other thing was that the technique allowed Hao Ren to condense the weak sword energies that had a tiny bit of lightning in them. The reason why Zhao Kuo got a few hairs burned was that he didn't defend. On top of that, this type of attack was weak because Hao Ren couldn't control the sword energies properly and could only throw them out as if it was a grenade.

However, the sword energies could always become sharper and more akin to a sword after more practice.

The most important thing, for now, was to improve his technique. Hao Ren sighed as he put the sword energy away.

Each of the five elements in his body had decreased to 7%. Although they were now balanced as a whole, this little amount of Nature Essence was still like nothing.

If the reference coefficient for breaking through the third level of the Spirit Concentration Scroll was one, then 7% of that would be 0.07. Along with the other four elements, the total came to 0.35. This meant that Hao Ren's total Nature Essence had reduced to one-third from before. He could only advance to Kan-level after that number becomes one. That was why Su Han called it Half Kan-level.

Certainly, balancing the five elements improved the Light Splitting Sword Shadow Technique and enhanced its power.

Hao Ren picked up a mechanical drawing book and fell asleep while reading it.

The second day, East Ocean University appeared to be very festive with lanterns and banners hanging everywhere.

One after another, fancy vehicles lined up from the Clear Stream Cafeteria to the library. Many famous people in the art circle came to attend this event. All the art courses were canceled, and students of the Arts Program were busy meeting the influential figures in the field who were rarely seen.

However, this didn't concern the students of all the other faculties. Therefore, the guys still needed to go to their classes.

Since the mid-term exams were on the day after, all the professors were doing final reviews for the students as usual. The key points that were mentioned during these reviews were usually questions on the exams.

Therefore, although Zhao Jiayi and the guys barely paid attention in class, they were exceptionally attentive today.

Even Zhou Liren was able to completely ignore the pretty girls from the Arts Program who were walking around outside. He had no other options! He failed six courses last semester, and it caused him a heart-breaking amount of money to re-take those courses.

After the Mechanical Engineering Theory Class finished, Xie Yujia walked to the back of the classroom from the front with a big bag in her hand. She put it on Hao Ren's desk and said, "I made a copy of my notes for all the same courses we have. As for the ones I took before, I found my old notes and made a copy of them too. They are all categorized by different subjects. There shouldn't be too much difference for the same courses. Also, I highlighted the sections that would be on the mid-terms."

Hao Ren was surprised at how thoughtful Xie Yujia was and didn't know what to say. He was planning to beg her for the notes after the class today but had no idea that she made copies for him herself. She also included the courses that she took before and he was taking this semester. She even highlighted her notes so he wouldn't waste unnecessary time.

The guys beside Hao Ren were all astonished too. The Class President's notes had always been the most helpful. However, no one dared to borrow them from her. Usually, they would be thrilled if any of the girls would be willing to lend them their notes. But today, the Class President offered a copy of them to Hao Ren herself!

"Oh..." the guys started to make a fuss as soon as they realized what was going on.

Xie Yujia flushed. "Good luck! I'm going to lunch with Ma Lina."

“Oh...” Hao Ren said after thinking for a bit, “How much was it to make the copies? I’ll pay you back!”

“It’s nothing. Don’t worry about it.” She turned around, went back to the front, and walked out of the classroom with Ma Lina.

Hao Ren glimpsed at the thick stack of materials that piled up in the bag and thought, “Nothing? It’s as thick as the Mechanical Engineering textbook.”

The guys in the back shouted as the Class President exited the classroom, “Ren, I’ll buy you breakfast for ten days if you lend that to me to make a copy!”

“Lend it to me first, and I will give my items in the World of Warcraft to you!”

“Me too! I’ll treat your entire room 302 to hot pot!”

“If anyone is getting a copy, it has to be us from 302 first! Others should get in the line!” Zhou Liren, who was very stressed about the mid-terms, suddenly got excited and shouted in rampant.

In their eyes, Xie Yujia’s notes were more precious than any treasures. It was just that they weren’t close enough to borrow it from her. Since she was always the top student in the program and won full scholarships every semester, who wouldn’t want to take the shortcut and use her notes to review for the exams?

Seeing the crowd getting bigger, Hao Ren said loudly, “You can all get a copy, but don’t rush and don’t tear up the original copy! You are in charge, Zhou Liren!”

Zhou Liren straightened up his back and held the bag in his arms. “Here, here, here! Call me Mr. Zhou first, and then I’ll let you have a copy! Let’s see who still have the guts to call me Little Li! Humph! Gu Jiadong, since you beat me in poker the other day and called me a sucker, you are going to be the last one!”

Since Xie Yujia gave the copies to Hao Ren in front of the class, she wouldn’t mind him sharing it with the other guys. Plus, she was not that kind of person; she had always helped patiently whenever the girls in the class had questions. She was always the ‘Captain of the Reviewing Team’ before exams.

Hao Ren and the guys, on the other hand, were comparatively too ‘shy’ to ask Xie Yujia for help, let alone borrowing her notes. Hence, they never had the opportunity to enjoy her ‘gift’.

Hao Ren shook his head as he saw the guys in excitement. He walked out of the classroom and headed to Su Han’s office.

The streets were busy, but Su Han’s office was so quiet that one could even hear a pin dropping.

In Hao Ren’s mind, Su Han had always preferred the quietness. As the Regional Inspector, she was dedicated to cultivation. In her theory, governing by non-interference was the best way.

Hao Ren pushed the door open and saw her cultivating with her eyes closed.

She looked demure and sweet in her vintage style dress and the delicate chiffon blouse. The long lashes over her eyes tilted up slightly as she looked calm and breathed steadily.

This image under the sun was a hundred times prettier than the beauties on posters.

A ray of red light which indicated the metal element and a ray of blue light which indicated the water element reflected onto each other and surrounded her as a mixture of purple appeared.

The purple light was not settled. It throbbed up and down akin to the heartbeat. Then, it started to throb even faster.

“Would she be breaking through again? ...Strange how I said ‘again’...” Hao Ren stood at the door, surprised and bewildered.

Chapter 153: Cultivate with Martial Arts

Bang!

The purple light expanded, and the air pressure in the office changed with it.

Hao Ren was forced three steps back, and his back touched the door.

Su Han exhaled deeply before opening her eyes in which a bright purple light flashed before vanishing.

She turned to look at Hao Ren at the door and said lightly, “You can go on with your cultivation while I take a rest.”

“Did you make another breakthrough?” Hao Ren walked over and asked her casually.

Su Han didn’t want to answer him, but she said after a moment of consideration, “It’s not a breakthrough of realms but cultivation technique. I’ve just reached level 8.”

In the Profound Cultivation Palace in the East Ocean Dragon Palace, Hao Ren had flipped through the Ice Frost Scroll that Su Han had been cultivating and knew that the technique was divided into nine levels. The cultivation technique was mainly water elemental while its offensive power was metal elemental; It was perfect for Su Han’s Metal Water Body Type.

As a master of Qian-level, Su Han had only reached level 7 of the Ice Frost Scroll, which showed her indifference to techniques; she paid more attention to the elevation of cultivation realms.

Probably due to Qin Shaoyang’s taunts, she advanced to level 8 of the Ice Frost Scroll.

“I’m in a good mood today. You may ask any questions you want,” Su Han continued.

She stretched her long slim legs and put on a pair of pretty and elegant sandals with decorative engravings.

She was a cultivator but also a woman who loved beautiful things.

“Will you show up at Qin Shaoyang’s art exhibition?” Hao Ren asked. It was four o’clock, and the cultivation session would end at six which was when the exhibition would start.

“Depends,” Su Han said.

As if she was struck with a thought, she turned to Hao Ren and asked, “Regarding my class, how’s your exam preparation going?”

“Ugh... I haven’t begun yet.” Hao Ren didn’t expect this question, but he had to admit that her class was the most difficult one this term.

“I see.” Su Han nodded.

Hao Ren was disappointed since he had thought that Su Han would give him the answers to the exam.

“This exam will be very hard. You must prepare for it,” Su Han said.

“Well, ok.” Hao Ren broke into a sweat.

“Now that you have balanced the five elements, you can formally cultivate the Light Splitting Sword Shadow Scroll. In fact, after the breakthrough of the third level of the Spirit Concentration Scroll, the 108 acupoints in your body have been unblocked. It means that you have reached the realm of a martial arts master in the mortal world. If you want to continue to Kan-level and up, you must unlock the openings on the Dragon Core.”

Hao Ren listened to Su Han’s explanation more attentively now compared with during her class since it concerned his life. Cultivators were, in fact, stealing the essence from nature which was an act against the Natural Law. If the cultivators were not careful, they would be turned into ashes.

“By reaching Kan Level, you will unlock the first opening in your Dragon Core. The higher the realm, the more openings will be unlocked. Zhao Yanzi’s Third Uncle has reached top-tier Qian-level and unlocked all 368 openings in the Dragon Core. Then, the next step is to pass the Heavenly Tribulation and become a Heavenly Dragon.”

Hao Ren nodded. “No wonder Su Han said that I’m not at Kan-level yet. Although the Dragon Core in my body is silently absorbing the Nature Essence, the amount is not enough to unlock even one opening.”

Only after he unlocked the first opening in the Dragon Core would the Dragon Core be fully activated. By then, he would become a real member of the Dragon Tribe.

“The more openings you unlock, the more Nature Essence the Dragon Core could absorb, and the stronger you will be. After you reach Dui-level and unlock 232 openings, you will have the ability to transform into a dragon!”

“Transform into a dragon!” Hao Ren was amazed.

“A golden-scaled dragon with four claws and five fingers on each claw? If one can transform into a dragon at Dui-level, why does one need to pass the Heavenly Tribulation and become a Heavenly Dragon?” Hao Ren asked immediately.

“Peak Qian-level is not the real end. Only after you pass the Heavenly Tribulation can you become a true Immortal Golden Dragon; that is the ultimate dream of the cultivators in the Dragon Tribe. You won’t understand it,” Su Han said.

Discouraged, Hao Ren remained silent. He felt like the distance between him and Su Han was like the distance between humans and the ants. The humans could understand all the behavior of the ants, but the ants couldn’t understand what the humans were thinking and doing.

“I’d better turn my mind back to cultivation and try to reach Kan Level.” Without any more questions, Hao Ren sat down cross-legged and closed his eyes. Protected by the array formation, Su Han’s office was an excellent place for cultivation.

Watching Hao Ren cultivating, Su Han smiled lightly and thought, “This guy doesn’t like unrealistic dreams. With his diligence, he will reach Zhen-level without a doubt. However, his progress will be slow with the Light Splitting Sword Shadow Scroll.”

Oblivious to Su Han’s gaze, Hao Ren closed his eyes and calmly absorbed the rare Nature Essence. By now, the five elements in his body had formed a small five elemental array formation around the Dragon Core. Each trace of the Nature Essence he absorbed would be automatically broken down into the five elements, and they would enter the five small spheres around the Dragon Core.

Although the traces of Nature Essence were weak, the process continued without stopping.

Time ticked away, and Su Han, who had been staring at Hao Ren for two hours, suddenly saw that it was almost six o’clock.

Hao Ren also sensed that the time was almost up, so he opened his eyes.

Seeing it was already six, he stood up and was ready to take his leave. He asked abruptly, “Will you go?”

Su Han turned to the window and looked at the sunset. After a moment of silence, she grabbed the key to the office and said, “Let’s go.”

He was surprised that she agreed to go. He only asked to be polite and was certain that she wouldn’t like to go to such a crowded place.

Hao Ren walked with Su Han out of her office toward the cafeteria.

Although Su Han didn’t need to eat mortal food, Hao Ren had to have his dinner. It was during the peak hour, and the students were amazed to see the beautiful Su Han walking into the cafeteria with Hao Ren.

“Wow! Are my eyes playing tricks on me? Is it really Su Han?”

“Is he the guy who had an arm-wrestling match with Huang Xujie at the bus stop?”

“He’s also the guy who defeated Huang Xujie in the rock climbing competition...”

The gossips began to buzz over the cafeteria while guys and girls all looked toward Hao Ren and Su Han curiously.

Su Han didn’t eat; she just quietly sat across from Hao Ren and watched him eat.

Hao Ren felt abashed and paid more attention to his table manners.

It was no big deal for a teacher and a student to have a meal together in the cafeteria. However, since Su Han was the famous No.1 Beauty in East Ocean University, her appearance in the cafeteria with a student was sensational.

Uncomfortable under the stares coming from Su Han and the other students in the cafeteria, Hao Ren finished his meal quickly before walking toward the library with Su Han.

Wearing an elegant cupcake skirt, an elegant chiffon top, and a pair of eye-catching high-heeled sandals, Su Han impressed everyone who saw her.

Hao Ren knew that he would become the common enemy of the guys sooner or later, but he had no time to worry about that now as he followed Su Han into the library.

In the hall on the first floor, the lights were positioned well, and the boards divided the spacious marble-floored hall into independent sections in which different styles of Qin Shaoyang's paintings were displayed.

It was only half past six. According to the rules, the students were still not allowed in here. Since Hao Ren was walking together with Su Han who as a teacher, he slipped into the exhibition with her.

There were all kinds of paintings on the walls, including oil paintings, gouaches, drawings, and sketches. Traditional Chinese paintings were displayed in another secluded section.

Qin Shaoyang was an Inspector of the Dragon Tribe. In the mortal world, he was a genius artist who was highly regarded around the globe. Having received some education from Zhao Yanzi when they visited the 1825 Art District a couple of days before, Hao Ren could see the excellence of the paintings.

Dressed in a black suit, Qin Shaoyang looked dashing. Right now, he was talking with some of the influential figures in front of one of his huge oil paintings. His straight figure, handsome face, resonant and magnetic voice, and golden eyes all added to his charisma.

If Hao Ren didn't know that this man was an Inspector, he would undoubtedly have regarded him as a perfect man. Equipped with his great talents and eloquent speeches, it made sense why countless female fans worshiped him.

In addition, the rumors added to his mystery. It was said that he also had extraordinary talents in music and had amazed all the people there when he played the piano in a private party hosted by a famous international music master.

Seeming to have sensed Su Han's arrival, Qin Shaoyang paused his conversation and turned abruptly. Spotting Su Han in the hall, he immediately left the great artists and hurried toward her.

"Han, you are here." His voice contained a lot of confidence.

It was obvious that he was very pleased to see her.

However, Su Han ignored him and turned to another small section. She looked around at the paintings as Hao Ren followed her.

Qin Shaoyang's expression changed due to the cold treatment he received, but he regained his composure quickly. He quickened his steps and stood before Su Han. "Han, if you are interested in the paintings, I will be your guide."

"I'm here to check if there's anyone who is not supposed to be here. I have no interest in your paintings," Su Han said coldly.

"I know this is your territory, but you don't have to treat me so coldly. Don't you know that the purpose of me holding this exhibition here is to show you the achievements that I have made in the past two years?" Qin Shaoyang pleaded.

He glanced at Hao Ren who was standing beside Su Han and found him annoying. However, he didn't want to anger Su Han right now by attacking Hao Ren.

Su Han didn't answer; instead, she continued to walk forward. Seeing Qin Shaoyang blocking a beauty, some of the influential figures in the art circle all looked toward them curiously.

Qin Shaoyang held his fury in check and forced himself to step away graciously, allowing Su Han and Hao Ren to walk into the depth of the hall.

"You'd rather stay with a guy who isn't even on Kan-level than speak to me! I can kill him like an ant. Also, I still need to repay him for the six slaps..." Looking at their backs, Qin Shaoyang's golden eyes had a gleam of cold hatred.

In one of the inner sections of the exhibition, Su Han turned her head abruptly and asked Hao Ren, "Aren't you afraid?"

"Of what?" Hao Ren asked.

"Of his revenge," Su Han said.

"I have offended him already, so it won't hurt to give him another reason to hate me. Anyways, the arrogant people always think that others are in the wrong instead of blaming themselves," Hao Ren said.

With a smile, Su Han turned to another section with elegant steps. Su Han was smart, and she knew what Hao Ren meant. In fact, if Qin Shaoyang weren't disgustingly arrogant, she wouldn't have made this Patrolling Inspector her enemy.

She liked to take things slow and didn't like Qin Shaoyang's arrogant attitude; this man thought that he was the center of the world due to his perfection.

They turned to the section of traditional Chinese paintings when Hao Ren suddenly sensed a 'huge wall' moving toward him. He looked up and saw Xie Wanjun and his basketball team.

Today, the players on the Basketball Team were all wearing black suits instead of jerseys. Although Bai Zhixiong and the others were obviously uncomfortable in suits, Xie Wanjun looked majestic in his formalwear.

With his square face, tall figure, and broad shoulders, he was a born fashion model. It was the first time that Hao Ren saw Xie Wanjun wearing a suit, but he found him quite dashing.

"Why are you here?" Hao Ren asked. Having worked with Xie Wanjun once, he was not afraid of this big guy anymore.

"They train all day in the stadium, and I'm afraid that they will fall behind the times. So, I asked for some tickets from the Principal and brought them here to have a taste of art," Xie Wanjun explained in his rough voice.

Hao Ren was surprised, unable to place the sweaty basketball players and arts in the same picture.

“This is called gouache which has different characteristics from the oil paintings since gouache is opaque. Besides the difference of painting methods, the oil paintings give people a thick and heavy feel while the gouaches have a brighter touch,” Xie Wanjun began to explain to his teammates.

Hearing Xie Wanjun’s professional explanations, Hao Ren was even more surprised.

“This is another blow. Even the basketball player Xie Wanjun is more artistic than me...” Hao Ren was mortified, wondering if the world had progressed too fast for him or he had lagged behind too much.

“Our captain does oil paintings,” seeing Hao Ren’s mortification, Little Fatty, who was friends with Hao Ren, came over and told him.

“Oil paintings...” Hao Ren was dumbfounded. He imagined the two-meter tall Xie Wanjun sitting on a small stool while putting fine strokes on an oil painting and blocking the whole canvas board with his body...

Excellent academic performances, a full scholarship from an American university, superb basketball skills, and talented in oil painting... Xie Wanjun was an all-rounder.

“Has Yujia bothered you recently?” Xie Wanjun turned his head abruptly and asked Hao Ren.

“Oh, no. The mid-term exams are only days away, and she put all her attention on reviewing,” Hao Ren answered.

“Ok...” Xie Wanjun nodded. “And you are her Little Older Brother?”

Knowing that the secret was out, Hao Ren smiled in embarrassment.

Nodding, Xie Wanjun threw his arm around Hao Ren’s shoulders. “After this year’s National College League, I will go to the U.S. for my postgraduate degree. I entrust Yujia to you.”

His words were meaningful, and his arm was heavy. Feeling this Big Brother’s sincerity, Hao Ren gritted his teeth and nodded.

In the past, Xie Wanjun was the one who took care of Xie Yujia at school. Now that he was in his senior year and about to graduate early, his greatest concern was his younger ‘sister’ who seemed to be quite excellent but actually a bit naive.

After patting Hao Ren’s shoulder twice, Xie Wanjun didn’t say anything else. He led the Basketball Team to the next section.

The players dressed in suits were all uncomfortable to be here, but they had no choice since their captain insisted that they should improve themselves with arts.

“This Xie Wanjun would be close to the Connate Realm of martial arts if he lived in the past,” Su Han said abruptly.

“Connate Realm? The realm equal to the third level of the Spirit Concentration Scroll?”

Astonished, Hao Ren turned to look at the majestic back of Xie Wanjun. "Is it possible for one to reach the highest realm that is attainable by a mortal being by only playing basketball?"

"With his powerful aura and strong focus, he could have entered the cultivation world with martial arts. However, for a mortal being, he has reached his limit," standing beside Hao Ren, Su Han said lightly.

"Ms. Su!" a crisp voice sounded abruptly.

Hao Ren turned his head and saw Xie Yujia and Ma Lina walking toward them from another direction. It was Xie Yujia who called out to Su Han.

Seeing Xie Yujia coming over to her, Su Han smiled; it was an unusual act for her.

"Why are you here?" With Xie Wanjun's words still in his ears, Hao Ren asked Xie Yujia.

"My brother got me two tickets; otherwise, I would still be outside in the long line. Ordinary students are not allowed in until eight o'clock. We got the tickets and came here on our way back from the night study so we can relax a bit," Xie Yujia told him.

In her white T-shirt and soft black long jacket, she looked simple and elegant.

"Your brother just passed by us," Hao Ren said.

"Ok. I'll go find him later." Since it was no longer a secret that she was Xie Wanjun's younger 'sister', she didn't bother to cover it up. She looked at Hao Ren and Su Han and asked, "Ms. Su, did you come with Hao Ren?"

"Yes." Su Han nodded.

Xie Yujia pursed her lips, and a complicated emotion appeared in her eyes. She had heard that Su Han and Hao Ren were close, but it felt different when she witnessed them together.

"Ms. Su, will the exam be difficult?" she asked again.

"You are the best in the class, so you don't have to worry about it," Su Han said with a smile.

Xie Yujia felt humbled by Su Han's dazzling smile. After a moment of consideration, she said, "You two go on. I'll go find my brother."

"Ok." Su Han nodded slightly.

"Sister Su!" another crisp voice sounded abruptly.

Hao Ren turned again and saw Zhao Yanzi coming towards them while holding Zhao Hongyu's hand.

Zhao Yanzi let go of Zhao Hongyu's hand before running toward Su Han.

Su Han smiled helplessly and placed a hand on Zhao Yanzi's shoulder to stop her from throwing herself into her arms. After all, she was an Inspector and was supposed to keep her distance from East Ocean. However, she couldn't resist Zhao Yanzi when the latter was always so enthusiastic to see her.

"Sister Zhao, you came as well?" Qin Shaoyang came over with a few influential figures in the art circle. In a polite manner, he introduced to the others, "This is Zhao Hongyu, the boss of LOM Design Studio."

The people in the art circle obviously had heard about LOM Studio since they all looked very impressed.

“Hehe, I’m here to see the exhibition. Mr. Qin’s skills are getting better and better,” Zhao Hongyu said with a smile.

She came today for two reasons. One was to bring Zhao Yanzi to the exhibition and have fun while the other was to take this opportunity to meet Qin Shaoyang. After all, East Ocean was their territory, and it was necessary for her to meet this Inspector informally first using her identity in the mortal world.

“My brother has left; I couldn’t find him.” at this moment, Xie Yujia returned.

Qin Shaoyang was still incensed by Zhao Kuo’s threat from a couple of days before. He was planning to give Zhao Hongyu a hard time as an Inspector but stopped at the approach of Xie Yujia. He exchanged some polite remarks with Zhao Hongyu before leading the influential figures to the other sections.

Zhao Hongyu had a bad feeling about him as she observed Qian Shaoyang more.

Chapter 154: So Many Heroes

When Zhao Yanzi saw Xie Yujia, she immediately became hostile.

She found that every time she came to this school, this beautiful Class President was around Hao Ren; it had become a pattern. No wonder she took Xie Yujia as her rival in love.

Boldened by the presence of Su Han today, she was about to attack her rival with words. However, Zhao Hongyu stopped her with a tug and a look of warning.

“Let’s see the exhibition together then,” Zhao Hongyu said pleasantly to Xie Yujia and Su Han.

“Ok.” Xie Yujia had met Zhao Hongyu last time in the stadium. Knowing that this woman was gentle and considerate, Xie Yujia was quite fond of her subconsciously.

In science, she admired Yue Yang, but in life, she wanted to be a graceful woman like Zhao Hongyu.

“This is an impressionistic landscape painting which is usually painted on a piece of raw rice paper. It pays more attention to the spirit of the landscape than meticulous-style drawings. For example, this painting follows the style of Shi Tao, one of the Eight Eccentrics of Yangzhou ¹. Look at the right half of the painting; it depicts the depth of the landscape with a close-up view, which is an example of Shi Tao’s Section Method...”

Zhao Hongyu was telling Zhao Yanzi this while appreciating the paintings. The others also listened to her quietly.

Hao Ren knew that Zhao Yanzi’s knowledge in art all came from Zhao Hongyu. The 15-year-old Zhao Yanzi was already several levels higher than him in art appreciation, so Zhao Hongyu’s knowledge was way beyond his imagination.

Listening to the explanations, Xie Yujia was more and more amazed. Under Zhao Hongyu’s guidance, she began to understand the details that she would have missed.

Glancing at Hao Ren who was also listening attentively and looking at Zhao Yanzi who kept showing-off by talking to her mom, Xie Yujia suddenly remembered the art books that Hao Ren had borrowed. She wondered if the reason behind Hao Ren's sudden thirst for art knowledge was this little girl.

After they finished walking around on the first floor, Zhao Hongyu had given them a thorough lesson about the paintings. Hao Ren had learned a lot, and Zhao Yanzi was feeling smug. "Well, now you understand that my mom knows everything!" she thought.

Xie Yujia admired Zhao Hongyu's knowledge and temperament. Glancing at the babbling Zhao Yanzi, she wondered if this little girl could really grow into a gentle and elegant woman like her mom.

It was now eight o'clock, and the students who were waiting outside in line finally could enter the exhibition. The quiet hall suddenly became lively.

Lu Qing brought Lu Linlin and Lu Lili into the hall. The moment he saw Zhao Hongyu, he hurried over.

"Hello, Principal Lu," Zhao Hongyu greeted.

"Ah... Ms. Zhao, how are you?" Lu Qing asked in a slightly tentative voice.

Together with Lu Qing were some directors of the Art Program. He introduced, "This is Ms. Zhao Hongyu from LOM Design Studio. Her husband is Zhao Guang, the Chairman and CEO of Mingri Group which is the biggest donor of our school."

LOM Design Studio was well known among the teachers of the Art Program, and her identity as the wife of Mingri Group's Chairman made them even more respectful.

After all, the buildings and the advanced facilities of the Art Program were all funded by Mingri Group.

"Ms. Zhao, it is an honor to meet you..." They lined up to shake hands with Zhao Hongyu.

Half of the Development Funds of East Ocean University came from Mingri Group, the biggest corporation in East Ocean City. In fact, Mingri Group funded all the expansions of the university which were not covered by the government grants, including the facilities, benefits of the teachers and students, develop and research branches, and all kinds of guest lectures...

The rapidly growing reputation of East Ocean University was attributed to the generous donations of Mingri Group.

Standing beside Zhao Hongyu, Xie Yujia heard Lu Qing's introduction, and her eyes widened slightly.

"This elegant and easy-going woman is, in fact, the wife of the chairman of the biggest corporation in the region! And Hao Ren is tutoring their daughter!" she thought.

In short, Zhao Yanzi's family controlled Mingri Group, and Mingri Group was the big hidden boss of East Ocean University.

"No wonder Vice Principal Lu Qing is so respectful towards them!" she thought.

"Gongzi!" Lu Linlin and Lu Lili rushed over, and they each took one of Hao Ren's arms; they didn't care about where they were.

The students gushing in from the entrance happened to witness the intimate behaviors of the Lu sisters toward Hao Ren.

Even the teachers of the Art Program who were standing beside Lu Qing saw it. However, since the girls were Lu Qing's 'granddaughters' and Lu Qing didn't show any disapproval, they just pretended that they saw nothing inappropriate.

Therefore, the students saw Lu Linlin and Lu Lili clinging into Hao Ren blatantly in front of Vice Principal Lu Qing while the teachers around them just watched with smiles.

The students gasped. "This guy is so extraordinary that even Vice Principal Lu Qing doesn't mind him dating his granddaughters..."

Hurriedly, they memorized Hao Ren's look and reminded themselves not to mess with this plain-looking guy.

At this moment, Huang Xujie who had cut the line walked in with the members of his Rock Climbing Club. Although dressed casually, he was the most dashing one among the guys.

When he saw Lu Linlin and Lu Lili clinging onto Hao Ren and Su Han standing elegantly beside him, Huang Xujie's chill and confident expression vanished.

However, seeing Lu Qing and the directors of the Art Program standing across from Hao Ren, he didn't dare to cause trouble and had to hold back his rage.

He couldn't understand how this rival who was insignificant a month ago became so much influential than him in such a short time. Besides the great strength, this rival of his had even attracted so many beauties to his side despite the plain-look and the ordinary background.

"Why? Why?" Huang Xujie cried in his mind.

Hao Ren's sharp eyes caught the minuscule change on Huang Xujie's face. He withdrew his arms from the twin sisters' hands and looked disapprovingly at them.

Lu Linlin and Lu Lili stuck their tongues out at each other before giggling. It seemed like they had done it on purpose to make someone jealous.

On the other side, the girls spotted Qin Shaoyang in the suit and rushed toward him, shrieking.

The security guards immediately blocked them with their arms.

Accompany by many influential figures in the art circle, Qin Shaoyang slowly took off his suit jacket and revealed the white shirt underneath.

The white shirt was thin and fitting, highlighting his muscular body. It again had made the girls scream in excitement.

Next, a slightly devilish smile appeared on his face, and the usually quiet library was filled with a round of collective screams instantly.

Huang Xujie was a little dazed and thought, "This is what people call charisma!"

“Today’s exhibition is displaying the traditional Chinese paintings that Mr. Qin Shaoyang has painted in the past several years for the first time, and it represents Mr. Qin Shaoyang’s formal entrance into the field of traditional Chinese painting. As you all know, Mr. Qin Shaoyang’s oil paintings have won him a great reputation in the world, and the average auction price for one of his oil paintings has reached 7.8 million yuan!” The host in a tuxedo walked out with a microphone and introduced Qin Shaoyang to everyone.

“An average of 7.8 million yuan for one painting. Damn! The world is full of rich people...” Hao Ren thought.

“Now that Mr. Qin Shaoyang has begun to focus his attention on traditional Chinese paintings, his international reputation will bring our traditional Chinese paintings to the world! I’m sure that he will make traditional Chinese paintings the hottest collection items in the eyes of international buyers! The great artists in the Chinese art circle here today all agreed that Mr. Qin Shaoyang’s skills in terms of traditional Chinese painting have reached a very high level! At our persistent request, Mr. Qin Shaoyang will paint on the spot to show his passion for traditional Chinese paintings! Please watch and enjoy!”

After saying that, the host backed off, and the lights in the library were suddenly turned off.

Clap!

A spotlight lit up the area that Qin Shaoyang was standing on.

Two pretty girls in elegant traditional Chinese dresses carried out an antique-looking desk and placed it before him.

Then, one pretty girl spread a sheet of white rice paper on the desk while another beautiful girl walked over and began to make ink by grinding an ink stick with water on the ink stone.

The sound of melodious music appeared, and the spotlight moved to another pretty girl who was playing a Chinese lute.

The atmosphere was now completely relaxed.

The girls had stopped screaming, and they looked at Qin Shaoyang with wide eyes.

Qin Shaoyang tossed aside the hair in front of his forehead with a light shake of his head, and he slowly rolled up his sleeves, revealing his muscular arms.

The pretty girl who was making ink finished grinding and backed off silently.

Qin Shaoyang lifted the brush with one hand and stirred the tip in ink in the ink stone

Swoosh!

He waved his hand abruptly, and a streak of ink spread onto the rice paper, creating a dragon-shaped mountain.

He shifted his body before brushing onto the paper again, and ink dots that were representing trees fell on the mountain.

His movements were sometimes light and sometimes heavy, and his strokes danced with the music produced by the Chinese lute.

Qin Shaoyang's female fans held their breaths, afraid that they would make a sound and interrupt the beautiful scene.

Hao Ren also quietly watched Qin Shaoyang paint while Lu Linlin and Lu Lili stood close to him on both sides.

Xie Yujia and Ma Lina widened their eyes since it was the first time that they watched someone paint a traditional Chinese painting.

Due to Zhao Yanzi's lack of height, she had to stand on her tiptoes but still couldn't see. Therefore, Zhao Hongyu had to secretly boost her up with an invisible energy.

Su Han stood elegantly with her hands together, and her face was expressionless. However, she looked extraordinarily beautiful in the darkness.

As the music of the Chinese lute slowly came to an end, Qin Shaoyang also put down his brush before straightening his body.

His white shirt was still spotless, which was quite a feat in itself. The white shirt originated from the West and the landscape painting from the East didn't give people an impression of disharmony.

Click! Click!

The lights were back.

Two pretty girls in traditional Chinese dresses stepped forward and carefully lifted the landscape painting with their slim hands while the ink was still wet.

"The endless river flows eastward. With its huge waves, all those gallant heroes of the past are gone. People say that to the west of the ancient fortress was the Red Cliff where General Zhou won his early fame when the Three Kingdom were in flame. Rocks tower in the air, and waves slammed on the shore, rolling up a thousand heaps of snow. This world is like a painting, and so many heroes have put on great shows..."²

A poem was written on the left side of the painting.

"Great handwriting!" The Vice President of Chinese Artists Association, a white-haired and high-spirited old man, applauded. "This painting proves the saying that 'there is painting in the poetry, and there's poetry in the painting!'"

With his applause, the other influential figures in the art circle all showed their appreciations as well.

With a slight smile, Qin Shaoyang took the painting from the girls before walking into the crowd. He said with his magnetic voice, "Han, this painting is for you!"

"Wow!" The girls realized that Qin Shaoyang was taking this chance to show his love.

"But who is this 'Han'?" the girls wondered.

With the painting in his hands, Qin Shaoyang walked through the crowd and stood before Su Han. A bright smile was on his face.

Su Han looked at the painting before taking it from his hands. Then, she slowly tore it into pieces.

All of the people there were stunned.

It was a painting that the genius artist Qin Shaoyang had done under their eyes! And it was the first painting that he had ever done in public. With its significance and his reputation, the painting was worth at least 5 million yuan!

But an ordinary lecturer tore it into pieces before their eyes?

“Good try!” Su Han dropped the torn pieces of the painting from her hands and said lightly. Her eyes were as sharp as lightning.

She would never change her determination in pursuing the ultimate goal of cultivation. Qin Shaoyang’s effort of dissuasion was an insult to her!

“Su! What did you do?!” Oblivious to the situation, the Principal hurried over and scolded Su Han.

Surprisingly, Qin Shaoyang was not angry. He lifted his hand to stop the Principal and smiled graciously. “It was just a casual painting. I don’t mind that it was torn. However, Ms. Su does have a quick temper.”

Still angry, the Principal said to Su Han, “Come to my office after the exhibition!”

In his mind, Su Han usually stayed in her office and rarely showed her face on campus. However, she was a good and responsible teacher. But today, her behavior brought the school disgrace!

Su Han knew that Qin Shaoyang was trying to make her lose her job in the mortal world. She caught Lu Qing’s apologetic gaze and said after a moment of consideration, “It’s just a painting! I will repay you with another!”

Then, she stepped forward to the painting desk.

The teachers and students all knew her, and they stepped aside to let her pass.

“Is it possible that the No.1 Beauty in East Ocean University could paint traditional Chinese paintings?” this question appeared in everyone’s mind.

In her chiffon top, Su Han walked to the painting desk, and her beauty instantly overshadowed the pretty girls in traditional Chinese dresses.

Slowly, she lifted the brush, looked around, and called out, “Hao Ren, come here! I will teach you how to paint!”

Chapter 155: The Power of the Scroll

Hao Ren was stunned at this sequence of events.

“Su Han, I will die at your hands... I can't even sketch a picture of chicken pecking rice...” Seeing everyone turning to look at him, Hao Ren panicked.

Su Han just stood there waiting for him.

“Come on! Go up!” Huang Xujie was the first to yell.

Then, the other guys followed suit and yelled jeering encouragements.

“Uncle, you go up and draw a picture of chicken pecking rice!” Zhao Yanzi who was behind him urged as if she could read his mind.

“Whatever! I'll try to draw a picture of chicken pecking rice! Anyway, I'll be notorious after this at least.”

Hao Ren forced himself to go forward to the painting table.

Su Han stepped aside and handed the brush to Hao Ren.

The two pretty girls in ancient Chinese dresses stepped up and spread out another piece of rice paper that was more than half a meter long.

Feeling hundreds of pairs of eyes on him, Hao Ren was nervous. He whispered to Su Han, “What are you doing?”

Then, the lights went off like before, and a spotlight illuminated Hao Ren and Su Han in front of the desk.

“Metal, wood, water, fire, and earth. When I say one element, you must use this element. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine and ten. If I tell you one, you must use one-tenth of your strength, so on and so forth,” Su Han whispered.

Then, she stepped to one side to grind ink for Hao Ren.

“Ay!” the guys yelled indignantly, jealous of Hao Ren as the great beauty Su Han was grinding ink for him personally.

“Calm down and concentrate. Recall Qin Shaoyang's hand movements when he drew the painting. Do you remember each stroke?” Su Han asked.

They whispered to each other in front of the desk, at least half a meter away from the crowd. Therefore, no one could hear them.

“Yes I do.” Hao Ren nodded. He had a great memory, to begin with, and he could remember everything he had seen after breaking through to the third level of the Spirit Concentration Scroll.

“Metal, six!” Su Han said.

Hao Ren activated the Light Splitting Sword Shadow Scroll and a pure yet weak metal elemental sword energy shot out of his fingertip before traveling into the tip of the brush.

Swoosh! The ink went with the movement of Hao Ren's wrist before splashing onto the rice paper and forming a dragon-shaped mountain!

“Good use of essence!” Su Han praised silently.

However, the students who were watching couldn't see anything special about it. They thought Hao Ren was just imitating Qin Shaoyang's movement, and they booed at him slightly.

However, the influential artists were slightly shocked, thinking, “What a sharp stroke!”

“The second stroke; water, seven!”

Hao Ren copied Qin Shaoyang's second stroke from memory, and the brush splashed the ink several centimeters above the rice paper.

The force of the water elements threw the ink drops out continuously.

Whoosh! A big surging river appeared! It looked misty and lively!

“Smooth!” The influential artists, especially the masters who focused on traditional Chinese paintings, froze.

“Everything in the world is made from the five elements. The third stroke; wood, three!” Su Han said.

The brush in Hao Ren's hand began to make dots like crazy.

“Fire, two!”

Little black drops appeared like the stars in the night sky.

“Earth, eight!”

“Water, four!”

“Metal, nine! From top to bottom, be deep and powerful!”

Metal elements were sharp and lethal! Wood elements represented life! Water elements combined firmness and flexibility! Fire elements could lit up the world! And earth elements were so thick that they could carry everything!

The five elements in Hao Ren's body took turns as Su Han issued instructions and lightly ground the ink.

The audience watched Hao Ren move with smooth strokes while Su Han stood beside him elegantly.

“What a perfect couple in the spotlight!” This thought appeared in everyone's mind.

“Su Han, I can't do it anymore!” Hao Ren said, feeling that the five elemental essences in his body were depleting.

The continuous transitions and conversions of the five elements were quite energy consuming. Besides, he had to infuse the five elemental sword energies into the brush before each stroke, which was exhausting on its own.

After all, he now only had a cultivation value of 0.35, and he had been continuously releasing sword energies with the Light Splitting Sword Shadow Scroll for more than ten minutes!

Big drops of sweat flowed down his face, and his arm that was holding the brush was shaking slightly.

“Water, seven!” Abruptly, Su Han put down the ink stick and stood behind Hao Ren. With her right hand holding onto Hao Ren’s right hand, she whispered into Hao Ren’s ear.

Hao Ren felt a surge of pure water elemental essence entering his body through his arm, and he immediately absorbed it with the Light Splitting Sword Shadow Scroll before releasing it.

He splashed three big drops of ink, and they formed three weirdly-shaped rocks on the mountain.

“Wood, five! Convert it by yourself!” Su Han injected a surge of pure metal and water elemental essences into Hao Ren’s arm.

Hao Ren took a deep breath and circulated the Light Splitting Sword Shadow Scroll at a great speed, converting these essences into the wood elements. The light ink gave the painting a sense of liveliness.

Hook, crack, rub, point, dye! The techniques of the landscape painting were demonstrated through the five elemental essences.

Meanwhile, people gasped at the scene! Su Han was holding onto Hao Ren’s hand intimately while they painted together!

Feeling Su Han’s warmth beside him and hearing the whisper in his ear, Hao Ren took another deep breath, and several sailing boats appeared on the big river.

“Hao Ren and Su Han are indeed intimate.” Xie Yujia looked at them sadly.

Swoosh! Hao Ren and Su Han both lifted their arms with the brush, and a streak of rainbow appeared at the top of the painting. It was finished.

The two pretty girls stepped forward and gently lifted the rice paper up.

“Looking up at the high mountain and walking on the wide road! Excellent! Excellent!” The white-haired Vice President of the Chinese Artists Association applauded.

After his comments, other people began to understand the spirits expressed in the painting.

The highest level of landscape paintings valued not the techniques but the spirit and meaning! They were the most critical in landscape paintings.

Compared with Qin Shaoyang’s painting and calligraphy, the landscape painting drawn together by Su Han and Hao Ren was better in its portrayal of the spirit.

The surging river and rolling clouds depicted the spirits of valley and mountains.

High mountains were there for one to look up and admire, and the wide road was there for one to explore.

The spirit expressed in this landscape painting was Su Han’s response to Qin Shaoyang.

“The road ahead is long, and I won’t stop exploring and searching.”

Qin Shaoyang’s face turned pale, and his body shook all over. The sharp rejection Su Han gave him through the painting was one reason for his reaction, but the more important reason was the sight of Su Han and Hao Ren drawing the painting together with their bodies touching!

"I didn't know Hao Ren was such a great painter," standing beside Xie Yujia, Ma Lina said in surprise.

And Zhou Liren and his buddies standing in the crowd were all stupefied, thinking Hao Ren had disguised himself so well that they thought he could only draw something like a chicken pecking rice.

Zhao Yanzi put her fingers on her lips while she studied the masterly drawn landscape painting. She turned to ask Zhao Hongyu, "Did... Hao Ren really draw it?"

"Yeah." Zhao Hongyu smiled. "Now you think he's quite dashing, right?"

"Humph! Not at all!" After a moment of consideration, Zhao Yanzi turned her head away.

Chapter 156: The True Master

"This is for you!" Su Han placed it into Qin Shaoyang's hands.

Qin Shaoyang's face turned red then livid. He wanted to burn it into ashes right now, but he forced himself to control his rage considering his public image. Then, he rolled up the painting before handing it to his assistant beside him.

"The Art Program in East Ocean University is indeed full of talented students. Are there any other students or teachers who want to come up and show their talent?" The host walked up with a microphone and tried to smooth things over.

At the same time, the Director, Vice Directors and Professors of the Art Program looked at each other in mortification since none of them knew a talented student named Hao Ren in their program.

At the moment, even students in the Art Program didn't dare to be so audacious in front of the world-famous artists.

This small painting event was over, and the students began to scatter around to see the exhibition. The influential figures the art circle went to a pre-arranged quiet corner to have tea and chat with Qin Shaoyang and the officials of the Art Program.

In the chaos, Hao Ren slipped back into the crowd before joining Zhao Yanzi and the others.

Meanwhile, Lu Linlin and Lu Lili approached the painting desk that was now in the shadows. They pulled out a blank piece of rice paper and began to mess around with the brush and ink while giggling.

Hao Ren couldn't find Lu Linlin and Lu Lili.

Seeing that Zhao Hongyu was about to take Zhao Yanzi home, he offered to walk them out.

Zhao Hongyu's red Ferrari was parked in front of the stairs leading up to the library. The sports car was quite eye-catching in the night.

"Auntie, have a safe trip home," Hao Ren said with a wave after Zhao Hongyu and Zhao Yanzi got in the car.

"Thank you. Please get prepared for tomorrow's exams yourself!" Zhao Hongyu said with a smile.

Zhao Yanzi kept quiet and looked unhappy.

The car started and drove toward the main gate of the school.

Hao Ren turned around and was about to return to his dorm for the exam preparation when he suddenly saw Lu Linlin and Lu Lili stand right behind him.

Startled, Hao Ren jumped back subconsciously.

“Gongzi, the exams are tomorrow!” Lu Linlin said while covering the prankster-like smile with her hand.

Hao Ren knew it was her idea to scare him.

“Gongzi, you did good with the use of the Light Splitting Sword Shadow Scroll,” Lu Lili said while blushing. Obviously, she was a bit embarrassed for giving Hao Ren such a big ‘surprise’.

“Thanks.” Hao Ren nodded. In fact, he had tried his best tonight. He didn’t expect that it would be so exhausting to transfer the five elemental essences continuously while controlling the strength of the sword energies.

“Gongzi, what are your plans for tonight?” they asked.

“What plans?” confused, Hao Ren asked.

“Are they planning to go out and play?” he thought.

“Prepare for the exams!” The sisters answered at the same time.

Like in a magic trick, they dug out two small bags that contained books and notebooks.

“You don’t have to go back home?” Hao Ren asked.

“Elder Lu has arranged for us, and we could live on-campus,” they explained with smiles on their faces.

Hao Ren sighed and gave in, “Ok, I’ll study with you.”

Lu Linlin and Lu Lili smiled at each other and said, “Then, we’ll walk you to the dorm for your study materials!”

Feeling like a hostage, Hao Ren smiled powerlessly before leading them to the dorm area.

They crossed the campus and arrived at the Hao Ren’s dorm building.

Hao Ren asked them to wait outside while he went in to get his materials.

It was very quiet in the dorm tonight since everyone was cramming for tomorrow’s exams.

The same was true for Hao Ren’s dorm. Zhou Liren and Cao Ronghua had come back from the exhibition and were sitting at their desks busy reading Xie Yujia’s notes.

Seeing that Hao Ren was back, they all looked at him as if they were observing a strange beast since they had not yet recovered from the shock they got from his performance in the library.

Hao Ren didn't want to explain anything since he needed to put every minute he had on preparing for tomorrow's mid-term exams. Picking up the photocopied notes that Xie Yujia had given him, Hao Ren grabbed three jackets before hurrying out of the dorm.

The study rooms were very cold during the night. Although he knew that Lu Linlin and Lu Lili could withstand the cold since they lived in the Ice Palace for more than 200 years, he felt it was not gentleman-like to only get a jacket for himself.

"Ren, where are you going at this late hour?" Seeing Hao Ren rushing out, Zhou Liren yelled after him.

Immediately, Zhou Liren ran to the balcony and yelled indignantly when he found that Lu Linlin and Lu Lili were waiting downstairs for Hao Ren like two little flowers, "You totally forget your friends when you're with beauties..."

Back downstairs, Hao Ren handed the sisters the jackets before putting on his.

"Thank you, Gongzi!" After putting on Hao Ren's jackets, Lu Linlin and Lu Lili looked especially happy.

Hao Ren smiled; his mind on tomorrow's exams. In the past month, he had focused his attention on cultivation and tutoring Zhao Yanzi. Thus, he missed many key concepts in class. If he had not borrowed Xie Yujia's notes, he suspected that he would fail the exams miserably.

Crossing the quiet campus, Hao Ren led them to Academic Building D.

Academic Building D was mostly comprised of study rooms that were usually open until ten o'clock, but these rooms were open 24 hours a day during the exam seasons.

It was his first time going to a study room; he usually preferred to do the reading and reviewing in his dorm. Seeing the couples in the rooms, he realized that these study rooms were places where student couples came to prepare for exams.

While they were all couples of two, Hao Ren attracted attention when he brought two beauties there.

Spotting a big room that was relatively less crowded, Hao Ren forced himself to walk inside with Lu Linlin and Lu Lili.

The guys who had been busy reading looked quite angry when they saw Hao Ren come in with the two beautiful girls, which was a blatant show-off during this intense time before the exams.

"Ok. Let's sit here!" Hao Ren found a corner and sat down. He took the study materials out of his bag and spread them on the desk.

Meanwhile, in the temporary tea room in the library, a staff member came over with a piece of rice paper and asked carefully, "Mr. Qin, did you forget to mount and display this painting?"

"This..." Qin Shaoyang hesitated and replied, "Doesn't look like mine. Where did you find it?"

"It was left on the painting desk," the staff member answered.

Curious, the art masters who had been having tea and chatting with Qin Shaoyang leaned over to look.

The moment they saw what was on the rice paper, they froze as if they had been electrocuted by lightning.

There were three bamboos, and they looked so lively that it seemed like they were swaying out of the paper!

This was a realm that even the Eight Eccentrics of Yangzhou couldn't reach!

It should belong to Heaven instead of appearing in the mortal world!

What was more, the artistic masters saw a painting of chicken pecking rice beside the bamboos!

There was no inscriptions or signatures on it, so no one knew who drew them!

"East Ocean University is full of talented people!" The art masters who had been studying traditional Chinese paintings for many years were all stunned into silence!

Chapter 157: You Opponent Is Me

Just when the great artists were stunned by the three bamboos in the painting, Lu Linlin and Lu Lili, the pranksters, were preparing for their exams with Hao Ren in a study room in Academic Building D.

What they wanted to draw was the picture of chicken pecking rice, and the three bamboos were a result of their casual brushings. However, the staff panicked, thinking that the bamboos were Qin Shaoyang's work and the picture of chicken pecking rice was someone's prank which ruined the masterpiece.

Now, wearing Hao Ren's jacket, the sisters were sitting together and talking about the notes while comparing them to the content in the textbooks.

They were serious with their preparations. They were sitting close together, and their confused expressions and earnestly attitudes created a cute scene.

Hao Ren glanced at their textbooks and found that these books were mostly liberal arts subjects; he didn't think that the exams would be challenging to the smart sisters.

Occasionally, they were puzzled by some technical terms. However, they would soon understand them after discussing it among themselves. As to the difficult ones, they would ask Hao Ren for an explanation.

Hao Ren found it funny that the sisters would be taking exams in the mortal world.

Time ticked by, and Hao Ren had almost finished preparing for tomorrow's exams with the photocopied notes that Xie Yujia gave him.

He had mastered cramming for exams; he could cover a half-term's content in one night and get passable scores. This time with Xie Yujia's notes, it was much easier for him to prepare.

Lu Linlin and Lu Lili had also finished reviewing all the textbooks of the Film Program. In fact, equipped with their photographic memories, they could even rewrite the books if they wanted to. The problem

for them was that they didn't know how to approach and answer the questions that might be asked on the exams since it was their first time taking them.

Since they wanted to keep Hao Ren company, they had to stay in school. Therefore, they had to pass the exams not to get kicked out.

"It's 12 o'clock now. Are you done with your preparations?" after flipping through Xie Yujia's notes one more time, Hao Ren checked his watch before asking them.

"Yeah!" Lu Linlin and Lu Lili both nodded. In fact, they didn't want to go back home and would rather stay the night with Hao Ren. However, they also didn't want to exhaust him.

"Let's go!" Hao Ren packed up his stuff and stood up.

With dark circles under their eyes, the guys in the huge room looked at Hao Ren with jealousy again. Seeing Hao Ren coming and going with two beauties trailing behind him was too much for them to accept.

The campus was quiet, illuminated by the dim light of the street lamps.

Lu Qing had specially arranged a two-bed dorm for Lu Linlin and Lu Lili in the postgraduate residence area located next to Yixin Cafeteria.

While Hao Ren walked them back to their dorm, it suddenly occurred to him that since the sisters were both mid-tier Kun-level Master and he was only at Half Kan-level, he was not qualified to walk them to their dorm as a bodyguard.

However, he was a guy, and it was his duty to walk the girls to their dorm.

"Gongzi, good night! Thank you for your tutoring!" Standing at the door to the Dorm Building, Lu Linlin and Lu Lili waved at Hao Ren.

"Good night!" Hao Ren smiled at them before turning to leave.

Even though there was dim light coming from the street lamps, most of the campus was dark. Hao Ren kept alert while walking back to his dorm.

"What? Are you afraid of my attacks?" Qin Shaoyang, dressed in a suit, suddenly appeared in the darkness.

Hao Ren took half a step back, and a grey sword energy appeared in his palm.

Qin Shaoyang took half a step forward and said, "Now, as an Inspector..."

Before he finished his sentence, Hao Ren abruptly threw out the sword energy with full force.

Startled, Qin Shaoyang immediately put up a golden light shield in front of him.

Hiss! Hao Ren's grey sword energy penetrated the light shield and hit Qin Shaoyang on his chest, burning a hole in his black suit jacket.

With a grunt, he backed off half a step and looked at Hao Ren incredulously.

“How is this possible? His strength is beneath Kan-level! How could he hurt me?” he thought.

In fact, Hao Ren’s full force attack could even burn several hairs off of Zhao Kuo, the No. 1 Cultivator in the mortal world. The golden light shield Qin Shaoyang had hastily created was nothing.

Hundun Lightning could break the five elements in nature.

“This strike certainly doesn’t belong to the Dragon Tribe!” Qin Shaoyang suddenly remembered the girl who appeared by Hao Ren’s side during the day. He hesitated for a moment before lowering his hands.

“Today, I’ll let you go. I’ll settle the accounts with you at Zhao Yanzi’s birthday party!” Qin Shaoyang threatened.

After all, no outsiders would interfere in a small gathering of the Dragon Tribe.

Ignoring him, Hao Ren walked around Qin Shaoyang and headed for the gate of the school.

Qin Shaoyang turned and looked at Hao Ren until he disappeared around the corner.

He didn’t want to offend people before he understood the situation, so he had to clench his fists and control himself.

Suddenly, Su Han appeared in the darkness.

“Your opponent is me,” she said coldly.

Hiss... A white sword appeared in her hand.

A huge surge of chilly energy instantly swept over the ground.

Swoosh! Like a reversing shooting star, Qin Shaoyang flew into the sky. He had been oblivious to Su Han’s presence; if she had launched a sneak attack...

He started to sweat.

The long sword in Su Han’s hand turned into a sheet of white light when she struck it toward Qin Shaoyang!

A golden weaving shuttle appeared in Qin Shaoyang’s hand, and it blocked Su Han’s sword.

Bang! The huge noise woke up half of the students on campus!

Qin Shaoyang felt some numbness in his arm, immediately knowing that Su Han had advanced in Ice Frost Scroll’s level! She was here for revenge!

A dark red light sphere instantly engulfed them.

Bang! Bang! Bang... Inside the light sphere, the collisions made the space shake violently.

For the students who were studying or sleeping, the whole campus quieted down after that first huge banging noise.

Hao Ren who had been walking toward his dorm in the south also heard the huge sound. Thinking that something dropped to the ground in the construction site in the distance, he ignored it and returned to his dorm with his study materials.

Quickly, he fell asleep.

It was Thursday, and the nerve-wracking mid-term exams had finally come!

Thursday and Friday were exams of fundamental courses such as Advanced Mathematics, University-level Physics, and University-level English.

Even on these two days, Hao Ren still went to Su Han's office to cultivate after four o'clock.

Cold as usual, she meditated with her eyes closed. Though once in a while, she would open her eyes and give Hao Ren some instructions on his cultivation.

Hao Ren relaxed a bit after the last exam ended on Friday.

He returned to his dorm to get his study materials and other stuff before walking to the bus stop at the main gate of the school. He was going home for the weekend.

After this weekend, the next weekend was Zhao Yanzi's birthday party.

"Did you know that I saw Qin Shaoyang on Thursday?" some girls standing before him at the bus stop were talking among themselves.

"Oh? How was he?"

"He was there to pack up the exhibition! However, I saw that he had band-aids on his face and hands; he seemed to have scratches on him!"

"Band-aids? He must have looked dashing in them. Maybe he put them on for fashion purposes as like some of the celebrities!" a girl said excitedly.

Hao Ren was surprised that a master like Qin Shaoyang got wounded and didn't recover right away.

"If he only had minor scratches on his face and hands that could be cover by band-aids, it seems that his opponent went easy on him. Who was the person that wounded this arrogant Inspector?" he thought.

Chapter 158: I Want to be Surrounded by Great Grandchildren!

Hao Ren took the bumpy bus to the seaside and walked the rest of the way to his home. When he was about to yell 'Grandma', Hao Ren found that Xie Yujia was there already in her white apron!

"What... What are you doing here?" Hao Ren asked in surprise.

"I'm here to keep Grandma company," Xie Yujia answered calmly.

"Why, Ren? Do you have a problem with that?" Grandma walked out of a room on the first floor and went to Xie Yujia's side.

"No... No problem," Hao Ren put his backpack on the couch and asked Xie Yujia nervously, "How did you get here?"

"By bus. However, it only took me to the entrance, so I walked the rest of the way," she answered.

Hao Ren nodded. He assumed that Xie Yujia must have handed in her exams early, so she got here earlier than him. However, it was a half-an-hour walk from the bus stop to the house. It must have been hard for a girl like her to walk under the heat.

"Why didn't you come back with Ren," Grandma complained to her.

"I didn't know when he would be back since he may have some activities with other classmates. Besides, I am here for you!" Xie Yujia smiled brightly.

"Poor girl... You had to walk so long," Grandma looked at Xie Yujia and said. It was a one-hour bus ride and a half-hour walk from the school to here. It could be counted as an exercise for Hao Ren but not an easy task for a girl like Xie Yujia.

"Grandma, can I cook the fish the same way as last time? Steamed?" Xie Yujia changed the topic.

"Sure, whatever way you want. As long as you are the chef, I will love it!" Grandma said pleasantly.

"Okay!" Xie Yujia nodded and went into the kitchen.

Hao Ren noticed the empty house and asked, "Where are my parents, Grandma?"

"Ah... Them! Speaking of them sets me off," Grandma appeared to be annoyed, "They went to Beijing for some big national project this time and won't be back for a month."

"They went together?" Hao Ren asked.

"Yeah, they said it's a multi-fields project, and they didn't tell you because they didn't want to affect your mood during the exams," Grandma said.

Hao Ren thought to himself, "If it would, then my exams would be affected years ago."

He was already used to that.

Hao Ren sighed lightly and asked, "Then... Do you want to go live with Zi for the month?"

He thought that Grandma must feel very lonely at the house by herself. Uncle Wang couldn't do more than cooking and taking care of the flowers and vegetables, so it would be more relieving if Grandma stayed with Zhao Yanzi's family.

"We shouldn't bother them this time. I've decided to go to the countryside for a while. A good friend of mine from a long time ago got in touch with me a few days ago. She said that she is living in Zhejiang Province now, and the mountains and rivers in her village are gorgeous. She is surrounded by her children and grandchildren there, and she invited me to live there for a while," Grandma said.

"By yourself?" Hao Ren was worried.

"I am much healthier than before, so I will be fine. Plus, living in the countryside and talking with my old friend about the past will be a lot of fun," she sighed, "A big family surrounds her, but I am here all

alone. Both my son and daughter-in-law are not here, and you are my only grandson. Who knows where my great grandchildren are at this moment..."

Hearing this, Hao Ren stopped her and comforted, "Alright, alright. I'll take you there as soon as I finish my exams."

He thought, "If she goes there and sees the large family, who knows what she will be thinking by the time she comes back..."

There wasn't much that Grandma could do since Hao Ren was the only child. In her traditional view, the responsibility of carrying on the family and extending the bloodline was all on Hao Ren's shoulders.

Uncle Wang went back home for some family issues, so there were only the three of them in the giant house. If Xie Yujia didn't come, there would only be Hao Ren and Grandma which would feel even lonelier.

Since there were just the three of them, Xie Yujia didn't cook a full table of dishes. She made three vegetable dishes, a meat dish, and a bowl of soup; very well matched and balanced.

They were quiet when Grandma didn't say anything at the dining table. Xie Yujia took small bites as Hao Ren swallowed his rice without even looking at her.

Grandma watched the two of them as she ate. She noticed that something was wrong.

"Zi is not coming here this week?" Grandma thought of Zhao Yanzi and asked.

"Um... Her parents took her to Nanjing, and they won't be back until Sunday," Hao Ren said.

"Oh..." Grandma sounded a little disappointed.

After hesitating, she asked again, "Those two girls from last time, Lu Linlin and Lu Lili... Are they not coming here either?"

Grandma liked it when there were more people, but the house was as quiet as an ancient castle. She used to look forward to Hao Ren's return every day. But now, she has started to look forward to the girls' visits as well.

"Grandma..." Hao Ren shrugged, "They both have their own things going on and can't come to spend time with you every week."

"But they told me that they would come over every weekend..." She murmured. She adored the sweet and beautiful twins.

Hao Ren felt terrible seeing the disappointment in his grandma's eyes. She only wanted to have people over for some company.

"Stay here for the night with Grandma, little Yujia," Grandma suddenly looked at Xie Yujia and said.

Xie Yujia hesitated for a second as her pretty eyes blinked a few times. She picked up her cell phone and replied, "Let me phone my aunt."

She stood up and walked to the French windows facing the ocean. After a little bit, she hung up the phone and came back.

“My aunt said that it’s ok if I’m staying at Hao Ren’s place,” she said.

Grandma smiled happily at her answer, and it boosted her appetite suddenly as well.

She asked a lot of questions, and the kids answered them one by one. They seemed like a real family at the table.

After dinner, Xie Yujia and Hao Ren cleaned up the dishes together.

Although Xie Yujia had confessed to Hao Ren in the library, there was still something weird going on between them. They cleaned everything up quietly and quickly moved away when they ran into each other from time to time.

Unlike those crazy and wild girls at school, she was candid and reserved at the same time.

Hao Ren also wasn’t one of those guys who would pursue girls casually and could pretend that nothing had happened after being rejected.

Grandma was watching TV in the living room while Xie Yujia and Hao Ren were doing the dishes in the kitchen without a word.

“Later, you can sleep in my parents’ room. It’s empty because they went to Beijing,” Hao Ren said in a dry voice after a long period of silence.

“Um, ok,” Xie Yujia wiped the dishes dry smoothly as she answered.

Then, nothing more was said.

Chapter 159: Unwilling to Admit Defeat

The two remained silent.

For Hao Ren, he was apologetic for making Xie Yujia wait so long; also, he felt like he was not worthy of her wait. Therefore, he did not know how to respond to her.

On the other hand, Xie Yujia was asking herself, “What am I doing?”

After putting away the bowls and chopsticks in the cupboard, they came out of the kitchen.

Lying on her side on the sofa, Grandma was dozing off with the remote control in her hand. She was about to fall asleep.

Being considerate as she was, Xie Yujia walked over, picked up the jacket on the side, and laid it gently on Grandma. Xie Yujia had worried about Grandma getting too lonely being on her own as Hao Zhonghua and Yue Yang were so occupied with their careers. That was why she made time to visit her today.

Seeing that Grandma was dozing off while watching TV, she could imagine how Grandma usually spent her daily life alone at home. She felt a little heartbroken just thinking about that.

“Ah, did you finish doing the dishes?” Rubbing her eyes, Grandma asked as she let out a prolonged yawn, “Why don’t you guys go and rest early night?”

Somehow, Grandma’s remark seemed a little ambiguous and dubious to Hao Ren.

Sharing Hao Ren’s view, Xie Yujia also blushed at Grandma’s words.

Yet, Grandma had not realized the awkward feelings her previous remark had induced in them. Instead, she further added, “I had a dream just now. In my dream, Ren had a lot of children, and they were all calling me great-grandma!”

“Grandma, I am a male, how could I give birth?” Helping his grandma up from the sofa, Hao Ren found her dream both funny and weird.

“Haha...” Grandma did not explain herself any further. She turned to Xie Yujia who was still blushing and suggested, “Grandma is getting sleepy, so I am going to bed now. Since it is still early, why don’t you two go for a walk along the beach?”

“Eh.” Xie Yujia nodded habitually at Grandma’s suggestion.

“You, you should talk with Little Carrot more. Now that you two have reunited, how come you seem more distant?” Grandma turned to Hao Ren and asked.

“I will. Grandma, you go and get some rest.” Supporting Grandma by the arm, Hao Ren helped her into her bedroom on the first floor.

Watching Hao Ren, Xie Yujia found another virtue that Hao Ren possessed – filial piety.

Xie Yujia realized that ever since the first year of university, it had always been his gentle and straightforward nature that attracted her. It never had anything to do with whether he was good-looking or not.

“Let’s go take a stroll around the beach.” Hao Ren said as he came out of his grandma’s room.

“Sure.” Xie Yujia nodded lightly.

The beach was only a few dozen meters away from the house. The sand was very soft, and it was comfortable to walk on it barefooted. Xie Yujia took off her shoes altogether and began to walk.

The sound of the waves was also very gentle. Moreover, the sea glistened in the moonlight. As they were in a suburb area of East Ocean City, the air was fresh, and the stars were brilliant.

After walking along the beach for a few minutes, neither of them had spoken.

“How did you do on your exams today?” Hao Ren asked. Since he was a man, he should be the one to break the silence.

“Oh, today’s exams were not really difficult. I think it shouldn’t be a problem to get at least a 90 on each of them,” Xie Yujia replied.

Hao Ren smiled helplessly; he would be immensely thankful if he could achieve a 70 on each of the subjects.

When they were children, they used to go for walks along the beach, just like now. Yet, though it seemed only a moment ago, they were now already in their early 20s.

“Ouch!” Xie Yujia suddenly bent down.

“What’s wrong?” Hao Ren moved closer.

In the moonlight, Xie Yujia could be seen furrowing her brows. “I might have stepped on a piece of glass or something.”

Hao Ren quickly helped her to sit down and lowered his head to inspect her right foot. The bottom of her foot was bleeding a little as she stepped on a shattered shell.

“Xie Yujia’s skin must be very soft to get cut by a shell...”

In a moment of rashness, Hao Ren scooped up some sea water with his hands to help her rinse the wound. After that, to prevent Xie Yujia from getting hurt again, he ran to get her shoes and helped her to put them on.

Intently watching Hao Ren’s every move, Xie Yujia was touched. When they were kids, Hao Ren always liked to pretend to be a big man and ignored all her cries. Only when things got out of hand would he come over reluctantly and try to calm her down. Now that he had gotten older, he had somehow become very gentle and meticulous.

“It should be alright. Let’s go.” Hao Ren grabbed Xie Yujia’s arm and helped her to get up from the ground, “The sand gets very cold at night, so you might get a stomach-ache if you sit on it for too long.”

“Yeah.” Xie Yujia felt a bit of pain from the bottom of her foot. Yet, she endured it as she did not want to appear weak.

“I remember when we were little, I jumped down from that gigantic rock a few times. I always thought that since it was all sand underneath, it wouldn’t hurt even if I fell. Come to think of it now, I don’t understand how I was so daring as a kid.” Hao Ren said as he pointed at a huge piece of black rock not too far away.

“I know, right? I even followed you and jumped off it myself. However, I ended up twisting my ankle and spent two full days bawling at home,” Xie Yujia complained.

“Haha. When you were little, you never liked to admit defeat and rarely gave in.” Hao Ren remembered.

Xie Yujia did not respond. She believed that he was probably correct. Wherever Little Older Brother went, she followed. Whatever Little Older Brother did, she would try to copy as well.

They no longer talked about what happened at school. Instead, they began reminiscing the memories they shared as kids. As they pieced together their memories piece by piece, they were able to recall the events that took place one by one vaguely. All the little stories they couldn’t remember were found in each other’s recollections. Piece by piece, their shared experiences became dimensional and vivid.

A light breeze caressed Xie Yujia's face and blew up strands of her hair. Bathing in the moonlight, Xie Yujia's beautiful figure seemed especially gentle and serene. It was hard for Hao Ren to imagine that she used to be Little Carrot who refused to accept any defeat and was always sprinting around like a tomboy.

Since Xie Yujia's foot was no longer hurting, they had walked very far away. Now, they were slowly strolling back to the house along the beach.

When they got home, Grandma who was on the first floor was already fully asleep. Hao Ren and Xie Yujia tiptoed their way onto the second floor, they each went back to rest in their own rooms.

Xie Yujia had not told any of her friends about the fact that Hao Ren was her Little Older Brother. Likewise, Hao Ren also did not mention anything to his buddies. By leaving it a secret, they grew to understand each other more even though they had to act more cautiously around each other.

Hao Ren knew that there were a lot of male students going after Xie Yujia at school. After all, Xie Yujia was pretty and kind. Just how many guys have pictured their dream girl to be like her?

Nonetheless, Xie Yujia had always maintained a low profile and never tried to make her popularity into an asset of hers, unlike Lin Li, who liked to show off her popularity by making the number of her admirers known to the whole school. Furthermore, most of Xie Yujia's outfits were simple and unflashy, whereas Lin Li's choices of outfits were usually conspicuous and ostentatious.

If they were to compare the two, most guys at school would agree that Xie Yujia was more beautiful and graceful than Lin Li. Also,

Hao Ren was aware that many senior students on the Student Council tried to find ways to approach Xie Yujia, but most of these guys feared Xie Wanjun and had never openly expressed their admiration for her.

However, it was well-known among the senior students that after this year's National College Basketball League, Xie Wanjun would be attending school in the United States...

Gradually, the entire house went back to its original peacefulness and serenity.

As the tides turned, Hao Ren woke up from a pleasant dream and realized it was already ten o'clock in the morning.

He crawled out of bed quickly and went over to check on the room next door. He found that the door was open, and Xie Yujia was nowhere to be seen

"She wouldn't have left already, would she?" Hao Ren got a little anxious suddenly. Still in his pajamas, he immediately went downstairs.

Downstairs, he found Xie Yujia in a clean outfit, the one she had left here from last time. Also, she was wearing two rubber gloves.

At this time, she was tipping her toes on a stool out on the balcony, trying to hang a quilt onto a bamboo stick.

Grandma was seated inside and was enjoying the bread that Xie Yujia had baked with a heartfelt smile on her face.

“Grandma, what is she doing?” Hao Ren asked Grandma as he pointed towards the balcony.

“What is she doing?” Grandma rolled her eyes at Hao Ren. “Yujia got up early in the morning and went for a walk with me along the beach. She then made breakfast for me and even helped me wash my bed sheet and cover. Now, she is trying to hang them up to dry. I was going to wake you up, but she said that I should let you sleep more since you’ve been studying very hard for your exams lately!”

“Oh...” Hao Ren answered dully. Once again, his gaze moved towards Xie Yujia who was busying herself on the balcony. This time, he felt guilty and ashamed.

He had never done any of these things for his grandma.

“Ay, Yujia is such a good girl. Whoever gets to marry her in the future will be blessed!” Watching Xie Yujia sprinkling waterdrops in the sunlight, Grandma praised with an emotional sigh.

Hao Ren nodded, agreeing with Grandma’s statement. Xie Yujia was smart, capable, virtuous, and a talented cook. Indeed, it was almost like she was a younger version of Zhao Hongyu.

“Ay, how wonderful would it be if Yujia is my granddaughter-in-law...” Grandma kept on expressing herself.

Grandma’s remark made Hao Ren feel uneasy. He hurriedly picked up another piece of bread and put it in Grandma’s hand. “Grandma, you keep eating. I’ll go check on her out there,” Hao Ren said.

He then ran over to the balcony, pulled open the door, and walked out.

Xie Yujia was still standing on the stool and was trying to stabilize the bed sheet with laundry clips. Seeing that Hao Ren had come out, she smiled at him.

“You’re up!”

Scratching his head, Hao Ren felt a little embarrassed. “Yeah. It was already very nice of you to visit Grandma. You don’t have to help with the chores.”

“It is no inconvenience. After all, since your parents are not home, no one is here to take care of Grandma.” Jumping off from the stool, Xie Yujia patted down the bed sheet that was still dripping a little before putting the stool back into a corner of the balcony.

She took off the rubber gloves and revealed her fingers. Drops of water were seen lingering on her fingertips, making her fingers look like slender white jade.

“From now on, you don’t need to do these chores. I will take care of them,” Hao Ren said again.

Xie Yujia smiled and glanced at Hao Ren as she said, “You? I highly doubt that you’d ever think of helping out with things like these!”

Hao Ren laughed awkwardly. Indeed, when he came home to see Grandma every weekend, he had never thought of helping her wash her bed sheet or bed cover. It was true that only girls could be so thoughtful.

"I left you some breakfast too. You should go eat it now. I still have some of Grandma's shirts and pants here that need to be hung up," Xie Yujia added.

"Okay." Hao Ren turned around and went in.

A very neatly placed breakfast was on the dining table. It consisted of milk, a hamburger, and hard-boiled eggs; simple and healthy.

"Grandma, I'm going to head back now," after she finished hanging up all the laundry, Xie Yujia walked in to inform Grandma.

"So soon?" Grandma didn't want to part with her.

"Yes, it's almost noon. We have more exams coming up next week, so I have to go back and study," Xie Yujia explained.

"Aren't you in the same class as Ren? Why don't you stay here and study together with Ren?" Grandma thought of a good excuse.

"It's okay. Hao Ren might get distracted if I stay here." Xie Yujia smiled. "Grandma, you take good care of yourself. I will definitely come to see you when I have time."

"Ay... Alright then." Knowing that she could not convince Xie Yujia to stay, Grandma got up and walked her to the door.

"I'll give you a ride!" Hao Ren quickly got up while trying to swallow a mouthful of milk.

"That's okay. You should focus on studying. It doesn't take long for me to walk to the bus stop anyway. It'll be a good exercise." Looking at Hao Ren with her glistening eyes, Xie Yujia smiled, turned around, and walked out of the door.

Grandma stood by the door and watched Xie Yujia gradually walk out of her sight. Suddenly, she turned to Hao Ren, who was still holding the hamburger in his hand, and said, "Ren, regardless of what you think, Grandma has to make something clear! If you don't treat Little Carrot the way she deserves, Grandma won't forgive you!"

Chapter 160: The Strongest in the Mortal World

Ay... Hao Ren let out a long sigh. He understood what Grandma meant, but there was not much that he could do about it.

Although Grandma was senile, her mind was sharp. She could clearly tell that Hao Ren had been avoiding Xie Yujia in the past two days. Even when he talked to her, it was more just out of courtesy. There was a distance between them that was maintained on purpose.

Little Carrot's family had reached out when Hao Ren's family was going through the toughest times. Therefore, Hao Ren's strange behavior towards Xie Yujia had angered Grandma greatly.

On top of that, Xie Yujia was kind and considerate, and there was nothing that Grandma didn't like. Since Xie Yujia was loving, respectful, and thoughtful as if she was Grandma's own granddaughter, Grandma could not stand Hao Ren's aloof attitude towards Xie Yujia.

"Grandma..." Hao Ren wanted to explain himself, but Grandma wanted to hear none of it and went back to her room.

This weekend, Lu Linlin and Lu Lili didn't come to visit, and Zhao Yanzi did not call either. Hao Ren and Grandma were all by themselves in the house, and it seemed desolate and dreary.

The contrast further demonstrated how admirable it was for Xie Yujia to come and take care of Grandma.

Lu Linlin and Lu Lili must be busy studying for their exams. After all, no matter how bright and intelligent they were, having to deal with exams right after they started going to school would be a serious challenge for them.

As for Zhao Yanzi, she was still young and could not fully comprehend the mind of a senior. Therefore, she did not think of giving Grandma a call from Nanjing.

As the slightly depressing weekend came to an end, Hao Ren had finished packing up for school by dusk on Sunday.

Thinking of the fact that Grandma would be all alone at home again, Hao Ren felt terrible.

"It's alright; you can go. Grandma will be fine at home. Your Uncle Wang will be back tomorrow." Grandma tried to make Hao Ren feel better as she saw the guilty look on his face.

For the past two days, Grandma had been cold to Hao Ren due to his attitude towards Xie Yujia. Now, seeing that her grandson was about to leave for school, Grandma gave in and became gentle and kind again.

"Ah, alright." Hao Ren put on his backpack and began walking out.

After he was a dozen meters away, Hao Ren turned around and found that Grandma was still watching him by the door. He felt like his heart was struck, and he suddenly started walking back.

"What's wrong? Did you forget something?" Grandma asked.

"No," Hao Ren smiled and tried to sound lighthearted, "How about I take you to Zi's house to stay for a couple of days? I will finish my exams in two days, and I can take you to Zhejiang then."

"Well..." Grandma hesitated, "Why don't you give Hongyu a call and see if it would be convenient for them?"

"Ok!" Standing at the door, Hao Ren took out his cell phone and called Zhao Hongyu directly.

The phone call was connected quickly, and Zhao Hongyu immediately agreed to Hao Ren's proposal. Her unconcealed enthusiasm actually made Hao Ren feel a little embarrassed.

Even though Grandma did not want to trouble Zi's family, she did indeed miss Zi and Zhao Hongyu.

Hao Ren looked around the house and found the keys for his dad's white Ford. After Grandma finished packing up some clothes, he drove the car out of the garage and brought her to Zhao Yanzi's house.

Since they knew that Grandma was going to stay with them for two days, Zhao Yanzi's family had been eagerly awaiting her arrival. Hence, when Grandma arrived, both parties seemed a little excited.

While trying to help Grandma settle into the room that she stayed in last time, Zhao Hongyu also invited Hao Ren to stay for the night. However, Hao Ren was worried about tomorrow's exams and was determined to go back to school.

Nonetheless, Hao Ren felt relieved to see Grandma's mood lightened. Watching Zhao Yanzi who was yawning with a weary look on her face, Hao Ren knew that she must have just returned from Nanjing and had an exhausting weekend.

Although Zhao Hongyu didn't seem to mind at all, when Hao Ren got out of the house, he thanked her again and again for looking after his grandma.

"Zi has been traveling a lot with us lately and has been exhausted. Don't take it to heart if she didn't seem interactive or responsive," She explained to Hao Ren.

"It's fine; I know how she is." Hao Ren smiled as he knew that Zhao Yanzi had always been proud. Even when she seemed cold or indifferent, it was not indicative of her real thoughts or feelings.

"Don't worry about anything else and just focus on your exams. I'm planning to let Zi have a two-day break before her birthday party as well," Zhao Hongyu told him.

"Great. Auntie, you could use some good rest as well."

After taking out the car key, Hao Ren got into the white Ford.

Since the garage at Zhao Yanzi's house only had room for two cars, Hao Ren could only drive this Ford to school.

As he drove to the southern dorm area and was looking to park his car in a corner that was inconspicuous but not too far away, he saw Xie Yujia. She was wearing a black jacket, a pair of blue jeans, and grey canvas shoes. With a small backpack on her back, she was about to walk out of the southern dorm area.

Hao Ren thought for a second before driving over and stopping right before her.

"Oh? It's you!?" Xie Yujia saw Hao Ren and said in surprise. She almost thought that it was a good-for-nothing young man from a wealthy family who intentionally tried to block her way to get her attention. It had happened before when the news about her being Xie Wanjun's younger sister didn't get out, and her brother had to come over in person and subtly handle the situation.

"Class President, it is so late at night. Where are you going?" Hao Ren asked.

Constructions were going on around the school lately, so many unfamiliar faces were active in the nearby area. Hao Ren worried about Xie Yujia's safety if she were to go out at night by herself.

"I am going to study at school. Since there is a curfew at the dorm, lights won't be allowed. I plan to pull an all-nighter tonight. Oh, my bike broke, and I won't be able to repair it until after the exams," Xie Yujia answered as she pulled her jacket over her body tightly,

"How about... I go with you then?" Hao Ren suggested.

"That's okay." Xie Yujia shook her head in response.

"It's fine; I plan to stay up all night to study anyway." Hao Ren got out of the car and pulled open the rear door for her.

After a few seconds of hesitation, Xie Yujia got into the car.

It was warm and toasty inside the car with soothing music playing in the background; it was a sharp contrast to the cold piercing wind outside.

When Hao Ren got into the car, he drove out of the southern dorm area and headed to Academic Building D. Fortunately, the materials that he needed for his review were all in his backpack, so he did not need to return to the dorm room first.

"I didn't know you could drive," Xie Yujia said softly from the back of the car.

"Don't make fun of me now; driving is way easier than cooking," Hao Ren said as he drove steadily.

"People would think that you're from a wealthy family if they see that you are driving in school," Xie Yujia added.

"That won't happen. I have planned to park the car in a far corner before walking to the Dorm Building. Are you worried that the snobbish girls in our school would cause me trouble if they think that my family is rich, Class President?" Hao Ren asked while slightly turning his head.

Xie Yujia pouted, "Don't put words in my mouth. Alright now, focus on driving."

"Actually, Class President, your family's annual income is over 300,000 USD, isn't it? You indeed keep a low profile." Hao Ren suddenly said.

However, the annual income of 300,000 USD was likely only a modest statement from the casual conversation between the parents of the families. Xie Yujia's father, Xie Ming, had been continuously expanding his business in the United States and was the owner of at least four or five factories; his income was definitely far higher than this number. Yet, he probably did not want to make his old friend who was a poorly-paid scientist feel bad, so he gave a number that had been moderated greatly.

"That is the money that my parents make with their hard work. I only ask for a monthly allowance of 500 Yuan. I still think it's important to be self-reliant and to make money on your own," Xie Yujia replied without second thoughts.

Hao Ren respected how hard Xie Yujia studied and knew that she was telling the truth. Even before he found out that Xie Yujia was indeed Little Carrot, he had secretly admired her for her calm but motivational attitude. When they reached Academic Building D, Hao Ren locked the car and walked in with Xie Yujia.

As there were only two days of exams remaining, the number of students studying in the building had decreased enormously, and it seemed a lot quieter. Hao Ren did not plan to stay up all night to study, but he was concerned about letting Xie Yujia stay up all night outside of the dorm by herself. Moreover, remembering his grandma's words, he felt that he was now 'responsible' for Xie Yujia somehow.

Xie Yujia noticed that Hao Ren was following her closely and understood his concerns. Lately, there had been rumors about the disorderliness and dangers around the school. She did not know whether the rumors were real, but she had made up her mind to pull an all-nighter and secretly hid a few defensive weapons in her backpack.

However, the fact that Hao Ren took the initiative to be her company was a big relief to her. This feeling of dependence and safety was hard to come by in any other ways.

The clock was slowly ticking away.

The study rooms in Academic Building D were open to students throughout the night. While reviewing for exams, Hao Ren had been practicing the Spirit Concentration Scroll and did not feel sleepy at all. On the other hand, Xie Yujia was unable to resist the drowsiness and had laid her head down on the desk for a small nap.

Gazing at her soft and slender arms underneath her exquisite face, Hao Ren had never imagined that there would be a time when he and Xie Yujia would go out and pull an all-nighter together.

The few other students in the room were all lying down and resting, and their positions were all different. If Hao Ren were not there to guard her, Xie Yujia could not have fallen asleep so peacefully.

Even though her breathing was even and stable, her long and curly eyelashes were continually fluttering. Hao Ren knew that she must be dreaming in her sleep.

As the Spirit Concentration Scroll could help people become calm and collected, Hao Ren stealthily touched her fingertip with his finger and transferred to her a sliver of Nature Essence.

As expected, Xie Yujia was now in a better sleep; even her breathing had become long and deep.

Browsing the pile of heavy textbooks and notebooks on her desk, Hao Ren could tell that Xie Yujia was indeed studying very hard. However, according to her, her reason for all these efforts was to become good enough for her Little Older Brother.

Although it turned out that her Little Older Brother was actually quite terrible at school, Xie Yujia's beliefs and principles were already established. No matter what she was doing, she had always been inspiringly serious.

"Huh? What time is it?" After she woke up from the dream, Xie Yujia opened her misty eyes and asked Hao Ren who was seated next to her.

"It's two o'clock in the morning," Hao Ren answered as he checked the time on his phone. At the same time, his face was burning quietly as he realized that he had spent the last two hours staring at Xie Yujia and not his review materials.

"Ah, there are still two books that I haven't gone through!" Xie Yujia sat up abruptly while rubbing her eyes. Then, she let out an elongated yawn with her arms stretched out.

Her actions were so natural and unpretentious that Hao Ren thought he had found the adorably cute side of her personality.

“Why are you staring at me? Don’t you need to review too?” Xie Yujia turned to look at Hao Ren, and she asked while blinking her eyes.

“Oh. Oh, I am.” Hao Ren quickly put his head down and opened the book before him.

The time was passing by them.

Since Hao Ren almost had a photographic memory, he was able to skim through all the materials for his upcoming exams quickly.

Although he did not fully understand the stuff he just read and did not acquire as much comprehension as Xie Yujia, there shouldn’t be a problem for him to pass the courses.

Two hours later, Xie Yujia couldn’t help but needed another short break. Again, Hao Ren was still awake, guarding her while she slept. As Xie Yujia commended Hao Ren’s endless energy, she also appreciated his attentive protection.

Yet, at the moment, her focus was entirely on the exams and had no time for any other thoughts.

Soon, dawn had arrived quietly. Hao Ren silently moved his fingers that were touching Xie Yujia’s fingertip a moment ago. He was transferring slivers of Nature Essence to Xie Yujia. More or less, it had helped to nourish her body and ensure a sufficient level of energy.

“This is weird. I feel like I’m not tired at all from this all-nighter.” When Xie Yujia woke up again, she did not have any feeling of soreness in her back or neck. Instead, all the ideas and concepts she had in her mind became exceptionally clear and sharp.

“Thank you for pulling an all-nighter with me; let me treat you to breakfast!” Xie Yujia said as she started gathering her belongings.

Xie Yujia thought that the reason why she was able to sleep well was that she felt safe sleeping under Hao Ren’s watch. What she didn’t know was that Hao Ren had been sending her Nature Essence for four hours! That was an amount that required Hao Ren eight to ten hours of cultivation to acquire.

“Sure! Thank you, Class President!” Hao Ren accepted the offer readily.

After they finished packing up, they headed toward the cafeteria. Hao Ren decided to leave the car parked at Academic Building D until he completed all of his exams on Tuesday. He thought it might attract too much attention driving it back and forth in the next two days.

Spending a quiet night together seemed to have fully removed the barriers between them. Now, Hao Ren was busy ordering different types of breakfast items while Xie Yujia was paying for them joyfully with her card.

As they entered their exams, the atmosphere had once again become intense. Afterward, Xie Yujia decided to stay up for another night to study, and Hao Ren continued to stay with her.

Zhao Jiayi and the others were amazed to see Hao Ren and Xie Yujia spending the two days 'closely' together.

In their mind, Hao Ren had found 'great help' as everyone knew that Xie Yujia had always gotten first place on every exam. Studying together with her would not only help with the development of their relationship, but Hao Ren would also not need to worry about failing any of the courses.

Meeting their envious and dismissive gazes, Hao Ren did not bother explaining himself to them. He knew that certain things could not be explained.

Xie Yujia finished all of her exams before Hao Ren did since he had one more course.

After she was finally liberated from exams, Xie Yujia went to the western gate of the school to take the bus home.

She did not hurry home after getting off of the bus. Like always, she went to the market to buy a delicious takeout dinner and went to visit the old Grandma who lived in the slum hut instead.

It had been a few years now. This Grandma had always lived alone, and her health condition was neither good nor bad this whole time. According to others, she had a son, but he rarely came to visit.

On every weekend or holiday, Xie Yujia would come to see her, and she had been doing this for quite a few years now as well.

After all of her exams were over, Xie Yujia felt a complete emotional release. As she watched the Grandma eat the takeout food she bought, Xie Yujia couldn't help but begin telling the old lady what was on her mind.

She did not know whether this mute Grandma could understand what she was saying, but she found it cathartic to be able to reveal her secrets to someone.

"Grandma, I have been in such a bad mood lately, I hope you don't mind me ranting. Haha, next time, I will tell you something more uplifting." After unburdening her mind for half an hour, Xie Yujia said apologetically as she stood up and gently squeezed the old lady's dry hand.

The mute Grandma looked up at Xie Yujia with her turbid eyes. She then reached out her hand and affectionately patted Xie Yujia's forehead.

"Alright, Grandma, I have to go now. We have a two-day break after the exams. I will come to see you again tomorrow and the day after." Xie Yujia walked to the door, turned around, and waved her hand before leaving.

In the worn-down house, the senile and mute Grandma sat silently on an old and shabby chair in the dusk.

After a prolonged silence, she sighed deeply. "Since the dawn of time, excessive affection often ends in regrets, just as good dreams are the easiest for one to wake up from."

Suddenly, a blinding five-colored godly light emerged and began moving in spirals beneath her feet. Soon, she had disappeared entirely.

If any of the Elders of the Dragon Tribe were to witness this scene, they would undoubtedly gasp in disbelief, "Soul Formation Cultivator!"