## E Monarch 206

Chapter 206 – Breakthrough

The Solitary Falcon turned around and faced the other side, and one could tell that he had no interest in turning back around either. Moreover, it seemed from facial expression that he was dying to rip open that black masked man's head.

"That stupid bird-fighting move has brought him to such a point where he's completely obsessed with it! He probably just goes around every day looking for shrimps he can fight with, and he thinks that it will help him in becoming a legendary master someday?"

The black masked man seemed to be thinking out loud: "It's only a set of seventeen strokes..... and even they aren't properly linked yet; it's just sad ah, what a shame ah, and he actually has the nerve to call himself one of the 'Eight Great Masters'! Someone needs to put that boy's head in its place!"

The Solitary Falcon turned around the moment he heard these words, and looked up at the man behind that mask with a faint hint of surprise in his eyes: "You, you, what did you just say?"

"What did I just say? I said you're doing it all wrong!" the black masked man rolled his eyes: "You think that your silly "so-called" fighting style can sum up the hundreds of different maneuvers that a bird does? You haven't been able to figure it out completely yet and due to your lack of knowledge, that Eagle-fighting style of yours is closer to being Fly-fighting style; it's no surprise you can't produce any real power with it! And then, you're actually being complacent with such a silly technique? It's just shameful.... and plainly ridiculous!"

This time, even though the black masked man's tone was far worse and more demeaning that it was previously, but each word that came out of his mouth drummed the Solitary Falcon's ear and forced him to reconsider his initial judgements. As a result, instead of becoming even more rebellious this time, he felt as if someone had pulled him down from his celestial status and thrashed him to ground with a 'thud'.

"Please advise me, Sir!" the Solitary Falcon stated respectfully. As far as he was concerned, he was able to point out my shortcomings in an instant, therefore he obviously must be someone very senior, right?

He has to be someone from my senior generation ah! At this point, the Solitary Falcon suddenly put aside his personal arrogance and ego.

"First you cool down. Once I'm done saving him, I'll take another look at your little trick, and see if it's worth my time or not." The black masked man stated in an indifferent tone.

"Yes." The Solitary Falcon immediately turned around, sat down on the ground, and stated meditating.

The black masked man leisurely squatted down on the ground, comfortably hummed twice, and then once again grabbed Hai Chen Feng's wrist.

The 'Eighth Great Master' ah, wow! Who can dare to teach him a fighting style? Hmmmm! I can! And once I'm done training him, I will have his respect! I'm the master Supreme! I'm the best!

The man in the black mask was obviously the young master Jun, Jun Mo Xie!

That being said, Hai Chen Feng's injury was indeed very serious, and would be regarded as untreatable at this point in this world without advanced medicine. However, with 'The Art of unlocking the Heaven's fortune' in his arsenal, it was something that Jun Mo Xie could fix since quite easily this injury wasn't even as serious as Jun Wu Yi's. However, because this injury was fresh, and since the man was in a critical situation at this point, the young master Jun would obviously need to be very careful.

Of course, in case this task was being undertaken by any other person apart from Jun Mo Xie, then Hai Chen Feng would surely die!

Jun Mo Xie started the Hongjun Pagoda into motion, and an awe inspiring Aura started surging through his body; then he directed this aura into his palm, and started infusing it into Hai Chen Feng's meridians, and started repairing his broken meridians bit by bit, and then went on to renew the linkages between his Xuan Qi flow paths, and then slowly proceeded to repairing the damage inside his Dan Tian.....

Hai Chen Feng's face, which seemed deathly pale earlier, slowly started becoming rosier in shade, while his body started to shift a bit and he started moaning aloud; initially incapable of even opening his eyes properly, Hai Chen Feng was now watching this man in behind the black veil with eyes full of gratitude.

This gratitude wasn't entirely to thank him for saving his life, but also for insulting the Solitary Falcon, which had been rather enjoyable for Hai Chen Feng! In his almost dying moments, those insulting words were the only retribution he thought he'd ever get!

But fortunately, it wasn't the end of his life just yet!

An awe-inspiring aura was slowly flowing through his meridians, and his entire body, which had previously lost all its functioning, now suddenly seemed replenished with energy! Hai Chen Feng was well aware that such energy wasn't something even his own Master was capable of summoning!

This is miracle!

Hai Chen Feng's eyes were unflinchingly watching Jun Mo Xie's face, and slowly that expression of gratitude in his eyes started transforming into worship and adoration! Who is this man? He is such a mysterious man, but given how advanced his skills are, he must be someone exceptionally strong!

The Solitary Falcon instantly turned around the moment he heard Hai Chen Feng's moaning, and suddenly found himself staring at the scene in shock.

His brother-disciple had blown off his Dan Tian in a suicide attack, and his injury had already reached a point where no man or medicine in the Xuan Xuan continent was capable of restoring him back to his health! However, at present the Hai Chen Feng in front of his eyes was breathing far steadier than before, and anyone could tell that even though the man's injuries were still serious, but still posed absolutely no threat to his life anymore! Moreover, given the rate his injuries were healing at, one could estimate that he'd heal in no time as long as these ideal conditions were able to persist.

It was evident to the Solitary Falcon from the Aura which was surging in the atmosphere that this man in the black mask was someone beyond anything the Solitary Falcon had ever seen or heard off! Even though he was one of the 'Eight Great Master' of this world, he still couldn't help smacking his lips: Luckily I didn't attack him in a moment of impulse earlier; else I would've been lying on the ground next to Hai Chen Feng! I got really lucky this time!

Solitary Falcon, a man who had always been known to be bold and reckless, was dripping cold sweat at this time.

This is just unbelievable! Would even Yun Bei Chen be able to match up to this man's strength?

Since this thought had already crossed his mind, the Solitary Falcon secretly started drawing a comparison between the two men, and almost exclaimed out loudly upon reach a conclusion on his analysis.

He could clearly distinguish that Yun Bei Chen's strength, at the time when he had last seen the man several years ago was not even in the same layer at this man's! If Yun Bei Chen's strength was a small stream, then this black masked man's strength was an ocean!

I reckon that even if Yun Bei Chen has progress a long way since I last saw him, he still probably hasn't reached anywhere near this man!

Drops made of cold sweat had already started dripping down from the Solitary Falcon's forehead by now.

The Solitary Falcon was staring in shock, while Hai Chen Feng was staring in admiration, but neither man was aware that Jun Mo Xie, the center of the interests was slowly inching closer to a personal moment of crisis.

Even though Jun Mo Xie had only intended to extract a small amount of Aura from the Hongjun Pagoda in order to heal Hai Chen Feng's injuries, but soon enough a huge storm had started rushing through his own meridians, which soon-after was followed a loud 'ringing' like sound inside his head, and his mind had been sent into a state of complete chaos and confusion. Suddenly, it seemed to the young master Jun that he was stuck inside a void, and would spend the rest of his days living in vain.... And all alone!

This sudden turn of events had given rise to a strange sense of loneliness inside his mind.

Meanwhile, a huge surge of Aura had started rushing through his meridians, and it seemed that his meridians were harboring a turbulent sea of aura, with each wave stronger, fiercer, and more menacing than the previous one!

Jun Mo Xie was naturally left lamenting his luck!

I've been sensing and anticipating this moment for a long time, and now that it is finally happening, it is happening at the most unfortunate timing when I'm on the verge of completing a big assignment.....

The situation inside his mind was becoming more and more urgent with every passing moment, while the Hongjun Pagoda had already gone berserk, and had started emitting numerous gleaming rays of light inside his brain!

A powerful suction force was pulling Jun Mo Xie's conscious into it, and this pull was so fierce, that Jun Mo Xie could clearly sense that it was time for him to withdraw away from this place.

Hai Chen Feng was extremely surprised by this sudden surge in energy, and couldn't help vomiting out some blood, while the Solitary Falcon was simply left dumbstruck.

Jun Mo Xie reluctantly restrained himself as he slowly stated: "I have stabilized his condition. There is no immediate threat to his life anymore, but I'll need to put him through a number of conditioning procedures before he is completely healed. However, I have an urgent matter I need to tend to, and therefore I must leave immediately."

"This....." the Solitary Falcon raised his eyebrows, simply unable to guess his next step.

"Falcon, you will immediately take him to the Jun residence in the Tian Xiang City. There, you find seek out my disciple, the third master of the Jun Family, Jun Mo Xie. He will assist Hai Chen Feng in recovering from this injury; I've already imparted all the knowledge he needs in order to heal this man, and this task should be rather easy for him! This boy should be back to his health in a few months' time!"

The Solitary Falcon nodded.

"As for you, I've passed down several styles to Jun Mo Xie, which are quite similar to the one you're trying to make; if you want to complete your style, you must seek him out as well. Anyway, I'm not really interested in these little things anymore. However, I must warn you that his temperament isn't as polite is this Old mans' is, and in case you wish to learn a few moves from him, then you must be willing to endure a few insults!" Jun Mo Xie quickly finished his instructions since it felt as if the moment of a breakthrough was almost upon him!

"Remember, do not disclose the relationship between this Old man and the Jun Family to anyone!" He deliberately didn't warn them, and just stated these final words in a normal tone since he knew that they wouldn't dare to go against his will.

"Jun Mo Xie?" the Solitary Falcon opened his mouth and murmured, and then looked up again, but only to find that the mysterious man had already disappeared.....

"Amazing speed!" the Solitary Falcon simply couldn't help crying out in alarm this time.

He mentioned the Jun Family before he left.... uh, I guess I'll immediately go there.

He picked up Hai Chen Feng's body with one hand, and stated in a grave tone: "Boy, you will not say anything about today's matter to anyone; is that understood? If anyone finds out about this, then I will personally peel off your skin!"

Even though Hai Chen Feng's body was still as weak as a dead man's, he still spoke up in denial: "I won't say one word about the mysterious Master to anyone."

"What do you mean?" the Solitary Falcon suddenly stopped in his stead, meanwhile his long hair got caught in the wind as a result: "Are you saying that you'll tell people about our battle?"

"I cannot be sure." Hai Chen Feng hummed twice, and it seemed that his heart harbored infinite contempt for this so-called 'Master-brother' of his'. First you beat up someone so much weaker than yourself, and then you actually have the courage to ask me to keep my mouth shut about it? What happened to this courage of yours in front of that mysterious master, ah?!

"You won't say a word about anything!" the Solitary Falcon replied back barbarically: "If you tell people that you managed to injure me, then it will arouse a lot of doubts, and if you say that I saved you after you destroyed your Dan Tian, then people will raise questions once again. Basically if anything surrounding this battle comes to light, then the senior who just saved you will be revealed to the world, and let me tell you this once and for all; even your master and I put together cannot dare to provoke that man; hum hum, you weigh the situation yourself and decide."

When a man of the Solitary Falcon's caliber states: "Even your master and I put together cannot dare to provoke that man", then the extent of the shock and horror which Jun Mo Xie's skill must have instilled in his heart becomes rather obvious!

Chapter 207 – The Hongjun Pagoda and the Good Fortune

Since the Solitary Falcon was quite complacent, he was sure that Hai Chen Feng would keep his mouth shut because he had order it, and now that he was no longer worried about losing face in front of the world, he started focusing his attention on the task of finding Jun Mo Xie. As long as he was able to find Jun Mo Xie, he could improve the seventeen strokes of his style! This is working out really well......

But what's peculiar about Jun Mo Xie's 'character'?

The young master Jun's shamelessness was publicly known, but since he didn't wish to ward away two potential disciples, the young master Jun deceived them into going towards that Jun residence, and had only subtly indicated that his "so-called" disciple was a bit ill-tempered!

However, such public knowledge wasn't something a man of the Solitary Falcon's caliber would've bothered to learn about in the past.

His heart was full of joy and longing at the moment; it could be estimated that even if this mysterious master tried to con the Solitary Falcon, he wouldn't pay much mind to it....

As far as the Solitary Falcon was concerned, the agility of this mysterious master was unmatched in every respect; but in reality, the young master Jun hadn't actually left the vicinity, and had simply escaped underground; but since his backside was metaphorically on fire, even he didn't pay attention to the depth that his body had gone underground to! However, it could be estimated that he would've already reached deeper than an underground well's boring limits.

The young master Jun would've obviously wanted to find a more stable place to make this breakthrough, but by the time he spoke that last sentence to the Solitary Falcon, he had already started sensing that he was trying to hold back the turbulence of an ocean, which was soon followed by another loud 'boom' sound from the Hongjun Pagoda, and more Aura had started to flood into his body moments after. His mind had been launched into a state of complete confusion under the strength of

the impact of this Aura on his meridians; meanwhile the Hongjun Pagoda had started to shake violently....

I really can't hold this back anymore.....

Therefore, Jun Mo Xie didn't even wait for the Solitary Falcon's response, and directly casted out the 'Yin and Yang escape' law, and drilled his body into the ground like a mouse would've under just menacing conditions. He was completely unaware that this 'vanishing' act of his' would completely turn the 'Eighth Great Master's' world upside down!

Although the 'Yin and Yang Escape' law was indeed a peerless and unique technique, but its effect was something completely different from the Solitary Falcon's perspective; the mysterious master's agility was amazing ah, the Solitary Falcon had always paid special attention to his agility and had always believed that there was no one superior to him in this regard, however today he witnessed an act of agility which was far superior to anything he had even imagined!

This had also convinced the Solitary Falcon of this mysterious master's prowess, which is why he had obediently decided to seek out Jun Mo Xie. As far as seeking out a younger man for the sake of learning was concerned, the Solitary Falcon didn't seem to mind in the least. He was awfully clear on one immortal and unwavering truth: a superior in terms knowledge shall always be respected!

On the other hand, Jun Mo Xie was now completely ignoring the Solitary Falcon's presence above the ground, and was sitting cross-legged inside the ground beneath, and immediately started to realize that the situation was becoming more and more intense, and soon enough the young master Jun was no longer able to resist the power of the Pagoda anymore, and found his own conscious being pulled into the Pagoda.

The door to the Hongjun Pagoda opened silently.

Standing inside the magnificence of the Hongjun Pagoda's first layer, a few words suddenly panned out inside his mind: Defend the desires of the Yin and Yang!

Clear understanding!

Is clear understanding!

After one understands, one can protect the desire of the heaven and earth!

As he read these words, a burst of white light flashed up ahead, while a fragrant scent rushed through his nostrils, and what was initially an illusion of a ladder up ahead, suddenly became reality. These steps seemed to be leading up to a door, a solid but simple portal, which seemed to be opening slowly at the moment!

The second level of the Hongjun Pagoda had finally opened its doors to Jun Mo Xie!

An inexplicable burst of excitement seized Jun Mo Xie's heart! The first layer of the Hongjun Pagoda had given him some extremely powerful secret laws such as the 'Yin and Yang Escape' law, which had allowed him to defy the natural order of things in order to protect himself and his interest; as per the norms of this world, the young master Jun was only a basic Gold Xuan layered expert in terms of strength, however with the help of this law, he could roam around in the company of even Spirit Xuan experts without any fear of physical harm!

It was almost as if a three year old child had been given the power to transcend the status of an adult, and allowed him the right of an equal dialogue!

Just imagine the benefits I could get from the second layer of the Pagoda, ah?

He composed himself, and then slowly stepped forward towards the door, and felt a rather familiar kind of an atmosphere as he reached the second layer's entrance.

Suddenly, there was a burst of light from within the second layer of the Pagoda, and an endless stream of graphics flew out of it, spinning around in circles, seemingly resembling a bird's nest in shape, and then slowly penetrated into the point between his two eyebrows, and then disappeared with a trace, leaving no signs of ever existing in the first place.

At the same time, Jun Mo Xie's mind could clearly see a series of words and few humanoid images inside it; it seemed as if those images resembled the flow-system of his meridians.

Everything seemed to be going just the way it had happened while entering the first layer of the Pagoda!

"One who walks the scope of the heaven and the earth, must protect the desires of the heaven and earth; one who rashly beheads another, nurtures a heart of ice; nine loyal transformations stabilize the soul by the will of the heavens, and then abides by it....."

Jun Mo Xie started becoming a bit excited after carefully considering the words again: from what I can tell, it seems the first layer was only a beginning to 'unlocking the heaven's fortune'!

Abide by the will of the heavens!

From now on, only this can be regarded at the correct path ahead!

He was standing motionlessly at the door of the second layer at the moment!

The young master Jun was completely unaware that his corporeal body was undergoing some very drastic changes at the moment!

In addition to the huge amount of Aura which was rushing through his body's meridians again and again, a huge amount of aura had also penetrate through the pores in his brain, and the sole of his feet, and this crazy stream of aura was stretching and expanding his body's meridians in such a drastic manner that the clothes on his body were simply unable to resist their force, and had slowly turned to ash, and had then faded away into inexistence!

The sweat pores on the surface of the young master Jun's body were acting like springs, and were continuously emitting a dark, purplish fluid....

The aura inside his meridians was gushing about in such a turbulent manner that one could clearly hear the sounds they were making.

Since Jun Mo Xie's conscious was completely absorbed in this sea of knowledge, his mind was neglecting all external activities, which is why he had no idea that his body was undergoing such a major transformation.

This second layer of the Hongjun Pagoda said, 'nine loyal transformations stabilize the soul', which was very similar to the directions of the first layer, 'the nine refinements of the soul, and one never falls into hell!'

The first two directives of the Hongjun Pagoda have something in common, and that's the word 'nine'; nine refinements, and nine transformations!

The number of layer in this structure is also nine, but what does this reveal?

It's unlikely that it's all just a coincidence, right?

Jun Mo Xie's mind quickly evaluated everything that happened since the beginning of his time in this world, and after making a few calculation surrounding that information, the young master Jun was able to realize that his body had undergone several changes before the second layer of the Pagoda had revealed itself to him; upon careful introspection, he was quickly able to realize that the count of these changes was actually nine in number!

The first time this had happened, he had lost control and his soul had unexpectedly landed itself in this world, and this was the ninth time, which had finally taken him to the second level of the Hongjun Pagoda.

It's no wonder that my body didn't fall into Hell after its death! "Nine refinements of the soul, and one doesn't fall to hell!" so that's the reason all this is happening....

He couldn't help a wry smile, it seems that I'll have to go through these so-called nine transformations before I can enter the third level ah! This obviously means that the tasks I'll have to undertake will be far more difficult than before!

As the thought of this crossed his mind, his heart suddenly felt a strange sense of tranquil, and it seemed as if mind frame had changed by a lot. In this quiet and peaceful atmosphere, his conscious slowly started to float into the second level of the Hongjun Pagoda!

This room was as huge as the one below, but wasn't empty.

There was a three-legged Dan furnace in the middle of the room; a multicolored flame was steadily and smoothly burning under the furnace.

A 'book' like object was hanging near this furnace, wrapped in a golden and glittering skin.

A few characters were inscribed on the furnace: The furnace of good fortune!

The moment Jun Mo Xie read these words, they unexpectedly and abruptly disappeared!

Even the audacious Hitman was very surprised by this!

Jun Mo Xie couldn't help carefully inspecting this mysterious furnace from a distance, and then slowly took two steps closer to it; it started seeming as if a voice was calling out to him from this mysterious furnace, seemingly trying to pull him closer towards itself!

That inexplicable force didn't seem irresistible at all, but Jun Mo Xie still didn't wish to resist it since it felt as if this voice belonged to a very intimate friend of his'.....

Just as he approached the furnace, the flame under this furnace which seemed to me calling out to him, suddenly jumped up and instantly wrapped Jun Mo Xie's consciousness inside it; Jun Mo Xie only had a very little time to feel it, but it felt as if his body was passing through the eighteen layers of hell as a penalty, but since his consciousness was sober, he could clearly feel the extreme pain of it, and this pain had already gone beyond the point of his ability of endurance......

Outside, Jun Mo Xie's body had already stopped discharging that strange fluid; his body had started feeling a burning sensation since it had already been wrapped in a large and colorful flame!

Above the ground, that large maple forest, which was initially thriving, had withering in the blink of an eye. The entire range of plants on the ground had withering, irrespective of their ability to withstand heat, and even the most stubborn blades of grass were no exception to this; this initially plush forest had instantly turned into the driest patch of land!

A cloud of mist started to rise upwards from the ground, and quickly disappeared into nothingness in the sky above. All the water within a few miles of radius had instantly evaporated!

It seemed as if this lush part of the Tian Xiang City had suddenly become an epitome of death!

This land was so dry now, that even if one flooded this land with water, this water-depleted land would absorb the water so deep down in its water channels that one would probably never be able to dig deep enough to find any traces of moisture in it......

Jun Mo Xie's fair and sturdy body continued to turn and twist in this flame, until this flame slowly and gradually reduced, revealing Jun Mo Xie's unscathed body!

Suddenly, there was another calling-like sound, and Jun Mo Xie's body instantly disappeared from the ground.

At the same time, and for the first time ever, he found his physical body standing inside the Hongjun Pagoda's second level!

Chapter 208 – The Flame of Primal Chaos, and the Furnace of Good Fortune

There were two bodies of Jun Mo Xie's inside the Hongjun Pagoda at the moment; A real one, and an illusionary one.

An irresistibly strong force was trying to pull the two bodies together, and soon the two bodies fused together and became one.

The Furnace of Good Fortune had started issuing a sonorous sound once again, and soon a light emerged from it, circled around the furnace, and then vanished into nothingness.

Jun Mo Xie suddenly realized that his wrist had been cut, and blood was flowing out of that cut like fountain; however, instead of falling down to the ground, his blood was falling straight into the furnace!

The initially fading multicolored flame started blazing up again, and had soon encompassed the entire furnace into its colorful conflagration. However, Jun Mo Xie didn't feel any heat from this massive fire, even though he was standing close proximity.

The Flame of Primal Chaos!

These words suddenly appeared inside his mind, and then a dark golden-blood colored light flashed from within the Furnace of Good Fortune, and instantly entered into Jun Mo Xie's body. The young master Jun abruptly realized that the wound on his wrist had faded away all of a sudden, and if his body hadn't been feeling a slight discomfort due to the massive blood loss, he would've never realized that his wrist had just been cut moments ago.

The multicolored flame suddenly stopped burning again, and the entire room quieted down once again, reversing the atmosphere of the room to the one similar to when he had entered the second floor in the beginning.

The three-legged furnace remained silently in its place at the center of the room.

The multicolored flame under the furnace was only burning with a very small fire underneath at the moment, but the flame was still so smooth that it seemed as if it would continue to burn for the rest of eternity.

The book was still quietly placed next to this furnace.

Jun Mo Xie continued to stare at his surroundings with eyes wide open for a long time, believing that he was inside a dream, and then suddenly pinched his thighs; even though he felt the pain of the pinch, it still seemed to him as if he hadn't yet recovered from the shock of these sudden and unexpected turn of events.....

How did my body get in here?

For a long time, he was unable to believe what his eyes were seeing, and pinched his body a few times as a result. He pinched his body so hard that at one point it seemed as if he'd pull out his skin, but this

sharp pain finally made him realize: this is really hurting! It seems that my body has really entered into the Hongjun Pagoda!

Does this mean that I can access it anytime I want? Jun Mo Xie's head was still feeling a bit dizzy; it was almost as if the heavens were dropping meat pies on his head, and he didn't have any place to take shelter.

However, the young master Jun was still feeling a strange sense of happiness at this moment!

He hadn't found happiness in shade, or in the radiance of springs, but only inside the Hongjun Pagoda.....

He he.....

"Blood becomes the evidence, soul's wisdom becomes the proof, and the soul transforms in strength – the Flame of Primal Chaos refines all living things in this world; the furnace of good fortune, turns into the supreme creator!"

These words suddenly appeared inside Jun Mo Xie's brain. The young master Jun could clearly feel that his body, the odd ancient-looking Furnace of Good Fortune, as well as the Flame of Primal Chaos were now so closely related that it would be impossible to separate them.

Jun Mo Xie took two steps forward, and leaned over the golden colored book.

Just as his hand touched the book, the book suddenly turned to a mass made of nothingness, circled over the Furnace of Good Fortune once, and then vanished into the space between his eyebrows just as the previous images and letters had.

Folk Remedy!

These two ancient looking words would spin around in Jun Mo Xie's mind for a while, and would then be replaced by numerous dense characters and imagines depicting the alchemic methods to create numerous types of potions, and also the necessary steps to create the constituent raw materials; once

these methods had circled inside his head for a while, they would once again be replaced by those two words.

"I understand!" Jun Mo Xie mumbled these two words as he read those characters inside his head.

Now I really understand!

The Hitman's heart was jumping with excitement, but the composed Hitman suppressed his heart's excitement and calmed himself down forcefully. Simultaneously, he realized something very amazing and gratifying; the flowing Qi inside his meridians had mysteriously converted into the same colors as that of the Hongjun Pagoda's Aura, and was now slowly swimming around his meridians in very mist-like manner!

Such progress is simply amazing!

'The Art of Unlocking the Heaven's Fortune' surely requires some very difficult things, but once I've practiced and mastered its methods; it definitely gives good rewards in return!

Jun Mo Xie estimated that his present strength had reached the peak of the Gold Xuan layer as per the standards of this world. He had gone from the peak of Silver Xuan to the base of the Gold Xuan earlier, but had now stabilized into the Gold Xuan layer, and had then progressed to its mid mark, and had then surpassed to its peak!

And all this had happened in a matter of six seconds!

It must be mentioned that Jun Mo Xie had only arrived in this world a mere two months ago!

He had found himself in a very troublesome situation upon entering this world; moreover, he had acquired the body of young man whose strength was only comparable to that of a poor beggar!

His family was in crisis; his life was in crisis!

His body's strength was only comparable to that of ant in this world!

Had the original Jun Mo Xie persisted in this world any longer, then he would've succumbed to his end very easily in no time at all.

In fact, had it not been for the Hongjun Pagoda's support, the new Jun Mo Xie would've also already died countless times by now! He had always relied on this secret to transform his perilous circumstances into safety!

However, it was absolutely undeniable that his personal strength was far, far from being adequate!

His body's strength had reached the Peak of the Silver Xuan realm in less than two months' time, which was no less than a miracle! However, Silver Xuan strength isn't enough to ensure one's safety in this world.

It could be said that his life was still in danger at that point, and he could still be vanquished in case the circumstances changed against his best interests!

Then a few days ago, he received the 'Yin and Yang Escape' law, and the young master Jun was finally able to find a way to ensure his life's protection! Moreover, this law had given him the best means to protect himself when in danger!

However, even then, it was still far from being enough! It had never been in Jun Mo Xie's nature to hold back! Therefore, he's still need to the strength to go forward, and take the offensive charge when needed!

Jun Mo Xie would never owe anyone, he would never ask anyone for help, nor could he let anyone bully him; such was his nature! If you steal from me, I'll club you; if you disgrace me, I'll do you a hundred times over. If you hurt my family, I'll slaughter your entire Family; and if you deceive me, then it will remain edged in my memory forever!

Betrayal is the most intolerable thing!

Betrayal was the world's greatest evil in Jun Mo Xie's eyes!

Even though this shade was different from the scales of the world, but this was one of the reasons he associated himself on a moral level with his family!

If you dare to hurt even one strand of my hair, I'll cut off your arm! And whoever dares to hurt me, I'll destroy his entire family!

No matter who! They will all get the same treatment!

However, strength of character isn't everything; physical strength decides everything in the end. If one only has strength in character, one eventually finds the way to his doom!

Therefore, Jun Mo Xie had been looking forward to opening the second layer of the Hongjun Pagoda as soon as possible, and then the third, and then.... The ninth!

He knew that the Hongjun Pagoda was the only real support he had in this world!

The benefits of financial power can fly away like the dust; even his family may not be able to ensure their survival in this present situation of a power struggle with just money.

First, the ten year long trouble with the Silver Blizzard City, and now the trouble with the Xue Hun Manor had been putting the young master Jun under a lot of pressure! Moreover, each Family in the Tian Xiang City was breading snakes these days as the power struggle was beginning to take its toll, which was adding more peril to his circumstances!

No one knew of the pressure that Jun Mo Xie had been feeling. Although he had never showed it, but it didn't mean that he wasn't feeling it.

However now that he had opened the second layer of the Hongjun Pagoda, even though his strength was still quite low, but he had finally found some real and positive capital!

He knew that his lone Gold Xuan strength wouldn't be enough! In fact, it would be far from being sufficient! However!....

With the help of this Furnace of Good Fortune, and the book of Folk Remedies, Jun Mo Xie could now build his family a solid and staunch army in a very short period of time.

Moreover, it would also assist in rapidly increasing his own strength!

Then, once the time was ripe, Jun Mo Xie could expose his fangs to the entire world!

Jun Mo Xie could suddenly feel the wind rising in front of his eyes;

The powers of this world, I, Jun Mo Xie has finally found some real capital to confront you now!

Suddenly, the young master Jun found himself in the dark of the ground, seemingly having no idea as to when he had exited the Hongjun Pagoda. As the thought of Solitary Falcon and Hai Chen Feng rushing to his residence in search of him crossed his mind, he immediately sensed the urgency of the situation and escaped out of the ground.

Sunshine!

Jun Mo Xie seemed a bit lost standing above the ground, while his eyes were lowered under the gaze of the sun.

His strength had progressed quite significantly over a very short period of time! It was only natural that he'd be in a very excited frame of mind, in fact he was somewhat complacent about it; it was almost as if a pauper had suddenly won a lottery! Although he knew well that he needed to keep it a secret, his heart was still aching to flaunt his new strength a bit, and therefore he couldn't help summoning his strength.

In his excited frame of mind, the young master Jun hadn't even realized that he was standing completely naked in the woods at the moment.....

"Ah!!!!......" A scream pierced through the air, and was followed by a girl's anger and resentment filled curses: "Rogue! Stool! He's got the courage to ..... in broad daylight......."

Jun Mo Xie turned around to realize that two people were standing about ten meters away from him; a young man and young maiden. The young maiden's hair were flowing down over her shoulders and all the way down to her white dress, she had a rather delicate looking elegant body, and was in the process of turning around while stomping her feet at the same time; her hands seemed to be covering her eyes shut.

Next to her stood a handsome young man, but his eagle-hook nose and the angry grimace on his face made it rather clear that he wasn't very happy at the moment. His left hand stretched out to point a finger towards Jun Mo Xie, whilst his right hand found its way to the hilt of his sword: "You have the courage to do such a shameless act in broad day light! This young master simply cannot stand your nerve; I'm going to teach you a lesson!"

"What lesson? I don't understand you?" Jun Mo Xie couldn't help wondering: these two aren't mentally unstable or something, right? I'm just standing here and you come over shouting curses at me? Can't you tell me from my appearance that I'm no rogue of any sort? You're really looking to start a quarrel now!

It was rare for Jun Mo Xie to take someone's words to heart, but still found himself subconsciously stepping forward.

The young woman had just secretly parted her fingers to steal a glance at Jun Mo Xie, only to realize that he was stepping closer to her, and couldn't help feeling shy and angry at the same time, and thus she cried out in anxiety: "You, you, you, shameless character...... don't come near me! I'm very powerful..... you don't come near me......"

Her tone seemed full of anxious complains! Somehow, having witnessed a completely naked man for the first time had incited a rather strange feeling inside her, and though she knew that she shouldn't be looking at him, but still couldn't help her curiosity, and found herself secretly staring at the naked man in front from the secrecy of her parted fingers.....

Chapter 209 – You will wish you hadn't said that

The young master Jun was a bit puzzled; as far he was concerned, do I really look that scary? I mean just look at this girl, she looks as if she'd start crying any minute now!

The distance between the two parties wasn't much, and the young master Jun's small steps forward had obviously been bringing them closer!

"Yan Meng, don't panic; I will behead this shameless bastard with my sword!" the young man smiled as he stated confidently, and then slowly approached closer to Jun Mo Xie, having already unsheathed his sword, and then shouted: "You shameless bastard, step any forward and you court your death!"

Seeing his shiny sword made Jun Mo Xie even gloomier, and then his words only made him angrier, and how am I being shameless? Isn't this guy just clearly bullying me?

You may like to bully other people, but you've clearly found the wrong person today!

You can't protect yourself ah! And you're telling this woman that you'll kill a masked stranger for her? Your mother really gave birth to a bastard! Damn it, I'll show you; you're going to regret this forever!

The young master Jun's initial feeling of excitement had long died down, and had instead been replaced by a sense of anger, and hence he took a couple of large strides forward, feeling it necessitated to teach this arrogant youngster a lesson.

As he walked forward, he suddenly felt a cool breeze chilling his body, and was forced to look down in that moment of surprise!

"You're the real scoundrel!" the young master Jun shouted back, as he covered Little Mo Xie with one hand.

He had finally realized that his entire body was naked!

This was obviously far less shameful than running home naked without realizing it!

His body had been set ablaze previously when he had undergone a refining procedure by the Flame of Primal Chaos, and even though his body had received enormous benefits without even suffering any burns from the fire, his clothes had been turned to ash in moments.

However, Jun Mo Xie's body was underground at that time, while his conscious was inside the Hongjun Pagoda, which is why he had no knowledge of it. He hadn't realized this at the time when he had pinched his body since he was too intoxicated by the unexpected turn of events, and had completely forgotten about all other things because of it.

After coming out of the Hongjun Pagoda, the young master Jun was in such an excited frame of mind upon realizing that his strength had progressed a long way that he simply didn't notice it, and soon enough found himself being cursed and abused by complete strangers......

During this sudden transformation from feeling like a 'hero' to being called a 'rogue', Jun Mo Xie simply hadn't realized that he was standing stark naked.....

"You, you are such a shameless character that you've even turned to the thief who shouts the same at others!" The young maiden continued to stomp her feet while clutching her eyes shut: "You're a scoundrel, and then you have the courage to call others rogue.... You're an utterly shameless character!"

Although the young master Jun was clutching Little Mo Xie with one hand, his face showed absolutely no signs of embarrassment as he opened his mouth to bicker in a sarcastic repartee: "There is nothing rogue about a man running around naked in the streets; we were born naked, and we will die naked; our parents were naked when they conceived us, why don't people call that rogue? However, the eyes peeping at such things from the crevices of their fingers and then shouting rogue are the real scoundrels that plague this world!"

"I didn't ask you to see me, then why were you staring at me? You profane my innocence! You're the thief shouting thief here, and then you have the courage to call me a scoundrel? You're really unreasonable!" Jun Mo Xie twisted his words to force logic in the most unreasonable ways, backing it with utter shamelessness: "You young woman, are the real scoundrel here!"

The young master Jun advocated his preposterous reasoning in the same tone as that young girl had, seemingly mimicking her, and having raised his standards to a completely new and unrivalled height of shamelessness!

"You, you, you...... Xiao Feng Wu, hurry and kill this lecherous man; he insults me!" the girl shouted as she stomped her feet once again: "He actually has the courage to lecture me, and dares to call me a scoundrel after....."

"Your Family name is Xiao?" Jun Mo Xie rolled his eyes: "I hate the Family name Xiao! In my experience nothing good has ever come from that Family name, so it's no surprise that an arrogant youngster from such a hateful Family name is acting like such a rogue!"

Recalling the pain and hardships that the Silver Blizzard City had forced on his Uncle had obviously made Jun Mo Xie extremely sensitive towards that one family name!

The young man named Xiao Feng Wu suddenly became very furious and shouted: "Shameless bastard, you actually dare to open your mouth and be rude towards my Family? I'll take your life!"

He raised his sword as a golden light flashed from his body!

This young man had actually reached the Gold Xuan realm! Given his age, his talent was at least at par with Li You Ran!

Such strength might have caused some minor problems for the young master Jun a month ago, but now that his strength had seen a major enhancement, he could basically just ignore the opposition's threat!

Just as Xiao Feng Wu raised his sword, the naked figure in front of him suddenly disappeared, which was followed by a whizz of cold wind, and soon he found his face being slapped by a cold hand, while his crotch simultaneously felt a very powerful foot; the man's upper body curled down to his legs like shrimp, while his sword fell to his side.

'Chi' 'Chi' sounds were made as a piece of cloth was torn off from his robes. Although Xiao Feng Wu wasn't weak, but he still lacked practical fighting experience, and the young master Jun's kick had sent his liver and gall bladder mourning with pain as a result; the man rolled three feet and fell to the ground, but his face continued to look up at the naked man in front.

He watched as that shameless and naked man wrapped the cloth he had just ripped from his own robes around his body, and then leisurely tied a knot, and then actually jumped around back and front twice

while twisting his buttocks to inspect if some obscene parts of his body were still visible or not, and then turned his head forward again.

His upper body was still bare, while his slender legs also remained exposed as the cloth only circled around his broad shoulder and then down to his waist, making his attire look very free and unfettered but still quite glamorous by the standards of this world!

This person's appearance had completely changed in matter of moments. Even though his thin lips, his oblique eyebrows, and that faint smiling expression were enough to incite fear in any man's heart, one still couldn't help but be fascinated by his style.

He had just been exposed to a moment of such extreme embarrassment, but even then the young master Jun didn't blush in the least! This was evidence of the fact that his shamelessness had reached a point where it had already surpassed all of its kind before and since!

The girl, who was standing at a distance from this scene had completely forgotten to cover her eyes from the shock of these sudden turn of events, and was now watching Jun Mo Xie with her tiny red mouth opened as wide as it could be, never having imagined that her companion, a Gold Xuan realm expert, a peerless talent of his generation would ever be subdued by just half-a-move of this shameless mans'!

Although this man's face was covered with mud, which made it rather hard to access his appearance, but it was rather obvious that he was quite young in age, and was in fact even younger than his peer, how could he be so powerful?

"What is your name, and where do you come from? You come to the Tian Xiang City and actually dare to provoke me, ah, are you trying to dig your own grave?" Jun Mo Xie stepped forward in short steps since his present clothing limited the movement of his long legs to some extent: "You wanted to teach me a lesson and then kill me? Really? Well, understand this, you're only alive thanks to my good nature, else I would've cut you up and would've dropped your pieces to your grandmother's doorstep!"

Jun Mo Xie cursed, and then turned around to leave since he had no intention of staying any longer.

"How dare you? Don't ever let me see you in the Silver Blizzard City, else I won't let you live!" Xiao Feng Wu cried out, his eyes wreaking of a cruel and malicious aura: "Boy, you pray that I don't find you again!

I will slaughter your entire Family! If I don't make them run from their own house, and then slaughter them like dogs, then I'm not a Xiao!"

Jun Mo Xie was already preparing to leave when his footsteps halted midair, his eyes suddenly turned as cold as steel, and he turned his face around to look at Xiao Feng Wu: "Silver Blizzard City? You come from the Silver Blizzard City's Xiao Family?" his tone was already cold, overcast, and extremely gloomy.

"Yes, that's right!" Xiao Feng Wu struggled as he tried to stand up, and smiled ferociously: "Are you afraid now? Well, it's too late! Unless you and your entire Family kneel down to the ground and beg me for an apology, I will slaughter your entire Family in front of your eyes!"

"That's good! That's very good!" Jun Mo Xie slowly nodded, his face dull, but not angry. Since that's the reason behind your arrogance, then I'm no nephew to my Uncle if I don't punish you!

You will wish you hadn't said that!

"Kneel before me!" Xiao Feng Wu was under the impression that this man would inevitably turn soft, and he'd get a chance to save his face in return, and therefore, naturally couldn't help sensing his greatness!

"Kneel before you, my ass!" Jun Mo Xie abruptly stepped forward, and slapped the man across his face with a heavy hand, and sent the man falling a few steps backwards, spraying blood from his mouth.

Jun Mo Xie followed after him, and punched him twice in his each of his eye sockets, giving birth to a Giant Panda: "I'll show you! I'll show you! I'm going to paralyze you! You think that Silver Blizzard City is that great ah?"

"You threaten me!" – punch!

"You think that you can bully me because of your family name!" - kick!

"You want to destroy my entire Family!" bang bang bang.....

"I'll destroy you! I'll fucking destroy you! I'm not just going to beat you up! I'm going to destroy you!" bang bang bang bang..... "You want me kneel down and apologize! Not even if your grandmother drops!" bang bang bang bang bang bang...... "You bastard! You bastard! You bastard!....." Jun Mo Xie grabbed his hair, and raised his trembling body upwards as he cursed, "you bastard!", and then threw him down to the ground once again, and repeated the same procedure several times, and then grabbed his hair once again, which were still somehow painfully attached to his scalp, and then looked his face once again, and then sent his body flying; the man fell down to ground a few meters away, unconscious; unknown whether dead or alive. Jun Mo Xie still didn't stop, and flew after than man once again, and started pounding more strikes to his body, even as the man's body continued to flow blood. The young man was awakened from his unconscious state several times, but sunk back into it since his body was unable to tolerate the pain of it..... A man was lying on the ground, and an almost-naked man was standing on top of him and was beating him up in a frenzied manner..... "Ah....." the young girl was unable to even blink her eyes at the moment, nor could she understand how her companion had been suddenly turned into a human 'sandbag' in a matter of moments...... Things were happening too fast, and it was a bit dizzying for her. This young maiden's head was simply unable to make head or tail of what was happening at the moment, nor could she decide on her own course of action. "What is your name!" Jun Mo Xie fiercely looked at her as he gasped a few mouthfuls of air, and then

The young woman was almost in tears as she tried to open her trembling mouth, while her face had already gone pale with fear: ".....me?"

ferociously pointed a finger in her direction as he shouted in a rough voice: "Dammit, tell me or you

die!"

## Chapter 210 - Don't call him your senior again

"Are you a ghost?" Jun Mo Xie shouldered no signs of being protective towards the fairer gender, and stared viciously at her as he asked again: "What is your name?"

"I.....I.my name is Han Yan....Meng..... I'm very powerful..... don't you dare attack me......" The young maiden seemed awfully terrified which was rather evident since her jade-shade face had turned deadly pale.

Since birth, she had always been treated with respect wherever she had gone; she had never felt so bullied in her entire life. This man is a super-hybrid of a 'scoundrel' and a 'bully'!

Hence it was only natural that the young woman was awfully frightened at this time!

She had obviously never imagined that sneaking out from the Magnificent Jewel Hall for a little playtime would result in encountering such a 'fiend'! The young maiden's heart was constantly beating like a drum, and as the thoughts of those numerous dangerous possibilities crossed her mind, she started trembling more and more fearfully......

"Han Yan Meng?" Jun Mo Xie was dumbstruck: "This guy is from the Silver Blizzard City's Xiao Family? Yes? And You're from Han Yan Yao's Family?"

"She..... She is my elder sister...... don't you dare attack me, my sister loves me dearly, and she's terribly powerful....." Han Yan Meng threatened in a trembling voice, and it seemed rather obvious that she was just trying to prevent herself from being beaten up......

Jun Mo Xie was left completely dumbstruck at this point.

So this is the girl Mu Xue Tong was ferrying around? She's the one he was calling the little princess of the Silver Blizzard City? That would make her my Uncle's sister-in-law to be!

That basically means that she'll be my elder someday.... Kill me now!

"Is this your personal dog?" Jun Mo Xie pointed at the miserable looking Xiao Feng Wu as he asked.

"No, no, no." Han Yan Meng nervously waved her hand: "No, he is not my personal dog....."

Han Yan Meng hadn't yet finished her sentence when the young master Jun cut her off in between: "You haven't educated him one bit; he's not just a dog, but a wild dog!"

The young maiden quickly waved her hand to differentiate, "He is not a wild dog, he.... He is a man; he is my senior, his surname is Xiao, and his....."

"He is a man? I don't see so! He is dog!" Jun Mo Xie once again interrupted the young maiden's words as he wiped his hands and face off Xiao Feng Wu's blood, "I said he's a dog, that means he is a dog! An uneducated wild dog! Do you understand?"

"No, he he, he really isn't a dog, he....." the young maiden had always been pampered by her family, and had never met someone so tyrannical in her entire life, therefore she obviously didn't know how to deal with such a situation, and then suddenly an idea popped into her head: "You you, see, he he, he has no tail.... Dogs have a tail. So that means that he is actually a person....."

Jun Mo Xie was left stupefied once again, hesitated for a moment, and then broke into laughter, and then deliberately stated: "You don't know this yet, but his tail was cut off; how else would they be able to make him look man-like instead of a dog!" he wanted to say 'pleasing to the eye', but decided against it, and then suddenly discovered something strange about the man.

I beat him up so badly, but he's still breathing... his chest is falling up and down rhythmically, and even his fingers are showing subconscious movements, and it almost seems that he'd wake up any moment.....

Jun Mo Xie's mind burst into making some calculations again; his cultivation is very limited ah, so there should be no reason why he was able to withstand such a heavy beating, what is going on here? There must be something weird behind all this!

He tightened his waist cloth, and then strode forward and stationed himself in front of Xiao Feng Wu's body, and started sizing up his body with frowning glances, and then suddenly bent down laughing loudly, and then tore open his chest-clothing to reveal a soft, shiny and silvery armor that Xiao Feng Wu was wearing on his chest. Jun Mo Xie grabbed the armor with his hands and exerted some force to tear it open, but the armor remained in its place!

What an amazing thing ah! The young master Jun unceremoniously stripped the man down, and then stripped down that soft armor off his body. He grabbed the sword which was lying on the ground, and then pricked that soft armor with the sword's tip. Even though the armor was extremely soft in its make, it was still easily able to withstand the tip of the sword, and although there was no force behind the stab, the armor didn't even have the slightest of scratches on it.

It was rather obvious that the only reason Xiao Feng Wu had been able to survive this onslaught was because he was wearing this armor on his body. Xiao Feng Wu was lying unconscious on the ground, and had no idea that this was happening; however Jun Mo Xie had already understood that even though he had been able to beat this man unconscious, he still wouldn't have been able to kill him as long as he was wearing this armor!

Han Yan Meng wanted to come forward and rescue her companion, but was afraid of Jun Mo Xie's strength, and feared that he might actually slap her in the face which might send her flying out as well, and hence had resigned herself to squatting on the floor, clutching her face, and crying silently.

"What is this?" Jun Mo Xie asked Han Yan Meng, what is this evil little thing, I really want to know.

"Snow Silkworm Armor." Han Yan Meng opened her trembling eyelids and started staring at him again with a heart full of grievances: he's so shameless; his bodily skin is actually as delicate as mine, and he's quite good-looking too, but he still has no sense of shame or justice!

He is so disgraceful! How can someone treat a girl like this?

"Snow Silkworm armor, this a good thing. Well, good, very good." Jun Mo Xie looked at the armor lovingly as he twisted it over and over, and then tossed it up and down.

Han Yan Meng secretly thought of something and tried to hide it from reflecting on her face, but couldn't prevent her tears from stopping.

Snow Silkworm armor was obviously a very rare treasure in the mainland, but wasn't very uncommon in the Silver Blizzard City's high-class; in fact, most people had one such armor. This was one of Silver Blizzard City's monopolized treasures. In fact, when it came to precious items, a 'Snow Silkworm' armor was nothing special for them since they had several more advanced items in their arsenal. The young master Jun was able to analyze this very quickly, and estimated that this young man might be carrying some other very valuable treasures.

"What other precious items is he carrying?" Jun Mo Xie wasn't looking at her at this moment, but her facial expression had changed slightly by now. The young maiden was quite inexperienced in worldly affairs, and although she had only thought of something, but her subconscious actions attracted the young master Jun's attention, and he could clearly sense that she was looking down upon him disdainfully at the moment.

"The best is the Xuan Silkworm armor, and I have one.... I'm not wearing it....." Han Yan Meng was suddenly startled to see that the bloodied Jun Mo Xie was looking at her, and was so scared of his appearance that her naïve heart almost stopped beating, and eventually decided to say that she wasn't wearing the armor, I reckon that this bully will actually try to grab my armor as well, and might actually beat me up and then strip me over a Xuan Silkworm armor......

"Xuan Silkworm? Well, he he he....." Jun Mo Xie looked at her maliciously, and a burst of horror gripped Han Yan Meng, who immediately raised her arms in the air.

"Don't worry, I know you're wearing that Xuan Silkworm armor, but I will not rob a girl; I'm very cultured that way." Jun Mo Xie glanced at her as burst of unhappiness seized his mind, If I'm able to clean up the Xiao Family, and then somehow Uncle and Miss Han Yan Yao's love finds a way, and they end up getting married, then this little girl will become my Elder in name!

Would I call her Aunt? Or Sister-in-law?

Ah, this so is disturbing already! And then there's a Xuan Silkworm armor right there in front of me, and I simply can't grab it... this isn't done!

Jun Mo Xie stretched out his hand, and pulled her cheeks, scaring Han Yan Meng in the process, and then he laughed evilly as he turned around and sped away, "Miss Han, he he, I heard you call him your senior; don't call him your senior again, ha ha....."

Han Yan Meng breathed a sigh of relief as she saw that overbearing "monster" leaving at last, and finally started calming down. She patted her tiny chest, and then sighed, but was soon left puckering her eyebrows because she suddenly remembered the last sentence that "Monster" had said before leaving.

"Why? This is obvious, isn't it? He's from the Xiao Family, so why shouldn't I call him as such? I really don't understand this! It seems from this mans' words that he's some sort of a martial madman! Anyway, he's definitely not normal!"

Han Yan Meng's eyes were open wide and round for a while as she continued to mutter to herself in confusion. Eventually, she came to the final conclusion: the 'crazy' don't think in the same terms as normal people! I've never seen such a madman before!

The autumn winds gradually started rising up again, and since Xiao Feng Wu's injuries were quite serious, he showed no signs of waking up to his senses, leaving the unexperienced Han Yan Meng standing alone at a complete loss, and as she stood there all alone for an increasing period of time, the fear of heart also increased. However, a very strange phenomenon was taking place at this time: as the cold autumn winds were rising up, the maple forest was slowing fading out, and the trees were slowly turning to ash; the forest simply seemed unable to withstand the cold of the winds.