

Myriad 131

Chapter 131: Reaching an Agreement (1)

In a store downstairs.

Bedding, towel, broom, toothbrush, toothpaste, and so on. After picking everything he wanted, it was time for Su Yu to pay up. The price was driving him crazy. He had spent nearly 3,000 dollars for all that. After that purchase, he only had around 2,000 dollars left.

And that was after picking only the cheaper options. If he had picked the more expensive ones, he would probably need to spend some merit points instead. While he was shopping, Xia Huyou was walking around in the store as well.

When Su Yu was done with his purchase, he heard Xia Huyou talking to the shopkeeper, "Deliver a set of everything I picked to the rooms I told you."

"Sure." The shopkeeper agreed merrily. With a hearty laugh, he said, "28 merit points in total. I won't forget deliveries."

Su Yu glanced at Xia Huyou. He had made a bulk purchase, buying 28 sets of necessities at once and was even given a discount by the shopkeeper. After all, this was not the only store in the area. There were three of them in the Mental Tempering Garden.

"Deliver his stuff as well..." Xia Huyou pointed at Su Yu and smiled, "Don't worry. I'm not charging you. Don't be so cautious. Student Su Yu, when away from home, you have to rely on friends. Any extra friend you make is the same as gaining an extra path to walk. Why refuse everything I offer?"

"It's ok. I can carry my stuff myself."

"Aren't you going to get a meal? You still need to come down after going up." Xia Huyou smiled and said, "You are probably not familiar with this place, right? Don't look for the wrong place to eat and get yourself scammed. That way, you would lose even more."

Su Yu was still cautious. After walking out of the store, he feigned indifference and asked, "You know the academy well?"

"Kind of. I visited a few times before." Xia Huyou flashed his honest smile and said, "I'm still a distant member of the Xia Family so I have some family members studying here. Because of that, I was able to visit a few times before."

"Aren't you busy?" Su Yu was curious. Why was this fellow following him?

"Not at all. It's mealtime so I naturally need to eat. Work life balance is important. I can't spend all my time earning money and doing nothing else, right?"

When Xia Huyou saw Su Yu's expression, he smiled and said, "Don't worry. I'm not harboring any ulterior motive. You're a high-high student. It is normal for me to want to befriend you. Like I said, it is always better to have more friends when you're away from home.

"There are 1,892 new students this year. Among them, there are 145 high-tier students. Only 26 of them are high-high students. 23 of them are staying at the high-level zone and 2 are staying at the special zone. You're the only high-high student in the common zone. It's normal that I want to get to know you.

"Naturally, nobody will do something for no reason. But don't worry. I won't try to do anything against you. We're fellow students. Since you're talented, I can try befriending you. Who knows? My effort might just pay off one day.

"Us merchants like to put our eggs in different baskets. Your basket is still quite empty. It won't take much for me to put some eggs in your basket."

Su Yu laughed in amusement.

When Xia Huyou saw that, he said, "I'm not a capable person, but I'm still good at a few things.

"Firstly, I am well-connected and know a lot of things. If you need to know something, you can ask me. Regular information can be free but you'll need to pay for important information.

"Secondly, my family are businessmen as well. You can look for me for things you can't buy in the academy.

"Thirdly, you can look for me to buy or sell merit points too. I will definitely offer you a fair price. Doing business with me is also much safer than the black market.

"Fourthly, I provide loans with low interest rates. If you lack money or merit points, you can look for me. Of course, you also need to prove that you're worth the special interest rate.

Xia Huyou flashed a wide smile and said, "Now you understand why I'm befriending you? You're a genius. If we can establish a business relationship, then the business will have a lot of room to grow. Those mediocre students will be stingy when buying a single drop of source qi liquid, wasting our time. That's not the case with geniuses. They would be willing to buy even the blood essence of divines and devils."

Xia Huyou clicked his tongue and continued, "A drop of Skysoar divine or devil blood essence can be sold for 1,000 merit points at the black market. Some of the richer fellows will buy dozens of drops at a time. Tens of thousands of merit points would change hands. This is what I call a big business."

Xia Huyou looked at Su Yu and said, "You're a genius. How long would you take to reach the Skysoar Realm? Would you need the blood essence of divines and devils to forge your body? Would you be buying them?"

"But if you want to buy them from the academy, you would be limited by the academy's stock and your total earned merit. But if you look for me...hehehe. That would be a big business for me."

Su Yu asked in astonishment, "So you're selling the blood essence of divines and devils as well?"

"Cough, cough," Xia Huyou coughed awkwardly. "Not now. I'm still not qualified for that. But there's no rush. You would need time to reach the Skysoar Realm anyway, right? Maybe I would be qualified by then. Even if that's not the case, I can still introduce someone qualified to you. I'll only accept some introduction fees for that. This is a business the Xia Family can do.

"They won't entertain a random person, but if you have me as a guarantor, it would be fine. As long as you're not a cult member, it would work."

Su Yu couldn't help but be impressed.

This seemed to be a capable person. A distant branch of the Xia Family...even a distant branch was still part of the family. In Great Xia, the Xia Family was true royalty. They weren't the uncrowned kings. They were the actual kings. Su Yu also couldn't bring himself to dislike this person. He was forthright when speaking, giving off a reliable feeling.

"You said that there are 145 high-tier students this year. How many freaks are there?"

"About that..." Xia Huyou was beaming as he said, "That is a secret. The academy won't leak their identities unless they reveal themselves. Of course, I am well-connected enough to know a little about them. But this isn't information you can get for free."

"How much?"

"For this information, we don't deal in cash. We deal in merit points. Fifty points!"

Xia Huyou laughed and explained, "Don't think that this is expensive. I'll be honest. This information is priceless for the Myriad Race Cult. Of course, anyone daring to sell this information to them will die. In any case, you only need to understand that this information is very important. At the very least, it would remain valuable before these freaks reach the Skysoar Realm."

Su Yu nodded and said, "I can't afford that. Forget it."

"Don't worry." Xia Huyou said, "I can tell you their number. There are probably eight of them. Probably. I really don't know the exact number. But if you want to know their names, strength, backgrounds, Divine Characters, and abilities, you'll need to pay."

Su Yu nodded. After thinking for a bit, he asked, "Can I ask a few more questions?"

"Sure. As long as it's nothing important, it would be fine."

"Before this, Teaching Assistant Bai Feng said that he's going to take me as his personal student. Do you think he's a good choice for me?"

"Erm..." Xia Huyou awkwardly said, "That's hard to say. I've heard about that as well. But it depends on what you have in mind."

Su Yu calmly said, "I have nothing in mind. I only want to know how much help he could give me. Teacher Zhao Li of the weaponsmith faction had offered to take me as a personal student as well. I want to compare the two and see which of them is worth following."

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Xia Huyou looked at him in astonishment. "Researcher Zhao wanted to accept you as well?"

"Yes."

"Then...you're really quite capable." Xia Huyou raised his thumb and said, "That old man stopped accepting students a long time ago. His strength is nothing special, but he has a bad temper. Since he is one of the major figures of the weaponsmithing faction, his status is very high."

Xia Huyou hesitated and said, "Since you're asking me this, I'll give you a simple explanation of what I know."

"Bai Feng isn't too strong. At the very least, that's the case when compared with those from the older generation. Sure, he is talented, but that's his talent. Not yours."

"Bai Feng's faction is quite poor. The strongest in their faction is probably his teacher, Master Hong."

"But Bai Feng's faction might suit you more," Xia Huyou explained. "Their faction walks the path of Divine Character fusion. They don't focus on a single Divine Character. Fusion Divine Characters are very powerful.

"Furthermore, their faction also places a lot of importance in physical cultivation. Most of them are quite strong during the Mental Tempering Stage. Since they need to form more Divine Characters, they have higher requirements in terms of physical strength."

Su Yu frowned. Was that the case? Instructor Liu should be from the same faction as well, but his physical body...was really not that great. Prior to his breakthrough, he was only a Great Strength cultivator.

Xia Huyou continued, "But the most important part of their faction isn't all that. Rather, it's a research project of Master Hong. He aimed to unlock the special racial abilities for the human race. You won't understand that now. I don't know too much about that either. You'll know in the future."

Xia Huyou lowered his voice and said, "Assistant Bai Feng is only a seventh-stage Skysoar cultivator, but even Xia Yuwen from the Xia Family once claimed that he is a troublesome opponent to have.

"He has been keeping a lot of his trump cards hidden. Some suspect that his trump cards are related to Master Hong's research. If he reveals his trump cards, he might even be able to contend against Xia Yuwen.

"If you pick their faction, you might be able to gain a lot of benefits. Of course, there is always the possibility of gaining nothing.

"But I think you don't really have a choice. Sure, Teacher Zhao might be a decent choice as well. As for others, unless you choose to join the pillmaking faction, it would be better for you to choose Bai Feng.

"Your first mentor is Master Liu Wenyan. If you're untalented, it doesn't matter. Since you're talented, you would be considered his apprentice. And after coming to the academy, you would encounter some trouble if you don't join Bai Feng's faction."

Su Yu exhaled deeply and said, "Master Liu...Was Teacher Liu very popular back then?"

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"I guess so." Xia Huyou smiled, "I don't know the details. I only know some rumors. In any case, back then, Master Liu had a lot of enemies in the academy. Now, many of those people are occupying high positions in the academy. Think about it. It has been 50 years. A lot of things have changed since then.

"It is rumored that the current Principal Wan and Vice Principal Zhou did not get along well with Master Liu back then."

Su Yu frowned and nodded. He asked, "What about Teacher Zhao Li?"

"Weaponsmithing faction..." Xia Huyou muttered to himself. "To speak the truth, he's pretty suitable for you as well. Teacher Zhao is very protective of his own and the weaponsmithing factions do not lack resources. For middle and low tier students, they can get enough cultivation resources from them. But your future with them might be rather limited.

"Here in the academy, the weaponsmithing faction only has one Mountainsea expert. That expert has been in seclusion for years.

"If you're a middle-tier or even a high-low student, I would recommend that you join Teacher Zhao. But you're a high-high student. I think Assistant Bai Feng is a better choice for you."

Xia Huyou turned serious and said, "Of course, that is only my personal opinion. I only know that much after overhearing some conversations at home. I don't know more than that."

Su Yu nodded and thanked the chubby student for the information.

After a slight hesitation, he said, "There are internal conflicts in the academy. I want to know the level of the conflicts."

"Are you asking if people can get killed in these conflicts?"

"Yes."

Xia Huyou smiled and explained, "Nobody would die in the academy. But outside the academy...things are different. It's really very hard to say. At the very least, nobody had been caught killing outside the academy because of these conflicts yet. But at times, some people will die after leaving the academy. Who knows what happened? It's pointless to ask about this. The only thing you need to do is to watch your back."

"In that case, is it still safe within the academy?"

"Of course." Xia Huyou solemnly said, "This is the Great Xia Cultural Research Academy. Without Prefect Xia, even the capital city itself might be weaker than this academy."

"As an academy that has existed for hundreds of years, if it can't even protect the lives of its students, it should just shut down."

"Here, you can trick others. You can plot and scheme, or you can challenge others head on. But if you try to kill someone stealthily...hehe, just wait to die."

Su Yu was relieved to hear all that. At the very least, his safety was guaranteed.

Xia Huyou asked curiously, "Su Yu, have you decided?"

"I'll see." Su Yu did not answer the question. He asked, "When will the teachers start accepting students?"

"In five days. The students can take a few days to settle down. After that, the teachers will start accepting personal students." Xia Huyou smiled and said, "Don't worry. In the academy, as long as you do well in the monthly, seasonal, and end of semester exams, everything would be fine. Life here is really not that difficult."

"Exams?"

"Yes. Exams." Xia Huyou said, "Don't treat those exams lightly. You're a high-high student. Each month, you will receive three merit points. If you do badly in one exam, it's fine. If you do badly twice in a row, your student tier would be dropped. Three times and you would have your merit points deducted. Four times and you would be expelled..."

"What's the contents of the exams?"

"Languages, Divine Characters, willpower...the usual stuff." Xia Huyou indifferently said, "But the academy has different expectations for students of different tiers. As a high-high student, you will receive additional benefits. In that case, you need to do well in your exams. If not, both you and your personal teacher would be penalized."

"I understand."

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While speaking, the two arrived at the cafeteria. After paying 1 merit point for the cafeteria credit, he ordered some random dishes and was charged 300 dollars for them. That left him with a credit of 9,700 dollars.

He only had one word for this cafeteria: Scam!

Su Yu was buying the meal this time. He wasn't trying to be generous even when he was poor, but he wanted to ask Xia Huyou more questions. This fellow knew a lot of things. As a member of a large family, he was naturally different from Su Yu.

After eating his fill, Xia Huyou smiled and said, "Su Yu, I won't eat this meal for nothing. I'll give you one piece of advice. To survive in the academy, you need to be ruthless."

"Huh?"

"Don't try to hide your talent. It's pointless." Xia Huyou's face turned grim as he said, "If you keep hiding yourself, who would care if you're only being humble to mislead any potential opponents? Of course, if

you don't care about the resources of the academy, the support of the teachers, and some other benefits, then it doesn't matter.

"If you care, you have to show your talent. Don't be afraid of offending someone. What's scary about that? This is the academy. Would they dare to kill you in here?"

"They wouldn't. In that case, you should grab every chance you can and grow as fast as possible. The stronger you are, the more support you can get.

"If you are good enough to reach the Skysoar Realm in half a year, even the principal will start paying attention to you. At that time, harming you would be the same as suicide.

"But if you keep a low profile and pretend to be weak, who would care if you got killed?"

"I'll be frank. There are 100,000 people in the academy. How many experts are there in the academy? Why should others care about you? Since you're not a genius, you have no value. They are better off supporting their children or grandchildren. Why would they bother supporting you?"

"Therefore, you need to do well in the exams. If someone creates trouble for you, hit back. If it's an opponent you can't defeat, stay silent for a while. The moment you grow strong enough to take revenge, go step on them. Don't wait too long. Nobody would be interested in waiting for you to slowly grow.

"It's fine to be arrogant. Who's not arrogant around here?" Xia Huyou smiled, "In recent years, the most arrogant batch is Bai Feng's batch. Xia Yuwen, Hu Wensheng, Wu Qi, Bai Feng, Liu Hong...all these people are all from the same batch."

"Why are there so many experts from that batch?"

"Conflict." Xia Huyou answered in excitement, "You don't know just how arrogant those people were when they were students. When Xia Yuwen was on the verge of reaching the Skysoar Realm, he fought all the top 10 students on the ranking, challenging them from the second until the tenth place before doing the challenge in reverse. Each of them was beaten up twice by him.

"Toward the end, he challenged all of them together. He suffered heavy injuries from that fight, but he did manage to totally shut their mouths through that fight.

"You know Bai Feng. Back then, he was incredibly arrogant too. He was even more famous in the war academy than our academy. When he was in the Mental Tempering Stage, a genius from the war academy beat him up. After that, he started visiting the war academy every single year.

"One year, that fellow wasn't around. Bai Feng thought that the fellow was hiding from him so he challenged the other students on their Infinite Strength Ranking. From the second place until the hundredth place, he challenged them all. Using three days, he shut the mouths of all the war academy students."

Xia Huyou laughed, "Principal Zheng was furious and cleaned up the entire ranking of weaklings. He would rather let it stay empty than let some garbage students get on it.

"From 100 students, only 25 students were left on the ranking. The ranking was only fully filled up 2 years ago."

Su Yu asked in astonishment, "Something like that happened before?"

In his eyes, Bai Feng was a carefree and calm individual. He did not look like a hot-blooded youth that would get into fights easily. Thus, this story came as a surprise for him.

"Yeah. But it has been quite a while since then. When they were our age, they were very cocky. But if you're not arrogant, who would care about you?"

"You must have heard of Wu Qi before, right?" Xia Huyou lowered his voice and said, "She's even crazier than Bai Feng. She is younger than Bai Feng. When she first joined, the others looked down on her and claimed that she only has looks and nothing else. But...hehe, that woman is a monster."

Xia Huyou looked around fearfully before saying, "Do you know Liu Hong? He provoked her once. In front of dozens of teachers, she broke his leg. Even his bones were showing. Since then, Liu Hong has been afraid of her. He would be as obedient as a little boy whenever he saw her.

"That's not all. That woman...tsk tsk. She did not reach the Skysoar Realm in the academy. She did it at the Allheaven Battlefield. There, she encountered a devil who was out to temper himself. The two fought for half a day. I heard...I heard that she bit that devil elite to death. She even drank all his blood. What a fierce woman.

"In fact, she used devil blood to forge her body after her breakthrough. The Wu Family had originally prepared some divine blood for her, but they discovered that there was a lot of devil blood in her body. That was the blood she drank from the devil she killed. As a result, they were forced to give her devil blood for her forging instead.

"I heard from the Martial Dragon Guards that when they found her, she was barely alive. As for the devil, his throat was nearly bitten off."

Su Yu instantly turned solemn. All the previous information didn't really attract too much of his attention. With Wu Lan as an example, he had developed a prejudice toward those from the large clans. He thought that all of them were fools.

But now, even Su Yu was horrified after hearing the story of Wu Qi. Was she that ferocious? She actually bit a devil to death? How vicious must she be to do that? He wasn't even sure if he could do the same himself. There were many ways to kill, but he wasn't able to accept all methods of killing.

"I'm telling you all this because I want you to know that their batch is the real deal," said Xia Huyou. "And you need to know that our batch is even crazier.

"There has never been a single batch with so many freaks before. At best, there would only be around two or three per year. This year, I know of eight of them.

"We have 26 high-high students this year. Last year, we only had 12 of them. That's like more than double the number this year.

"Therefore, I am definitely going to be more cowardly in the academy. As a high-middle student, I could have been just as arrogant if this is any other year. But this year, I'm too afraid to do that."

"Why did you instigate me to do so then?" Su Yu rolled his eyes.

"What are you afraid of? You're a high-high student!"

"You're nearly at the Great Strength Realm. Maybe you can break through in a few days. There are very few Great Strength cultivators among the new students. Sure, the Mental Tempering Stage is great and all, but without the right Divine Characters, the Mental Tempering Stage won't really provide you with much combat strength."

"Like me. I'm at the Mental Tempering Stage with a completed Divine Character. But my Divine Character is only good for cleaning. As for fighting...I would probably find myself beaten to death if I had to rely on this Divine Character."

"Your Divine Character should be offensive in nature, right?"

Su Yu smiled and said, "You can say so. But it's not too strong offensively. It's more a supportive Divine Character than an offensive one. I need to cut open the enemy's skin for my Divine Character to start absorbing blood."

"Oh, blood absorption ability..." Xia Huyou noted that down. Su Yu asked in astonishment, "Don't you have my information?"

"I have, but the information provided by Nanyuan is very vague. As for the exam information, it's top secret. Most of what I know are rumors. And I didn't know you before this, so I have no way of knowing about that."

Information was something he needed to gather slowly. And look, he was able to learn that Su Yu had a blood absorption Divine Character ability.

Su Yu said, "Uhm...if I sell my information to you, would it be worth anything?"

"What?"

"I have more than one Divine Character ability, if I sell more to you, would you pay?"

Ruthless!

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The way Xia Huyou looked at Su Yu changed. This was a ruthless guy! For money, he was willing to sell even himself!

"Uhm...if you're providing real information...I think it would be worth some money."

"Then how about five merit points for one ability?"

"That's too expensive. How about one merit point?"

"Forget it. That's too little. I'm not selling anymore." Su Yu gave up.

Xia Huyou wiped his sweat. He was really surprised. This fellow looked like an innocent guy earlier, but he was finally showing his true colors. He was a truly truthless guy.

"Are you not afraid that others would target your weakness after learning about your abilities?"

"They would know sooner or later. I only need to keep growing and trying to target my weakness would be nothing but a joke."

"You're right..." Xia Huyou nodded. The smile on his face grew wider as he said, "Brother Su, remember to take care of your brother in the future. Feel free to look for me if you need anything. I'll take care of it for you."

"Really?"

"Of course."

"I want to buy some Infinite Strength blood essence. Can you get some for me?"

"It's only some Infinite Strength blood. That's no big deal. What do you need?"

Su Yu started listing, "Looping turtle, ox-faced fish, and iron-winged bird."

"I can't provide any ox-faced fish blood," Xia Huyou was troubled. "That's a neutral race. We can't hunt them easily. Anyone caught hunting them would be in trouble. I can get iron-winged bird blood easily. As for the looping turtle...I need to ask around first."

"What's the pricing for that?"

"Infinite Strength blood essence can be split into the early, middle, and late stage. Which do you want?"

"Great Strength iron-winged bird blood is cheap. You can get a drop for one merit point regardless of their cultivation level. As for the Infinite Strength Realm, you need to pay 3 merit points for a drop of early-stage blood, 5 merit points for middle-stage blood, and 10 merit points for late-stage blood.

"As for looping turtle blood, it's even more expensive since it's much rarer than iron-winged bird blood."

"I only need some early-stage blood. As for looping turtle blood, it doesn't matter if you can't get it. I'll get some iron-winged bird blood essence. How about 5 drops of iron-winged bird blood essence and 5 drops of source qi liquid for thirty merit points."

Xia Huyou grimaced and said, "Su Yu, you're pushing the price too much. Source qi liquid is worth 5 merit points per drop while the blood essence is worth 15 merit points for 5 drops. You need to pay 40 merit points for all that..."

Su Yu shook his head and said, "I'm not stupid. If I exchange my merit points into cash, I can get 50,000 dollars per point. For 30 merit points, I can get 1.5 million dollars. The official price of source qi liquid is only 100,000 dollars per drop. For 5 drops, I only need to pay 500,000 dollars. Don't tell me that a drop of Infinite Strength iron-winged bird blood essence is worth 200,000 dollars per drop.

"But it's risky going through the black market. I don't want to take that risk or go through the official channel and waste my merit points. That is why I'm buying from you. If you can do this for 30 merit points, we can keep working together in the future. If not...I refuse to believe that nobody else is doing this in the academy. It's not like I'm buying some restricted resources.

"This is enough for you to make a profit. I'm not someone that won't allow someone to make money. Don't tell me that you will make a loss selling them to me at 30 merit points."

Xia Huyou raised his thumb and said, "You're smart, brother. If you buy from the academy, you would need 40 merit points. You made the right choice coming to me instead. Sure, I'll get them to you by tomorrow. I'll accept the offer of 30 merit points."

Su Yu smiled. Money saved! If it was anyone else, he wouldn't have dared to make a purchase so soon after entering the academy. After all, he was still afraid of getting scammed and losing all his merit points.

But he was willing to work with Xia Huyou since this was a smart person from a large family. He should be aware that it wasn't worth severing his relationship with Su Yu for only 30 merit points.

Perhaps Su Yu could get a cheaper price on the black market, but he didn't have the time to waste on that. It wasn't like he had a connection to the black market either. As for Zhou Hui, forget it. He was afraid that she would report him for his merit points.

Xia Huyou was also grinning happily. See, this was the benefit of befriending a genius. At their first meeting, they were already making a transaction worth 30 merit points.

Those middle and low tier students were incredibly stingy. Every transaction with them would probably be worth only a few merit points. Working with a genius would be much better. And a genius with no background like this was an even better customer. After all, those with a strong background would already have plenty of such resources.

Su Yu had just entered the academy. What about the future? The more Xia Huyou thought about it, the wider his smile was. After taking the 30 merit points through the black market, he would get 1.5 million dollars.

As for the things Su Yu needed, the price wasn't fixed. For example, the official price of a drop of source qi liquid was 100,000 dollars. But if he bought from some of his close acquaintances or obtained the help of a Skysoar cultivator, he could get the liquid at the price of 50,000 dollars per drop.

As for Infinite Strength iron-winged bird blood essence, it wasn't too expensive. He was confident he could get 5 drops for 500,000 dollars. He stood to make at least 50 percent profit from this transaction.

Of course, he needed to take some risk for this transaction. He also needed connections for it. This was not the kind of business everyone could do. If one was unlucky and got raided during the process, all the merit points would probably end up in a certain Wan guy's pocket.

He was happy, and Su Yu was even happier. This was a much better price than he had expected. He was already prepared to buy from the academy, but he would lose all 40 of his merit points doing so.

Now, he was able to keep 10 merit points for himself. That would be enough to pay for his living expenses for a period of time.

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After grabbing a meal and collecting his books and uniform, Su Yu returned to the Mental Tempering Garden. The residents around his unit had already arrived by now.

Xia Huyou was no longer the great merchant who would talk about transactions worth thousands or even tens of thousands of merit points. Instead, he transformed back into a humble cleaner as he approached the newcomers for more business.

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In his room, Su Yu spread the new bedding over his bed and opened the window for ventilation before sitting down on the couch. He exhaled in relief. He had finally settled down.

Tomorrow, Xia Huyou would give him what he wanted. He would then be able to start cultivating without any inhibitions. With five drops of Infinite Strength iron-winged bird blood essence, could he reset the iron-winged bird page?

Su Yu did not know the answer for that. Regardless of the answer, Infinite Strength blood essence would still help him cultivate faster. And the source qi density of the capital had always been much higher than Nanyuan's.

Even without things like source qi liquid and blood essence, Su Yu could cultivate much faster here. He could feel a large amount of source qi entering his acupoints even when he wasn't focusing on cultivating.

With an environment like this, Su Yu was sure that even without the book in his mind, he would be able to easily reach the seventh-stage Source Opening Realm just by growing up here. As far as he was concerned, a local who wasn't at least a sixth-stage Source Opening cultivator was truly talentless, even if that local was from an ordinary family.

While Su Yu was thinking, someone knocked on his door. He opened the door.

A middle-aged man was outside. When he saw Su Yu, he wasted no time and said, "I am a member of the guards committee of block 3. Please be reminded that when coming in and out of the dorm, you are not allowed to bring outsiders. Additionally, your class notifications or schedule changes will be given by us.

"You can also look for the committee for cleaning services. We will send some cleaners up. You only need to pay 3,000 dollars per month for that.

"As for laundry, there is a laundry shop downstairs. You can pay for everything with either your merit card or your student card."

The man spoke quickly and smoothly. Clearly, this wasn't his first time saying those words. Su Yu's first thought was that Xia Huyou's cleaning business was over. From this moment onward, his cleaning business was dead. A competition had arrived so quickly.

"Additionally, since you new students are free this afternoon, you can gather downstairs at three. The committee is organizing a tour around the academy.

"From tomorrow onward, you can pick your faculty and teacher."

Most of the residents of block 3 are geniuses. In fact, a majority of those staying in the Mental Tempering Garden were high-tier students. Of course, there was also a small number of middle-tier students.

They were also in the Mental Tempering Stage, but since they hadn't completed their Divine Characters, they weren't able to get enough score to get a high-tier evaluation during their examinations.

"Ok. Got it."

The middle-aged man said nothing else and moved on to a different door.

Before long, Su Yu heard someone shouting in the corridor, "The guards committee is providing cleaning services, but their services take a lot of time! You need to apply for it, wait for people to be sent, and wait for an hour or two while your room is being cleaned. Is it fun to stay with strangers for an hour or two?"

"Look for me! I'll get it done in five minutes! And I guarantee I can do a better job cleaning your room!"

"My services might be a bit more expensive, but it is worth the price. If you subscribe to my services for a month, you'll receive a discount. For an even bigger discount, subscribe for a year!"

...

In his room, Su Yu did not know whether to laugh or cry. That fellow was clearly not willing to give up on his cleaning business and was making a last struggle against his competition. But then again, some of the richer students might really look for him.

But his services were really quite expensive. If it was those fellows in the high-level zone instead, they would probably be willing to pay him. After all, his cleaning services were really fast.

Those rich students wouldn't care about money. If they would, they wouldn't have spent 100 merit points to live in the high-level zone.

...

Su Yu ignored the voices outside and continued reading the student manual. When it was near three o'clock, Su Yu went downstairs.

Chapter 134: Minor Cultivation (1)

Downstairs.

A lot of students had arrived. A middle-aged man of about 40 years old walked out and introduced himself, "I am Chen Feng, the leader of block 3's student committee. I will be taking you on a tour around the academy."

Su Yu narrowed his eyes. This Chen Feng felt like a blinding dot of light to his senses. Large amount of source qi converged around him. This was a cultivator at the Infinite Strength Realm or above.

Was he at the Infinite Strength Realm? Or stronger? The guards committee was basically the security of their apartment block. The academy was using an Infinite Strength cultivator as a security guard?

Since Su Yu could sense the guard's strength, the other students had naturally sensed the same. These students were mostly in the Mental Tempering Stage without much combat strength, but their senses were far sharper than warriors of similar cultivation level.

One of the students asked, "What is your strength, Committee Leader Chen? I'm curious. Can you tell us?"

Chen Feng looked at the students and smiled before answering, "Seventh-stage Infinite Strength Realm. There are five of us in the committee for block 3. The other four are in the Infinite Strength Realm too.

"We are members of the regiment of guards stationed here at the Mental Tempering Garden. In the Mental Tempering Garden, there are three 100-man units. The academy places a lot of importance on you people. Therefore, the guards here are stronger than the guards of the other areas."

The students here were all geniuses. Apart from some important secret grottos, the Mental Tempering Garden was the most important part of the academy. After all, eliminating the Mental Tempering Garden was basically the same as ridding the academy of its successors.

A seventh-stage Infinite Strength cultivator as the leader of a security team for a single apartment block. Nobody in Nanyuan would dare to even imagine something like that happening.

Chen Feng checked the time and said, "I guess this is everyone. The other students are probably already familiar with the academy. Follow me and don't run off alone."

...

There weren't a lot of students in this tour group. There were around 50 of them. Su Yu had no idea how many students there were in block 3. But if it was fully occupied, it would have 120 residents.

Xia Huyou wasn't part of the group. That fellow was already familiar with the academy so it was understandable that he wasn't interested in this tour.

"There are eight main districts in the academy. Those who have read the student manual should know that. Today, I'll show you the Education District, Dao Preaching District, and Grotto District.

"The Mental Tempering Garden is part of the Residential District. After leaving the Mental Tempering Garden, you will reach the ordinary dorms."

It was clear Chen Feng had no talent in being a tour guide. His introductions were dry and stiff.

The first place they reached was the Education District. The district was massive, and it was filled with numerous buildings. The books depository and library were all in the Education District as well. Chen Feng only showed the students the buildings from the outside as they needed to pay to enter.

Apart from Su Yu's group, other groups of students were also being shown around the academy. Those were probably all new students.

Before long, they arrived in front of an old building. Numerous people could be seen coming in and out of the building. Chen Feng turned and faced the students before saying, "Some of you probably know this place. This is the House of Hundred, a building allocated by the academy to serve the top 100 students.

"They can accept missions, cultivate, or spar here. The biggest dream of many students is to enter this building, becoming a top 100 student. In the academy, a top 100 student is different from a regular student. Of the previous year's top 100 students, 16 of them have stepped into the Skysoar Realm in June this year.

"That is proof of how authoritative the Top 100 Ranking is when it comes to judging the potential of the students. As for those in this year's top 100, I reckon a lot of them would be able to graduate by next year as well."

Su Yu asked doubtfully, "Committee Leader Chen, is the Top 100 Ranking updated once per year?"

"No." Chen Feng shook his head and said, "The ranking is updated once per month. The 16 graduates I mentioned did not graduate at the same time. They graduate throughout the year, but we will lump them together. For example, the students graduating from July this year until June next year would be lumped together as well.

"The ranking will refresh on the 3rd of each month. Students not on the ranking can challenge those on the ranking from the 3rd until the 25th. After the 25th, challenges will stop."

Beside Su Yu, a tall and slim student asked, "Committee Leader Chen, I heard that we need to pay 10 merit points per challenge. Isn't that too expensive?"

"That is put in place to ensure that the students would be self-aware." Chen Feng explained, "What if a student is not self-aware enough and repeatedly challenges the students on the ranking? How are the top students supposed to cultivate? But if the challenger needs to pay 10 merit points, that would serve as a lesson to not overestimate themselves.

"Of course, if you're rich enough, you can even challenge the ranking 10 times per day. You will be able to find an opponent each time."

The challenge fee was basically an obstacle. The challenger would get the merit points back upon winning. But if they lose, they won't get anything.

The tall and slim student asked, "Do we have to start our challenge from the student on the 100th place?"

"No. You can challenge those from the 91st to the 100th place. If you win, you can get on the ranking and challenge those in the next category. Thus, to challenge those in the top 10, you need to be in the top 20.

"The Top 100 Ranking is only a ranking measuring your combat strength. The academy has many other rankings as well. You can give those a try. For a cultural research academy, combat strength isn't a priority prior to graduation."

The Top 100 Ranking mainly measured one's combat strength. Some students would not have much combat strength prior to graduation. Thus, this ranking was unfair to them. After all, those walking the path of pillmaking, weaponsmithing, and so on were quite weak during the early stages.

At that time, a crew-cut youth walked out of the building in front of them. He looked straight ahead, not sparing Chen Feng even a single glance.

Chen Feng hurriedly stepped aside and softly said, "Don't block the way!"

The students behind him hurriedly parted. Meanwhile, the crew-cut youth continued walking ahead, completely ignoring them.

"A top 10 student," said Chen Feng after the youth left. "He is Jiang Mu, number six on the ranking. At the sixth-stage Infinite Strength Realm and Mental Tempering Stage, he is very strong."

Chen Feng added with a self-mocking tone, "Don't look down on him just because he's at the sixth-stage Infinite Strength Realm. If I fight him, I won't be able to last more than 30 seconds."

The students' expressions turned solemn. Chen Feng was a seventh-stage Infinite Strength cultivator. He was quite strong already. But someone like him wouldn't even last 30 seconds against Jiang Mu.

And that came from Chen Feng himself, not a random rumor off the street. And from Chen Feng's expression, he wasn't speaking those words to fawn on that student. He was speaking the truth.

A student asked, "Committee Head Chen, how about Zhan Hai, the number one student on the ranking?"

"Zhan Hai?" Chen Feng smiled, "You should ground yourself in reality. Forget about Zhan Hai. He once fought a Skysoar cultivator. He did not lose."

He didn't lose! Did he win? Nobody knew if it was a victory or a draw, but that was still shocking news. This was a genius capable of fighting someone in the Skysoar Realm.

One of the students said enviously, "This House of Hundred will be our new target. I hope I can reach this place as fast as possible."

Chen Feng merely smiled silently, not bothering to say anything to smash their confidence. How many students were there in the academy? There were over 10,000 students below 30. And only 100 of them could get on the ranking.

Most people would enter the academy at 18. In short, the ranking was a ranking for 12 batches of students. Some of the older geniuses had naturally reached the Skysoar Realm and graduated by now.

But some of the more ordinary students who had joined 12 years ago had also grown to a rather terrifying degree by now. Generally speaking, even the best among the top-tier students would need around three years to enter the ranking.

"Don't look down on the top 100 students. Even the one on the last place has the combat strength of a third-stage Infinite Strength cultivator." Chen Feng reminded, "As for those on the top 50, they had the combat strength of sixth-stage Infinite Strength cultivators. Those on the top 30 had the strength of seventh-stage Infinite Strength cultivators. As for those in the top 10, they had the combat strength of peak Infinite Strength cultivators."

Some of the new students were disheartened after hearing all that. Even the one on the last place was nearly as strong as a middle-stage Infinite Strength cultivator. It was truly hard to get on the Top 100 Ranking.

"Alright. We're done here. I'll show you the outside of the Grotto District. You still can't enter that district for now."

As the students followed Chen Feng away, many of them looked back at the House of Hundred. Since a lot of them were also high-tier geniuses, they naturally longed to enter that house. Nobody would be willing to stay mediocre.

...

They couldn't see too much of the Grotto District since they were only allowed to take a look from the outside. The only impression Su Yu got out of it was that there were a lot of experts around.

The researchers they saw along the way were akin to small suns to his senses. They were so blinding that he did not dare to use his senses on them. In fact, before his senses could reach them, his extended willpower was already on the brink of collapse.

Even the weakest researcher in the academy would be in the Skysoar Realm. As for the Foreign Student Faculty, they weren't allowed to visit. They had not seen any foreign students either.

The foreign students were staying in a different area from the human students. In fact, their residential area was actually near the residential area of the teachers. Evidently, the academy was also afraid that things would get out of control so they arranged for the foreign students to stay near the teachers.

After all, that was a place filled with experts. Hundreds of experts would appear at the first sign of trouble there.

Chapter 135: Minor Cultivation (2)

After about an hour, the group returned back to their block.

That night, Su Yu grabbed a simple dinner before doing some cultivation and reading. In this academy, strength was the most important factor. To earn merit points, strength was required. To gain resources, strength was required. To show off, strength was also required. Without strength, one was nothing.

Additionally, even experts like Chen Feng would step out of the way politely upon facing a number six student like Jiang Mu. They weren't even that respectful when facing researchers.

Generally, the researchers would not pay any attention to people like them. But that was not the case for these young students that were still full of youthful vigor. It was far easier for them to take offense to how others behave around them.

Chen Feng and the other guards were well-experienced. Thus, they knew to be even more cautious toward these students than the researchers. That was one of the reasons why everyone was so envious of the top 100 students. Everyone had to show them respect.

Su Yu no longer had any source qi liquid on him. As for the final drop of blood essence he had, he did not use it. That night, he mainly focused on reading. He was reading the Lightning Source Blade willpower text written by Liu Wenyan. He had already mastered the second move so he was reading the third move.

Unfortunately, due to the passage of time, the third move was no longer as effective as the first two moves. As for the fourth move, when he tried skimming through it, it was only a tiny bit effective. As for the fifth move and beyond, the contents were basically the same as a regular book instead of a willpower text.

"Third move of the Lightning Source Blade, Lightning Eruption."

"A total of 16 acupoints are required for this move."

Su Yu had already opened 12 of the acupoints for Lightning Source Blade. Thus, he needed to open 4 more acupoints to practice the fourth move. For now, he was only reading it. He was not planning to practice it anytime soon.

Rather than opening four acupoints to master the third move, he might as well open the final three acupoints he needed to open for the War God Art. After that, he could enter the Great Strength Realm if he gave up on the advanced version of the War God Art.

The second move of the Lightning Source Blade in the hands of a Great Strength cultivator was still far stronger than the third move in the hands of a Source Opening cultivator.

"I need to read this text more. It's going to turn into a regular text soon."

Su Yu was feeling very gloomy. The Source Opening Codex written by Bai Feng had already been reduced to a regular text. If the same happened to the Lightning Source Blade before he could read more of it, that would be too much of a waste.

He spent the entire night reading. The third move was rather troublesome to read, but this was a clash of willpower, a perfect way of cultivating his willpower. Before reaching the Skysoar Realm, he wouldn't be able to cultivate the academy's Myriad Text Sutra.

Su Yu's willpower was already 30 percent full. He had grown a lot since his previous meeting with Bai Feng. All that was thanks to the incomplete Great Strength original text that was on the verge of falling apart, the Source Opening Codex, and the Lightning Source Blade.

And when he reached the Mental Tempering Stage, his strength would take a qualitative leap forward. At that point, his Divine Characters would grow a lot stronger.

...

While Su Yu was reading the Lightning Source Blade.

Education Building.

Sounds of discussion rang out from the brightly lit building.

"The pillmaking faction should get a few freaks this year!"

"We can't let all the freaks join the Willpower and Character Faculties every single year!"

"Yeah! Our faculties are on the verge of shutting down! You guys keep sending middle and low tier students our way. As for the high-tier and freak students, those two faculties are getting them all. It is only a matter of time before our faculties go extinct."

With the new students in the academy, the various faculties were starting to get impatient. Based on the convention, most of the freaks and high-high geniuses would choose to join the Character and Willpower Faculties.

As for the other faculties, they were losing members faster than they could train new members.

New students would enter the academy each year, but the more talented ones would all be snatched by the two major faculties. The other faculties were dissatisfied, but there was nothing they could do about it. The person hosting the meeting wasn't Wan Tiansheng. It was Su Ziming, the third vice principal.

The old man was having a headache listening to the arguments. Looking at the shouting researchers, he slammed his palm on the desk and shouted, "Silence."

"High-tier students are allowed to pick their own faculty. We can't force them to join a faculty they don't want to join."

"The Character and Willpower Faculties rely on their own capability to recruit so many talented students. What can I do if you guys are the ones who can't do anything to attract those students?"

"You spend all your time in seclusion and your research centers. As for the Character and Willpower Faculties, they have people going around recruiting those top talents every single year. What have you been doing? If you're not willing to put in the work, how can you expect the students to choose you?"

"During tomorrow and the day after, the students will be picking their faculties. Try to recruit them during those two days. If you keep lazing around, then it is only a matter of time before your faculties are shut. In that case, we might as well merge your faculties into the major faculties."

Someone in the crowd objected, "Elder Su, there is nothing we can do about that. Willpower and Divine Characters have a very clear effect on one's strength. But how about the other faculties? Take our Pillmaking Faculty as an example. We have a lot of powerful pills on display, but do you know what the students think when they see our pills?"

The old man gloomily said, "They would think that wow, those pills sure are expensive. Let's grow strong and earn some merit points to buy those pills in the future. But very few of them would actually think of making these pills themselves!"

The crowd roared in laughter.

A burly man said, "It's the same with the Beast Taming Faculty. No matter how powerful the beasts we show off, those little bastards will only think of buying some powerful beasts when they earn some money in the future. Nobody would think of taming their own beasts."

"That's the same with the Talisman Faculty. They will only think about buying the talismans, not crafting their own talismans."

They sounded very resentful when speaking.

An old man from the Pillmaking Faculty said, "That's all the Xia Trade Company's fault! They are spreading their black market into the academy, making all sorts of resources available for purchase."

Because of that, the students have the impression that as long as they have enough money, they can buy anything. I suggest we crack down on the black market!"

The old man solemnly said, "This is the best timing. Since the new students have just entered, we raid the black market and make them disappear from the academy. We will uphold the sanctity of our official exchange system. We will let them know that there are some resources that they couldn't buy even with money."

"If we allow this to continue, apart from the combat faculties, all the other faculties would be done for."

"That's right! We need to crack down on the black market!"

That idea immediately gained the approval of the crowd. Someone else said, "With the Xia Trade Company as our main focus, we will tear down the black market in the academy. We will also start supplying our pills, talismans, and mounts to the Xia Trade Company at a higher price. Let's see if they still think that money can buy everything after that."

"Yeah! We'll increase the price! We will force the students to rely on themselves instead of the black market!"

Su Ziming looked at the excited crowd and helplessly said, "Raising our price? Based on how the Xia Trade Company acts, the additional cost would only be transferred to the students."

"Exactly. That way, the students would realize that it's not worth buying from the black market. They would be forced to buy from the academy instead. They would find that they lack the total earned merit and merit points to buy what they want. At that time, we will unveil our special price for our own faculty students. That would naturally attract more students to join our faculties."

The old man from the Pillmaking Faculty smiled and said, "If we give a 20 percent discount on all pills for our own faculty students, do you think we will gain a lot of new students?"

...

One after another, they voiced their agreement to the plan.

Su Ziming was greatly troubled. After a while, he said, "I can agree with the crackdown. I can also agree with the internal discount. But you can only force some unwilling students to join you this way..."

After some thought, he added, "I have been in talks with the principal about allowing the students to minor in a second faculty.

"Apart from focusing on combat, it is always better for the students to learn some additional skills. By allowing them to minor in a second faculty, our students would learn more skills..."

Many pairs of eyes lit up in excitement. One of them said, "Elder Su, this isn't the first time someone is suggesting this. During our previous attempts, the students focusing on multiple faculties would end up spread too thin and failing to keep up with their studies on both sides. How do we solve that?"

Cultivation was very time consuming. It was a good thing to learn more skills, but it was even more possible that the students would simply fail to keep up after spreading themselves too thin.

Su Ziming smiled and said, "For now, we can give this privilege only to the high-tier students. These students have better talent and resources. They would have no trouble keeping up with two faculties.

"As for the middle and low-tier students, you don't lack those students anyway. The high-tier students are what you want, right?"

"What do you think? We'll allow the high-tier students to minor in a second faculty for now."

Everyone looked at each other. Before long, one of them said, "Would the students minoring in our faculty count as our students?"

"Yes."

"Would their results be counted in our performance review?"

"Yes."

"Can the researchers of the minor faculties accept these students as their students as well?"

The crowd started getting excited. One of them asked, "Most of them would already have a teacher from their major faculty. Can they take a second teacher for their minor faculty?"

Su Ziming raised his brow and said, "If you don't mind, sure. But each student can only pick a single faculty to minor in."

"The students in your faculties can also take a minor in other faculties as well. I understand that a lot of the students in the Pillmaking and Talisman Making Faculties have been thinking of changing a faculty."

The crowd nodded. Someone asked doubtfully, "Elder Su, would Principal Wan agree?"

"Yes, he will." Su Ziming said, "The academy is trying to reform itself. Some of the old rules might no longer be suitable. The previous attempt at establishing this minor faculty system had failed because we didn't have this many genius students and resources back then. Thus, it wasn't able to achieve the desired results."

"But things are different now. The collision of different systems might spur even more growth among the students. After all, it has been many years since the academy has produced someone beyond the Mountainsea Realm."

Su Ziming sighed and said, "We are reexamining the way we have been doing things. Have we been too focused on having each student focus on a single path? Is that why we haven't been able to produce new experts? Those above the Mountainsea Realm we had produced back then were all individuals well-versed in many paths. Did our overly strict division of paths cause the stop of progress?"

Everyone sank into silence. Was this really the cause? They didn't know, but the division of paths had indeed been very strict in the academy. Sure, that had allowed the students to grow quickly at the early stages, but most of them would slow down tremendously at the latter stages.

In terms of low and middle end strength, the academy had grown massively. But in terms of high end strength, the academy had been stagnant.

Su Ziming sighed and said, "Let's give it a try. I also want to see if this would change our students. In fact, this is applicable to us as well. I suggest all of you to minor in a different path as well. Otherwise, it is really too hard for people like us to progress further."

"Elder Su, would this really work?"

"We can only give it a try." Su Ziming softly said, "Isn't the process of reform also a process of experimentation? All of you should understand what Principal Wan wants. We are strong enough in terms of low and middle end strength. What we need now are elites, the cream of the crop, those capable of reaching beyond the Mountainsea Realm.

"I'll be honest. Even if we have to ruin some students during the reform, as long as we can discover a path beyond the Mountainsea Realm, everything would be worth it.

"A single individual beyond the Mountainsea Realm is worth more than 10,000 students."

Toward the end, Su Ziming's tone turned cold. This was an experiment. They did not know the result. But if they could really produce even one individual that was above the Mountainsea Realm, it would be worth it even if they have to ruin the next 10 batches of students.

Chapter 136: Malicious Intent From Martial Uncle (1)

irst day at the academy was spent getting to know the academy.

Early next morning. Su Yu had just finished brushing his teeth when someone knocked on his door.

"Su Yu, open the door."

Su Yu walked over and opened the door.

The moment he did so, Xia Huyou rushed inside and wailed, "It's over!"

"Huh?" Su Yu frowned. What was this fellow doing?

"It's over!" Xia Huyou mournfully said, "It's really over. Last night, the guards were deployed. The entire black market was raided. A large number of people were captured and countless merit points and resources were seized. Those captured are being interrogated. Even those who had not been caught with any other wrongdoings would need to pay a fine to be released."

"Raided?" Su Yu blanked out and frowned as he asked, "And why are you telling me this?"

"Su Yu, didn't you order some products worth 30 merit points yesterday? Those things have arrived in the academy. I was going to give them to you today, but the raid happened. Uhm...can you...uhm...share the burden with me?"

Su Yu had not paid anything when making the order.

Xia Huyou sullenly said, "That's 30 merit points. Su Yu, those things were bought for you. I hadn't bothered asking for a deposit because we're fellow schoolmates. Now that a raid has happened, can you..."

Su Yu stared at the chubby guy for a while before saying, "Why are you acting pitiful? Do you think I would believe you?"

"I'm telling the truth!" Xia Huyou said indignantly, "The black market was really raided!"

"So coincidental?"

"Exactly!" Xia Huyou pitifully said, "Each year when new students arrive is the peak period of the black market. Nothing has happened to it before but this year, something happened. The academy is too greedy! My loss is quite small in comparison. Some fellows are going bankrupt."

He sighed and said, "Take that Liu Hong as an example. He is probably crying somewhere now. His Liu Family is a big player in the black market. He had a lot of his wealth thrown into the black market. Now, he lost all of them."

Su Yu suddenly felt like laughing. It would seem like the academy had emptied the pockets of many people this time.

"I'm not paying." Su Yu shook his head. "This is unrelated to me. I refuse to believe your stuff was seized since you're still freely walking around."

"Even if your stuff were really seized, if you're asking for your customer to share the burden for a tiny loss, you're not worth working with anymore."

"Even if I can pay you a few merit points this time, you can forget about doing business with me in the future. People like you can only see the short term benefit. There is no point for us to work together."

Xia Huyou's face turned awkward as he said, "Su Yu, don't say that. I was joking! I made some losses yesterday so I was in a bad mood!"

"Your stuff will be here in the afternoon. I'm still charging you 30 merit points. To tell you the truth, the prices are increasing after the raid, but I'm maintaining the same price for you!"

"I was just joking earlier. Don't take it seriously."

Su Yu couldn't be bothered to entertain the string of excuses and asked, "Were you really raided yesterday?"

"Yes!" Xia Huyou swore, "I was really raided. You have no idea how sad I am! Luckily, I just entered the academy yesterday and my business wasn't that big yet. If my business was already big, I would have lost even more. But I really did lose everything I made from an entire day of cleaning due to the raid!"

Su Yu rolled his eyes. So this fellow didn't lose that much at all. He had thought that this fellow had gathered a massive stock only to be raided.

"Would the academy do these raids often?"

"No," Xia Huyou answered helplessly. "I heard that previously, there wouldn't be more than three raids per year. But this year is different for some reason. There was a raid just two months ago but they're back so fast."

He cursed and said, "Is the academy running out of money? Are they trying to use the black market to fill up their empty coffers?"

Su Yu did not let the conversation derail and asked, "Since there was a raid, could you still deliver my stuff in the afternoon?"

"Of course." Xia Huyou proudly said, "This is the safest time to do it. There was a raid last night. Are they going to raid us again so soon? Furthermore, the volume I trade in is too small to pique their attention. It would be fine."

"Would they notice if I transfer my merit points to you?"

"We would be fine as long as we aren't caught in action." Xia Huyou was all smiles as he said, "It is too easy to come up with an excuse for the transfer of merit points. For example, I'm starving and you're lending me some. Or you owed me some in the past and you're clearing the debt."

Su Yu nodded and said nothing else. The raid didn't really have any effect on him. He wouldn't pay anything before receiving his stuff.

"Oh, I almost forgot this. The academy is launching a new system where high-tier students can major in a faculty and minor in a different faculty."

"Huh?" Su Yu exclaimed in astonishment, "Minor? What do you mean?"

Xia Huyou gave a simple explanation, clearing Su Yu's doubts.

"Zhao Li..."

But he shook his head. Even if he wanted to do so, Zhao Li might not agree. Minor in a faculty was still different from majoring in it. He stopped thinking. He would see what to do when the moment arrived.

Su Yu then finished cleaning up before preparing to go out for a meal. He still had a lot of things to do after the meal. Like Chen Feng said yesterday, they were going to pick a faculty today. The various faculties would be at the Dao Preaching District to attract new students.

...

Half an hour later.

Public square, Dao Preaching District.

Before even reaching the square, Su Yu was greeted by an astonishing sight.

A massive bird was flying in the sky. On the bird was a tiny human silhouette. The human said, "The Beast Taming Faculty welcomes all new students. By joining us, even those below the Skysoar Realm can fly!"

Immediately after, a different human silhouette shot into the sky from a different side of the square. That person was not at the Skysoar Realm. The person in the sky looked young, and at a closer look, there was actually a pair of wings on that person's back.

"The Transformation Faculty welcomes you! No Wings? We can help you grow a pair of wings! Even as a Great Strength cultivator, you can soar into the sky and breach the clouds!"

...

Su Yu was completely stunned. This was his very first time seeing a cultural researcher who had transformed his own body. He had grown a pair of wings for himself!

Beside him, Xia Huyou and the others were also staring at the person in the sky. Before long, one of them softly said, "I can't accept transforming my own body. He looks like someone from the Foreign Student Faculty. On the battlefield, he might get mistaken for an enemy instead of a human."

Next, an explosion of light erupted as dots of light rained down on the students. A human soared into the sky, numerous shining Divine Characters floating around his head. Those were not human characters. Su Yu recognized them. Those were characters of the immortal race.

"Heal!"

"The Character Faculty welcomes everyone to the academy. If you are being plagued by some illness, we can help you treat the illness. If you don't have any illness, we can improve your health."

At that, Su Yu and the other students felt a refreshing sensation spread all over their bodies.

The shining person in the sky smiled and said, "That is a basic supportive Divine Character. Today, we are accepting new students, so we won't be using any combat Divine Characters. If you are interested, feel free to join our faculty."

Before the students could react, a golden streak shot over. Next, a jade pendant appeared in front of Su Yu.

"The Talisman Faculty welcomes all of you! You don't need to prepare anything in advance. Just activate it! Student, lend me a hand! It's very simple. Just toss it at me!"

Su Yu looked up and saw an ethereal old man looking at him with a friendly smile. Su Yu was astonished. He was chosen to activate the talisman?

After giving it some thought, he grabbed the talisman. The old man said, "Release a bit of your willpower..."

Su Yu nodded and tossed the talisman at the old man.

Rumble!

Countless swords of light appeared around him and shot toward the old man. The old man laughed heartily and crushed a different talisman in his hand. Numerous golden shields appeared around him.

"This is a defensive talisman. Watch!"

Boom!

The swords were all stopped by the shields, and numerous golden explosions erupted around the old man. Immediately after, the world returned to normal.

The old man smiled and said, "Join the Talisman Faculty and all battles would become much easier."

Su Yu's eyes widened. That was really impressive. He could clearly feel that every single one of the golden swords earlier had the offensive prowess of the Infinite Strength Realm. And yet all those attacks had been blocked. He had only spent a tiny bit of willpower to activate the talisman.

Beside him, Xia Huyou whispered, "They're spending a lot for this. All this is intentional. They know you're a high-high student while we're all high-tier students as well. That's why the talisman just happened to stop in front of us."

Su Yu did not know whether to laugh or cry. No wonder the old man had asked for his help to activate the talisman instead of anyone else. All around him, the various faculties were showing off their prowess.

The old man from the Talisman Faculty had barely finished speaking when a woman flew into the sky and said, "The Willpower Faculty does not need to present anything. We will talk with facts. Of the 62 Skysoar students that had graduated June this year, 30 of them were from the Willpower Faculty. Decide for yourself if you want to join us."

Su Yu looked at Xia Huyou by reflex. The chubby guy shrugged and said, "That's not surprising. They have a lot of geniuses and they mostly focus on only willpower. They can grow their willpower quickly since they don't need to nurture Divine Characters. Their combat strength is low, but they do have a lot of Skysoars.

"Despite having a lot of Skysoar graduates, they have very few students on the Top 100 Ranking. Their students are true cultural researchers. They have weak physical strength, and they are the ones that would be beaten up badly by the war academy every year."

Su Yu nodded. There were naturally pros and cons to joining each faculty. At the Willpower Faculty, they could cultivate quickly. They wouldn't nurture Divine Characters, wouldn't concoct pills, and wouldn't forge weapons. Because of that, they had a lot more graduates than the other faculties.

While the various faculties were busy showing off, a certain old man was sweating heavily at a corner.

He was shouting at a group of people, "All of you are useless! Can't you show something flashy or trendy?"

"Master Zhao..." A middle-aged man helplessly said, "How are we supposed to be flashy? Weaponsmithing is different from the other professions. We can't be flashy."

Zhao Li was furious. It was no wonder that the Weaponsmithing Faculty had been deteriorating year after year. Just look at the dazzling performances of the other faculties. Were they supposed to stand here and hammer some metal for the new students to see?

After thinking for a bit, Zhao Li clenched his teeth and said, "Go. Get our weapons here. Grab the ones that look gorgeous and flashy. I don't want the ugly ones. The prettier they are, the better. I want all those weapons to fly in the sky."

The eyes of one of them lit up in excitement. That person hurriedly ran away to grab the requested weapons. Before long, over 100 shiny weapons started dancing in the air.

"The Weaponsmithing Faculty welcomes everyone! Divine Characters can be obtained easily, but a good weapon is hard to get!"

...

Not far away, Su Yu saw Zhao Li. When he saw the shiny weapons, he laughed. That was a flashy performance, but it was impractical. Then again, this was just a performance so it was understandable. Su Yu wasn't too tempted though. As far as he was concerned, weapons were things he could buy instead of making himself.

Chapter 137: Malicious Intent From Martial Uncle (2)

A few minutes later, Su Yu arrived at the Character Faculty's section.

"Su Yu?"

There was a row of counters there. A few instructors were in charge of the registration process. These instructors weren't actual researchers of the academy. They were the old students of the academy that had not been able to reach the Skysoar Realm and graduate.

Hearing Su Yu's introduction, the instructor smiled and said, "I knew you would join the Character Faculty. Assistant Bai Feng already reminded us about you. Are you directly registering as his student or are you going to wait for a bit before confirming your teacher?"

Before Su Yu could answer, a nearby female instructor exclaimed, "Xia Chan? The freak from Xia Family?"

The young lass standing in front of the female instructor frowned slightly before smiling and nodding, "I'm Xia Chan."

"Yo-you're joining the Character Faculty?"

The instructor was surprised by that choice. A freak of the Xia Family might not necessarily choose to join the Character Faculty.

Their faculty head was Zhou Mingren while the Xia Family had their own vice principal who was also a faculty head of the Willpower Faculty. In the past, many of the people from Xia Family would join the Willpower Faculty.

"I have an agreement with Faculty Head Zhou. I'm going to become his personal student."

Xia Chan was indifferent while surprised gasps sounded all around her. Zhou Mingren. The first vice principal, the head of the Character Faculty, and a peak Mountainsea expert. He had accepted a new student this year!

Sure, this student was a freak from the Xia Family, but one ought to know that there were new freaks entering the academy each year. A big shot like Zhou Mingren would not accept a student easily.

Xia Chan ignored the people around her and left unhesitatingly after completing the registration. Su Yu took a look at her, but he didn't really care that much. A freak...was truly quite strong. He could sense that she was at the Great Strength Realm.

She had definitely completed at least one Divine Character as well. Her willpower was also stronger than his. He didn't know how many completed Divine Characters she had though. Maybe she only had one, but even with only one, some Divine Characters could be incredibly powerful.

It was normal for a member of the Xia Family to be strong.

He was still busy thinking when the instructor in front of him recovered from the shock. The instructor sighed and said, "What a surprise. The faculty head is actually accepting a student this year. The new student is even a freak from the Xia Family. I wonder if this combination can surpass that person from Great Zhou."

"Great Zhou?" Su Yu asked, "The freak who reached the Skysoar Realm in half a year?"

"You know about him as well?"

"I heard of him before."

"Yeah, it's him," the instructor replied. "Reaching the Skysoar Realm in half a year. That's too fast. And he's still so young. He isn't the only genius from a big family around, but he is the only one who had ever managed to reach a Skysoar Realm in half a year."

"How about Researcher Xia Yuwen?" Su Yu asked curiously.

The instructor smiled and said, "Xia Yuwen...took two years."

"Two years?"

"Most of those from that batch took two years. I'm referring to the freaks of that batch..."

The instructor's tone turned envious as he said, "Two years is fast enough. Of course, almost all of them joined the academy at the peak of the Mental Tempering Stage. Generally, even someone capable of graduating in five years would be considered a freak.

"Almost all the students who were able to graduate before 30 were one of these freaks. Of the 16 under 30 graduates of our academy this year, 10 of them had been classified as freaks when they first joined the academy."

He shook his head and said, "What a pity. Some of the freaks were incredible when they first joined the academy, but they ended up stuck below the Skysoar Realm."

Each year, a few freaks would enter the academy. There were around 30 to 40 of these freaks who were under 30 and had yet to graduate but only 10 of them had graduated this year. Clearly, some of them were still stuck below the Skysoar Realm.

Su Yu did not ask any other questions. The instructor asked, "Are you going to confirm Assistant Bai Feng as your teacher?"

Su Yu smiled and said, "Not for now. I haven't even met Teacher Bai Feng yet. I'll decide after meeting him."

Bai Feng was nowhere to be seen. Although Su Yu had decided previously to become Bai Feng's student, he was starting to waver due to Bai Feng's attitude. He hadn't even shown his face after Su Yu joined the academy.

"I'm afraid Assistant Bai Feng has been busy recently..." said the instructor. "I heard he has been staying in the research center..."

He was still talking when a sorry-looking individual appeared: Bai Feng. With a messy stubble and thick eyebags, Bai Feng walked over while yawning.

When he saw Su Yu, he smiled and nodded, "Finish the registration and take a rest today. You can report to my research center tomorrow. Bye..."

He then turned to leave. Su Yu was stunned. Was this fellow not going to say anything else? Also, what happened to this fellow? During their previous meeting, he was ethereal and refined. But now, he looked more like a beggar.

"Teacher Bai..." Su Yu hurriedly chased after Bai Feng. Bai Feng turned around in astonishment and asked, "Yes? Is there anything else?"

"Uhm..."

Su Yu was truly speechless.

Seeing that Bai Feng seemed to be in a rush, Su Yu stopped hesitating and said, "Teacher Liu said that after being accepted by a teacher, I would receive some gifts from the teacher. He said that I could get

an advanced version of the War God Art, 100 drops of Infinite Strength blood essence, and 10 willpower texts. Is that true, Teacher Bai?"

...

Bai Feng was dumbstruck.

Which teacher was so rich to give all those gifts to their students?

Even if your teacher was Wan Tiansheng himself, you wouldn't get all that!

Su Yu scratched his head with an honest expression and spoke hesitatingly, "I'm not sure if that's true. Previously, Teacher Zhao Li said that he would give me a high-tier profound-grade cultural weapon if I become his student. Is that weapon valuable?"

"Zhao Li?" Bai Feng instinctively looked over. Far away, Zhao Li was looking at them as well. He was glaring at Bai Feng. He wanted to rush over, but the people from the Weaponsmithing Faculty were keeping him busy. They still had many things to do.

"High-tier profound-grade cultural weapon?"

Bai Feng was cursing inwardly. Was Zhai Li crazy? Even if he wanted to poach a student, this wasn't how you should poach! Was he not afraid that he would offend all the researchers in the academy?

Who would give a high-tier profound-grade weapon to a new student? That was worth thousands of merit points! He looked at Su Yu and saw an honest and embarrassed expression of someone who had said something he shouldn't.

Bai Feng stood there blankly. What...should he do? His martial uncle was screwing him over. Even Zhao Li was screwing him over! A hundred drops of Infinite Strength blood essence? Ten willpower texts? Advanced War God Art? Were they serious?

All those were worth thousands of merit points! He was even wondering if Su Yu was making all that up.

With an honest smile on his face, Su Yu's face turned red in embarrassment as he softly said, "Teacher Bai...if you don't have all that...it doesn't matter. After all...you're only an assistant. I understand. I have been here for two days. I know how poor assistants are..."

Bai Feng's face fell. What was the meaning of that? Was the kid trying to use reverse psychology on him? Or was the kid looking down on him?

Su Yu timidly continued, "Teacher Bai, it's really fine. You taught me about Divine Characters before. You're my first mentor when it comes to Divine Characters. You have already helped me greatly. If you don't have money, we can earn some together..."

Bai Feng did not know what to say. After a while, he said, "Su Yu, don't listen to my martial uncle. We don't really give out gifts when accepting students here..."

"Absolutely!" Su Yu nodded solemnly and said, "Like I said, us students should be the ones giving our teachers gifts instead, not the other way around!"

"Teacher Liu must have remembered things wrongly. He even gave me a number and said that the owner of that number can definitely give me a lot of gifts if I become that person's student instead..."

"What number?"

Bai Feng was alarmed. But Su Yu scratched his head awkwardly, not saying anything.

"Tell me the number. Don't worry. Martial Uncle is basically my family. I wouldn't do anything that would harm you."

Su Yu softly read the number out, alarming Bai Feng even more.

What the fuck!

Martial Uncle, that was too much! That seemed to be Wu Yuehua's number. No, that was definitely her number!

His martial uncle had actually told Su Yu to become Wu Yuehua's student? She wasn't even from the same faction! Sure, they were quite close, but that was the personal relationship between his martial uncle and Wu Yuehua, not the relationship between their factions!

Fuck!

A single Zhao Li was still not that difficult to handle. But Wu Yuehua was the deputy head of the Pill Faculty! The Pill Faculty was known for its wealth! If Su Yu called that number, Wu Yuehua would definitely not refuse Liu Wenyan's student!

Advanced War God Art? A hundred drops of Infinite Strength blood essence? All that was nothing for her! No wonder his martial uncle had claimed that Su Yu could get so many gifts after picking a teacher. His martial uncle was talking about Wu Yuehua, not him.

So Martial Uncle has been intending to deliver this kid to Wu Yuehua? That was why he told this kid all that so that the kid would feel that I'm poor? If I can't take all those gifts out, the kid would only need one phone call to realize how generous Wu Yuehua is. And after comparing the two of us, would he still want to be my student?

Bai Feng instantly felt a thick sense of malice. His martial uncle's malice! His martial uncle was too embarrassed to speak honestly to Su Yu, so he was using a roundabout method to tell Su Yu that Bai Feng was not qualified to be his teacher!

Bai Feng felt his lips turning dry. He really couldn't afford all that! He was broke! He wouldn't be able to take all those things out!

At that moment, one name appeared in his mind: Liu Hong!

Old Liu, you're quite rich, right?

He needed thousands of merit points to accept this student. Would Old Liu still be willing to work with him? This unofficial student of his had quite a terrifying appetite! He was feeling very helpless as well!

Chapter 138: Formally Picking A Teacher (1)

Bai Feng studied Su Yu seriously. He was feeling doubtful about Su Yu. Liu Wenyan had once said that Su Yu was smart, tenacious, and calm. Their previous meeting was short. At the time, Su Yu had been quite ignorant. But that was due to his lack of experience.

Ignorance was not the same as stupidity. In that case, was Su Yu not aware of the value of all those things he had mentioned? He had been in the academy for two days. Was he not aware of what would happen to the students who had been accepted by a teacher?

Thinking about all that, Bai Feng looked at Su Yu, looking at the slightly awkward and uneasy expression on the kid's face.

He laughed and said, "Su Yu, you won't receive so many gifts for being accepted as a personal student. Furthermore, you're not even at the Great Strength Realm. Those things won't be too helpful for you right now. And upon reaching a certain level, all those things are nothing.

"Some things are worth a lot more than you know. You are still too ignorant. Don't think that only those things are valuable. Often, a small opportunity could be much more valuable than all that."

Bai Feng's face turned solemn as he said, "And I'm giving you one such opportunity, a chance to enter my teacher's research center! That is an extremely rare opportunity. You can ask around. What does it mean to join our research center?"

Bai Feng said, "Material items have a measurable value attached to them. But entering the research center will give you things that can't be measured. That is worth a lot more than you can imagine."

Su Yu flashed an honest smile and said, "Teacher Bai, I'm only at the Source Opening Realm. I don't understand any of that."

"Kid..." Bai Feng laughed. This kid was probably going to remain stubborn until he was shown some actual benefits.

Looking at Su Yu with a teasing gaze, Bai Feng said, "Did Martial Uncle really tell you to become the student of the owner of that number?"

"Yes. You can check with Teacher Liu if you want."

Su Yu nodded. Naturally, Liu Wenyan had not mentioned that. But he knew his Teacher Liu. If Bai Feng really went and asked, Liu Wenyan would definitely admit to mentioning it.

Scratching his messy hair, Bai Feng looked around and sank into thought before saying, "Su Yu, are you unwilling to become my student?"

Su Yu shook his head, "Teacher Bai, you're my first mentor in Divine Characters. Prior to reaching the academy, I've decided to become your student. It is my honor to be picked by you."

"Then why..." Bai Feng paused slightly, smiled, and asked, "Why create an obstacle between us?"

He finally realized what was happening. Zhao Li? Wu Yuehua? Those were all Su Yu's excuses. If he really wanted to be their student, he would have looked for them. But he hadn't. He had waited until Bai Feng was here before saying all those.

Prior to Bai Feng's arrival, Su Yu had already registered for the Character Faculty. That proved that Su Yu had not called the number or further talked to Zhao Li.

With the same honest smile on his face, Su Yu shook his head and said, "I wasn't creating an obstacle. You should know that I'm from an ordinary family in Nanyuan. I do not have a powerful family to rely on. I do not have enough strength. During my early stages, I need more support.

"Since I'm a high-high student, I believe I can be considered a genius as well. More support during my early cultivation stages is the same as sending me firewood during a harsh winter.

"Cultivation is a path like no other. In this path, if I start behind others, I will have to put more effort to catch up. But without enough resources, no matter how talented I am, I would be completely useless after struggling for a few years and missing my golden years of cultivation.

"Since I've arrived at the capital, since I've received a high-high evaluation, I hope to receive the treatment a high-high student should receive. I don't think I'm better than everyone, but I also don't think I'm worse than anyone.

"I hope to receive what the other geniuses can receive. And...I would appreciate the support more than them. Because unlike them, everything I get are things I worked hard for."

Bai Feng stayed silent and looked at Su Yu pensively. Su Yu stopped talking. His head was lowered, thinking about something unknown.

After a while, Bai Feng smiled and said, "You want better treatment and more benefits. But I'm very poor. I don't have all that."

Su Yu looked up and said, "I'll still become your student, but I will minor in the Character Faculty."

The look in Bai Feng's eyes changed as he said, "Minor?"

"Yes." Su Yu nodded and seriously said, "Perhaps those things are not important to you, but are they not important during your early stages as well? If I'm at the Skysoar Realm as well, I might also think that cultivation methods and blood essence are unimportant.

"The so-called opportunity you mentioned might be very beneficial to me in the future. But if I'm already behind others at the starting line...what sort of future would I have?"

Su Yu took a deep breath and continued, "During my exam, I obtained a high-high evaluation. Why? Because I want a better starting line. I want to reach further than the others. Otherwise, I could have gotten a low-tier evaluation and grow slowly instead. That would be the same as what you have suggested."

Bai Feng said, "To speak the truth, I never expected that you would get a high-high evaluation. For me, getting a low or middle-tier evaluation is the same. I am surprised by your exam result. But I also did not expect that the good result would cause you to grow even more ambitious."

He nodded, "Not bad. It is good to be ambitious. Without ambition, you won't go far. But I really don't have all that. In truth, I would have been able to afford all that in the past, but not anymore. All my wealth has been used for the research center.

"Of the things you mentioned, I can only provide the advanced War God Art. As for the 10 willpower texts, I can try to write some when I have the time, but not now. As for blood essence, I don't have any merit points left.

"If you find that agreeable, come to my research center tomorrow. If not, you are free to look for a better option. I won't say anything about that. To tell you the truth, merit points are really not that important.

"There are things that merit points can't buy," said Bai Feng. "Many people want to join the research center. They are willing to pay even tens of thousands of merit points for that. But we rejected all of them. If you decide to come, you will be allowed to join the research center. That will replace the blood essence you want. If you agree, come. If not, so be it."

Bai Feng then turned and walked away.

Interesting.

Previously, he had decided to take Su Yu as his student because of Su Yu's talent. He thought that with Su Yu's rapid growth, he could be promoted to a full researcher earlier. He did not really care about anything else. He had seen a lot of geniuses, including those classified as freaks.

But only by going further in the path of cultivation would one be a true genius, a true freak. Su Yu was still at the starting line. But after the conversation with Su Yu, he had developed a growing interest in the kid.

...

Looking at the departing Bai Feng, Su Yu smiled. Some things could only be obtained if he fought for them. In truth, there was basically no chance he was going to be someone else's student.

Liu Wenyan was his first mentor in the path of cultural research. Bai Feng was his first mentor in the path of Divine Characters. He was already marked with the brand of their faction. It wouldn't be proper for him to pick a different teacher.

Even if the teacher did not mind, he wouldn't be able to face himself. Thus, he could only fight for more benefits from Bai Feng. If he had stayed silent, Bai Feng might have given him nothing.

But after his talk with Bai Feng, that advanced War God Art alone was worth 100 merit points. If Bai Feng could provide that to him, he could keep the 100 merit points the academy had rewarded him.

As for the willpower texts, even if he wasn't sure if Bai Feng would actually provide him any, a promise had been made so there was still hope. Taking a deep breath, Su Yu felt much more relaxed than before. But the next moment, his face stiffened.

"Where's your research center?"

He was speechless. Bai Feng had run off too quickly without even mentioning the location of his research center. Su Yu sighed. This Bai Feng was feeling more and more unreliable. Forget it. He would just ask Xia Huyou about it later.

...

A short while later.

Su Yu arrived at the Weaponsmithing Faculty's section.

By that time, Zhao Li was already finished with his work. When he saw Su Yu, he hurriedly asked, "Kid, you registered for the Character Faculty?"

"Yeah." Su Yu nodded and awkwardly said, "Teacher Zhao, Teacher Liu told me to do so. Furthermore, Teacher Bai already arranged everything for me. I can't switch faculties now or I won't be able to face them."

"Kid..." Zhao Li regretfully said, "I know their faculty is more suitable for you, but I'm still feeling regretful. What you did that day impressed me a lot. I have a very high opinion of you. In fact, you might even be better than those freaks."

"Thank you for the praise, teacher."

Zhao Li was the only researcher apart from Liu Wenyan and Bai Feng who had acknowledged his talent, so he was very grateful for that.

Su Yu stopped beating around the bush and said, "Teacher, the academy is allowing us to minor in a different faculty. If I wish to minor in weaponsmithing, would you be willing to accept me as a student?"

"Huh?" Zhao Li blanked out slightly before asking in astonishment, "Kid, if you're not majoring in weaponsmithing, there are things that I might not teach you. It is too much of a waste to teach them to someone minoring in weaponsmithing. I will also feel too bad for myself..."

Su Yu smiled and said, "It doesn't matter. I still don't know the academy well and I have very few friends here. As for my new teacher, I keep having a feeling that Teacher Bai will be very busy and won't have much time for me. Therefore, I wish to learn more from the seniors in the academy. Even if Teacher Zhao is unwilling to teach me some of your secret knowledge, I am happy with some basic knowledge as even that would be very helpful for me."

"Do you really think so?" Zhao Li laughed and said, "If you're minoring in weaponsmithing, I won't supply any materials to you. Also, you will only be able to attend my classes. I won't give you any resources. I still need to keep my wealth for my future last disciple."

"That's fine." Su Yu smiled and said, "Teacher, I never expect to get much from the faculty I'm minoring in. I only hope to gain more understanding on the path of cultivation. I only hope that you can forgive me for my choice."

Zhao Li laughed, "You're a high-high student. Of course I won't refuse you if you want to minor in weaponsmithing. You can come and learn on the job. You won't be considered my formal student. If you can agree to that, I will submit your name to the faculty. Are you not going to think about this?"

"Thank you, Teacher Zhao." Su Yu gratefully said, "This is more than I could ask for. I will have to trouble you from now on, Teacher. I apologize for wasting your time."

"Don't worry. Feel free to ask me if you have any questions."

Zhao Li smiled. He was regretful that he couldn't take Su Yu as a personal student. But it was still a decent result to have Su Yu minoring in weaponsmithing. As for the matter of Su Yu asking for his guidance, that wasn't anything major.

Su Yu was showing a completely different attitude to Zhao Li than Bai Feng. Bai Feng was the teacher of his major faculty. He had to display his worth to Bai Feng to receive more support. As for the level of respect he had for Bai Feng, that was really not important.

In truth, both him and Bai Feng were merely making use of each other. As for Zhao Li, it was different. Since he was minoring in weaponsmithing, he could be considered an outsider. He would be happy to get even a tiny bit of benefit from them. And if he got nothing, he wouldn't be unhappy either.

On the other hand, if Bai Feng failed to give him the required support, that was the same as failing in his duty as a teacher.

When Zhao Li saw how respectful Su Yu was, he said, "Since you're going to major in Divine Characters, you will probably be too busy to visit us too much. Just come on the 8th, 18th, and 28th of each month. Come to my research center and attend my classes.

"Of course, I suggest that you learn the basics first before coming. For example, you can attend a few weaponsmithing classes before coming to see me. Otherwise, you might not be able to understand what I'm talking about in my classes. That would be a waste of time."

"Sure. Thank you, Teacher."

When Zhao Li saw that there were no signs of dissatisfaction on Su Yu, he smiled and said, "Since you want me as your minor teacher, I'll give you one more piece of advice today. Did Bai Feng invite you into Hong Tan's research center?"

Su Yu nodded.

"Good! Looks like Bai Feng still looks rather highly upon you. Or to be precise, he has a lot of trust in you. That's understandable. After all, you're from Nanyuan, a student of Liu Wenyan."

"I know a little about what Hong Tan's research center is about. There are no results yet, but I know about some of the initial results. You don't have to care about the high-level research they are conducting. But there is a filter room in their research center. After joining, you can cultivate near the filter room."

A doubtful expression covered Su Yu's face.

Zhao Li smiled and said, "That's a good place. Those madmen had gathered a large amount of high-tier blood essence before isolating and filtering the blood essence repeatedly to extract only the purest blood essence."

"The leftovers were all kept in the filter room. As these leftovers were composed of too many types of blood essence to be properly utilized, they were left abandoned in the room."

Zhao Li stopped talking with his mouth. Instead, he transmitted his voice, "Kid, grab this chance. I went to that research center once. I tried renting the filter room a few times, but they never agreed. If you have the chance to enter that room, you can come look for me. I'll give you a cultural weapon mold. Look for a chance to toss the weapon mold into the room. After a while, you will be rich!"

Zhao Li said in excitement, "That place is thick with blood essence energy. It is the best place to nourish cultural weapons. It might even be able to nurture an earth-grade cultural weapon. What a pity. Those bastards refuse to let me use the place. I even offered 5,000 merit points! Then again, earth-grade weapons require a lot of energy. Since you're still at the Source Opening Realm, a profound-grade weapon would do for you."

Chapter 139: Formally Picking A Teacher (2)

Su Yu noted the matter down. He was still weak, so he had not considered getting a cultural weapon yet. He still had a middle-tier yellow-grade standard saber. He could even use that weapon until the Infinite Strength Realm if he wanted. But that was a martial weapon, not a cultural weapon.

He had read about cultural weapons before. There was a short introduction in the student manual. The biggest advantage of a cultural weapon was the fact that it could be kept in one's sea of willpower. For example, the Hundred Sword Box Zhao Li had shown him previously could also be kept inside his sea of willpower. It was a al and mysterious weapon. And it was worth a lot more than a martial weapon.

...

Su Yu took his leave from Zhao Li. He had completed everything he set out to do today. He had confirmed his major and minor faculties. Everything had progressed relatively smoothly.

Bai Feng seemed unreliable, but Su Yu did not expect to get that much of a help from Bai Feng either. He had yet to reach a bottleneck in his cultivation. During the early stages of cultivation, his teachers would serve more as an advisor in his path of cultivation.

And Su Yu had yet to encounter any trouble in his cultivation so far. Instead of returning to the Mental Tempering Garden, he went to a different place that was equally as important.

...

A few minutes later.

Merit Office.

Su Yu handed his merit card over. When the young woman at the counter checked his card, she said, "A high-tier student will receive 100 merit points and 2 secret grotto entries upon joining the academy. Student Su, are you claiming all your rewards now?"

"No," Su Yu shook his head.

The young woman smiled and said, "Student Su, are you cultivating the War God Art? If you are, you should know that there is an advanced version. You can purchase it for 100 merit points."

"It's fine." Su Yu shook his head again. "I want to ask about the price of the advanced War God Art's willpower text."

The woman was surprised, but she soon concluded that Su Yu had probably obtained a copy of that cultivation method himself.

She checked her records before answering, "Since this is an earth-grade cultivation method, there are several requirements.

"Firstly, you need 100 total earned merit. Secondly, you need a researcher from the academy acting as the guarantor. Thirdly, you can only study it in the academy. You are not allowed to take it out of the academy. Entering the academy is easy, but you will be searched when leaving. You need to register any willpower text you carry on you.

"Fourthly, all the above requirements are only applicable to the Great Strength version. For the versions at the Infinite Strength Realm or above, there are different requirements. For the Great Strength version, you need 300 merit points."

Su Yu was dumbfounded. The woman smiled and said, "That is actually quite cheap. A researcher needs a large amount of blood essence to write a copy of it. The blood essence at the Great Strength Realm isn't expensive, but it isn't cheap either.

"Since this is an earth-grade cultivation method, the researcher also needs to add some Infinite Strength blood essence into the mix as well. Additionally, a peak Infinite Strength or even a Skysoar beast hide or

bone is required to act as the medium. You also need a researcher that is familiar with this cultivation method to exhaust a large amount of willpower to write it.

"I suggest you look around for some public classes opened by the researchers. For these willpower text classes, the academy would subsidize a part of the cost. The remaining cost can be shared between the attending students. Generally, you can attend one for around 10 merit points."

It would be too expensive to buy a single willpower text. But the benefit of an academy was that there would be willpower text classes. He could register for one and share the cost with a bunch of other students. That way, it would be much cheaper. Su Yu gave up on purchasing a willpower text for himself. He couldn't afford it.

"How about a regular copy?"

"The War God Art is still a top-tier profound-grade cultivation method. Even a regular copy isn't cheap. You can get it for 150 merit points. And for a public class of the regular copy, you only need 5 merit points. This is a widely practiced cultivation method so a lot of researchers can provide the regular copy."

"I see."

Su Yu completely gave up on buying anything. He couldn't even afford the regular copy. It was too expensive. The Lightning Source Blade was also a profound-grade martial technique. Although it was only a low-tier technique, Su Yu guessed that it was probably not cheap either.

It wouldn't be cheaper than 100 merit points. Back when Liu Wenyan was writing the willpower text, he had not imagined that it was this expensive. It would seem like that willpower text was his most valuable possession for now. 110 merit points. That was all Su Yu had for now.

If Bai Feng hadn't promised to supply him with a copy of the advanced War God Art, he would only have 10 merit points left.

"I need to put these points to good use."

Su Yu decided to wait until the blood essence he ordered from Xia Huyou to arrive before trying the effect of Infinite Strength blood essence. Only then would he be able to make further plans on how to make use of his remaining merit points.

"Let's hope these points can last longer."

Su Yu wasted no time and left.

And the moment he left, the smiling woman at the counter called a number and reported, "Su Yu, a new student of the Character Faculty, seems to possess an advanced War God Art already."

Before long, the call ended.

The academy would naturally investigate the origin of Su Yu's copy. If they couldn't find a proper origin for the copy, even his actual identity would be subjected to investigation.? This was how the academy operated.

And after finding the source of his copy, they also had to make sure that the source had the rights to distribute the copy. To distribute a copy, someone with the rights would need to report it and pay the relevant fees before doing so. Anyone trying to look for a loophole in the rules would come to regret it.

...

At the same time.

Bai Feng was yawning while speaking to his communicator, "That kid is really a genius. Little Liu, if you wait until he grows up before suppressing him, you would earn big! I'm not asking for too much. I only want an advanced War God Art, 100 merit points, and 10 willpower texts of earth-grade methods or techniques."

"Scram!"

On the other end of the call, Liu Hong had an ugly expression.

"I'm telling the truth. I promise you he can enter the Top 100 Ranking in three months! Amazing, right? Incredible, right?"

"Are you joking with me?"

"I'm being honest!" Bai Feng seriously said, "Why would I lie to you? Would it benefit me? A genius like that has actually appeared in our faction! Tsk, tsk. Some people are going to have trouble sleeping from now on."

Liu Hong coldly said, "Bai Feng, you have yet to give me any return on my investment. The only thing you have been doing is asking for more. Don't you think that you're pushing it too far?"

"This is a long term investment!" Bai Feng laughed and said, "How about this, I'll find some time to beat up Faculty Head Zhou's favorite student and provoke their faction. They will feel pressured and learn that I'm not a pushover. That would also increase your value in their eyes. What do you think?"

...

Liu Hong coldly said, "Are you joking?"

"I'm telling the truth!" Bai Feng said, "Hu Wensheng is nothing. In my eyes, he's worse than you! He's only a ninth-stage Skysoar cultivator. I'll use my real strength and kick his ass."

...

Liu Hong was finding those words hard to believe. He said, "Hu Wensheng is very strong. He has always been the biggest obstacle in front of me."

"Tch. He's nothing!" Bai Feng was indifferent. "In my eyes, in our generation, only Xia Yuwen and Wu Qi are worth competing against me. Hu Wensheng is nothing. Just you wait. Pay up and I'll beat him up for you."

"If you fail and end up defeated, my value would plummet as well. You understand what I mean."

Bai Feng narrowed his eyes and said, "Do you not trust me? Even if I fail, it is still a good thing for you. At least you'll know that you should stop your investment. But what if I win?"

"Your value would skyrocket!" Liu Hong answered. "But at that time, would they still believe that I can be your opponent?"

"You just need to reach the eighth-stage or the ninth-stage and that would do."

"I have just reached the seventh-stage! How am I supposed to reach the eighth-stage?"

Bai Feng grinned and said, "Is that so? If I remember correctly, you still have one chance to enter a secret grotto, right? Use it. You will be able to advance quickly after using it."

"I'm keeping that for my breakthrough into the Cloudbreach Realm!"

"Use it now. With Hu Wensheng out of the way, you would be the number one of our generation in your faction. At that time, you would get plenty of opportunities to enter the grotto."

"You..." Liu Hong clenched his teeth and said, "I don't have that many merit points. I already used them all up."

"Don't lie."

"I'm not lying! I was raided by the academy guards yesterday..."

"Your backers are rich."

...

Liu Hong was furious.

Bai Feng continued, "Are you doing this or not? If we succeed, you would earn even more than me. As long as I stay in the Skysoar Realm, they won't be able to send their Cloudbreach cultivators to me. And without Hu Wensheng, you're their only option among the Skysoar cultivators! They would have no choice but to support you!

"Old Liu, learn to look at the long term. Faculty Head Zhou and the others are so rich. A few thousand merit points are nothing for them."

...

Liu Hong was really tired of speaking to Bai Feng. He was starting to lose confidence in their partnership.

"Fine. But I have a request. Since you want me to invest so much on Su Yu, I want to see some hope that you're right. Hu Wensheng has a student. He joined the academy last year. He's a seventh-stage Great Strength cultivator at the Mental Tempering Stage. I want Su Yu to suppress him in three months. As for the Top 100 Ranking, stop joking. I'm not going to believe that.

"Also, a freak from the Xia Family has joined the academy. Her name is Xia Chan. She has been accepted as Faculty Head Zhou's student. Even if Su Yu can't surpass her, he must not be suppressed too badly by her. Otherwise, there wouldn't be a need for me to do anything to him."

"Yeah, yeah." Bai Feng agreed easily and said, "Don't worry. This isn't a problem. You only need to pay up. That's all."

"Fine. I'll trust you one more time. If you fail, you will lose more than me!"

"Yeah, yeah."

Bai Feng then ended the call before grinning widely.

But soon, he frowned and muttered, "Hu Wensheng...this won't be an easy job. Liu Hong...is that fellow hiding his strength or not?"

Bai Feng was unsure. If Liu Hong was really only a seventh-stage Skysoar cultivator, what was the point of even trying to compete against Hu Wensheng?

Chapter 140: Multiple Divine Character Fusion (1)

After returning to his room, Su Yu reflected on everything that had happened during the day, wondering if he had done anything wrong. By asking for benefits from Bai Feng, he might or might not court Bai Feng's displeasure. But he had definitely benefited by saving 100 merit points.

"If Bai Feng is displeased because of this..."

Su Yu muttered to himself. But soon, a resolute look covered his face. In that case, Bai Feng was basically a petty person that wasn't sincere when accepting him as a student. At worst, he would stop relying on Bai Feng in the future.

The tradition of having the academy experts accept talented students as their personal students had always been for the sake of granting the good students more opportunities. Otherwise, there wouldn't be so many students wishing to get a teacher.

Those with low or middle-tier evaluations would not be given that chance. Why? Because the teacher-student relationship would benefit both the student and the teacher. If the student performed well, the teacher would benefit from it as well. After thinking about it for a while, Su Yu calmed down and stopped worrying.

...

Afternoon.

Xia Huyou arrived.

After knocking on the door, Xia Huyou entered with a worried look. He complained, "The academy has gone crazy. They have been cracking down on the black market repeatedly. Fortunately, I'm not bringing a lot of stuff into the academy or I would have my stuff seized today."

Su Yu did not care about that. At worst, he would start purchasing from the academy instead. He only needed to pay more.

"Where's my stuff?"

"Here."

Xia Huyou took off his hat and showed the items hidden within the hat.

Su Yu was speechless. This fellow was quite good at smuggling stuff into the academy.

"Just tell them you're using these things yourself. Are they going to seize your personal belongings?"

He did not believe a word of that. Things were definitely not that strict. Otherwise, nobody would be able to cultivate in peace. Would such a small amount of things really be seized?

"You don't understand..." Xia Huyou smiled and said, "The academy has been paying close attention. They are aware of the individuals that might smuggle things into the academy. Us Xia Family members are high-level suspects. Things would get troublesome if they found these things on me."

"Come. Complete the trade." Su Yu did not say much and took the things from Xia Huyou. He was handed two bottles.

One bottle of blood essence and one bottle of source qi liquid. The blood essence was easy to check. Each drop of blood essence would showcase a different attribute depending on the beast it originated from. Of course, he still needed to be careful lest he was sold fake products.

After checking with his senses, he confirmed that the blood essence was filled with energy. In fact, the energy was thicker than the Great Strength blood essence that he had used previously. He was certain that these were Infinite Strength blood essence.

He looked at one of the drops and saw a miniature golden iron-winged bird in it. The source qi liquid was even easier to check. After confirming that he had received real products, Su Yu took out his merit card and paid Xia Huyou. After swiping 30 merit points away, Su Yu had 110 merit points left.

After receiving the merit points from the academy, Su Yu felt much more comfortable spending his merit points. These would be enough for him in the short term. Xia Huyou stole a glimpse at Su Yu's balance and was overjoyed to see that Su Yu still had 110 merit points. That was not bad at all. This guy hadn't bought a cultivation method, right?

"Su Yu, do you want an advanced War God Art?" Xia Huyou whispered, "I can get one for you as well. It would be much cheaper than the official channel."

Su Yu frowned and said, "No thanks. The academy is more reliable when it comes to cultivation methods."

It was hard to verify the authenticity of unofficial copies. He wouldn't use an unofficial copy lightly. Furthermore, he already had one. Since Bai Feng had promised him, there shouldn't be any problem on that front.

Xia Huyou was regretful, but he did not seem to mind. With a smile, he said, "Let's not talk about that. Do you need anything else? Feel free to tell me."

"I don't need anything for now."

Su Yu was going to start cultivating again. During the past two days, his cultivation speed had been rather slow due to a lack of blood essence and source qi liquid.

Suddenly, he said, "By the way, do you know the location of Assistant Bai Feng's research center?"

Xia Huyou's eyes lit up as he asked, "Are you joining his research center?"

"Nope. I'm just asking."

"Don't lie to me!" Xia Huyou said in excitement, "You must be joining! Su Yu, why don't we work together? Sell me some of the research results..."

"Scram!" Su Yu was a relatively calm person, but he still couldn't resist cursing furiously, "Piss off! If you're not answering, so be it!"

This fellow had gone mad. Even if Su Yu was still unaware of how important the research center was, he still understood that selling research results would get him in big trouble. And if he happened to sell some vital results, he might even end up losing his life. This fellow was obviously an unscrupulous merchant!

Xia Huyou awkwardly said, "I was just kidding! Even if you're really selling, I won't have the guts to buy them. If it is revealed that I am buying his research results, Master Hong Tan might kill me. I don't have the courage to touch his research results."

His tone turned envious as he said, "Su Yu, Master Hong Tan's research center is a very big deal. Of course, they haven't been producing much results for the past few decades, but a few decades ago, tsk tsk, that was a very popular research center in the academy."

"Popular?" Su Yu asked curiously, "For what?"

"I'll give you an example..." Xia Huyou grinned and said, "There is a course in the academy, the Divine Character ability fusion course. The human race has been researching this subject for decades. But in the past, the fusion has been crude and simple.

"Back then, Master Hong Tan released a new research result regarding ability fusion. Or to be precise, ability transfer."

Xia Huyou seriously said, "Simply put, a single Divine Character might have multiple abilities, but some of the abilities might not be that useful. It might even hinder the other abilities. In the past, such a scenario would mean that the Divine Character would be rendered completely useless.

"Back then, Master Hong Tan came up with a new way to transfer these abilities instead of forcefully fusing the Divine Characters. For example, a knife character might have a sharp ability. That is a straightforward and powerful Divine Character. But if the character gains a second ability, for example, the brittle ability, then the character would be rendered worthless.

"Sharp is a powerful ability, but no matter how sharp the character is, if using the character on a weapon would not only make it sharp, but make it brittle as well, the weapon might break before the cultivator even finishes swinging the sword. In that case, is that Divine Character still useful?"

Su Yu nodded and said, "Therefore, these abilities can be transferred?"

"Not before," answered Xia Huyou with a smile. "But we can do it now. Of course, it isn't easy. During the transfer, the Divine Character can be easily destroyed. But at the very least, we now have a chance to salvage the characters with bad abilities. That was one of Master Hong Tan's results."

"Master Hong Tan was still young back then, right?" Su Yu said hesitatingly, "When you say a few decades ago, how long ago was it exactly? Master Hong can't be older than 70."

"Yeah, he was very young." Xia Huyou laughed. "That is why he has been a senior researcher for such a long time. Of course, those are not the results of him alone. Back then, he had inherited a part of the fifth principal's research papers. His research results were a product of an improvement of the fifth principal's research."

Su Yu raised his brow. He asked, "Is Master Hong related to the fifth principal?"

"You don't know that?" Xia Huyou asked in astonishment, "He's a student of the fifth principal. Instructor Liu Wenyan is a student of the fifth principal as well. Are you unaware?"

"I never asked."

Su Yu gave a noncommittal answer, but he noted it down in his mind. Of course, the research results were the main point here. Su Yu had not expected that such an important research had been performed in the research center back then.

Ability transfer! That was incredible.

That was very important for Divine Characters. Forming and growing Divine Characters required time and luck. The moment one formed a Divine Character with bad abilities, the character would be rendered useless. All the time and resources spent on the character would go to waste. But if the abilities of the character could be changed, then one would be able to ensure that the character was a suitable one.

Su Yu exhaled and said, "Just tell me the location."

"It's easy to find. It's near the Heart Cultivating Pavilion. There are a few research centers there. Master Hong's research center is called Wentan Research Center. You can find it there."

"Wentan Research Center?"

Su Yu was curious. Was the "wen" in the name referring to the character of Divine Character or was it referring to wen of Liu Wenyan?

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Su Yu nodded and said, "Teacher Bai Feng said that he's very poor since all his resources have been poured into the research center. Is that true?"

"That...is true."

Xia Huyou nodded, "Their faction...or to be precise, your faction is quite poor. A single research center is dragging all of you down. That wasn't the case before. The ability fusion research alone had earned them a large amount of support back then.

"But...nobody knows what Teacher Hong Tan was thinking. He insisted on researching something else. As a result, the research center has been swallowing resources for decades without any results to show for it. They are now so poor they can barely afford their meals...Otherwise, your faction would have been a lot wealthier."

"Our faction..." Su Yu hesitated before continuing, "You keep saying the word faction, but I don't know about this. Which faction do we belong to?"

"Multiple character faction." Xia Huyou smiled and said, "That's what everyone calls you guys. You need to know that although the Character Faculty utilizes Divine Characters as well, generally, most people would stop at around three to five Divine Characters. Some would keep only one. A single powerful Divine Character is enough.

"But your faction likes to form a lot of Divine Characters. When I say a lot, I mean it. Prior to reaching the Skysoar Realm, Bai Feng formed 12 Divine Characters. A single Divine Character is already very time-consuming. You also need to nurture and strengthen it. If it wasn't for his strong talent, with so many Divine Characters, reaching the Skysoar Realm would have been a pipe dream.

"Therefore, your faction doesn't have a lot of people. Neither do you have a lot of Skysoars. In the past, there were a lot of you. But many ran out of patience and left. In your faction, you won't be allowed to advance into the Skysoar Realm without forming a minimum of 10 Divine Characters. Even if your willpower is strong enough to reach the Skysoar Realm, you will be forced to wait. Who could withstand that?"

Su Yu frowned, "Must they do that? If the students can break through, why stop them? Can't they continue forming Divine Characters after the breakthrough?"

"How am I supposed to know that? There are too many factions in the academy and each faction has its own trump cards. There are things that outsiders won't know."

Xia Huyou shrugged, "Therefore, your faction isn't too powerful in the Character Faculty but with Master Hong around, your status is still quite high. In the past, your faction had been able to accept some students each year. But after so many defections, your faction stopped accepting too many new students."

After accepting a student, the faction would need to use some resources on the new student. But halfway through that, the student ran off. All the resources used on the student were wasted.

Eventually, Hong Tan's faction started accepting less and less students. Even the two student slots under Bai Feng had been left empty before Su Yu's appearance. That was one of the reasons he had refused to accept students.

"Ran off..." Su Yu muttered before asking, "Won't they be punished for defecting?"

Xia Huyou smiled and said, "In normal situations, it is naturally a taboo to defect. But since your faction does not allow them to break through, there is nothing you can say if they decide to leave. The academy would not allow geniuses to waste their time and remain in the Mental Tempering Stage. Then again, Master Hong did have an eye for talent. A few of the defected students did end up advancing after the defection.

"In fact, a few of the current full researchers in the academy used to be from your faction. That's the case with a few of the teaching assistants as well. However, Bai Feng mostly ignores them. He refuses to admit that they used to be in your faction."

"So how many people does my faction have?" Su Yu asked curiously.

"Let me think..."

Xia Huyou made a short calculation before spreading his chubby palm.

"What do you mean?"

"Five!" Xia Huyou laughed heartily and said, "Five, including you."

Su Yu was stunned. "You mean they only have four before this?"

"Yeap. Elder Hong, Bai Feng, a senior brother of Bai Feng who is a full researcher at the Cloudbreach Realm, and the senior brother's student. Including you, there are five."

Su Yu's face fell. Five people in an entire faction? He had thought that Bai Feng was from a large faction! But they only had five people even after including him?