

Myriad 211

Chapter 211: Encounters In The Senior Class (2)

Su Yu smiled and explained, "Nanyuan is quite poor. We don't have a lot of source qi in the environment. And we can't afford source qi liquid either. Thus, we can only rely on our efforts from a young age. We don't have that many opportunities to use source qi liquid.

"Only when the entrance exam was near did I purchase some source qi liquid from the school. And I found that the liquid worked very well on me. After arriving at the capital, I found that the source qi here is terrifyingly dense. The people here can definitely cultivate at a much faster speed.

"Thus, I concluded that my progress is so fast because this is my first time having access to so much source qi. I suggest that everyone should not use any source qi liquid and even move out of the capital before 18. Maybe you can consider growing up in Nanyuan and return when you turn 18. With that, you might be able to grow as fast as well."

Silence descended. Nobody had anything to say.

Was he talking nonsense? It was unlikely. There was some truth in his words. But all of them were already above 18. And all of them had grown up on source qi liquid.

Yet Su Yu was telling them to go cultivate at Nanyuan? Forget it. They decided to pretend they hadn't heard anything.

Meanwhile, Jia Mingzhen transmitted his voice with surprise, "Is that the case? It's so simple?"

It had been far too long since he was a Source Opening cultivator. He had not paid any attention to the lower levels of cultivation and he had nearly forgotten all about his early years.

"There are other examples of this, but it's very rare. It still depends on the cultivator in question. Have you forgotten about that fellow from the Great Xia War Academy? That fellow grew up in a poor family too. His background is even worse than Su Yu's. He has only joined the Great Xia War Academy for a few years yet he's already at the Cloudbreach Realm. His cultivation speed is incredible. Back then, he

performed his breakthrough in our source grotto as well and he reached the third-stage Great Strength Realm directly."

Those words reminded Jia Mingzhen of that person.

"In that case, if one has high talent and is starved of source qi since young, one would be able to cultivate faster after growing up? Has any research been performed on this aspect? If there are, send me the data later. If this really works, then we can really consider sending the brats of our families to some backwater. That way, we can both save money and temper them. They will grow up knowing the hardships of the common people."

"As the saying goes, children of the poor grow up faster. Su Yu does not have a good background, but that poor background seems to be his greatest treasure. Just look at him. He's a lot more humble and honest than the other kids in the class."

The elders started talking about what they learned.

They did not doubt Su Yu's words. His words were reasonable. A kid who had grown up in Nanyuan, never used source qi liquid, and never been to a place with high source qi density might really find his cultivation speed increase by leaps and bounds after being suddenly exposed to more source qi.

His cultivation had merely been slow in the past because his talent had yet to be discovered. This kid was most definitely a genius in physical cultivation. After all, there were other Nanyuan students around as well, but Su Yu was the only one who had grown so quickly. Thus, his talent was most likely the reason for his growth.

Since Wan Mingze had asked him a private question, Su Yu held nothing back. He wasn't one to take a loss so he smiled honestly and said, "Student Wan, my teacher said that all of you are freaks and geniuses. But to speak the truth, there is something I don't understand. Just...how many Divine Characters have you formed?"

Wan Mingze was stunned momentarily but he quickly smiled and said, "About that...I have three Divine Characters. Then again, we don't walk the path of multiple characters and we aren't going to form any character techniques. Thus, we don't generally aim to form too many characters. We will mostly focus

on only a few main Divine Characters. At times, we will even give up on the Divine Characters we encounter if they are not really suitable for us."

Su Yu nodded. Three Divine Characters. That wasn't a small number. No wonder these freaks could get more than 1,000 marks during the entrance examination.

He wanted to ask more, but he gave up since he had the persona of an honest and innocent man to maintain. With that persona, asking one person was fine. But if he asked more, he would appear ignorant and idiotic.

His previous question was fine since Wan Mingze was the one who had asked him a private question first.

This was Su Yu's first day in the senior class. He had proven his strength and talent before so the atmosphere in the class was decent. At the very least, nobody tried to create trouble for him.

Even Lin Yao was staying very silent. Su Yu was very happy with this. As long as nobody bothered him, he was more than happy to leave others alone. He did not enjoy conflicts that would not bring him any benefits. These kinds of conflicts were pointless.

Wasn't it nice to hold hands and live together peacefully? While he was thinking, a figure walked past the window near him. Su Yu's face changed when he saw that figure. He had a feeling that his peace would not last with that person here.

Liu Hong!

Liu Hong entered the classroom with his trademark smile, but there was some gloom deep in his eyes.

Damn it!

Who in the world had secretly set him up?

Recently, there was a rumor in the black market that Liu Hong was someone who had backstabbed even a student. The rumor also claimed that he wanted to take down the Xia Family's share in the black market and monopolize the entire market by himself.

What nonsense was that? Did he really have such a big appetite? That matter concerning Xia Huyou was nothing major. Would he need to report something like that to the academy?

Two days ago when the academy rewarded him 120 merit points for snitching Xia Huyou out, Liu Hong nearly got a heart attack from his anger. After scheming against others for so long, finally, he had a taste of his own medicine. Someone else had schemed against him! He didn't even need to guess. It was obvious enough that someone had set him up.

He had been busy dealing with the backlash of that incident for the past two days. He had barely gotten a chance to rest when Su Yu ended his seclusion. His higher ups had been pressuring him to suppress Bai Feng more.

To be precise, it was Zhou Pingsheng who had been ordering him around. That fellow was only a Cloudbreach. Why was he acting like he was a Mountainsea? How dare that fellow order him around? Liu Hong couldn't help but to grumble that everything had been going wrong for him recently.

Zhou Pingsheng was an idiot. He was a Cloudbreach yet he wasn't a match for Chen Yong so he had Liu Hong avenge him for his loss in the books depository. What an embarrassment.

Liu Hong did not let his thoughts show on his face.

Looking at Su Yu, he smiled and said, "Today is Su Yu's first day in the senior class. Since all of you already know him, I won't waste your time introducing him. In the senior class, your goal should be the Top 100 Ranking and the Skysoar Realm. Moving forward, all of you will be extremely busy. Previously when we were picking a class monitor, nobody had volunteered. Since Student Su Yu had performed well as a class monitor in the intermediate class, this is perfect. He shall be the class monitor of the senior class. Does anyone object?"

Nobody said anything. Nobody cared for the position. They were too busy. And to speak the truth, the meager rewards of that position were not attractive enough for them. It would only be a waste of their time.

Since Su Yu wanted that position, they were more than happy to let him have it.

Meanwhile, Su Yu was cursing inwardly. He had thought that life would be easier in the senior class, but that bastard Liu Hong was playing the same trick on him! He had never expected the senior class to still not have a class monitor after so long.

Bastards!

Did they think he cared that much about those meager rewards? He was pretty rich nowadays! With his previous 146 merit points and the 800 merit points he had won, he had a total of 946 merit points in his possession.

He had no lack of cultivation methods and willpower texts too. He was in the stage where he needed to cultivate and progress rapidly. He did not have the time to act as the class monitor.

He had zero interest in that position!

Thus, Su Yu hurriedly said, "Teacher, it's fine for me to become a class monitor in the intermediate class, but the senior class is filled with students better than me. Forget about me. I don't have the confidence to become— "

Liu Hong smiled, "Believe in yourself! You can do it!"

Su Yu said, "Teacher..."

Liu Hong berated, "Student Su Yu, you're new here. I'm letting you be the class monitor so that you can learn more about the senior class. This is a good chance for you. How can you not treasure it?"

Su Yu inhaled deeply. He wanted to shout that he would rather treasure Liu Hong's mother instead. But he calmed down and stopped himself from blurting those words. That was a Skysoar. He couldn't afford to offend a Skysoar yet.

Liu Hong did not give him the chance to say much. "It's decided then. Su Yu will be the class monitor. Additionally, the academy is going to organize a Divine Character tournament soon. It is a very interesting tournament. Feel free to take part in it, everyone. There are rewards for those who do well in it."

He looked at Su Yu and said, "Su Yu, you're the sole new student of the multiple character faction. The multiple character faction used to dominate this tournament a few decades ago. You mustn't bring shame to your faction so work hard to get first place!"

"By the way, I heard that for the first place, the reward is a willpower text that no longer has any willpower. It was written by a Mountainsea expert. It is a very popular book. It's called the Mountainsea Peace Seeking Stratagem. It no longer has any willpower in it, but you can still sense the intent of the author through it..."

Most of the students were indifferent about the reward.

But the expressions of a few students changed. All of them looked at Su Yu.

Su Yu was completely confused. What was going on? Was that book important? Were those people unhappy because Liu Hong told him to get first place? These freaks...did not look so calm after all.

Right that moment, Jia Mingzhen smiled and casually said, "Isn't that something written by...Senior Hong? I heard he likes it a lot. Why is it being used as a reward?" Liu Hong smiled, "I have no idea. But that is indeed the reward offered by the academy."

Su Yu's expression changed. Was that something written by his grandteacher?

What was the meaning of this? Was it a big deal that it was being used as a reward? It was a willpower text with no willpower. Was there a special meaning to that text? He had no idea what these people were thinking about.

Su Yu stayed silent and decided to ask his teacher about it after class. Little did he know, the text was actually obtained from the black market.

Hong Tan's personal item had appeared in the black market. Someone had deliberately offered it as a reward to slap the face of the multiple character faction. That was something Su Yu had not thought of.

He only knew that Liu Hong the bastard was most definitely scheming against him again.

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After saying all that, Liu Hong did not wait and left.

A different instructor was in charge of teaching the first class. Like the intermediate class, a foundational subject was being taught here. However, they would delve deeper into the topic in this class, touching on some knowledge involving willpower.

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Back at the research center.

Su Yu wanted to look for Bai Feng to ask some questions, but Bai Feng had locked himself on the third underground floor for his research so Su Yu decided to not bother his teacher.

He did not intend to visit the prison zone either. He would keep those fellows waiting before working on them. It wasn't a good idea to look too eager. In any case, he didn't need anything from them right now.

He also wasn't too worried about his position as the class monitor. The senior class did not have too many students. Thus, even if he had to do what he did for the intermediate class, he would still have a much easier time.

Since it was still quite early, Su Yu went to the second floor and started his daily cultivation session.

After reaching the third-stage Great Strength Realm, his cultivation of the War God Art had slowed down.

He had the help of the iron-winged bird blood essence, but he found that the Source Swallowing Technique of the iron-winged bird left a lot to be desired after reaching the Great Strength Realm.

It was far slower than his speed when he used the Body Strengthening Art of the mountainbreak bull.

Furthermore, the Source Swallowing Technique did not even have the effect of strengthening his body, unlike the Body Strengthening Art where he could clearly feel his physical body getting stronger from each cultivation session.

Strictly speaking, in the same realm, the Source Swallowing Technique was also weaker than the War God Art. After all, the War God Art was an earth-grade top-tier cultivation method. As for the Source Swallowing Technique, it was only some profound-grade top-tier cultivation method.

The iron-winged bird race was only a weak race that wasn't comparable to the mountainbreak bulls which was a top 100 race.

"I need more mountainbreak bull blood essence. It would be better if the blood essence is in the early Infinite Strength Realm."

Su Yu decided that he would use mountainbreak bull blood essence to cultivate moving forward. With it, he could both strengthen his body and increase his cultivation speed. In fact, his speed would increase by at least 30 percent.

But the academy's price for blood essence was too expensive. He had to look for Xia Huyou. He was fine with the Source Swallowing Technique previously, but after he tried the effects of the mountainbreak bull blood essence, he was no longer happy even with the Infinite Strength Source Swallowing Technique.

"For the Great Strength Realm, the mountainbreak bull blood essence is the better option. Maybe there would also be a different blood essence that is better at the Infinite Strength Realm. In that case, there might be different cultivation methods of different races that would be more suitable for each different cultivation realm. The mountainbreak bull is the best during the Great Strength Realm. What's the best during the Infinite Strength Realm?"

Su Yu started wondering.

If he could cultivate with different cultivation methods at different realms and kept strengthening his physical body, would he grow into the strongest expert in the same cultivation level?

"The Body Strengthening Art requires 126 acupoints. It is a heaven-grade middle-tier cultivation method. I can even sense the locations of its acupoints. Therefore...I can actually cultivate the real Body Strengthening Art. Even without blood essence activation, if I can open all 126 acupoints, I can use this method without blood essence."

Su Yu had been thinking about the issue for several days. The War God Art was a good cultivation method. But too many people cultivated it, so it was no longer anything special. Almost all the geniuses were cultivating the advanced version of that method. Thus, Su Yu didn't have any advantages when compared with the others in terms of cultivation method.

Some large families had their own unique cultivation methods. For example, the Sky Sundering Countless Saber of the Xia Family. As for follow-up cultivation methods, Su Yu wasn't too worried either as he could always activate a higher level of the cultivation method with blood essence.

"Do I change my cultivation method?"

That question popped up in his head, but he quickly gave up on it. If he changed his cultivation method, he would lose a lot. For example, the complementary martial technique and his willpower text that he could no longer use after changing his cultivation method.

"Unless..."

A new thought appeared in his mind. If he opened enough acupoints to the point all the acupoints needed by these cultivation methods were already opened, then he would be able to activate any cultivation method at any time.

Oh you thought I cultivated the War God Art?

Wrong!

I had the Body Strengthening Art!

You thought I cultivated the Body Strengthening Art?

Surprise, surprise! I cultivated the Source Swallowing Technique!

"If I can open even more acupoints to cover even more cultivation methods and martial techniques, it would be incredible..."

In Su Yu's imagination, when his opponent thought that he was cultivating a certain method or technique and moved to target the weakness of the technique, hehehe, he would let his opponent know just how dark the world could be.

"I can even deliberately expose some of my weaknesses, giving them an impression that by damaging certain acupoints, I would be crippled. That would make the fight even more interesting. Wow, this is the best way to set people up in combat."

Any cultivation method would have its own weaknesses. War God Art did not have a lot of weaknesses. That was why it was so widely used. But it still had some. And a lot of people were probably aware of its weaknesses too.

But if Su Yu was the one who had revealed his weakness and lured his opponent in...hehehe...he would teach them how cruel the world was.

"But to do that, I would need to spend a lot of time and resources to open acupoints..."

Su Yu shook his head helplessly. Opening acupoints weren't free. And he needed time too. He was sure that he definitely wasn't the first person to have thought of something like this. But just the 108 acupoints of the War God Art were enough to give one a lot of trouble. Who would still consider opening more acupoints?

Anyone trying that would probably find themselves stuck in the Great Strength Realm even after their peers had reached the Infinite Strength Realm. That would defeat the purpose as one would still be weaker than one's peers.

Everyone knew that with more acupoints, even if one couldn't utilize all the acupoints as a part of a system, one's source qi would still be stronger. But who would waste the time and effort opening so many acupoints? Resources and time were required to open new acupoints!

"But I believe that there are definitely some fellows out there who have opened additional acupoints."

He was sure that someone must have opened more acupoints. If one was facing an opponent with similar cultivation methods, martial techniques, and cultivation level, one's foundations would start playing a greater role.

More acupoints, richer experience, or sharper weapons could all serve as one's foundations. He had not heard of such people in the cultural research academy, but he was sure there were people like that in the war academies. That was similar to how there would be people forming additional Divine Characters in the cultural research academies.

"But the ninth-stage Great Strength geniuses of the cultural research academy might not only have 108 acupoints. They might have more, such as 120 or even 130."

Nobody had told Su Yu that. He had reached that conclusion himself. And he was confident in his conclusion.

"If I have the time and opportunity, I should try opening more acupoints as well. After all, I know quite a lot of cultivation methods already."

And Su Yu had one advantage over everyone else. When he cultivated with his blood essence, the corresponding human acupoints required for those cultivation methods would temporarily open, clearly showing him the locations of those acupoints.

When he activated the cultivation methods through his book, he would be shown the acupoints and circulation routes of these methods. That was basically the same experience as using willpower texts.

Slowly but surely, Su Yu was exploring the uses of his book. A borrowed ability was still a borrowed ability. Only by truly having the ability would it be truly reliable. If he was able to open the required acupoints and master those cultivation methods, there would no longer be a point to using blood essence to activate those methods.

Numerous thoughts appeared in Su Yu's mind. His motivation grew and he cultivated even harder than before. He aimed to reach the ninth-stage Great Strength Realm as fast as possible. He would then open some additional acupoints, allowing him to become unrivaled within the same realm.

Or perhaps he could aim to reach the Infinite Strength Realm earlier before becoming unrivaled within that realm. As for the Skysoar Realm, he still needed more time.

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On the 5th, Xia Huyou was still nowhere to be seen.

Su Yu only found Xia Huyou when he visited the Mental Tempering Garden on the 6th. After disappearing for a few days, Xia Huyou seemed to have grown even bigger than before.

When Xia Huyou saw Su Yu, he acted like he was meeting his lover as he said, "Su Yu, I can finally see you again! You don't know this, but someone set me up! My gambling operation was raided by the academy and I lost over 10,000 merit points!"

Su Yu rolled his eyes, "Do you think I can't do math? Only 12,000 merit points were seized during the raid. I heard that more than half of the people were betting on Lin Yao winning. You don't need to compensate those people, right? At most, you would lose 5,000 merit points."

Xia Huyou's expression turned awkward. Su Yu sure was very sensitive when it came to merit points. And Su Yu's estimations were mostly correct.

"It was still a great loss." Xia Huyou had a sullen expression. "The academy is too cruel. I'm now deep in debt..."

"Don't act poor in front of me." Su Yu couldn't even be bothered to entertain Xia Huyou's performance. He moved on to the next topic, "In the future, you can have the job of reminding our classmates to attend their classes."

"What?"

"I'm the class monitor of the senior class. I'm now delegating this task to you. Do you object?"

Xia Huyou blinked in confusion, "You became a class monitor again?"

"Yes. That bastard Liu Hong set me up."

Su Yu didn't even feel like saying too much about it. Xia Huyou couldn't help but to laugh, but he wasn't too bothered by it. He said, "Sure, but this is not needed for the senior class. Everyone is free to attend or not attend their classes. These fellows won't be grateful after receiving your reminders. They might even feel offended. As for Assistant Liu, don't worry about him. All the senior class students are like this. Is he supposed to punish you because of that?"

Su Yu nodded.

After taking a few steps, he softly asked, "Can you get a batch of mountainbreak bull blood essence for me?"

"That's not easy..."

"I don't need Great Strength blood essence. I need Infinite Strength blood essence. Early Infinite Strength. As cheap as possible. Give me a fair offer. We have completed quite a few transactions already. I believe the volume of our transactions would only grow in the future. I am only at the Great Strength Realm now. Xia Huyou, give me a fair price and we can do this long-term. Perhaps in the future, we can even do transactions worth thousands or tens of thousands of merit points."

"Infinite Strength mountainbreak bull blood essence..." Xia Huyou furrowed his brow. "To speak the truth, if you want to look for Skysoar blood essence of a top 100 race, it won't be hard. But Great Strength and Infinite Strength blood essence are really quite hard to find. And there is no way these blood essence can be cheap.

"In the Allheaven Battlefield, most of the top 100 races utilize the soldiers of their subordinate races. The soldiers of their own races are very rarely seen. Very few of their Great Strength and Infinite Strength cultivators will appear in the battlefield. But they are a lot more common at the Skysoar and Cloudbreach Realms."

Su Yu raised his brow, "Are you telling me you can get the blood essence of a Skysoar top 100 race?"

"Yes. Do you need some?"

"No."

Su Yu was only asking out of curiosity. If he tried using Skysoar blood essence with his current cultivation, his body might blow apart before his book could even absorb the blood essence.

Yes, there was a slight gap between the time he consumed blood essence and the time the book absorbed it. Thus, he estimated that for now, it was best for him to use early Infinite Strength blood essence.

He could consider middle-stage Infinite Strength blood essence after reaching middle-stage Great Strength Realm. He only needed to keep the blood essence one major realm above him. And to use Skysoar blood essence, he had to reach the Infinite Strength Realm first.

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Xia Huyou did not ask anything else. He said, "Infinite Strength mountainbreak bull blood essence...I'll try to gather some for you. The academy's price is 15 merit points per drop..."

"That's too expensive." Su Yu interrupted him, "Don't charge me based on the academy's price."

"That is only natural." Xia Huyou smiled, "How about this, I'm still interested in having you as a long term customer. I'll give you a special price of 13 merit points per drop. That is totally worth it."

"Too expensive."

"It's really not!" Xia Huyou explained, "Killing a single Infinite Strength mountainbreak bull will get you no more than 10 drops of blood essence. The mountainbreak bull is a top 100 race. There is also the need for extraction, preservation, transportation, and all sorts of labor costs. 13 merit points per drop is really not expensive."

"In fact, even the academy's price is already quite cheap. If you buy outside the academy, it's more expensive at 20 merit points per drop. And even at that price, you might not be able to get any."

"It's not like you have never bought outside the academy before. You should be aware that the academy's price is already discounted. As for black market dealers like me, to speak the truth, we're mostly in this to dispose of things that we can't sell on the official channels. That's why the black market prices are always cheaper."

Su Yu was astonished, "There are actually things the Xia Family can't sell on the official channels?"

Xia Huyou smiled, "Well, this doesn't apply to the Xia Family, but it does apply to the others."

He was afraid that Su Yu wouldn't understand so he explained more, "Think about it. We aren't the only ones that can go to the Allheaven Battlefield. Some people can directly extract the blood essence of the enemies they kill and return with the blood essence. But according to the rules, anything you gain from killing the myriad races needs to be recorded and taxed..."

"That is understandable since the military needs to keep running. Those lone experts can only move so comfortably in the battlefield thanks to the presence of the military, right?"

Su Yu nodded. He had not thought of that before, but he finally understood.

His eyes flickered as he said, "You mean that some people have smuggled some things back without paying the tax?"

"Exactly." Xia Huyou nodded, "In truth, the military turns a blind eye to this a lot of the time. After all, life is not easy for everyone. It is never a bad thing to have an expert going to the battlefield and killing more enemies. Thus, the military mostly sets their eyes on the bigger trade firms, such as those from our Xia Family or the other prefectures.

"As for the lone travelers, the military mostly leaves them alone. However, there is a rule put in place forbidding them from selling their gains to others. They are only allowed to use what they get for their own cultivation. Otherwise, the trade firms that have been taxed would not be happy."

Once again, Su Yu nodded in understanding. The rules were quite reasonable. By killing enemies in the battlefield, one had still contributed to humanity. Thus, one could use the gains for one's own cultivation or even on one's family.

But if one started selling what they gain from the battlefield without paying taxes, the trade firms that had been taxed for the privilege of doing so would be unhappy.

The market would be disrupted as the person who had not been taxed could afford to sell at a much lower price. That would eventually result in a reduction of the taxes the military could collect. And once the military started getting unstable, things could potentially grow even more troublesome.

Thus, these people could only sell through the black market. This was illegal. There was nothing one could say if one lost their products to a raid. Because of that, the various prefectures enjoyed raiding these black markets every now and then.

Su Yu nodded. He even guessed that the Xia Family was probably not in the black market for money. They were probably only there to get a better idea of the market movement. For example, when some lone cultivators took out some precious resources, the Xia Family would be able to find out immediately.

At that thought, Su Yu asked, "There are lone cultivators in the Allheaven Battlefield as well?"

"Of course." Xia Huyou said, "Not everyone there is part of the military. As long as you file the proper paperworks and register yourself, you can enter the battlefield at any time. But the casualty rate of lone cultivators is very high. That place is too chaotic and there are too many experts around."

Su Yu was tempted. If lone cultivators could go as well, then...

Xia Huyou knew about Su Yu's situation so he could guess what Su Yu was thinking about. He said, "Don't even think about it. Reach the Skysoar Realm first. As a lone cultivator, if you aren't even a Skysoar, you can't even escape when you encounter danger. But if you're a Skysoar, you can at least escape faster."

"I understand." Su Yu nodded, "The Infinite Strength mountainbreak bull blood essence might not be as effective as the Great Strength blood essence. I'll buy it for 10 merit points per drop."

"Su Yu, you should at least let me earn something, right? Why must you make me sell at cost each time?"

Su Yu ignored the fatty. After some calculations, he said, "If you agree, I'll get 60 drops from you for 600 merit points. Xia Huyou, think about this. I'm only a third-stage Great Strength yet I'm already buying things worth thousands of merit points. Perhaps at the Infinite Strength Realm, I might even buy more from you."

"As for the students that are richer than me, they have no lack of these resources. As for those lacking these resources, they can't afford them. Thus, I am the best customer you can find. I'm an even better customer than those freaks. They have powerful families and experts behind them. Would they need to buy what they need through you? People like me are the main customers of the black market."

Xia Huyou laughed. That was right. Su Yu saw things clearly. 600 merit points. This could truly be considered a big transaction.

As for the others, the ones with money didn't lack these resources while those who lack these resources didn't have the money to buy them.

"Fine. Su Yu, I see you as a friend. Since you're saying all this, I'll invest in your future. I hope I can earn a lot in the future. I'll try to get 60 drops for you for 600 merit points."

Xia Huyou sighed and continued, "This is such a big loss for me. I'm selling the Infinite Strength blood essence to you at the price of Great Strength blood essence."

"Thank you."

Su Yu heaved a breath of relief.

Xia Huyou was a businessman and saving 300 merit points at one go was a big deal.

If he used a drop per day, the blood essence he bought this time would last him two months. His cultivation speed should increase significantly since he could use the mountainbreak bull blood essence for two months straight.

"It would be even better if I could cultivate in the grotto..."

At that thought, he asked, "What do I need to enter the Source Qi Secret Grotto?"

"At least 100 total earned merits and 100 merit points per entry. Have your total earned merits reached 100?"

"Yes."

Su Yu nodded. The merit points he got from placing first in the monthly examination could be counted as part of his total earned merits. The merit points from his position as the class monitor counted as well. Naturally, the monthly payment he received as a high-high genius would not count. After all, that was only considered a subsidy while the position of a class monitor and his monthly examination result were considered tasks completed.

With all that added together, his total earned merits had surpassed 100 points. He suspected that very few of the new students had earned that many total earned merits.

Sure enough, Xia Huyou said with envy, "That's so fast. At the Source Opening and Great Strength Realms, there aren't a lot of opportunities to increase our total earned merits. I only have 56 points now so I can't even enter the grotto. Not many of our classmates have enough points to enter either. Not even Xia Chan has earned 100 total earned merits. But I reckon after a month or two, a lot of them would earn enough from the monthly exams."

Of course, the premise for that was that they needed to do well in the examinations. Without getting into the top 10, one would not be rewarded.

Thus, Su Yu was probably the only new student that could enter the grotto for now. The biggest factor allowing him to enter so early was the 42 merit points he had earned during his journey to the academy.

Su Yu did not say anything but a few new thoughts appeared in his mind. He was going to have 346 merit points, 60 drops of Infinite Strength mountainbreak bull blood essence, and several drops of iron-winged bird blood essence.

Although he wouldn't be able to progress as much as before, he would still be able to cultivate quickly in the Source Qi Secret Grotto. His previous visit was different as he had made use of the momentum from his breakthrough to grow rapidly. But even without the help of a breakthrough, he would still be able to grow much faster in the grotto.

"I also need to be careful and try to enter when there is nobody in there. I will be able to enter three times."

Su Yu did not intend to spend too much of his time opening acupoints, so doing so in the Source Qi Secret Grotto was the best option. But he needed to spend a painfully large amount of money to reach the speed he wanted. One could say that he was quite extravagant using 900 merit points in such a manner.

Su Yu was sure that even those freaks would have a hard time taking out so many merit points. As for the people like Chen Qi, the merit points they had taken out were actually the funds their families had prepared for their body forging. That was a one-time support instead of a continuous support.

After all this time, Su Yu had gained more understanding of the large families. They were very realistic.

After giving someone 1,000 merit points to forge their body, if that person failed or achieved a weak result, the family would not reimburse them. Instead, they might even find their support from the family weakening.

These families could be very generous to their own, but they were also capable of being very heartless when they needed to.

"I'm spending a lot without much income..."

Su Yu was troubled. It would seem like after joining this faction, he was fated to be a pauper like his teacher. His previous impression that 1,000 merit points were more than he could spend had been reduced into a joke.

"I need to get into the Top 100 Ranking soon. I also need to keep placing first in the monthly exams. Being a class monitor is not that bad, I suppose. I also need to take part in all sorts of competitions to earn the competition rewards. Also, it would be even better if people could keep losing money to me. Liu Hong is very rich. He has also been targeting me relentlessly. I remember he still has a student. Also, his little brother is probably quite rich as well..."

Su Yu had his eyes set on Liu Hong's people.

Not only that, but there were also Zhou Pingsheng's people and Faculty Head Zhou's people. All those people were assholes anyway. Those were the main figures bullying the multiple character faction!

Su Yu looked at Xia Huyou and said, "Gather some information for me. I want to know everything about Zhou Pingsheng, Liu Hong, Hu Wensheng, and those related to them. Focus on their students and those below the Infinite Strength Realm and early Infinite Strength Realm."

"Huh?" Xia Huyou blanked out slightly, but he soon grew excited. "Are you planning to do a big job? I have an excellent target. Xia Chan! She's Faculty Head Zhou's student so she is the natural enemy of

your faction. She is strong and arrogant. If you challenge her, she won't refuse. And she is confident enough to accept a large bet. If you can beat her, you would be rich!"

Su Yu was speechless, "I thought you're from the same family?"

"So what? The Xia Family is big. I'm not from the main branch anyway so why would I care?"

"You still have the guts to start another gambling operation in the academy?"

"Why not? I only need to be careful. Everything will be fine. Su Yu, are you confident in yourself? If you are, I can find you an opponent every single day. If you're too shy to challenge those opponents yourself, it doesn't matter. I can help spread some rumors and make them challenge you instead."

Xia Huyou released a shameless laugh and said, "These fellows are rich. You might as well take their money from them. Like I said, in the academy, you won't be able to establish yourself without being ruthless. Don't feel bad about taking from others. That is how the academy works. The majority of the resources will be concentrated on a small number of geniuses. Even if you don't take these resources, others will take them."

Su Yu exhaled and said, "Gather the information first. I'll decide after that. They won't be too careless against me after I demonstrated my ability to unleash Infinite Strength offensive prowess with blood essence."

"True."

Xia Huyou felt somewhat regretful, but Su Yu was right. The strength Su Yu could gain from using blood essence wouldn't be as reliable as his own strength. The two chatted while walking toward the classroom.

Now that Su Yu had joined the senior class, he no longer went to classes in large groups. The senior class had far fewer students and most of them were staying in the high-level and special zones. Su Yu also couldn't be bothered to try pleasing these prideful fellows. Even if he wanted to, he might not be able to find them in their residences.

"I might need to change my plan..."

Su Yu was feeling rather helpless. He could no longer stay low profile. His strength did not allow that. Or to be precise, his need for merit points did not allow that.

Chapter 214: Fourth-Stage Great Strength (1)

Su Yu spent the day attending classes. Nobody bothered to pick fights with him as everyone was still busy cultivating. After all, they had just entered their academy and this was the period of time where they could grow rapidly.

Only when they encountered a bottleneck or when they decided it was time to challenge the Top 100 Ranking would the peace of the senior class be broken.

As for the tournament mentioned by Liu Hong, that was only a small tournament. These small tournaments were merely one of the small events the academy used to stimulate more growth in their students.

Since there was still some time before the tournament, Su Yu wasn't too worried about it. He would ask about it after Bai Feng left his laboratory.

...

Xia Huyou was quite efficient.

Su Yu had made the order on the 6th and all 60 drops of blood essence arrived on the 8th. Xia Huyou even gave him some information for free. After all, he was more than happy to see Su Yu create more waves in the academy.

Wentan Research Center.

Finally, Su Yu came to understand how strong the single character faction was.

The current leader of the single character faction was Zhou Mingren, a ninth-stage Mountainsea. Apart from Zhou Mingren, there were a few other Mountainsea experts in that faction.

Naturally, some of these experts no longer bothered themselves with the general affairs of the faction. But Zhou Mingren wasn't the one personally running things. Instead, a Mountainsea expert by the name Zheng Yuming was in charge.

He was a first-stage Mountainsea. He was also a senior researcher, a new elder of the Heart Cultivating Pavilion, the first student of Zhou Mingren, and the current faction master of the single character faction.

This was also Su Yu's first time hearing about the faction master position. That was not an official position. Instead, it was an unofficial way the members of a faction address the person in charge of running the faction. The multiple character faction had a faction master as well, and that faction master was Chen Yong, not Hong Tan.

People at the level of Hong Tan would mostly not concern themselves with the more mundane affairs of a faction. Meanwhile, the faction master was the one in charge of handling all the day-to-day operations of the faction. Basically, the faction master was akin to a butler.

Of course, since Zheng Yuming was already an elder and a Mountainsea expert, he would probably relinquish the position in a few years and focus on his position as an elder.

"Zhou Mingren has six direct students. Zheng Yuming, Mountainsea. Hu Wensheng, ninth-stage Skysoar. Xia Chan, seventh-stage Great Strength."

Apart from those three, the only other student Su Yu knew was Zhou Pingsheng, a seventh-stage Cloudbreach. Of the six students, four were in the academy. Of the remaining two, one had perished while the other was in the Devil Subduing Army. That person rarely returned to the academy so Su Yu did not pay him much attention.

There was no need to mention Xia Chan. She had just entered the academy yet her status was high. Zhou Mingren had not accepted a student for many years. Hu Wensheng was supposed to be his final student, but now, that position had been taken by Xia Chan.

Su Yu had thought that Liu Hong was Zhou Mingren's student as well, but he was mistaken. Liu Hong was the student of a different elder from the single character faction. But that elder seemed to be reaching the end of his lifespan so he rarely showed himself nowadays.

After accepting Liu Hong, he had vanished from public eyes for about six years. His current status was unknown. Thus, Liu Hong was a genius of the single character faction, but he wasn't from Zhou Mingren's line. Hu Wensheng was the main figure of Liu Hong's generation from Zhou Mingren's line.

"Zhou Mingren's generation consists mostly of those in the Mountainsea Realm. As for his direct students, they come in all cultivation levels. Apart from Xia Chan, three of his four students still present in the academy have accepted students as well. All three of them had filled the quota of students they could accept."

According to the academy rules, an assistant researcher could accept two students, a junior researcher could accept four, an intermediate researcher could accept six, and a senior researcher could accept unlimited students.

Previously, Zheng Yuming was only an intermediate researcher like Zhou Pingsheng. Both had accepted six students each. Meanwhile, Hu Wensheng had accepted two students, and Chen Qi was one of them. Thus, they only had 14 third generation students under the main line of the faction.

And eight of them had not reached the Skysoar Realm. Since Zheng Yuming was already a Mountainsea and Zhou Pingsheng was a seventh-stage Cloudbreach, it was understandable that some of their students would be in the Skysoar Realm.

Su Yu's focus was on the eight non-Skysoar students. Apart from Chen Qi, he had seven potential targets. Lin Yao did not count since he was Liu Hong's student, not someone under Zhou Mingren's line.

"Seven..."

Among them, four were actually in the Top 100 Ranking. One ought to know that there were tens of thousands of students in the academy below the Skysoar Realm yet Zhou Mingren's line had occupied four of the top 100 spots. That was actually very impressive.

The more Su Yu read, the more he realized that he had underestimated them before. The other three weren't students who had failed to enter the top 100. Rather, they were already beyond 30. They might have entered the top 100 before as well. After all, only those below 30 could enter the Top 100 Ranking.

"They only accept geniuses as students. With sufficient resources, it is understandable for their students to do so well. But Chen Qi seems to be an exception. He is the worst out of the eight and he is only a high-middle student."

Su Yu finally understood why Chen Qi was so rash when dealing with him. He wanted to use the mountainbreak bull blood essence to forge his body and gain more strength. He needed to enter the Top 100 Ranking and gain more acknowledgement from his own faction.

Including Chen Qi, their line only had five students of their generation. And out of the five, four had entered the Top 100 Ranking. Chen Qi was the only one not in the ranking. How could he not be stressed about it?

"Impressive."

Su Yu was planning to deal a heavy blow to them, but he found that he had truly underestimated them. That was a terrifyingly powerful faction. Out of their eight third-generation students who had yet to reach Skysoar, Chen Qi was actually the weakest.

And that was excluding people like Zhou Mingren. If their generation was included, they would have several Mountainsea experts. Those senior figures had their own students. And these students had their own students too. Added together, there were quite a lot of them.

"Huang Qifeng!"

Su Yu suddenly noticed a name and his face turned gloomy.

"Huang Qifeng, 23 years old. This is his fifth year in the academy and he is ranked 79th in the Top 100 Ranking. Around a month ago, he had defeated Wu Jia to get into the Top 100 Ranking."

That was a short description, but Su Yu's face fell when he read it. This was the person! During his previous visit to the books depository, he had heard a series of painful coughs from that senior sister who he had never met before.

It was normal for students to fight for the Top 100 Ranking. But it wasn't normal for someone to be injured so heavily. Sure, one could always claim that one wasn't able to hold back in time during a match. But was that really the case for Huang Qifeng? Su Yu wasn't sure, but he guessed that Huang Qifeng had intentionally harmed his senior sister.

"Ninth-stage Great Strength Realm and 95 percent willpower. His main Divine Character is a battle character of the devil race. In combat, he is dauntless."

That was the information Xia Huyou had collected on Huang Qifeng. This was a very powerful student. As a ninth-stage Great Strength cultivator with a powerful Divine Character, he had the combat strength of a regular third-stage Infinite Strength cultivator.

"Zheng Yuming's final student."

Final student! Su Yu knew that that signified. But perhaps it was as simple as Huang Qifeng being Zheng Yuming's sixth student when Zheng Yuming was only an intermediate researcher. Because of that, he automatically became the final student.

"Huang Qifeng..."

Su Yu stared at the name while deep in thought. This was the person who had seriously injured his senior sister. His martial uncle had been depressed. His teacher had been feeling indignant. But neither could do anything to Huang Qifeng. Due to the academy rules, there was nothing they could do to him.

But without these rules, these students wouldn't have been able to cultivate so freely. Everyone was subjected to the restrictions of these rules. The multiple character faction had no way of dealing with Huang Qifeng.

He was still not a Skysoar. Wu Jia was already seriously injured while Su Yu was a new student. Who in the multiple character faction could touch him?

"Fucking asshole!"

Su Yu scolded.

"I'll remember you. Just you wait."

It would have been fine if he had only defeated Wu Jia. Everyone was fighting to enter the Top 100 Ranking. If one wasn't a match, it was only natural for one to be defeated. But Wu Jia had been injured so heavily she had to be bedridden for three months.

One ought to know that even the injury Su Yu dealt to Chen Qi would recover in only three days as long as he was given the right treatment. And Chen Qi's defeat had been pretty miserable. Even so, he had only needed three days to recover. Just how badly was Wu Jia injured for her to be bedridden for three months?

Su Yu took a deep breath and packed his stuff.

"Blood essence, War God Art's willpower text, Skybreak Technique's willpower text..."

After packing up the important items, he thought for a bit before picking up the two Great Strength myriad race willpower texts as well. He then left the research center. He had initially planned to pick a few weaklings from the single character faction to bully. But he discovered that he had been too optimistic.

Their weakest member was Chen Qi, someone Su Yu had already defeated before. Unless he looked for Liu Hong's other student, he wouldn't be able to find a suitable target. It didn't matter if he had Infinite Strength blood essence with him.

Chapter 215: Fourth-Stage Great Strength (2)

Outside, the sky was already dark.

This was Su Yu's first time roaming the campus during the night. He was heading straight toward the Grotto District.

There were too many people around during the day. Su Yu didn't want to visit during the day as he didn't want to be disturbed during his cultivation. He reckoned that the grotto should be quite empty late at night.

Grotto District, security checkpoint.

After swiping his card and stating his purpose of visit, Su Yu was allowed passage. This time, he had arrived alone. He slowly approached the small building housing the Source Qi Secret Grotto.

Su Yu had just arrived at the building entrance when someone walked out of the door. When that person saw Su Yu, he called out in surprise, "Su Yu?"

When Su Yu heard that voice, he looked up and exclaimed in astonishment, "Chen Qi?"

He had not expected to meet Chen Qi here. It would seem like fate truly enjoyed bringing foes together. Chen Qi had a rather gloomy expression, but he was also surprised to see Su Yu.

Why was Su Yu there? Hadn't he broken through not long ago? Why was he here at the grotto again?

Chen Qi sized Su Yu up and sullenly said, "Are geniuses...really so different? You're entering the source grotto again?"

Su Yu did not bother giving an answer. He continued walking forward.

Chen Qi looked at the departing Su Yu and said, "Su Yu, you might have injured me and severed my chance at getting the mountainbreak bull blood essence, but that really isn't such a big deal. The faster you grow, the faster trouble will come."

"Are you aiming to get into the Top 100 Ranking? When you do get into the ranking, your suffering will arrive. The academy has a rule stating that top 100 students are not allowed to challenge students not in the ranking. But once you're in the ranking, those strong students can start challenging you as well..."

Su Yu looked at Chen Qi with a frown and said, "What are you trying to say?"

Chen Qi coldly said, "Su Yu, don't grow too fast. It might not necessarily benefit you. Unless...you are confident you can defeat some fellows, you would only end up like Wu Jia."

Su Yu said, "Chen Qi, is that a threat?"

"Threat?" Chen Qi laughed. "No. Why do I need to threaten you? It's pointless. I already lost both the blood essence and my merit points. I won't be able to get into the top 100 anytime soon. So why would I threaten you?"

Chen Qi had a sinister smile as he said, "I only hope that...you don't challenge the Top 100 Ranking so early. If you are defeated too quickly, what would that mean for me, your defeated opponent? Am I a piece of trash? Am I worthless? Am I a waste of air?"

"Su Yu, you don't understand. You really don't understand. At this point, I only hope to see you go further, to see you grow smoothly and defeat some fellows. I want you to step over some of those fellows and climb to the top. I don't want to see you suffer a defeat right after defeating me. That would only prove that I'm truly worthless."

"I will only suffer more the easier you're defeated. But if you manage to defeat some of those assholes, then nobody can deny that you are strong. I would no longer be the garbage that had been defeated by you. I am merely someone who has been defeated by a talented genius."

Su Yu blanked out slightly. That was quite a surprising line of thought.

Chen Qi said, "Be careful when you challenge the top 100. Some fellows are stronger than they look. Wu Jia had relied on true strength to get in the ranking. She had been preparing to challenge the top 60 students. But in the end, she suffered such a terrible defeat. Isn't that surprising? You need to know that

some students exist for the sole purpose of sniping some geniuses from the ranking. Don't lose too quickly..."

Chen Qi left, his laughter resounding in the air. He was quite surprised to see Su Yu here. He could see that Su Yu was probably aiming to increase his strength. A student at Su Yu's current level would definitely be getting ready to challenge the Top 100 Ranking.

If Su Yu ended up defeated...

A gloomy look appeared on Chen Qi's face. If Su Yu was defeated, it wouldn't mean anything for Su Yu. He was still very young and new. A defeat did not matter. But for Chen Qi, Su Yu's defeat would turn him into an even bigger disgrace.

After all, he had suffered a miserable defeat in Su Yu's hands. And if Su Yu ended up suffering a miserable defeat when fighting someone else instead, what would that mean? It was not necessarily a good thing for a faction to be too big. The internal competition might get too great.

Everyone in the faction had the right to get the resources of the faction. In that case, who should get them? Well, Chen Qi definitely wouldn't be that person since he was someone who had been defeated by Su Yu. He was no longer worthy of their support after his defeat. Without blood essence and merit points, he was basically akin to a stray dog.

His family was blaming him for his defeat, his teacher was in seclusion, his senior brother was calling him garbage, and even the Great Xia Club was treating him differently even though they had not confirmed that he was the one who had drugged Lin Yao. He had earned everyone's ire.

Without entering the Top 100 Ranking, the academy had way too many students similar to him. Why should they look highly upon him then?

"At this point, not even the Top 100 Ranking can repair my reputation. Su Yu need to perform even better. He needs to be so strong that nobody can suppress him. Only then would they understand that I'm not garbage. Su Yu is simply too strong."

Since he couldn't prove himself anytime soon, he could only place his hope on the opponent who had defeated him. After the others in his faction also suffered defeats under Su Yu, would they still dare to throw insults at him? The more arrogant these people were right now, the more terrible their fall from grace would be.

"Using the strength of his opponent as a proof of his own strength?"

Su Yu also understood what Chen Qi was trying to do. That was previously similar to what he did when he fought Chen Qi previously, proving that he was stronger than Lin Yao.

"Interesting..."

Su Yu suddenly found that there weren't a lot of fools in the cultural research academy. Perhaps these fellows would be very prideful in the beginning, but after suffering defeat, these fellows were able to quickly adjust their mindset instead of pestering their opponent endlessly.

That was the case for both Lin Yao and Chen Qi. After their defeat, they stopped looking for Su Yu. Instead, they quickly adjusted their mindset and focused on strengthening themselves and repairing their reputation. And the easiest way to repair their reputation was to have Su Yu further showcase his strength.

"What an odd logic."

Chen Qi had clearly just visited the Source Qi Secret Grotto as well. That fellow was truly quite rich. He could still afford to visit the grotto even in his current condition. Su Yu wondered if Chen Qi had to pay to enter or if he was entering for free.

The two old men were still present in the small building. The two had already sensed Su Yu earlier so they were expecting him when he walked in. But they were quite surprised to see him back so fast.

Old Huang said, "It has only been a short time since your last visit. Are you sure you want to visit again? It has been less than 10 days. Previously, you advanced straight to the third-stage Great Strength Realm after using a considerable amount of resources. You might not even be that familiar with your new acupoints yet. Are you sure you want to enter again?"

He was basically advising Su Yu to not waste his resources entering the grotto again so fast. He needed to pay 100 merit points to enter. That wasn't a cheap price. Even after killing an early Skysoar cultivator, one would only earn that much. The multiple character faction wasn't rich. Why waste his merit points like this?

"Teacher, after my calculation, 100 merit points is the value of 20 drops of source qi liquid. As long as I absorb enough source qi, this would be worth it. I believe I can absorb enough..."

Su Yu had an honest smile as he said all that.

Old Huang did not know whether to laugh or cry. He explained, "Sure, but source qi liquid is only valuable for those at the Source Opening Realm. At the Great Strength Realm, cultivators can actively absorb source qi so it will be less valuable. Merit points are more useful in comparison. Thus, even if you can absorb as much source qi as what 20 drops of source qi liquid can supply, this would still be a loss. Your faction has a filter room right? That is a decent place to cultivate."

Su Yu scratched his head and said, "Teacher, I still want to give it a try. During my previous visit, I found that I can cultivate very fast here. I can also open my acupoints quickly in the grotto. I suspect that the grotto can help in opening acupoints. Therefore, I'm here to test that out."

Old Huang did not persuade Su Yu to leave any longer. He said, "You're right. This grotto was formed out of a Divine Character. It is indeed helpful for acupoint opening. But if you can't stay long enough, you will only have your existing acupoints filled without any new acupoints opening. In that scenario, you won't be able to gain that much from the grotto."

"I understand." Su Yu nodded. "Teacher, I'll give it a try. If it doesn't work well, I'll just not come in the future."

"Fine."

Old Huang said nothing else and checked Su Yu's updated profile. He nodded with praise. Su Yu had already accumulated over 100 total earned merits.

"100 merit points per entry. Remember, don't roam around. Just stay in the Great Strength Zone. It's empty right now."

"I understand."

It would be even better if the place was empty. Su Yu was overjoyed. If there was nobody there, he would be able to cultivate without fear.

The same thing happened. The world blurred around him as he stepped through the door. Once again, he found himself within the Source Qi Secret Grotto.

...

Inside the small room.

After Su Yu entered the grotto, Old Huang said, "Old Nie, what do you think?"

"What?"

"Chen Qi..."

Old Nie indifferently said, "Don't get shocked by every little thing. It's merely the scheme of a brat. Why do you care that much?"

Old Huang hesitated slightly before saying, "I don't really care, but I'm worried that the effect of excessive internal conflict would be bad. Should we do something about it?"

"They won't have any pressure without any competition." Old Nie had a different opinion. "I believe that only with intense competition would a true expert emerge. In fact, I don't think the way they do things here isn't too good. Everyone is too busy scheming. If it's up to me, Chen Qi should have kept going after Su Yu after his defeat. But instead, that brat wants Su Yu to defeat others to prove that he's not weak instead. That's how cowards think. He lacks courage."

Old Huang rolled his eyes. He said, "You can't say that. Is it really good if someone only knows how to be unyielding? In the academy, they can still survive. But on the battlefield, they will die."

Old Nie said, "Exactly. Here, they can choose to fight until they are completely ruined. Better do that here than to do that on the battlefield and die. They're better off living the life of a commoner behind the front line."

Old Huang had nothing to say.

After a short silence, Old Huang said, "How long do you think he can stay this time?"

"About an hour. If he can't open new acupoints, he'll probably come out even faster. It would already be quite impressive if he can stay for an hour."

"True. That kid is too impatient."

After a short chat, silence returned as the two forgot about Su Yu and returned to their cultivation with their eyes shut.

...

"It feels great to be here all alone!"

Meanwhile, Su Yu was feeling greatly excited inside the grotto. The Great Strength Zone was empty.

This time, he would be able to cultivate to his heart's content. After experiencing the rapid growth in the grotto previously, even the filter room felt slow to him. And that was despite the fact that he could open one acupoint every three days there.

In truth, that was already a terrifyingly fast speed. But for Su Yu, that wasn't fast enough. Out of 108 acupoints, he had only opened 38. He still needed to open 70. If he could only open one every three days, he would need to spend seven months opening acupoints.

To challenge the Top 100 Ranking, he had to be at least at the seventh-stage Great Strength Realm. Thus, he had to open 84 out of 108 acupoints before he could do so. He still had a long way to go.

He sat down cross-legged and opened the War God Art's willpower text. This was a Great Strength willpower text written by Bai Feng, so the handwriting on it looked familiar. The Skybreak Technique willpower text was also opened. Next, he swallowed a drop of Infinite Strength mountainbreak bull blood essence. This time, he was using it to activate the mountainbreak bull's cultivation method.

Mountainbreak bull (Second-stage Infinite Strength Realm)

Racial abilities: Mountainbreak (activate with blood essence)

Foundation source art: Body Strengthening Art (activate with blood essence)

Chapter 216: Fourth-Stage Great Strength (3)

Sure enough, the page was updated. Although he had to use a drop of blood essence to do this, he did not regret it. Next, it was time for him to focus on cultivating.

He swallowed yet another drop of blood essence. The Body Strengthening Art was activated and numerous acupoints opened temporarily in his body. When he looked at himself with his willpower, he could see over 100 shining dots all over his body.

The acupoints started pulling in nearby ambient source qi, causing the density of the source qi around him to increase greatly. The gathered source qi started entering his 39th acupoint. With over 100 acupoints working together, he was absorbing source qi at a rapid speed. His acupoints shook and within his body, one previously dark acupoint started shining.

After over 15 minutes, a rumble sounded within his body. A new acupoint had been opened. The power of the drop of blood essence he consumed was fully exhausted. Su Yu was overjoyed. Even though the energy of the blood essence had been exhausted, trading a drop of blood essence for the opening of one acupoint was worth it.

Prior to this, he would need to use two or three drops of iron-winged bird blood essence before he could open an acupoint. Although cultivating with iron-winged bird blood essence was cheaper, he preferred speed. He could save more time cultivating with mountainbreak bull blood essence.

"I still have 58 drops of blood essence. If I can open 58 acupoints with them..."

Su Yu's jaw dropped. Was he going to have 97 out of 108 acupoints opened after this? Of course, he knew that things wouldn't be so simple. But he still couldn't help but to fantasize about it for a bit. Even if he couldn't open 58 acupoints, opening 57 of them would still be acceptable.

"Low-profile. Yes. I need to stay low profile. I can't grow too fast or I would be dissected. If I have no choice, I can open some Great Strength Art acupoints instead to delay my War God Art's growth. Or maybe I can open some Lightning Source Blade acupoints..."

Su Yu decided to not go further than the sixth-stage Great Strength Realm this time. Any more than that and he would look too abnormal. If he still had blood essence left after reaching that level, he would consider opening the acupoints of other methods or techniques.

Or he could always return to the grotto next time and go straight to the ninth-stage. Su Yu had a beautiful imagination. But reality soon proved that he had been too optimistic.

...

An hour later, he had used 6 drops of blood essence to open 4 acupoints. He had opened 42 acupoints in total.

Two hours later, when he had used 13 drops of blood essence in total, he had opened 3 more acupoints, reaching a number of 45 total opened acupoints.

Three hours later, he had used a total of 20 drops of blood essence.

At that point, he was still opening the final acupoint of the War God Art's fourth-stage, his 48th acupoint.

While cultivating, he studied Bai Feng's War God Art. The willpower text shone brightly as Su Yu focused fully on the miniature Bai Feng in the text. He was cultivating both his body and willpower at the same time. As for the waste of willpower, he was willing to overlook that to pursue speed.

As Su Yu studied the willpower text, the text started dimming due to the rate its willpower was being exhausted. At that moment, a character in the willpower text started dimming as well.

"Battle!"

While still opening his acupoint, Su Yu sensed a new Divine Character slowly taking form in his mind. His fourth Divine Character had appeared!

It was a battle character. In his sea of willpower, the kill character flickered and stabbed through the battle character. Su Yu didn't even need to lift a finger for the new character to be subdued. Like a father leading a son away, the kill character brought the pitiful battle character into the little saber.

The saber flickered as the battle character entered like an obedient child and stopped at a certain spot inside the saber.

Su Yu was dumbfounded.

What? Was the new character so weak? No, it wasn't the character. It was the willpower text. It was his teacher! His teacher was too weak! The character from a text written by a Skysoar was akin to a bug before the character from a text written by a Mountainsea.

Su Yu could sense that among his four Divine Characters, the blood character was probably the strongest. It was on the verge of reaching the second tier. Second to that was the kill character, followed by the lightning character. The weak battle character occupied the last place.

The blood character was so strong because it had absorbed a lot of blood. It had also absorbed a lot of leftover willpower from destroyed Divine Characters. As for the kill character, Su Yu guessed that it needed more combat to grow.

While Su Yu was thinking, a rumble sounded within his body. The 48th acupoint had fully opened. A large amount of source qi gathered around him and entered his body. Once again, his body was strengthened as impurities started seeping out of his pores.

It had been over three hours since he entered the grotto.

...

Inside the small room.

The two old men looked at each other and stroked their beard before they shut their eyes again. The ones who had said that Su Yu would only stay in the grotto for an hour earlier were definitely not them. Yeap. That had nothing to do with them.

That brat was not human! This was his second visit yet he was staying over three hours inside again. That was completely abnormal. Was he going to stay five hours again? Clearly, that brat was going to earn a lot from his visit again.

They had complicated emotions. They finally understood Bai Feng's feelings. With a student like that, he had no choice but to bluff. Who would be happy to have their face slapped all the time? Fortunately, Su Yu had not heard them guessing that he would only stay inside for an hour. Otherwise, that would be too embarrassing for them.

"The next time this kid visits, nothing matters. I'll directly guess that he can stay for 24 hours. If he can't, then he's a piece of trash!"

The two old men reached the same decision. Su Yu would slap their faces if they said that he could stay for an hour. They would like to see the brat do that again if they said he could stay for 24 hours.

But at the same time, they also couldn't help acknowledging that this brat was an absolute genius comparable to that monster from the war academy. That person had taken only eight years to reach the Cloudbreach Realm. How many years would Su Yu need? How many years would Bai Feng need?

What if Bai Feng and Su Yu ended up reaching that realm at the same time after a few years? That would be amusing.

By the time five hours had passed and Su Yu was still inside the grotto, nothing could surprise Old Huang anymore. He said, "Should we report this to the higher ups? Su Yu is definitely a genius in physical cultivation. A war academy might be more suitable for him..."

Old Nie said, "Why are you talking like our academy doesn't produce experts in physical cultivation? If you report this, Faculty Head Zhou and the others will find out as well. Would it be proper for us to report this? I'm more worried that they suppress him so much that his talent is wasted."

Old Huang hesitated slightly and nodded, "Then we won't report it. This kid is definitely not as honest and silly as he pretends to be. He had won quite a lot of merit points from Chen Qi and the others. And he even has enough total earned merits to enter this grotto again. This kid is definitely a ruthless one. As they say, a dog that bites won't bark...He has probably killed before as well."

Su Yu had accumulated more than 100 total merit points and about half of that came from his assistance in killing enemies. The two old men did not know the exact circumstances of those kills, but based on a simple calculation, they could see that Su Yu was still in the Source Opening Realm when he earned those merit points.

Someone who could earn over 50 merit points from killing enemies during the Source Opening Realm was most definitely not an honest and silly man. If anyone dared to try to convince Old Huang otherwise, he would slap that person to death.

As for Chen Qi, had he guessed the same after meeting Su Yu here? He probably had. Otherwise, he wouldn't have said those words to Su Yu. After all, Su Yu had already visited this place before. His free entry had been used up. Since he was returning so soon, he had clearly accumulated enough total earned merits.

Old Huang laughed and shook his head. He had discovered that he was even slower than Chen Qi in realizing that fact. He had just made the discovery now.

Meanwhile, Chen Qi had probably thought of all that the moment he saw Su Yu here. After thinking about his own defeat, he came to a realization that he had been set up by Su Yu, so he understood Su Yu's character even more.

Old Huang muttered, "He reminds me of someone..."

"Who?"

"Wan Tiansheng!" Old Huang said, "A dog that bites—cough, cough. Before Principal Wan became the principal, he had been maintaining a low profile as well. He looked honest and kind, but the moment he gained power, everything changed. He acted like a kindly old man but everyone knows that he can be very ruthless and merciless when he acts."

"Principal Wan?" Old Nie smiled, "He's not that bad. If you want to talk about a silent dog that bites, Principal Wan can only take the second place in Great Xia. The person in the first place is...a businessman."

"Him?" Old Huang raised his brow, "I heard some stories before. Are those stories true?"

"Yes, they are. Of course, you should forget all about them. That person...is merciless. Everyone knows he loves scheming for money, but he is even better when it comes to scheming for life."

At that point, fear appeared in Old Nie's eyes as he switched to voice transmission, "Don't say anything after this. That person is quite petty as well. He doesn't care if you call him Fatty Xia. But that's because you won't hurt him calling him that. But if you do end up threatening his interest...you won't like what comes next."

Old Huang hurriedly nodded. He recalled some rumors he had heard before. So those rumors could be true? At that thought, he sighed.

"Maybe we're not strong because we're not ruthless enough..."

Just look at all those people. Every single one of them had a warm and friendly smile at all times, but every last one of them was merciless and cunning. Principal Wan enjoyed smiling. Marquis Xia enjoyed smiling as well. People who smiled a lot were scary.

And that brat in the grotto...seemed to enjoy smiling a lot too.

"Damn it! Only villains smile all the time!" Old Huang cursed. He only came to realize this at such an old age. Suddenly, he recalled something and asked, "Did Liu Wenyan smile a lot back then?"

"Yes."

"Sure enough!"

Old Nie guessed what his friend was thinking and laughed, "There's also Liu Hong. He smiles a lot too."

"Don't smile at me! I'm very scared of smiling faces now!"

"..."

Old Nie was speechless. He was different from those people. He would only smile occasionally. How could Old Huang say that?

Chapter 217: Academy of Joy (1)

Su Yu had entered the grotto around 11 pm. At around 5 am, when the sun was starting to rise, he finally emerged from the grotto. He had spent all 60 drops of his blood essence. He had also discovered the true purpose of the Source Qi Secret Grotto.

For him, the source qi inside the grotto wasn't the most important part of the grotto. More importantly, bottlenecks did not seem to exist in the grotto. One could break through smoothly in there as long as one could open enough acupoints.

After using his blood essence and opening a new acupoint, he could directly use the next drop of blood essence without waiting. Even his willpower recovery was much faster there.

The grotto was quite a place. Of course, the premise for all that was the ability to constantly break through. The so-called no bottleneck was merely Su Yu's personal experience.

He had spent around six hours there and used up all his blood essence. Just like that, 600 merit points were gone. Even the War God Art willpower text was on the verge of falling apart after he studied it for an entire night and formed a Divine Character out of it. That was 300 merit points gone. To enter the grotto, he had paid 100 merit points.

After adding up his expenses, Su Yu looked up at the sky and started doubting life itself. He had spent 1,000 merit points. And that was basically a discounted price since he had bought his blood essence from the black market.

If he had bought from the official channels, he would have to spend 1,300 merit points. At the black market, that was worth 65 million dollars. That was enough money to buy an entire block in his old neighborhood in Nanyuan. No, he could probably buy two blocks there.

Before this, he had also used over 1,000 merit points' worth of resources in the grotto. In short, he had used over 3,000 merit points during his two visits. Not even a mining tycoon could afford to spend money like that.

At this rate, not even a Cloudbreach would be able to afford raising Su Yu. He would need a Mountainsea to raise him. At the thought of money, Su Yu grew dispirited.

The two old men looked at him with odd gazes. He had stayed in the grotto for six hours. They were too embarrassed to scan the kid with their willpower, but Su Yu had just ended a cultivation session and his acupoints were still overflowing with source qi. Thus, the two Cloudbreach cultivators could see that there were at least 50 or 60 tiny source qi whirlpools in Su Yu's body. That signified that he had at least 50 or 60 acupoints opened.

When Old Huang saw the kid's dispirited expression, he couldn't resist asking, "Su Yu, how's your cultivation?"

"It's okay."

Su Yu forced himself to smile. During his two visits, he had spent over 3,000 merit points to open 61 acupoints. He had reached the fifth-stage Great Strength Realm. He had basically spent around 50 merit points to open each acupoint. That was scary.

Since he still had 47 acupoints left to open, did he need to spend over 2,000 merit points for them? Who else would need to spend around 5,000 merit points just for their Great Strength cultivation? And he hadn't even taken his Divine Characters into consideration.

This was too expensive! Sure, his cultivation speed had grown, but it would be really difficult to keep supporting his current cost of cultivation. The cultivation resources that he had prepared for the following two months had all been used up in one night.

If he had a Mountainsea father, it would be fine. But he didn't have such a father. What was he supposed to do now? He still had 246 merit points remaining, but Su Yu felt like he was as poor as a beggar now.

"It was okay?"

Old Huang had the urge to slap the brat to death. It was okay? That was what the brat had to say for that much progress?

Old Huang coughed and said, "Your current condition is too obvious. Anyone can see that you have grown considerably. I'll help you cover your status. You're welcome."

His eyes lit up brightly as his willpower stretched out and wrapped around Su Yu, sealing all the leaking source qi.

Su Yu blinked his eyes, not able to react in time. But he did not forget to show his gratitude, "Thanks, Teacher."

"Don't mention it."

Old Huang smiled smugly. Wasn't he kind? He had offered to help conceal the brat's growth. And while he was at it, he could also satisfy his curiosity. He was really curious as to how many acupoints the brat had opened.

Su Yu felt somewhat uncomfortable looking at the smile on Old Huang's face. When Old Huang smiled, he looked like an old scoundrel.

Su Yu did not stay long. He did not feel that it was a bad thing to have Old Huang help conceal his growth. It wouldn't be good to have everyone know about his recent growth.

He left. Immediately after, Old Huang slammed his palm into his desk.

Boom!

"Holy shit!"

"..."

Old Nie looked at his old friend in confusion. What was that old man doing?

"61 acupoints!"

Old Huang swallowed. He really couldn't contain his shock.

"How many?"

"61 acupoints!" Still in shock, Old Huang said, "Before entering the grotto, the brat had opened no more than 40 acupoints. He had just opened 36 acupoints not long ago. Even if he can open an acupoint per day, he wouldn't have more than 40 acupoints prior to his entry. This time, he had opened more than 20 acupoints."

Boom!

Old Nie's foot kicked through the desk, but he pulled it back expressionlessly. He acted like nothing happened and said, "Not bad."

"The fuck are you pretending to be calm for?" Old Huang cursed, "You call this not bad? He opened 20 acupoints at one go! Is your son this good as well or is it your dad that's this good as well?"

"Are you cussing me out?"

Old Nie's eyes turned dangerous.

"No!" Old Huang denied. "That kid is really abnormal! He had a thick smell of blood essence on him. Did you smell that as well?"

"Yes." Old Nie couldn't be bothered to argue with Old Huang and said, "Mountainbreak bull blood essence. I think it's Infinite Strength blood essence. And the quantity is definitely not low. In truth, I sensed the blood essence the moment he arrived. That kid had arrived prepared. He is cultivating by consuming blood essence."

"A Great Strength consuming Infinite Strength blood essence?" Old Huang was shocked, "Is that possible? Can that brat's body take it? Wait, he did succeed. He had even consumed a large amount of that blood essence. Is it because of body mutation, bloodline inheritance, or a unique Divine Character?"

Old Nie shook his head. It wouldn't be easy to figure that out. Unless Su Yu told them himself, they wouldn't know for sure. The only thing they knew was that Su Yu had consumed a lot of blood essence for his cultivation. He had swallowed dozens of drops of Infinite Strength blood essence.

"Just like that, he reached the fifth-stage Great Strength Realm..." Old Huang sighed. "Fifth-stage Great Strength Realm! Can his martial technique keep up with his cultivation level?"

"It will probably be fine." Old Nie said doubtfully, "I don't know why but I sensed quite a lot of willpower texts on him as well. One of them even seems to have been written by a Mountainsea."

His voice was uncertain as he said, "It feels like a Skybreak Technique willpower text written by a Mountainsea. It feels very familiar. It should be the Skybreak Technique."

"Was it written by Hong Tan?"

"I doubt so. The aura on it is different. Hong Tan is not around anyway."

The two looked at each other. Suddenly, they recalled something. Not long ago, someone had lost a willpower text in the academy. No way. Did the willpower text end up in that brat's hands?

"This is way more complicated than we think it is."

Old Huang sighed and said nothing else. Things were really getting more and more complicated. Something the single character faction lost had appeared in Su Yu's hands. Was this a coincidence? Or was someone scheming something?

Chapter 218: Academy of Joy (2)

At the same time.

Mental Tempering Garden, special zone.

Boom!

A hand was furiously slammed into a table.

Zheng Yunhui roared, "Repeat your words. Who took my Skybreak Technique?"

Liu He rolled his eyes, "Why are you shouting at me? It's not me. I only heard it from my elder brother. He said that during Su Yu's fight with Chen Qi, the technique he used felt different. The Skybreak Technique he used felt like the inheritance of a Mountainsea..."

Zheng Yunhui started thinking. He was present during the fight as well.

When he recalled that scene, he gnashed his teeth and said, "So he might have learned the technique from my lost text? That bastard! Wait, no, I bought the text from your elder brother. He needs to compensate me!"

Liu He snorted, "The common practice of the black market is that if things are lost to raids, both parties will not hold the other party responsible. You can only blame your bad luck for losing the text. I can only tell you that the text might have ended up in Su Yu's hands. You should be thankful I even bothered to tell you this much."

Liu He stood up and said, "I already told you what I know. Do whatever you want with the information. But if you want the text back, you better be fast or it will be ruined after its willpower is drained. Don't blame me for not reminding you if that ends up happening."

Zheng Yunhui snorted and said, "Don't even think of using this trick on me. Are you trying to instigate me to start a feud with Su Yu?"

Liu He said with derision, "Instigating you? Is there a need for that? I only dislike him so I'm telling you frankly that you should look for him to get your text back. That is me being frank, not me instigating you."

"..."

Zheng Yunhui resisted the urge to swear. These fellows from the cultural research academy were all shameless. Even when they were scheming, they could do it openly and proudly.

Liu He didn't even bother trying to explain himself. Instead, he bluntly said that yes, he was here to unleash Zheng Yunhui upon Su Yu.

While walking away, Liu He said, "That's something worth 1,500 merit points. I know your Zheng Family is rich, but you still shouldn't waste your money that way. Also, you need to know that at times, money alone won't get you the willpower texts you need."

"Scram!" Zheng Yunhui roared.

That caused Liu He to turn around and smile, "You look crazy. I like it. Zheng Yunhui, try to get into the Top 100 Ranking as early as you can. I look forward to beating you until you cry. How dare you act so arrogant in front of me?"

Zheng Yunhui's face fell. Damn it! Was this person crazy? He kept having a feeling that everyone in this academy was crazy.

Jia Mingzhen, Xia Chan, Wan Mingze, Hu Qiusheng...

Not one of those fellows was normal.

Even Su Yu and Xia Huyou were somewhat abnormal as well. In short, since joining the academy, he had found that this place was filled with lunatics. No wonder his grandpa had always said that the cultural research academy was a gathering place of madmen.

A bunch of lunatics!

This Liu He was one of them. He was just instigating Zheng Yunhui to move against Su Yu a moment ago. Why did he decide to threaten Zheng Yunhui out of nowhere?

Zheng Yunhui was tired, but a wise man knew better than to fight when the odds were against him. He lowered his voice and said, "Please do scram. Fuck this. It's too early for you to get all cocky in front of me. I'm not even in the Top 100 Ranking yet. At worst, I'll just concede and leave the Top 100 Ranking. What the fuck can you do to me after that? What a dumbass. Do you think you look cool saying all that to me?"

"..."

Liu He's face stiffened.

Zheng Yunhui said, "What are you waiting for? Fuck off. Do you think you can threaten me with the Top 100 Ranking? Do you think I care? I can enter and leave and enter and leave again and again. What the fuck can you do about it? I'll leave the moment you challenge me. What can you do? An old student like you is threatening a new student like me? And you actually feel proud doing it? Just wait until I reach the Infinite Strength Realm through my physical cultivation. I'll punch you to death, you piece of shit."

"..."

At that moment, Liu He suddenly realized that there really was nothing he could do to Zheng Yunhui. He could only smile before leaving with his teeth clenched.

Fine. He lost. Since that fellow was so shameless, what could he do about it?

After Liu He left, Zheng Yunhui spat on the ground before scratching his head, "Should I go look for Su Yu? Would he give me the willpower text?"

Yeah, that was very unlikely. But Su Yu looked so honest and kind. Perhaps it wouldn't be a bad idea to give it a try. After all, he had spent 1,000 merit points for that text. He was unwilling to give up on the text so easily.

Like Liu He said, the Zheng Family might be rich, but they still shouldn't waste their money like that. Furthermore, the Skybreak Technique willpower text written by a Mountainsea was very rare.

"If I wait until he fully drains the text of willpower, it would be too late."

Zheng Yunhui was feeling helpless. He knew that Liu He was trying to push him against Su Yu, but he had no choice but to follow Liu He's plan. After all, he was unwilling to lose something he had paid 1,000 merit points for.

...

After returning from the grotto, Su Yu took a short rest in the research center before getting ready to attend the morning class. Right after he walked out of the research center, he recalled something. He had forgotten to feed the fellows in the prison zone.

"How many days have it been?"

Su Yu blinked. He recalled that he had not fed those creatures even once. It was the 4th when he was introduced to the prison zone. And it was already the 9th.

"Forget it. It has only been a few days. I can feed them after class."

He had been too busy recently so he had completely forgotten about the creatures. He hadn't even found any time to visit Zhao Li. His martial uncle had asked him to get closer to Zhao Li, but he really didn't have the time for that. He needed to work on his acupoints, Divine Characters, and classes...

If it wasn't for the fact that he lacked money, he would rather stay in the research center and seclude himself for a few months in cultivation. He walked while thinking. Suddenly, someone appeared before him.

He recognized the other person so he nodded and greeted, "Good morning, Student Zheng."

"Just call me Zheng Yunhui."

Zheng Yunhui went straight to the point, "Su Yu, I have a question."

"Yes?"

"I lost a Skybreak Technique willpower text written by a Mountainsea in the black market not long ago."

Su Yu's heart thumped.

Holy shit! The buyer was here! He had not told anyone about the text. His teacher was probably the only person who knew a little about his text. How did Zheng Yunhui learn of it?

"Liu He told me." Zheng Yunhui seemed to know what Su Yu was thinking. He did not bother trying to hide anything for Liu He. "He said you have the text. Is that true, Su Yu?"

Su Yu gave it some thought and concluded that it would be pointless to deny. He smiled and said, "Yes. I got a Skybreak Technique willpower text through luck. But Student Zheng, there is no name on that text. And it wasn't something someone bought from the academy so there is no official record. Do you think that I'll give it to you because you're claiming that it is yours? Even if I'm stupid, I'm not that stupid."

Su Yu earnestly said, "Put yourself in my shoes. If you pick up something like this, would you give it away? If there is a record to prove that it is yours, things would be different. But there is no record."

Zheng Yunhui felt distressed. He knew this would happen. Like Su Yu said, that text did not come from an official channel. It was pointless even if he knew Su Yu had it.

After thinking about it, Zheng Yunhui said, "I already paid 1,000 merit points to order that text. It was priced at 1,500 merit points. You must have studied it several times already. If you're willing to return it to me now, I am willing to pay you the remaining 500 merit points. In all honesty, you only need to study it a few times. It won't be that useful even if you study it more."

"500 merit points?"

Su Yu hesitated slightly and said, "How about this? I'll rent it to you for 100 merit points per read."

"..."

Zheng Yunhui was stunned.

What a genius. Damn it! This kid was actually a genius businessman! 100 merit points per read? What a good idea!

Chapter 219: Academy of Joy (3)

Su Yu said, "With 500 merit points, you can read it 5 times. Like you said, you only need to read it a few times. So it should be enough for you to read 5 times, right? If you agree, both of us will gain something out of this. Who knows? Maybe you only need 3 times to master it. You can even save 200 merit points and make a profit. What do you think?"

"I can make a profit?"

Zheng Yunhui shook his head. How did the conversation take such a turn? He had to pay to read his own stuff...and he was going to make a profit doing that? What? And Su Yu sounded so convincing.

Zheng Yunhui stayed speechless for a long while before he said, "Su Yu, in that case, I'm not going to buy the text from you. I can agree to rent it, but 100 merit points is too expensive. Let me read it for 10 merit points. I'm only at the Mental Tempering Stage. It's a Mountainsea willpower text so it won't suffer much damage from me. I can even read it a dozen or so times without damaging it. What do you think?"

Su Yu looked at Zheng Yunhui in astonishment. This fellow had agreed so easily?

When Zheng Yunhui saw Su Yu's shocked expression, he smiled, "That cocky asshole Liu He tried to use me as a weapon against you. Why should I agree? I only want to read the Skybreak Technique written by a Mountainsea. I'm not here to look for trouble. If you agree to let me read it, we can talk about this. If you disagree, there is nothing I can do except forming a feud with you."

Zheng Yunhui smiled, "If you let me read it, you can even earn something from it. And you can even ruin Liu He's plan. And you might even get me as a friend. Do you agree?"

Su Yu was about to speak when Zheng Yunhui added, "My grandpa is Zheng Ping."

"..."

Su Yu had a blank expression.

Zheng Yunhui was speechless. Su Yu didn't know who Zheng Ping was?

"My grandpa is the principal of the Great Xia War Academy."

A look of realization appeared on Su Yu's face. He was quite surprised. He only knew that Xia Chan was someone from the Xia Family. After all, the Xia Family was too well-known in Great Xia.

As for the others, he had guessed that Wan Mingze was probably related to Principal Wan. As for the other students, he had not paid much attention to them. In any case, there were more than one Zheng Family in Great Xia.

So this Zheng Ping was a principal of the Great Xia War Academy! Then that was most definitely an important individual.

Su Yu thought about it and said, "30 merit points per read. If you agree, we can work together. If not, forget it. This text won't last forever. You're insulting a Mountainsea by offering a price like 10 merit points. Also, I will set a limit. You can't read it more than 5 times. And each time, you can only read it at my place with me beside you. Otherwise, I wouldn't be able to do anything if you refuse to return it."

"Sure."

Zheng Yunhui was quite a reasonable person.

When Su Yu saw that, he sank into thought before asking, "Zheng Yunhui, do you lack money?"

"What?"

"Do you lack merit points?"

Zheng Yunhui looked at Su Yu in astonishment and replied, "Who doesn't? Do you really think that people like us have endless money? No matter how strong our seniors are, they won't be able to support us without limits. The money I spent on this text is supposed to be all my funds in the Great Strength Realm. I won't get more funds before the Infinite Strength Realm."

Su Yu said, "I have a thought. I suspect that Liu Hong had intentionally dropped your stuff and arranged for me to pick it up."

Su Yu connected a lot of dots in his mind and clenched his teeth as he continued, "In fact, Liu Hong was the reason I found this text. He deliberately whispered near me about the location of this text. That was how I found it. But after that, he had his little brother tell you about it. I'm certain that this whole thing is a plot by him."

The more Su Yu spoke, the more certain he was. "He is trying to pit us against each other. Since he is from an opposing faction, it is normal for him to act against me. But you...do you trust me when I say that he intentionally dropped your stuff?"

Zheng Yunhui raised his brow. Was it all intentional?

"Is he not afraid of his reputation in the black market? Why would he do something like this?" Zheng Yunhui said in disbelief, "Reputation is important in the black market as well. Also, there was indeed a raid during the day my text was lost."

"He had definitely taken advantage of the raid to drop your text." Su Yu was sure, "Definitely."

"And what do you intend to do?"

"Plot against him as well." Su Yu clenched his teeth in anger, "Get what you lost from Liu Hong."

Zheng Yunhui's eyes lit up, "Get what I lost from him? But that's 1,000 merit points. How am I supposed to do that?"

"We'll walk and talk."

Su Yu started walking. "Didn't he send you after me? Just do what he wants. We will agree to a private match and try to lure him into betting on the match. What do you think?"

"Hmm?"

Zheng Yunhui was excited, but his excitement was short-lived. He shook his head, "There are too many variables to that plan. He might not end up putting a bet at all. And even if he does end up betting on the match, he won't do it personally. And you won't know his bet. He might not even bet too much. Sure, a researcher might enjoy gambling, but this is only a match between students. For them, this is a quarrel between children. It might not even catch Liu Hong's attention."

That was an idea Su Yu had come out with after a sudden bout of inspiration. When he heard Zheng Yunhui's words, he nodded in agreement. There were indeed too many variables.

But he really wanted to scam Liu Hong once. That fellow had been making his life difficult repeatedly. He was very unhappy about it.

Suddenly, Zheng Yunhui smiled and said, "If you really want to scam Liu Hong, I have an idea."

"What?"

"When moving against an expert like Liu Hong, you have to aim for his weakness. I know he has been keeping his eyes on your Wentan Research Center."

Zheng Yunhui beamed and said, "Su Yu, we can agree on a supposedly private match with the Skybreak Technique and some data from your research center as the wager. You can just use some fake data. We'll try to scam Liu Hong by having him buy the fake data."

Su Yu understood, "You mean I'm going to deliberately lose and let you win the fake data. You can then sell it to Liu Hong?"

"Yeah." Zheng Yunhui smiled, "Of course, Liu Hong might not fall for it. After all, you're still new so you probably still don't know anything important."

Su Yu scratched his head and muttered, "Yeah. My status is too low so he might not fall for that. With my current strength, just what secret can I learn?"

Su Yu raised his brow and asked, "What if my teacher works with me? I'll have my teacher announce that I'll be officially allowed to join the main research. With that, I'll be able to get in contact with some secret data."

"Hmm?"

Zheng Yunhui looked at Su Yu in astonishment. His teacher? Why did he speak like his teacher was going to obey him?

Chapter 220: Academy of Joy (4)

Zheng Yunhui knew Bai Feng. That was an arrogant person. His grandpa had told him previously that when he grew strong, his first target should be Bai Feng. After all, that person was too hateful. He once challenged the entire war academy all by himself.

Su Yu said, "If my teacher agrees, would it be much more believable?"

"Of course. But Assistant Bai..."

Su Yu smiled, "I'll convince my teacher. Liu Hong is our opponent, after all. He would definitely be happy to see Liu Hong scammed. Then again, if we do that, my teacher would need to get a share of the profit as well."

Su Yu was starting to get excited as he said, "If my teacher tries to scam him, Liu Hong won't believe it. He would also be on guard against me. But you...he might not be too suspicious of you."

"If you can sell him the data for 5,000 merit points, you can get your money back. Also, he was the one who had set you up first. He dropped your stuff to turn you against me. That fellow is an asshole. Of the teaching assistants, he is the worst. He has no class and is a first rate hypocrite..."

"Of course, if I use fake data, he can still discover the scam too easily. It won't work unless...I take a risk out of greed. For example, you offer something good as the wager. Something too good for me to refuse."

Zheng Yunhui's eyes flickered as he said, "I do have something like that. My grandpa, he's one of the strongest experts of Great Xia. A few years ago, he killed a Cloudbreach divine in the battlefield and obtained 10 drops of Cloudbreach blood essence. How about this? I'll use 3 drops of Cloudbreach blood essence as the wager. You'll use the willpower text and a set of data. That should work."

"Divine blood essence?"

Su Yu couldn't help but to curse inwardly. This fellow was really rich.

"Don't look at me like that. The blood essence belongs to my grandpa. But I can borrow it. It's the real deal so nobody would dare to snatch it from me. In Great Xia, nobody would dare to take from my grandpa unless your principal...I mean our principal shamelessly makes a move himself."

Zheng Yunhui was starting to get excited as well. "I'll use the real deal for the wager. With even divine blood essence being used, he has no choice but to fall for the scam. We will try to be cautious and secretive about it. Make it so that we are the only ones aware of it before leaking the information to him. The more secretive we are, the better it is. That would be understandable since we're both betting with things we shouldn't."

Su Yu was shocked by Zheng Yunhui's boldness.

He said, "That's too troublesome. Why don't we just offer to sell him the blood essence through the black market. Then have your grandpa raid the market and accuse him of stealing the blood essence. Your grandpa can beat him up and reclaim the blood essence after that..."

Zheng Yunhui was dumbstruck. Dang! What a ruthless guy!

"This is not the war academy..."

In other words, that plan might really work if this was the war academy.

The black market transaction would be illegal so it would be within Principal Zheng's rights to beat Liu Hong up before seizing the blood essence. He could even frame Liu Hong for some crimes and make Liu Hong's life even more difficult.

"Forget about selling the blood essence. That thing is too eye-catching. If someone really sets their eyes on it and I end up losing it in the black market, I would be dead. My grandpa would beat me to death.

"It would be better if I can keep it with me. Things would be much easier to deal with. Anyone daring to rob me can be treated as cult members. That excuse won't work after putting the blood essence in the black market," said Zheng Yunhui. He disagreed. But he was impressed with how treacherous Su Yu was.

"We should stick to our previous plan." Zheng Yunhui was still feeling rather excited, "This is quite exciting. If we succeed, Liu Hong would be broke! And he wouldn't even be able to do anything to us since this would be an illegal transaction!"

As for whether their plan would work, it didn't matter. There was a chance it would work and that was good enough.

"But there is an issue with this plan. You're not strong enough. Although you have your blood essence ability as your trump card, I'm not weak. You must be crazy to agree to such a bet without the confidence to defeat me. If you want the plan to work, you need to give the impression that you can

defeat me. Otherwise, agreeing to this bet is the same as destroying your own future. Not even an idiot would believe that a genius like you would ruin your own future. This is the biggest issue with our plan."

Su Yu smiled, "Why won't I have the confidence to defeat you?"

"Huh?" Zheng Yunhui laughed, "Blood essence is really not that reliable. I'll be frank. I'm a seventh-stage Great Strength and my willpower is quite strong too. Even my Divine Character is pretty good. You won't be my match."

As far as Zheng Yunhui was concerned, not even blood essence would help Su Yu defeat him.

Su Yu smiled, "Don't get too confident. Since even you don't believe that I stand a chance against you, if I can really display enough confidence, Liu Hong might really believe that the bet is real."

"What other trump cards do you have?"

Su Yu smiled, "There is no rush. I still don't have enough confidence now. Wait a few days. I'll expose my secret to Liu Hong. As for you, just act clueless."

As a fifth-stage Great Strength, he was still a tad bit too weak.

But if he was at the sixth or the seventh-stage and nobody except Liu Hong knew about it, would Liu Hong fall for the plan? It was very likely that he would fall for it.

If Liu Hong believed that Su Yu's trump card was good enough to threaten Zheng Yunhui, then the bet would be a lot more believable. At that time, he would suffer a close defeat to Zheng Yunhui and everything would be acceptable.

Zheng Yunhui doubted Su Yu's words. But it didn't matter even if the plan failed. Su Yu was the one who had proposed this plan. He had never intended to do anything against Liu Hong in the first place. After all, Liu Hong was much stronger than him.

"Fine. We'll talk again next time." Zheng Yunhui smiled, "But from today onward, both of us will need to be hostile toward each other. I am from the Zheng Family. I have a fiery temper like my grandpa. That's probably why Liu Hong picked me as his target."

The Zheng Family was famous for their bad temper. Zheng Yunhui was the odd one out. Otherwise, he wouldn't have joined the cultural research academy.

"We'll go separately. In the classroom, I'll start looking for trouble with you. We'll let our hostility develop for some time and try to scam Liu Hong. Even if we end up not scamming him, we can still use the plan against someone else."

Zheng Yunhui was filled with excitement, "This feeling of plotting against others is incredible! It gives me the feeling that we are the villains. The cultural research academy is a good place indeed. It must be very exciting being a villain here!"

There was no place for him to showcase his cunning in the Zheng Family. After all, that was a family of brutes. All they knew was to swing their fists around. That was way too boring for him.

The cultural research academy was truly a good place. Just look at how treacherous all his schoolmates were. He liked this environment. Su Yu was the perfect example of that. He was supposed to be an honest man, but he turned out to be a super competent schemer.

Zheng Yunhui was falling in love with the cultural research academy. Life was so exciting here. Everyone here was so good with their words. Here, even students dared to plot against the teachers. The war academy was completely different. There, only fists mattered.

Zheng Yunhui started walking away in excitement. He had a feeling that the cultural research academy was the stage for him to win power and reputation. This was the perfect place to showcase his true talent. He could tell everyone that the Zheng Family was no longer a family of brutes!

Looking at the departing Zheng Yunhui, Su Yu laughed. He was also finding this whole thing interesting. The cultural research academy was truly a fun place.

As for Zheng Yunhui, he definitely wasn't as simple-minded as he looked. At first, he had thought that Zheng Yunhui was similar to Chen Hao. After all, Zheng Yunhui had the appearance of a typical brute. But the moment that fellow offered payment to read the text, Su Yu realized that he had misunderstood that fellow.