

Mystical 451

Chapter 451: Eve 1

"You...!! You..." The red-haired girl was at a complete loss for words.

"Why do you have this thing?" Garen stood at the side with his eyebrows furrowed and asked the question that everyone wanted to know.

Kid threw another one of those things into his mouth.

"This seed is actually from a type of plant called the Nightmare Vine. It has a strange ability that forces people into nightmares and makes them unable to free themselves, but I naturally have specialized physique, thus I wasn't affected." He trailed behind Garen, as the opportunities for him to speak increased.

"But the seed from earlier tasted weird, as if it was cultivated wrongly, and were not as tasty as mine." He added another sentence right as he finished the first one.

"Do you always have dangerous things with you?!" The red-haired girl could not help but scream.

"You guys are just too weak." Kid looked at them contemptuously. "If you reached Form 3 you wouldn't be affected by this anymore."

His sentence rendered the entire Mercenary Group speechless.

"Alright, Angel will recuperate here with me while the rest of you return to inform the others," commanded Garen the moment he opened his mouth.

Most of the Mercenary Group members did not dare to disobey orders, except for two of Angel's disciples who stood on the spot and did not move.

Both of them exchanged glances.

The boy Gracie suddenly said in a loud voice.

"We want to stay behind and take care of Teacher as well!"

Garen looked at both of them carefully.

"Okay." He waved his hand.

Once the Nightmare Seed was extracted, Angel was fine. When she woke up, the situation cleared up naturally.

"Someone's here."

Immediately, an older female servant rushed into the palace frantically.

"Palace Master?"

"Take them downstairs and arrange rooms for them there, make sure that their food and drinks are light and soft. Hire some doctors to come into the palace to take a look," Garen told her.

"Understood."

Soon, most of the people from the Black Panther Mercenary Group had left after Gracie and Hill's instructions. Both of them carried Angel, and followed the servant into the guest room.

Garen pondered for a moment, and realised that he definitely lacked palace staff. Tasks such as arranging food and lodging required him to command them individually, which was very troublesome.

Suddenly, he thought of the two Dragon Blood death prisoners that he had modified. Those two had insufficient strength, but could do some housework at least. They could also help the extremely busy Lala.

Although Lala did not have a lot of strength, the critical thinking skills she had gained from the law department allowed her to manage the family business in perfect order. Those two could now become her subordinates.

After handling Angel's situation, Garen called both of her disciples to his study room alone.

Watching Garen drink his green tea slowly as he sat on the chair made the two others slightly cautious of him.

"Have a seat."

The three of them were the only ones in the study, and there were no one else in their surroundings.

The entire Black Fire Palace was unlike the rumors from the outside, there were no violent bloody scenes, but instead it was deathly quiet.

Neither of them dared to defy him, so they quickly sat down on the bench on Garen's left side.

"I called you here, because I wanted to know about Angel's Mercenary Group, and what the current developments are? Why didn't she contact me all this while?" Garen called a servant girl over to serve two cups of green tea to the others.

The boy Gracie smiled bitterly.

"Palace Master, I think I know why Teacher never contacted you."

"Oh?"

Gracie remembered for a moment.

"Everytime Teacher taught us, she would always sigh for an unknown reason. From Teacher's words, I could always hear a certain.. longing." Gracie lifted his head and glanced at Garen.

"Teacher seemed like she always wanted to surpass somebody. Because of that, she worked hard determinedly. Meanwhile, Teacher always complained that her talents were not strong enough, and although she worked hard, she could never see a ray of hope. Frankly, we could never understand the meaning behind Teacher's desire. In our eyes, Teacher was already strong enough. There would always be people in the world who were stronger than ourselves, and if we wanted to surpass all of them, one lifetime would be insufficient," he smiled bitterly.

Garen furrowed his eyebrows slightly.

Gracie seemed like a calm person who would not be fazed during peril, but he never expected that he would lack the desire and strength to improve. He did not like people like this.

Pushing that aside, he understood what Gracie meant.

Perhaps the person that Angel always wanted to surpass was an old acquaintance, or a friend, or maybe even Garen himself. This was something that nobody knew for sure.

"That's right, this is the open communication device that Teacher left behind before she left." Gracie had thought of something suddenly, as he took a little square black box out of his arms.

The little box was made of black iron, and looked unimportant. There were rows of horizontal cracks on its surface, exposing its hollow interior.

This thing looked like the outside of a radio from earth.

"Open communication device?" This was the first time Garen had heard of this phrase in this world, it was a name that was obviously connected to technological terms.

"Hmm, could it be that Palace Master doesn't about this?" Gracie was slightly shocked. He quickly explained. "This is a communication device that is currently very popular. Initially, only high levelled Totem Users had the right to use it; it can communicate with others from distances of over a thousand kilometers, using a shapeless resonance technology. It was developed in the Rainbow Domain, as it was said that they caught a small insect species that possessed natural resonance abilities, thus they used these insects build nests, and researched them for a while, before finally creating this thing. Its price is..."

"This thing is very cheap, only ten copper rums for one," interrupted the red-haired girl on the side, as it was finally time for her to present herself, as her brother had said everything earlier, making her feel non existent. Now that Teacher had finally gotten out of harm's way, she had almost returned to her normal, girlish lively nature.

"It only requires one copper rumb?" Garen picked up the black box, and noticed that there were two switches on the right side. One of them was a button, and pressing it would decide if it was opened or closed. The other was a knob that was probably used to adjust something.

"This communication device can self regulate frequencies, and if a predetermined frequency is chosen, many people from distances of over ten thousand kilometers could communicate with each other at the same time, which would be extremely convenient. Except that its consumption source is something called an Acer Crystal, which is only sold in Rainbow Domain. One piece requires two copper rums, and is enough to last for an hour."

"No wonder this thing is so cheap," Garen realised. "So the key is its consumption."

"Mm," Gracie paused, before realising. They had only thought that this thing was interesting, but had never expected that Garen would look at it through the perspective of Rainbow Domain, and see the problem through the bigger picture. He saw that Rainbow Domain was controlling a large business opportunity through this.

Garen was quite impressed, after watching Gracie's demonstrations of this thing, he learned how to use it after a few tries.

It had almost the same functions as an original radio from earth.

But it was more advanced than a radio, because this thing could be used to communicate. As long as the other person's frequency was known beforehand, both parties could communicate directly. The distance between them could span up to ten thousand kilometers as well.

In simpler terms, if you spoke on one frequency, whether you intended it or not, everyone who happened to be on that same frequency would be able to hear what you were saying, and this was the true meaning of open communication.

However, these resonating frequency adjustments could reach extremely fine degrees, and there were a total of more than ten thousand grid scales, and the slightest movement would mean that the next grid would be a new frequency, making it impossible to use all of them.

The moment Garen turned on the communication device, strange loud noises could be heard from inside, as if many people were speaking at once, in chaotic confusion.

He adjusted it slightly, and changed to a different grid scale, before it quietened down.

"Are you here?"

"I'm here. Where do you want to exchange the goods today?"

"Did you bring the money?"

"Give me the goods first!"

"Give me the money first!"

"You don't have the right to set requirements!"

Why did it feel like a gangster movie?

Garen looked at Gracie with a weird expression, while the latter slapped his own head suddenly, and took out a piece of light red foil and pasted it carefully on the surface of the communication device, covering the top of it quickly.

"This is a sound insulation membrane, it will ensure that the sounds you make on this side will not transfer over."

Gracie explained.

Garen tinkered with the communication device for a while, and felt that it was extremely fresh, as he had never expected that the technological advancements in this world would develop so quickly, as the Totem User's usage of research could not be underestimated.

Since Totem User's powers had already developed to such extreme lengths, they did not need such destructive technological advancements.

Large defensive covers that spanned over hundred square kilometers would never exist on earth.

Gracie and Hill noticed that Garen was having fun with the communication device, so they decided to just give it to him.

"Palace Master, a lot of people are using this now because it's popular. They are other grades in Rainbow Domain, and this one here is medium grade. Below it are normal grade, while above are premium grade, luxury grade, aristocratic grade, gold grade, diamond grade and the only silver grade. The price increases with their grade. The important part is the difference between sound filters, and the variations in packaging appearances," Gracie explained.

"Understood," Garen nodded. The interior structure of this thing was very primitive, a sign that the Forgers in Rainbow Domain were unable to thoroughly study the principles properly, and were thus unable to make minor adjustments.

Upon seeing that Garen was playing with it intently, the other two got up to leave.

Next, Lala entered and quickly announced the recent news regarding the family business.

Garen listened casually and continued to play with the communication device, and asked some questions occasionally.

Lala had really managed everything properly, the resources that Garen had gained from the palace were used as the foundation of a new reward and punishment system, to establish a new set of perfect management systems.

This would motivate Totem Users to work hard, creating improvements as well. It also ensured that they were not too exhausted or troubled.

As for normal workers, there was a different set of beneficial methods as well. But it was obvious that it was not something that she had thought up on her own.

Garen just listened to these things casually. He only cared about his final income and expenditure summary.

"This is a set of welfare and wage systems that I came up with, could you look at it and see if anything needs to be added?" Lala brought out a thick stack of white documents.

Garen took the documents and flipped through them, and since his reading speed and memory analysis abilities were extremely quick, he was able to read through the entire thing within a minute, before he took his seal out and stamped it.

"I pass it, so you can take this to the Black Fire Palace's treasury to take the necessary financial resources for each month. The elite Black Fire Guards there will release them automatically." Garen passed the documents back.

He paused.

"Furthermore, as the supervisor, you can elect a vice supervisor on your own to manage the other tasks. You have the authority to approve one hundred thousand gold rums for all of these receipts, and these one hundred thousand gold rums will be the total monthly expenditure."

Lala's eyes widened suddenly, as she did not expect Garen to give her such great authority.

It was important to note that although the Trejons household was undergoing significant expansion, in reality, the entire household's assets were under a million gold rums. This happened after Garen became one of the Four Gargantuans of the Kovitan Kingdom, and succeeded in selling a large number of houses in the vicinity of the palace.

Although the palace still belonged to the Royal Family in name, once Avic died, Ivycius and Edin of the Silver Palace remained silent, and immediately supported the Black Fire Palace. Under the circumstance that no one objected, naturally, no one would dare to object his invasion of the palace areas as well. Although the other three Gargantuans were at odds, they were not entirely innocent as well, and would obviously not dare to provoke him directly as well, in case everyone would be thrown into an uncomfortable state.

Especially under the circumstance when Garen's name was related to violence and cruelty.

Chapter 452: Eve 2

"Lala, you've been with me for many years, haven't you? Garen changed the subject suddenly.

"Yes." Lala adjusted her attitude quickly, and relaxed again, except that an irrepressible ecstasy was still present deep within her eyes.

She had always took care of everything for Garen behind the scenes, and had never complained. Even when she was held captive and had almost lost her life, she had never asked Garen for rest or remuneration.

Now she had finally received her due reward.

She had her own friends, and relatives too. During the period when she came to the Kingdom, as Garen's influence expanded, she used this opportunity to find her lost relatives as well. As these people gathered beside her, they naturally became her source of strength.

To outsiders, she was the Black Fire Palace Master's spokesperson.

Her position was respected, except among the Gargantuans, and everyone in the Kingdom regarded her with status and respect.

In the days when the Kingdom calmed down, she would receive many banquet invitations daily. Some of them would be rejected, while others would be chosen to attend.

Countless people fawned over her and flattered her, in hopes of getting some of the power and profits from her hands. As long as one formed a relationship with her, they would be able to gain the favour of the fearsome Black Fire Palace as well. Everything she did was done with confidence.

In that moment, Lala had thought of many things.

She suppressed her excited emotions, and bowed in front of Garen seriously.

"I will not let you down."

Garen nodded, and watched her turn around to leave. He had given a large amount of his authority to Lala. With the protection of the Black Fire Guards and his namesake, no one would dare to make things difficult for her. Even the other three Gargantuans would need to give her face.

In the weeks after that, Angel recuperated completely, and her body finally healed. When she knew that Garen had saved her, she immediately fell into an absent minded state. It was obvious that the person she had always been trying to catch up to, was actually Garen.

She had initially sworn that she would protect Garen in Iron Tank City, and had never expected that she would be overtaken by Garen, as she once assumed that she would be able to catch up.

But the brutal reality completely shattered her remaining bits of pride.

Although she had never admitted defeat, and had never given up, now that she could see that she was being pushed further behind, and in the end, she could not even reach the borderline. This feeling made her remember the first thing she had said in front of Garen when she slapped the table.

She was a person with high self-esteem, and she had always felt that she could never be worse than others. Initially, she thought that she could never catch up to the geniuses because her talents were different, and they were treated in different conditions.

She never expected to encounter a living example like Garen.

For some time, she could not face Garen, and could only continuously force herself to become stronger, and this attitude brought her to the wrong path, and caused her Totem cultivation to become stagnant, forming consecutive failures. Later, after receiving encouragement from some friends in her circle, she attempted to find a shortcut, only to end up in an almost fatal coma in the end.

After she woke up, she did not come to see Garen properly.

But every morning, when Garen practiced his daily Myriad Water Jasper Technique exercises, she would always watch him from afar, but would say nothing.

It started as a coincidence, but after awhile, she would always wake up on time, and would always observe Garen from afar while he sat cross-legged on the ground, practicing his Secret Techniques.

Although she felt that it was weird for Garen to merely sit on the floor motionless for a period of time, she never came over to question him.

When Garen practiced his Secret Techniques daily, he could always feel the Nine-Headed Demon Dragon being absorbed and fusing with his body slowly. Through this specialized Secret Technique method, he

could operate the Nine-Headed Demon Dragon's blood flow and his own Totem Power, allowing both of them to fuse, and adapt to one another.

He practiced day and night, and during breaks in between, he would play with the open communication device, and soon Garen had started to call it a radio. It made him nostalgic about his days on earth.

Many weeks had passed.

Angel finally came to face Garen properly.

In the morning while Garen was practicing his Secret Techniques, she finally walked over to him.

Garen, who was still sitting cross-legged on the floor, suddenly opened his eyes.

"You finally decided to come."

"I just couldn't face you," Angel bit her lip, and her face was still slightly pale. "My main wish for the longest time, was not to let anyone feel that my achievements came from other people. Thus, I never mentioned our relationship to anyone."

"You're quite extreme," Garen smiled, and got up from the ground.

"The War Chain's abilities, are they still useful?" he asked casually, before taking a cup of mouthwash tea from a servant girl's hand.

Angel did not answer, but the unhappy expression on her face clearly showed her emotions.

It was not useless, instead, it was extremely useful. But everytime the War Chain's abilities increased, it meant that the distance between her and Garen was widening. The insulting part, was that she had

always wanted to surpass Garen, but many times outside, the key moment that saved her life, was always reliant on the Chain's abilities.

She had relied on these abilities when she had a disagreement with another Form 3 Totem User, and neither of them would give in to the other, and because this happened in the small scale mercenary community in the Kingdom, it also affected certain reputations.

Kovitan Empire was unlike Iron Tank City. This place was extremely powerful, and if it was not for the Chain's abilities, she would have been swallowed without a trace already. Moreover, she would not be standing securely right now.

Garen drank a mouthful of tea, swirled it in his mouth, and spat it out immediately.

"You're too preoccupied with strength, and your reputation. Put down your reputation. Sometimes, a friend's strength is also a part of your strength. You need to understand this, strength that is borrowed and made your own, is the mark of a true victor."

Angel nodded unwillingly.

She looked at the twenty-something year old young man that stood before her, at this young age, he had already become the famed Kovitan Gargantuan. Unknowingly, he had already become a true genius that had left his youth behind.

Some people even compared him to the Three Heroes of the Three Main Domains.

Each of the Three Heroes stood firmly in the endless sea of monsters, and had built a powerful presence of illustrious feats.

Garen himself, had deep contacts with Black Field's Hawk King, Goth.

This background, this strength, and these battle records quickly made Garen one of the biggest influencers of Kovitan's situation.

His each word and command, would lead to actions of the people around him, and would unconsciously bring a surge of hidden movements.

"The situation in the Kingdom is unlike the past, and although many aristocrats have left, remaining soldiers from the defense line after the defeat flood in instead, forming three major garrisons, meanwhile the common people from the border areas flooded into the outskirts of the Kingdom as well, and as their numbers increase, our food storage has become insufficient, and now that it is summer, more support will be needed for the arrival of summer."

As the main Gargantuan in the parliament, Garen would naturally receive sufficient news regarding the current situation.

The parliament had took over the previous imperial system, but the ministers below them remained, and were tasked with managing their own problems, and summarizing the messages from the bottom before they were sent to the higher ups.

The difference between the two systems was that Avic used to rule on his own previously, but now the parliament of the Four Gargantuans were the rulers. Only issues that were deemed too serious for the Four Gargantuans, or situations where there were similar vote numbers, would require them to hold large parliament votes again.

"Currently the elite soldiers are flooding inside, and have robbed the livelihood of you mercenaries to a large extent. Competition within the mercenary world will become greater in the future." Garen looked at Angel. "I'm getting ready to establish a school-of-thought-like organization, to receive more disciples. I happen to have a powerful method in my hands, but the danger is far too great."

"What method?!" Angel suddenly had an unrepentant feeling in her heart, she did not care that she had been saved by Garen anymore, and although the war Chain was dependent on the mercy of Garen and many others, she knew that she would never be able to surpass this man in her lifetime, and had simply relaxed her mind.

She was no longer tangled in the incident that required her to rely on Garen.

"It's very dangerous, and you could be inflicted with an intense amount of pain. I'll let you have a taste, and if you can handle it, I will let you try," Garen said earnestly.

"I'll do it." Angel answered without hesitation.

She had always been a persevering person, she had once been pursued for a thousand kilometers, and had been fled the Northern Region for her life. Even then, she had never once given up.

Garen nodded, as Angel's reply was just as he had expected.

"Be careful."

Just as he finished speaking, his fingers shot out like lightning, and touched Angel's forehead.

Angel felt as if she had been caught in thunderstorm, and was frozen on the spot, motionless.

Her face contorted, and the skin on the entire body gradually became red, while both of her hands were tightly balled into fists, and her fingernails had pierced directly into her palm, but she felt nothing.

Pap!

Garen stretched his fingers out and touched her forehead again.

Whoosh!!

Angel suddenly bended at the waist, while her entire body was covered with sweat, as if someone had just pulled her out of the water, as her clothes were completely soaked through. In those few seconds, the sweat that was expelled from her body was enough to form two wet footprints on the ground.

She began panting violently.

"How is it?" Garen looked at her worriedly. "This kind of pain, if we really begin, it will be one level stronger, as this was just a slight example."

"It's... Amazing!!" Angel raised her head, and saliva was beginning to dribble out of her mouth, while a joyful, blushing expression appeared on her face.

"This feeling... It's simply wonderful!!" She seemed to have enjoyed it, and was panting continuously, while she moaned quietly and alluringly.

Garen's mouth gaped open. He wanted to say something, but finally settled on closing his mouth and exhaling a deep breath.

He never expected that Angel would have these attributes, as the world was truly full of mysteries.

No wonder she was so strong-willed. She was a true masochist...

Frankly, he could already see that Angel's Luminarist talents were slightly stronger than his own, but because she had diverged on the wrong path, and attempted to take a shortcut, she had ultimately lost her conscience. On the path towards Totem cultivation, when one's original adaptability with their Totem decreased, it would finally become completely stagnant in the end.

Thus, he thought of allowing her to use the path of the Green Vine Sphere. In this chaotic world, the ones that were least likely to be lacking were the regular people with strong wills.

Extreme hatred, extreme desire, extreme madness, and extreme hurt. All of these were factors that could strengthen one's spirit and will.

In this chaotic world, these things were definitely not lacking.

"Alright, you should go and get ready. After three days, I will publicly announce that I am officially looking for disciples." Garen had already decided that he would make the official public announcement after three days.

This time, his main aim was to find regular people, especially those who excelled in fighting but were quickly declining. They were lacking a lot of master-level fighters, and this was a good chance.

After getting modified by the Zibane Power, they would soon become strong, peak-levelled masters.

"Besides this, your revenge..."

"I'll solve that on my own!" Angel interrupted Garen, and said decisively.

Chapter 453: Martial Arts 1

As he saw Angel turning to leave, Garen shook his head slightly.

"It's not so easy to fuse with this power..."

There was a limit, even for a masochist. Although this kind of breakthrough was an enjoyment, she might even collapse faster than a normal person.

However, everything had its pros and cons. He hoped Angel could get through this.

Without much emotions, Garen thought for a moment.

"Come."

Very quickly, a heavily armored Black Fire behind him and kneeled on one knee.

"Go and bring the Lord of the Silver Palace. I have something to discuss with him."

The Blackfire Guard did not answer. He merely stood up quietly and quickly left the courtyard.

They had capacity for speech. Although they maintained some form of abilities and intelligence, they were only equivalent to ten-year-old children.

Garen then instructed another servant to inform Lala, the supervisor, to prepare some essentials. It was all needed for Angel to adapt to Zibane's power.

When Ivycius arrived, Garen was busy instructing his subordinates on the things required for the next few days.

Maxilan and Edney behind Ivycius. As usual, the two of them were each in Green Vine Sphere armor. There were a blood vessel-like structures on the top, with green liquid speedily flowing through them.

"Just in time. I have something important for you to do." Garen nodded as he saw the pair. "Everything has been clearly stated in my previous letter. Have you all decided?"

Maxilan and Edney nodded their heads positively with firm expressions.

"That's good. The process is simple. In my Blackfire Guard, there are fifteen of them who can fuse. Once you reach the place, all you have to do is sit on the position and the armor will initiate the fusion process. The process will be immensely painful. Of course, the longer you withstand it, the greater the improvement of your abilities. Go to the Blackfire Palace once you're ready. I've already prepared everything there."

Garen explained in simple terms.

Maxilan nodded. They came together with two of the toughest guards in the Trejon Household. It was all about whether they could succeed this time. If they did, they would be able to step into a level that could compete with totem users.

As normal humans, they were different from Angel, who was innately a totem user. Obtaining powers like these would be a totally new experience for them.

Obtaining the power of Zibane did not mean that they would become strong overnight. It simply changed the attribute of the body to be able to withstand totem light. This gave normal people an opportunity to be on a level playing field as totem users.

Garen did all he could to prepare for his family and alleviate the pain. However, was barely effective. 90% of the process was dependent on the person's will and body.

Maxilan and the rest didn't utter much. The days of meditation had cultivated a strong will in them to surpass this barrier.

Garen could also see this. Without asking much, he waved his hand and instructed them to go.

Ivycius was the only one left in the courtyard as he stood quietly at a side.

"What's the matter?" Ivycius was already somewhat different than before.

His hair had already reached his waist. It was white as silver and tied in a bundle. His eyes were like high-quality white jade as his pupils were completely invisible. At the same time, there was a faint fragrance emanating from his body.

"I need your men for something." Garen whispered. "Send someone to the Seven Night Tower on the North Snowy Mountains. As my Blackfire Palace is recruiting disciples and announcing to the world, naturally we need some masters with substance to view the ceremony. The Lord of the Seven Night Tower, Anjiad and I hit it off well."

"Where's the gift?" Ivycius was lazy to even ask.

Garen threw out a small, black bag.

"This is the deposit. The Seven Night Tower is the strongest force in the North Snowy Mountains. Although their followers are poor, their elites still count for something."

"You want to invite the Lord of the Seven Night Tower as a guest?" Ivycius furrowed his brows. "But you've robbed a big portion of the Royal Treasury. This doesn't affect you at all."

"That's unimportant. What is most important is our own strength." Garen shook his head. "How has your progress been?"

Ivycius shook his head slowly.

"I'm stuck at the most important stage. If I take this step, I would definitely level up within a year!" He spoke confidently with an air of determination.

He gave Garen a glance in the end. "God Cloud's clone of the Emperor was heavily pursued by the Director of the Secret Service and almost fell. Do you know of this?"

Garen was caught off guard.

"When did this happen?"

"The news came the day before yesterday. Out of desperation, God Cloud had to reveal his actual self to fight. After battling with the Director from a distance, he managed to save his clone. But in this battle, he was slightly weaker than the Director and was heavily wounded. It's estimated that he won't be able to recover within these few years." Ivycius repeated the news that he heard.

"Not listening to the Director's words is looking for death. He can't blame anyone." Garen laughed coldly.

"But he still achieved half of his objective." Ivycius sighed. "Besides, the elites that you wanted to find have been found. What do you plan to do?"

"Set up a ring, the winner is king. The final three people standing would be given a place to join my Blackfire Palace." Garen had no expression, as if he had long thought about it.

"That's good. I'll go and make the arrangements." Ivycius nodded as he gradually disappeared into the shadows and left quickly.

Garen stood alone in the courtyard. He closed his eyes and descended himself into a state of mind to train his martial arts.

As time passed, he gradually understood the details of fusing with the Nine-headed Hydra.

Regarding this type of fusion, it was far easier for other totem users compared to Garen.

They only had to fuse once to complete the process.

But Garen had nine lives. The Nine-Life Talent brought an incredibly strong life force, but at the same time also brought a huge burden.

Garen had to fuse nine times in order to fuse all the nine heads into his martial arts and become one with his body. Only then could he step into fifth form.

He had been meditating daily for the past few days. Every time he activated the Myriad Water Jasper Technique, it would shorten the distance between himself and the first of the nine heads.

As the Nine-Headed Hydra moved from the sides to the middle, the dragon heads gradually strengthened. The most terrifying of them all was the golden dragon head in the middle. It was the source of almost 80% of the Nine-Headed Hydra's power.

Every time Garen trained his martial arts, he would come to realize that the Myriad Water Jasper technique and the Nine-Headed Hydra were not a perfect fit. The majority of their paths fared well, but there was a small minority which rejected one another.

He had vast experiences in martial arts. He could even master theoretical techniques like the Divine Statue Technique. Naturally, he had ways to overcome this problem.

Recently, he had been spending most of his time adjusting the Myriad Water Jasper Technique to suit himself more.

Most of the adjustments were slight tweaks, according to the Nine-Headed Hydra's blood flow.

On the day of the announcement, everything was prepared.

Garen sat quietly in the garden. The four sides were surrounded by four heavily-armored Blackfire Guards to prevent him from being disturbed.

He was clothed in a white robe as he sat cross-legged on the ground. Black fog surrounded his body while faint strange noises came from within.

Undeterred by the black fog, the jade-like moonlight shined on Garen's body.

On Garen's skin, the faint, constantly moving red shadow of the Nine-Headed Hydra was visible. Each of the nine heads looked different. Some of them were grim, terrifying, quiet or even lonely.

Cheeeee!

Garen abruptly opened both of his eyes. Two red rays of light shot out like arrows, converging into two red lines midair. They dissipated after a brief period.

The left dot on his forehead was emitting a bright red glow.

Garen raised his hands and opened his left palm. Red light flashed over it, forming a red ball the size of an egg. A ferocious dragon head faintly appeared on the surface of the ball. It disappeared as quickly as it appeared, as if it were never there.

Garen abruptly clenched his fist.

The red ball exploded silently into tens of thousands of smaller red balls of light, gathering and quickly circling him.

The black fog mixed quietly spread towards his surroundings, permeated by the red lines.

The plants in the garden were like living things drinking water, greedily absorbing the black fog. Gradually, each of their surfaces turned black. Some of them even had red lines like the black fog, strangely mysterious.

Very quickly, the black fog completely covered the garden.

As the black fog rumbled, there was a ray of white moonlight that formed a puddle through the fog and onto Garen's body.

The moonlight pillar was incredibly clear, as if it were an actual solid.

At the same time, like resonance, the Silver Palace also emitted thick white gas.

A fragrance of faint rose came from the Silver Palace.

In the middle of the Silver Palace, swathes of white smoke formed a huge slowly rotating white whirlwind. Ivycious was seated right in the middle.

He gazed towards Garen from afar. Both of his eyes were white and devoid of pupils.

"You've found the juncture as well?" Ivycious mumbled. He retrieved his gaze and continued to close his eyes, focusing on the totem fusion.

Three white fire stations were placed in a triangular shape surrounding his body. Three basins of white flames were burning on top of them. The large amounts of white smoke were from these flames.

After some time, the gas in the two palaces gradually dissipated.

In the Blackfire Palace, the abnormalities all over Garen's body had disappeared as well.

He slowly opened his eyes. A red light flashed over his face. The left red dot on his brows dimmed a little, not as red as before.

As he felt the changes to this body, he let out a long sigh.

After being repressed for so many days, he finally understood all the details of the fusion process. After ensuring there would not be any problems, he started fusing the first dragon head proper.

It was the dragon head on the far left.

As the Nine-Headed Hydra had nine heads, he had to fuse nine times to thoroughly complete the fusion process. The difficulty level of the nine heads slowly increased, starting from the easiest in the beginning to the hardest at the end.

Moreover, fusing each dragon head with martial arts would cause drastic changes to this body.

Garen stood up, faintly sensing an unexplainable change in his body. His breath capacity seemed much larger than before.

This time, he completely fused the dragon head to the far left into his body.

He glanced at the attribute pane below his vision. Sure enough, there were new changes.

'Strength 14. Agility 10. Vitality 10. Intelligence 10. Potential 710%. Possesses Luminarist Qualities.'

'Martial Arts - Myriad Water Jasper Technique, Ten Thousand Mammoth Battle Skills.'

On one of the martial arts panes, there was a clear transformation.

'Myriad Water Jasper Technique: Myriad Water True Technique (Second Level, Total of Five Levels). Can control all forms of liquid within a specific area.'

Martial Arts Additional Effects

Toxin strengthened by two levels. (From the Color Changing Butterfly Totem, Nine-Headed Hydra. All attacks have hallucination and deadly toxin effects)

Regeneration strengthened by one level (From the Nine-Headed Hydra, quick recovery after injury.)

Chapter 454: Martial Arts 2

The two consecutive strengthening effects caused Garen to think deeper.

It was evidently the effect of totem fusion and martial art training. With his martial arts level, it naturally wasn't hard to identify. Even if no adjustments were made to the Myriad Water Jasper Technique, there was already a feeling of beyond recognition.

"What if I had not fused with the Nine Headed Hydra but with other totems? Will the additional strengthening effects be different?" He gave some thought. "This fusion method could be a self-propelled evolution method. It changes to suit the user into a form that suits the user the most."

In simple terms, the Myriad Water Jasper technique was just the basic foundation. As different totem users reach fifth form and fuse with different totems, the effects of the techniques will also be different.

At this time, Garen had a subtle realization. If he passed on his techniques to a normal person and trained him to the peak, the person might have similar effects with himself. Even if the power was slightly lesser, it was just a matter of compatibility.

If he continued to fuse with the Nine Headed Hydra, even he himself wasn't clear how his techniques would evolve and strengthen.

This effect was as if his martial arts were using the totem fusion to evolve itself into a higher level.

If ten thousand people were trained in the Myriad Water Jasper Technique, there might be ten thousand different skills.

"Are martial arts the ultimate foundation?"

Sitting cross-legged in the garden, confusion arose in Garen's mind.

Martial arts, totems, and oneself. There was a mysterious connection between these three elements, although they seemed independent. In fact, they were one.

Within his churning mind, he secretly made a decision.

In this world, among totem users, martial arts peaked at the fourth form. In fact, only fifth form masters were qualified to train. Normal humans had no chance to even learn. Without sufficient abilities, there weren't much benefits in training. At most, it was to strengthen the body.

Among the normal humans, the Master-level elites had their own secret training methods similar to martial arts. It was just far less advanced compared to the level in his previous world.

It could be because of the existence of totem users, the martial arts of normal humans did not have a chance to shine.

But Garen could now see a silver lining for normal humans.

Initially the qualifications to learn the Myriad Water Jasper Technique were relatively demanding, but it was far simpler than a totem user's qualifications. At least, the proportion among ordinary people would be far larger. There would be at least be one among a hundred who can train in this technique.

Now, the evolved technique had faintly surpassed the martial arts' innate level.

The evolved martial arts could completely change the human structure. It has reached the level where it can evolve the body.

As Garen thought, he continued training the next level according to the instructions given by Celine.

Strangely, after fusing with the first dragon head, the Myriad Water Jasper Technique was no longer difficult for him. With only ten minutes or so, he entered the second level.

Initially he had completely understood the whole technique. As he was on the level of the King of the Century, the effects should have taken place long ago, but they've only happened now. Not earlier or later, but now.

This startled Garen a bit.

Since he was trained in the Divine Statue Technique, he had thoroughly opened the blood vessels within his body long ago. His vitality attribute was already strengthened until 10 points. In addition to the Nine Headed Hydra's heart, he was on a mind boggling level.

These effects should be natural.

But Garen felt a little strange.

He quickly surpassed the second level. For a commoner-grade martial art, the Myriad Water Jasper technique wouldn't be considered difficult to learn for Garen's level. Next, it was the third level.

The third level took an hour. It cleared all the hidden vessels, and even some complicated vessels in the brain.

For a normal martial artist, without Garen's foundation in the Divine Statue Technique, his elite control of blood flow and his deep understanding on martial arts, it might take ten years.

Next was the fourth level. He was on a roll. Few of the main blood vessels were the same as Garen's Divine Statue Technique. He quickly surpassed that level.

For the fifth and final level, most of the effects were in the brain. It encompassed countless tiny blood vessels and nerves.

In summary, the fifth level used a unique method to activate certain areas in the brain to achieve the supernatural ability of controlling water.

This was the true form of the Myriad Water Jasper technique.

After surpassing five levels to the top in one go, Garen finally opened his eyes. The surroundings were in total silence.

It was already midnight.

The surrounding air was frigid. The garden of flowers and grasses let out a rhythmic sound in the wind.

The two oil lamps hanging on the roof glowed a faint yellow light.

After reaching the peak of the Myriad Water Jasper Technique, some combat skills would of course come as one.

Garen stretched out his hand and grabbed lightly. Droplets of moisture quietly gathered from the surrounding into his hand, forming water beads.

The perfectly round water beads floated quietly on top Garen's palm. Their surfaces clearly reflected the surroundings.

Garen swung one of his hands.

Huaaa!!!

A clear stream of water gathered in the air before him to form a water dragon. The water dragon was circling around constantly like a clock.

Yet, Garen let out a sigh of disappointment.

In the Martial Arts world, a technique like this would be considered amazing and incomparable. It was almost out of the human realm and could be known as a superhuman ability.

Once the enemy draws near, the blood all over his body would be controlled. Being free from the body's control, it would be fully extracted. In the Martial Arts world, it would be known as the strongest assassination technique!

The Myriad Water Jasper technique was known as the best ambush technique. It indeed wasn't something to be trifled with.

However, although it was strong, it was still dependent on the environment it was in.

This was a world of totem users. A martial art like that wouldn't cause fear to any totem user. It was a simple superhuman ability. If it could not penetrate totem light, everything would be useless.

The process of training the Myriad Water Jasper Technique was in fact a process that allows the human body to surpass its limits and develop superhuman ones.

The flow of water could also form a wall of defense by surrounding the body. Among the fighting skills that came with the technique, was the form of a high-pressured water gun, a skill that could suffocate the enemy to one that could quietly snap the opponent's blood vessels.

Snapping different blood vessels would create different effects. All these needed a deep understanding of the human body. Unfortunately, the main opponents here were no longer normal people.

These methods had no value at all.

If it were in his previous world, maybe each of them would be elite techniques that could shock the world.

However, Garen subtly felt that he could surpass the limits of this technique through the fusion with the Nine Headed Hydra.

There were only eight heads left on the Nine Headed Hydra. It seemed a little depressed. Garen wanted to continue the fusion process but it seemed to be rejecting.

Since he could not fuse with the dragon heads in the near future, Garen did not force it, but instead diverted his attention towards researching the mystery of martial arts.

He noticed that although the Myriad Water Jasper Technique was already at its peak, but it was slightly different than the original. After adjusting it with the Nine Headed Hydra, there seemed to be space to continue progressing forward.

Since he thought about it, he decided to do it. Garen didn't have to care about sleeping. He had incredible resistance and superhuman vitality. Not sleeping at this point of time will not bring any side effects to himself.

Step by step, he used the peak of the Myriad Water Jasper technique as the foundation and continued forward. With his nine lives, he wasn't afraid of being injured or things going wrong.

He failed for more than ten times and was heavily injured up to the point of almost losing his life. However with his huge life force, he did not lose his life and managed to derive a new level for the Myriad Water Jasper technique.

Garen successfully connected it to his totem power.

The source of totem power was the brain.

Garen slightly adjusted the activation path for the Myriad Water Jasper Technique. He tweaked it to activate the part that produces totem power.

Under his constant experimentation, just like the Green vine Sphere, there was finally a glimmer of hope for normal humans to become strong.

It did not have an evil inclination like the Green Vine Sphere. The sixth level of the Myriad Water Jasper Technique that he derived allowed a normal human to activate totem power once they reached this level. They would then have the qualifications to be an actual totem user.

However, although this new technique was strong, it was difficult to find usages for it in a battle.

Garen thought for a moment and added in parts of the Divine Statue Technique that he was most familiar with. The Divine Statue Technique was formed by a combination of the White Cloud Gate and the Golden Statue Technique, to reach an level unreachable by mortals.

After all the incorporations, the Myriad Water Jasper Technique was totally unrecognizable. It had completely become a new martial art.

Garen wanted to carefully explore the next level. But without fusing with more dragon heads, he had no stronger path to base his derivation upon. He felt it wasn't the best and forgot about it.

The new Myriad Water Jasper technique incorporated many of Garen's martial art secrets. It gave normal people hope towards the peak.

Even then, this path was equally difficult.

The first step was to train the new Myriad Water Jasper technique to its peak as the foundation. Then only could they face the next key checkpoint - breaking through totem power.

Even after Garen's adjustments and improvements, finally he could only simplify the Myriad Water Jasper technique into four levels.

Only by training these four levels, there was a chance to activate totem power.

This technique was based on Garen's foundation. Its greatest effects were basically similar to the ones described in the ability pane.

Water control, toxicity and strong regenerative abilities.

In other words, Garen's current state of martial arts was the peak state of this technique.

Garen had a feeling. After finalizing the martial art, for everyone training it in the future, those that arrive at the peak will become weaker versions of the Nine Headed Hydra....With another dragon heart transplant, sufficient state of mind and the same natural talent, he would be another "Mini Garen".

However to train the four level of this technique was incredibly difficult. It was only slightly simpler than the original Myriad Water Jasper technique.

The original Myriad Water Jasper Technique was already very difficult. Only during Neptune Fist's peak, there was someone that reached its peak.

Now it was only slightly simpler. To succeed, without suitable natural talent, strong will and relentless determination, it was impossible to reach the peak.

The only thing Garen could do was broadening the scope of qualifications. By broadening the scope, it would increase the number of people. Surely a talented and strong-willed genius would appear one day.

Sensing the martial art that had been totally revamped, it could no longer be called the Myriad Water Jasper technique. There were too many elements mixed into it.

He stretched out his index finger. A crystal water snake crawled up, looking beautiful and pure.

"I am the Lord of Blackfire Palace. My body totem is the Nine Headed Hydra, which is the lord of the swamp and a water totem. This martial art can be called Black Water Technique."

He hesitated for a moment.

"Out of the whole wide world, this is the only martial art that allows a normal human to walk towards the path of an elite. It allows activation of totem power, I should add the word "True" to it."

"From today onwards, this martial art will be called Black Water True Technique!"

Chapter 455: Disciples 1

Outside Kovitan Palace. A plaza at an intersection.

Several tall circular rings stood quietly in a triangular formation.

There were three fully white rings, with huge crowds surrounding them. From time to time, there were people cheering, people lifting up their hands as support and whispering among worried faces. However, most of them were wholly fixated on the rings.

"Ice sword!"

A cold female voice came from the ring. With a tinkling sound, a ray of silver-white light turned into a sharp beam. It jolted forward towards a black-haired man on the opposite end of the ring.

The man's expression changed and thrust his right hand towards the ground.

With a bang, a cloud of black smoke arose, hiding him within it.

Nothing could be seen within the black smoke. The sharp white beam quietly disappeared after.

After a moment, a white-robed female quickly retreated from it. She looked pale with her hand clenching her left shoulder.

After she came out, she could no longer keep standing. As she fell and sat on the ring, the thin white sword in her hand snapped into two with a crack.

"Blackbird wins!"

A red-robed noble with a white wig who sat beside the ring announced boomed.

"Next!"

An attendant beside the noble shouted.

"Don't understand what the Lord is thinking. I understand that he wants to recruit outside forces, but what's the point in recruiting normal human fighters like this?" A few noblemen and women beside the ring discussed between themselves.

The men dressed in red were handsome and graceful. The women who wore white lace dresses were feminine and charming. They weren't advanced in years but there was a hint of arrogance in their eyes.

"Don't guess the intentions of the Lord. We just have to follow his orders. Many people would fight for a supervising job like this." A beautiful girl wearing a round, white hat muttered.

She held a white umbrella that seemed to be more for aesthetics than practical use. She wore pearl earrings on both of her ears. She put her long, rounded legs together and tilted them slightly, her white lace tunic skirt evidently revealed her figure.

"My Lady. Do you think that our Lord received orders from the princess, which is why....?" One of the nobles asked softly.

"Who knows? Alright, stop guessing. My advice is good for you." The lady said softly. "This time, the Blackfire palace's disciple recruitment is incredibly rewarding. If we allow trash to enter the palace and something happens, it would be troubling for us.

"We can say that. But aren't the people in the rings private soldiers from different noble families? Once they saw the opportunity, they rushed here to gain connections." A girl on the side pouted her lips, displeased.

"Both are normal human fighters, why can the peasants use but not us nobles? Shouldn't one's abilities be decided in the ring?" The male noble folded his arms and gazed towards the ring. "Look, it's another peasant."

The rest of them followed and looked.

True enough, a common looking man was carried down from one of the rings. There was blood at the sides of his mouth. He was unconscious, yet it was obvious he was quite severely injured.

A man in green tights stood on the stage with a thin sword in one of his hands. Blood dripped from the tip of his sword as he looked arrogantly at his opponent below.

"Pass. Winner has won 15 matches consecutively and advances to the finals!" The judge announced loudly.

The man in green nodded lightly. There was a glimmer of delight in his eyes as he walked towards the back of the ring.

There were rows of white chairs with winners sitting on some of them. All of them had won 15 matches consecutively.

Most of them were dressed as nobles. Their closed looked luxurious and delicate, with a distinct western vibe.

Only a minority were dressed like peasants, each of them remained solemn without uttering a word. They were different from the nobles. This viewed this audition with much more importance.

Scenes like this were all over the kingdom.

Yesterday, the Blackfire Palace announced that they would be having auditions to recruit disciples. They made announcements through the most popular radio channel and also by posting notices and distributing fliers everywhere.

For anyone who placed within the top three, the Lord of Blackfire Palace would personally take them as disciples. They would be taught a technique that would help them to surpass the level of normal humans, becoming a master on the level of totem users.

Even for those who failed to enter top three, the top hundred would also qualify to enter Blackfire Palace for an opportunity to be reborn as a Blackfire Guard.

Before the fight began, Lord Garen appeared personally for a speech.

"No matter rich or poor, old or young, male or female. Anyone who meets the requirements, I will bestow upon you the power you desire."

In that moment, twenty rings were opened at the same time throughout the whole kingdom. Elite fighters among normal humans were steadily being screened.

In the past, there were auditions like that by other departments. However, they were used to select totem users. The requirement for normal guards wasn't huge at all. They were commonly selected directly from low level noble disciples or knights.

Peasants had totally nothing to do with it. In fact, this path to success had been cut off by the nobles.

The only hope for peasants was to enter the noble's circle through achievements, contributions and military exploits, to become one of them.

But now, the Blackfire Palace was the first one to break this taboo.

It caused a lot of resentment among the major noble families.

The saving grace was that the Blackfire Palace was only recruiting a hundred men. Moreover, according to rumors, the Lord would personally bestow upon them a martial art technique.

Nobody knew what a martial art was. What fighting technique deserves to be personally bestowed by the lord? Any form of fighting technique without a forger's tools, should be easily suppressed by a first form totem user.

However after the notice was updated for a second time, the entire kingdom went crazy.

Crowds rushed towards the rings in droves, with more and more people waiting for their turn to enter the ring. Some of them were locals, some were military men, some were noble disciples, and some were also mercenaries and foreigners from out of the kingdom.

There were elderly men, and immature boys and girls. Most of them were fighters that had no glimmer of hope.

All of this came from Garen's second announcement.

"Blackfire Palace recruiting disciples. Totem user qualifications are ignored. Totem users are not allowed to participate."

Someone verified the truth with a Silver Palace guard. The Lord of Blackfire Palace truly held a key technique that could allow normal humans to surpass totem power.

Someone verified it again with a Trejon. Initially everyone thought that this technique would require an abnormally large sum of money to develop. It was unexpected that the Lord of the Blackfire Palace would open it up, allowing the public to audition.

Time passed day after day.

The news from Blackfire Palace gradually solidified.

The Lord of Blackfire palace developed a martial art technique known as the Black Water True Technique. After training to a certain level, it will allow normal humans to surpass their limit and activate totem power!

In an instance, the Black Water True Technique became the hottest topic in the kingdom.

Elite totem users flocked to the Blackfire Palace to see Garen. Even the remaining Gargantuans personally visited Blackfire Palace for a long discussion with Garen before leaving.

Low level totem users panicked. But after enquiring, they found out that this technique had many prerequisites. To be able to train to the level that surpasses the limit was not relatively easier than having a totem user qualification.

It would be even rarer than totem users. Only with this did the fear in the hearts of the lower level totem users reduce slightly.

They were the foundation of the Totem World. Gathering materials for forgers and providing totem power for tactic formations were jobs that normal humans couldn't do, but elite totem users didn't want to do. First form totem users were responsible for most of them.

Although many have ran away from the kingdom, there were still thousands of first form totem users.

Not mentioning the arrival of the three major armies and the nobles who had gradually returned from their leave.

A week later, Dawn.

Within the Blackfire Palace

In the red-patterned, black main court, extraordinary men and women of sat on two rows of black stone chairs. It looked like each of them occupied a high position, viewing everything around them as distasteful. They seemed to distaste everything around.

Black robed boys and girls were all over the court, continuously serving fruits and wine.

The throne on the front of the court was still empty. On the two sides close to the throne were six slightly shorter black highback stone seats. The similar heights showed that the people that were about to sit on these seats had roughly the same status.

The six seats were separated into two sides, three on each.

Below was the crowd that sat on the black stone chairs. These were the representatives of notorious and powerful forces in the kingdom; there was the representative of the War Guild, Assassin Guild, high level nobles, major businessmen and so on.

For the six empty seats, no one thought they were unreasonable. If the Lord of the Blackfire Palace set it up this way, the statuses of these people were only slightly lower than him. It was evident that for the people that sat on those seats, their abilities matched up to their positions.

Finally, after some time, a white light of dawn shined into the court from the flanking windows, , and gathered in the middle of the court.

There was finally a figure on the palace's right entrance.

Three strange looking men and women in white robes walked into the court. Under the guidance of the servants, they sat on the three seats on the right hand side of the throne.

The nobles and representatives immediately caused an uproar. They turned to talk to each other but realized that no one recognized the three white-robed men and women.

The three of them were not young. The eldest of them had a head of white hair, estimated to be 70-80 years old. The youngest one was also about 50 years old. They had similarities in their dressing, where all of them had different amounts of white fox skin as decor. On the left of their faces were pitch black crescent marks, and the lone girl wore bells of different sizes all over her body. They rang continuously as she walked, giving off a foreign feeling.

"The Lord has arrived!"

With a swoosh, a black blur appeared on the throne. The figure was in black, his eyes electric. This was evidently the Lord of Blackfire Palace, Garen Trejon, whose fame had spread throughout the kingdom and even the whole of Kovitan.

Garen was tall and had good body proportions. As he sat on the throne, he gave off an imposing feeling, as if he were some huge tiger or dragon.

In the split second he appeared on the throne, the whole court shook mildly, as if they were letting out soft, overwhelmed sounds.

As the strong ones struggled to snap out of it, they realized that the palace was in perfect condition. The tremor just now was just an illusion of the heart.

In that instant, the crowd was shocked beyond words. Their respect towards the Lord deepened. Then they realized, as one of the Four Gargantuans in the kingdom, he was currently still young. He could still be improving every second.

"The Lord of Silver Palace has arrived!"

Quietly, Ivycius' handsome figure appeared on the first seat to Garen's right. He held a long, white sword. He frowned slightly at the three people opposite him.

Only then did the crowd notice; the three mysterious persons on Garen's left weren't affected at all by the strong tremors just now. Their expressions only grew more solemn. If originally they seemed casual or even displeased with their seats, it was more evident now.

A circle of white faintly surrounded the three people. Suddenly, a young man or girl appeared behind each of them.

The three of them were also in tight-fitting snow white clothing. A small crescent-shaped white lock of fur was sewn on each of their shoulders. They had a respectful demeanor about them, and evidently they were the descendants of the three seated people.

At this point, three men walked out behind Ivycius. It was the Moonies. They wielded thin swords and stood behind him with the same respectful stance.

Garen swept his gaze throughout the court from his elevated seat. It finally landed on the three people to his left.

"This selection is an important matter that determines the foundation of my Blackfire Palace. Many thanks to the three Lords of Seven Night Tower who travelled far to come personally. It is indeed my honor."

"Your words are too kind. My Snowy Mountain Seven Night Tower has been Kovitan's neighbor for a long time. We have heard your fame. Being invited to view the ceremony is my Seven Night Tower's honor."

The white-haired elderly man in the lead quickly bowed his head and responded respectfully.

Chapter 456: Disciples 2

"I've heard that dangers are everywhere deep in the Snowy Mountains. Ferocious beasts roam the place and living conditions are harsh. The Seven Night Tower, as one of the strongest forces, can be known as the representative of the Snowy Mountains range. I never thought I would be able to meet the three

Lords here." Ivycius slowly opened his mouth. As someone who already entered a mysterious level between fourth and fifth form, his speech gave off a strange indescribable feeling.

His words were clearly gentle and warm with extra attention to the terms, but it gave off a cold strange feeling to others.

"My apologies. I had some enlightenments recently, which changed my body." He himself knew the current state of his body and added on a few words to avoid any misunderstanding.

"This should be the Lord of Silver Palace? A hundred twenty years ago, White Rose Sword Sage Ivycius consecutively defeated the twelve Demon Lords of the East Sea, eradicating the Demon Lord Totem organization. For an achievement like that, even if we are located in the North region, we would have heard about it." The lady in the middle opened her mouth and said.

"Your words are too kind."

There was a commotion in the crowd below. Now only they knew that the White Rose Sword Sage from a hundred years ago was the current Silver Palace Lord Edin. His original name should be Ivycius.

"Let me introduce to all of you." Garen started to speak. He pointed towards the first person on his left - the white-haired elderly man.

"This is the Second Lord of Seven Night Tower, Moroba Blizzard. Known in the North as the Master of Eight Realms. The one behind him is his disciple."

The white-haired elderly man smiled as he stood up, and bowed towards the crowd below. His mannerism was a little different than central countries. He joined his hands and touched the tip of his own nose.

His disciple behind him followed in the same manner.

Garen continued to introduce the second person.

"The second one is the Fourth Lord of Seven Night Tower, Lucy Starnight. Known in the North as the Angel of the Night. The one behind her is also her disciple."

"Angel of the Night?" The one that just took a seat, Second Lord Blizzard grinned slightly. The Fourth Lord's nickname wasn't "angel", but "demon"... Her favorite thing to do on a normal day would be killing youths. Uncountable innocent lives have died in her hands. After aging in the recent few years, she toned down a little and stopped killing innocents. Before, just by mentioning her name in the North would stop a kid from crying.

Calling her an angel instead of a demon. Seeing Demon Girl Starnight smiling in pleasure, Blizzard knew a new side of Garen.

Garen didn't care and continued introducing the last one.

"The last one is an old friend. Third Lord Anjiad Spellcaster, known as the Spellmaster in the North."

Anjiad was the same wizened old man. He was short, but his sharp eyes gave off a feeling that he should not be trifled with. As he heard Garen's introduction, he stood up and forced a warm smile. He put his hands together and touched the tip of his nose, then sat down.

Master of Eight Realms, Angel of the Night, Spellmaster. These were the three masters sent by the Seven Night Tower to support Garen.

They were all true fourth form elites. Because of the harsh conditions around the Seven Night Tower, it caused the top to be incredibly strong, but the middle and lower class were severely powerless.

Moreover, differing from Kovitan and other strong countries, Seven Night Tower was located in the Snowy Mountain range. They were the strongest force in the vast region, but a peak fourth form was already their strongest representative.

The strongest First Lord was also only a peak fourth form. The only difference from the other Lords was that he controlled the only ultimate heirloom in Seven Night Tower. Throughout all the elites in the Snowy Mountain range, there were no totem users who could withstand him. Those that were slightly weaker than him had to group together to even put up a fight.

However, in the central division, even Kovitan already had three out of the Four Gargantuans. They each had their own ultimate heirlooms and were peak fourth form units. Kovitan as a single nation already far surpassed the strongest forces in the Snowy Mountains.

Not to mention an Original Heirloom like the Ultimate Shelter, people from the Snowy Mountain would never even have heard of it.

After understanding the frightening strength of the central region, an internal force in the Seven Night Tower instantly had some thoughts to leave Snowy Mountain. The three Lords were the representatives of that force.

Fortunately, Anjiad and Garen had crossed path multiple times and were familiar with each other. During his journeys to the North to kill monsters to recuperate potential points, Garen would meet Anjiad every single time.

The first time was a coincidence, but for the past few times, it was evident that it was Anjiad that took the initiative to approach Garen. Garen's Blackfire Palace was also currently lacking elite forces. Hence, the two sides hit it off well.

After a few interactions, the friendship began to grow.

Anjiad was a man of capricious nature. He was soft and conflict averse. Although he was a peak fourth form, he didn't like taking an enemy heads on, instead using his trained mutated beasts to do battle for him. After testing Garen a few times through their interactions, he realized his opponent was the type that countered his abilities. Since he couldn't defeat Garen, he was naturally convinced.

Garen relied on his frightening regenerative abilities. With his nine lives, he was never afraid of death and was incredibly ferocious. Within a few rounds, he broke through a huge wave of mutated beasts and headed towards Anjiad. Anjiad could see him regenerating from the wounds he had just obtained.

After two tests, Anjiad was completely won over.

It was the first time the crowd below had met masters from the North.

They have heard of the Snowy Mountains. After Garen mentioned the Seven Night Tower, some of the elderly faintly remembered. Before the mutation epidemic, the North and the central region had some relations. Representatives of the major business remembered a little clearer.

At that time, the kingdom's business alliance would go to the North to re-stock from time to time. Their fur and rare herbs were decent and of high quality. People from the North were not exposed to the world; a hundred-year snow ginseng only needed a hundred gold. It was incredibly cheap.

For other countries, the market price would at least be fifty thousand gold or above.

Gold was a common trade commodity. To convert to Rumbs, it was 10 to 1. Fifty thousand gold would be able to convert to five thousand Rumbs. It was abnormally cheap.

As time passed, some people from the business alliance looked at the North as a deserted land. No one thought that now the strongest force in the North, the Lord of Seven Night Tower would appear.

The crowd below were whispering, but the people on the top didn't care.

Next the servants made the announcement to bring the fighters from the audition.

The participants were brought up in batches. For this opportunity, they were selected winners out of tens of thousands of participants. Although it was merely one week of auditions, the things they've faced were already more than their previous years of lives. They were also much more complicated.

Noble businessmen played dirty tricks. Bribery, scheming, blackmail. Some noblemen fighters secretly hired totem users to severely injure other participants.

There were some used little tricks such as hidden tools to obtain victory.

Fortunately Garen requested for Ivycius' three disciples plus Lala's supervision, and also a few professors from The Grand Duke Benoc's institute to settle the various problems.

This successfully put an end towards most of the unhealthy competition.

As they winners were brought up, Garen asked people do place a giant jade-like stone in the middle of the court. All the winners would place their hands on the jade stone. For those who qualified for the Black Water True Technique, the jade stone would faintly blink in black. Using this testing tool that Garen created himself, he could identify the most suitable fighter to train his Black Water True Technique among the sea of participants.

One by one Garen pointed out the participants. The rest were brought away.

For the people that were brought away, although they failed this test, there was another one waiting for them. It was a determination test by using special methods to simulate the pain of during the infestation of the Green Vine Sphere. It started from mild to extreme, as it got closer to the actual level.

This was the achievement of the forgers that the Trejon's Household recruited recently.

If they couldn't even pass this test, they only could become the lowest level sentry in Blackfire Palace. Although the Blackfire Palace's sentry had benefits far above other forces, but it was nothing compared to the Blackfire guard, one rank higher, and the core disciples.

As the participants went up and down one by one, Garen only selected five people out of seven or eight crowds. These five people made the jade stone blink in black for the longest period of time. The test ended when there was no longer anyone to bring up.

Garen furrowed his brows and looked at the five men before him. There were three females or two males. One of the females was already over forty years of age while the rest were still very young, not more than twenty three. Two of them were dressed as nobles.

Five of them stood at the furthest end of the court. They were already considered core disciples of Blackfire Court. Garen would personally take them as disciples. Although they were still standing, many seated representatives gave them gazes of admiration.

"Bring in the top three!!"

The final moment had arrived. The three strongest men from the auditions would definitely be disciplined by Garen. To be able to stand out among the sea of participants, their abilities were unimaginable.

Very quickly, three middle aged people with outstanding auras walked into the court. There were two males and a female. All of them looked around thirty forty years of age.

As they entered the court, Garen instantly let out a smile.

"Indeed...." It was exactly as he had expected.

The three of them were Master-level elites!

If they were placed in the Martial Arts World, they would at least be at fighter level. The fighters of Totem World were different from the Martial Arts World. They did not have any aura, nor would they use their own essence to suppress the enemy's abilities.

They chose a different path - heightened self-condensation.

They kept all their essence in their body, sealed. It was like a living sealed can, trying to prevent essence from leaking out. The purpose was to increase lifespan and strengthen the body. This caused Garen to think of one of the highest realms of Earth's martial arts, Secure Golden Body.

As the three people walked in, they gave off an extraordinary feeling. They had strong temperaments, causing people to fix their eyes on them.

People like that stood out among the crowd. They were clearly visible, like oil on water.

The three master-levels stayed solemn. As they stood in the court, there was a certain pride and grace in them.

"Good!" Garen slapped the armrest. The smile on his face intensified.

The three of them had trained their essence in their body to a terrifying level. The firmness of their body was at an unimaginable level, as if they were evolved beings.

If they were placed in the Martial Arts World, the three of them should at least be at peak fighter level.

The three of them wore the issued black Chinese robes. They bowed towards Garen and the surrounding people.

"Are the three of you willing to join me? Label me your master?" Garen was, in fact, young, but as he spoke, others could see that he had strong momentum on his side.

No one in the crowd thought it was awkward as if it was natural.

"I, Bale, am willing!" The first man finally couldn't control his joy and quickly answered.

The remaining two had equally strong reactions. Uncontrollable joy could be seen on their faces.

"I, Kamar, am willing!" The girl answered loudly.

"Saloma greets the master!" The last one bowed to the ground. He was shaking as tears came out uncontrollably from his eyes.

He looked simple, and evidently was from a peasant background. He thought about something at the moment and acted so intensely.

In fact, the three of them as the top three were the first to touch the big jade stone. But the jade stone's reaction was incredibly weak.

They initially thought they had lost all hope.

The audition was just the first stage. If they couldn't pass the second stage, all hope would be gone.

They never thought as they were brought up to the court, Garen would directly take them as disciples.

Chapter 457: Elder 1

"Bring the rings!"

The herald on the side shouted.

Three beautiful ladies had long been prepared. They brought up three silver plates in their white dresses.

In the middle of the plates were three small, pitch-black rings. A simple pattern resembling the Nine-Headed Hydra was carved on each of the rings.

The emblem of Blackfire Palace was instantly displayed on the court. This allowed the crowd to gauge Garen's value towards the three people.

The three masters took the rings and placed them on different fingers on their respective hands.

The servants then brought the three of them down, and next was the group that was just selected. They went up to receive the rings. This time, they were black-red rings to signify a lower level than the pure black rings.

This not only signified the difference in benefits and status, but also represented the different levels of teachings that would be bestowed upon them.

Lastly, the people that passed the third determination test were brought up. Dark red rings were given, representing their third-ranked status.

Almost everyone in the kingdom knew that Garen had seized control of the largest royal treasury, then equally divided the resources with the Silver Palace. He also controlled large amounts of land in the

palace, even the eldest princess and the four princes didn't dare to return to the palace in order to avoid conflict.

Moreover, for the two Grand Dukes, one of them had a good relationship with Garen; while the other one would not start a conflict with Garen over some wealth. Although at first glance, they did not obtain the royal treasury, but they obtained a more secretive royal warehouse.

Both parties had an understanding. It could be considered as the both of them taking what they needed.

The candidates at the determination test were different from the first two batches.

They were treated significantly worse, except those that had fully passed the test. Those that endured more than half would be given a pass as well, but they had to pay a significant fee every year.

The meaning behind this measure was that only those with top talent and determination would qualify to be trained by the Blackfire Palace. Those with slightly lower talent and determination had to pay a price to obtain what they desired.

It was equivalent to school fees.

Garen wasn't unaware that other forces would definitely send people to try to learn his techniques, or they might even have other motives.

However, that did not matter to him.

After his contest with Ivycius, he realized that there were many fourth form totem users with martial arts in this world, but only a few could enter the fifth form.

Martial arts was only one of the criterias to enter fifth form, but it wasn't the full requirement.

To reach fifth form, he initially had no clue as well, but after fusing with the first head of the Nine-Headed Hydra, he finally had some rough idea.

Fifth form was combining the totem and totem user into one. The ultimate totem would be absorbed by the totem user using martial arts to completely fuse both of them, reaching the goal of the evolution of life.

In simple terms, totem users and luminarists were both ways to fuse external forces into the body to achieve evolution.

The trained totem would grow, step by step, to drive the evolution of the body, before finally arriving at a strange new level. This path was far deeper than mere martial arts development. It has even suppressed the path of science.

In other words, the development of totem was a science.

There are many types of martial arts and totems, and even more types of human bodies, each had differing talents.

Martial arts, the totem, and the body. These three must reach an unprecedented alignment to undergo the ultimate fusion.

In other words, if the martial art wasn't suitable, fusion was out of the question. Similarly with an incompatible totem. If the body had some issues, then that would be even more unthinkable.

If there was an issue with any of the three, form 5 was out of the question.

Garen could now understand better the thought process of the peak fourth form masters who were about to enter fifth form.

The period before leveling up was the most important period. If it's long, it could take years, and the shortest would even be a few months.

In this period of time, one had to meditate to continuously adjust the state of the heart, body and totem. Then, using the most suitable form of martial arts to fuse. He cannot be disrupted nor severely injured.

Any problems out of the three would result in wasted efforts. Once one was disrupted and then resumed, it would take multitudes more effort and time.

A compatible totem, suitable martial arts and fitting state of the body. None of the three could be lacking.

Even if the martial arts was given, it wouldn't create a scene among fourth and fifth form elites. Only a compatible martial art would suffice.

Ivycius took more than a hundred years before he completely understood the relationship between the three. It wasn't until his battle with Garen that he was enlightened. Only after that could he develop the perfect sword skills that he was lacking, fulfilling the condition of the most compatible martial art.

It might partly be because of his perfectionist behavior, or his deformed feelings towards his totem, but to be able to make him stay at this level for more than a hundred years naturally wasn't a joke.

From the beginning of time, fourth form totem users have had various unique abilities. There were techniques to lengthen the lifespan of men. However, the main reason so many fourth form totem users have perished throughout history was due to the inability to regulate their body to perfect compatibility, failing to reach the level of the three becoming one. This level required large amounts of time. Most of them tried to quiet down and regulate the body, but countless have died in the process. Only a handful have successfully broken through.

Too many people were stuck at this level. It wasn't the lack of martial arts and totems, but the process of regulating their body. It was, in fact, a state of the mind and cannot be forced using resources. Breakthrough also could not be achieved by talent alone. It needed experience, perception and seizing of the opportunity when it came by.

Improving the state of mind was the biggest stumbling block to entering fifth form.

Both Garen and Ivycius had entered this final stage.

As the Nine-Headed Hydra and White Rose were the totems most suited for them respectively, they've passed this test.

Garen had mastered many different martial arts. After some mild tweaking, he combined the essence of his martial arts into one, inventing the Black Water True Technique that suited him the most.

Fortunately, his martial arts was on the level of the King of the Century. It naturally gave him a huge advantage in regulating his body. His control and regulation of his body far surpassed other totem users.

Hence, Garen had in fact already fulfilled the two hardest items - body regulation and the most suitable martial arts.

Unfortunately, as God Cloud has said, his biggest limitation was his totem.

The Nine-Headed Hydra did not have sufficient potential. After all, it wasn't from a perfect genetic bloodline. It was evolved from the imperfect gene of the Dual-Headed Salamander. Its congenital deficiency became a key restriction for him to progress.

God Cloud was not just saying it for fun.

He calculated that after completely fusing with the Nine-Headed Hydra, he should be able to barely reach lower fifth form. However to progress further would be incredibly difficult. Even with his strong battling ability, the furthest he could go was being able to compare with a peak fifth form.

However in the eyes of the old men who had secluded themselves from the world, to enter fifth form was already the pinnacle of achievement. It was sufficient to bear the top missions of the Three Departments.

Garen refocused and gazed at the middle of the court below. The last batch of self-paid disciples was led down. Today's ceremony would soon come to a close.

"Alright. Since there are so many friends who came and supported me today, I have another major announcement."

Garen suddenly spoke loudly.

The crowd that was about to leave stopped instantly. They had no clue as to what Garen planned to announce.

Some of the people below started talking among themselves, but the most of them looked focus and fixated their gaze on Garen.

Garen nodded in satisfaction.

"I invented the Black Water True Technique. The original name of Blackfire Palace is no longer suitable. With so many friends here today, I announce that from today onwards, the Blackfire Palace will officially change its name!"

He paused for a moment.

"To Black Swamp Palace."

As the Nine-Headed Hydra was originally the king of the swamp, changing to "Swamp" was suitable indeed. Moreover, for the disciples who were trained in Black Water True Technique, due to the nature of the martial art, they would definitely choose totems with water attributes. Due to this fact, "swamp" was also very suitable.

With his own forces, Garen no longer had to do everything himself. He could even ensure the safety and benefits of his own family and also gather more information and resources easily. It would also be very beneficial for his future purpose.

"Black Swamp Palace?"

"The name is simple enough."

"The Lord had originally not used a fire attribute totem. Naturally, changing the name is the normal thing to do."

The crowd below echoed their approval.

Garen smiled then diverted his gaze towards the three tower lords on his left.

"Of course, this is not the major announcement. The major announcement is, the three Lords from the Snowy Mountain's Seven Night Tower in the North will officially become honorary elders of my Black Swamp Palace under my invitation. They will be subordinate to only me."

Honorary elders. This role was not unexpected.

Traveling thousands of miles to Kovitan and facing dangers and troubles throughout the journey, naturally it would not have been just for a simple celebration.

Only a minority of the people had not expected it, and let out surprised expressions.

Among the three Lords, the strongest, Second Lord Blizzard, stood up.

"To be invited by Lord Garen to this historical nation Kovitan and becoming an honorary elder of the Black Swamp Palace, is a great honor to me." He bowed slightly to show respect.

"You're welcome, Lord Blizzard." Garen nodded.

The other two tower lords also rose to their feet for some kind words.

"Hahahaha!"

Suddenly, a loud, fierce laugh came from outside of the palace.

"I heard the Nine-Headed Hydra Garen has extraordinary strength. I traveled over a thousand miles for this challenge. I'm sure the Lord will not disappoint me?"

The voice was terrifying. It shook the whole ground, numbing the soles of the crowd.

At the same time, all heads turned towards Garen.

Since Garen gained fame, this was the first time a strong opponent had come to challenge him. Each famous strong master would have experienced countless challenges before finally reaching the peak.

Garen gained fame in a short time. Due to his elusiveness and the continuous major incidents recently, this had not happened for a while.

Until now, he permanently resided in the kingdom. He had even started a clan and controlled an organization like the Black Swamp Palace. This gave people an opportunity.

Riding on another elite to gain fame was the fastest path to fame. Some of the elites had been training for multiple years. After coming out of training, they were eager to prove themselves to set up a foundation for their future generations. Naturally, they relied on their strength to find the fastest path.

Garen sat on the throne while both of his eyes were almost closed, as if he did not hear any sound.

It was the Angel of the Night on his left who slowly stood up and let out a clear laugh.

"It just so happens my Polar Flame is still lacking two major drugs. I'm really borrowing the master's fortune." Before she finished speaking, the figure on the Angel of the Night's seat slowly dissipated. She had already left as she was speaking, leaving a blur on the seat.

She was incredibly quick as even Garen and Ivycius did not notice.

Suddenly, a loud wave of thunder came from the sky outside the palace. Within the thunder was a seductive laugh. The clear ringing of bells came directly into the heart of the crowd. It was like a lover's grudge, causing the people around to itch.

"Who are you!!!??? The person I want to challenge is the Nine-Headed Hydra...ahhh!!!" The man's voice came to a sudden halt.

In an instant, a white blur of lightning shot into the court onto a seat on the left of the throne. It was the Angel of the Night, who had just left.

In her right hand, between her five sharp fingers was a bloody heart which was still beating.

On the seats below, some of the ladies let out faint cries. Most of the men turned pale. Within a few breaths, this lady tore out the heart of a strong totem user.

A murderous act like this was shocking for someone as beautiful as the Angel of the Night. Her white skin and the red blood formed a clear contrast.

The Angel of the Night laughed as she passed the heart in her hand to her disciple, then sat down. Her hand was not stained with blood at all.

Chapter 458: Elder 2

"Good going, Angel." Garen finally spoke. "To finish a Form Four fighter within five breaths, your reputation does not deceive."

"You are too kind, Palace Master." The Angel laughed lightly. The three of them were the elders Garen had spent a fortune to invite here, if they didn't show off some of their power, how could they earn everyone's obedience.

In an area with so many powerful fighters such as the Central Region, both sides survived side-by-side, fighting for benefits. They showed their power, which was also the Black Swamp Palace's power. To shock everyone present.

Garen understood that too, so he purposely asked the new arrivals to show their power.

His own battle achievements were right there, so the large man here to challenge him definitely wasn't here to kill him, probably only planning to retreat in one piece, and that would be enough to make his reputation. After all, Garen was currently one of Kovitan's four heads, his position was not to be underestimated.

This man had definitely investigated everything beforehand, and had prepared defenses specifically to protect against Garen's powers before he came for this battle.

But he didn't think he would meet the Angel of the Night who had mysterious powers. It was extremely rare for totems from the Northern Region to show up in the Central Region, and whilst both sides were unaware of each other, his Totem Light was destroyed as soon as they met, and his heart dug out.

As expected, the expressions of all the guests and witnesses below changed drastically.

Before this, they never had a clear impression of Garen's power, but now after seeing the Angel of the Night kill a Form Four fighter of the same level with her bare hands, and still be so respectful to Garen, they finally understood how terrifying Garen was.

"Come! Bring out the Elder Ring!"

Garen ordered directly.

Three young girls came up timidly, and presented the three Tower Lords with their Elder Rings, black with a bit of silver in the center.

Just as the three of them were about to pick up the rings.

"Wait!"

Another voice spoke up,

The one who spoke was none other than Ivycius, who sat alone on the right side.

Seeing the three of them opposite him glaring at him, Ivycius' expression remained unchanged.

"I just happened to have invited two of my best friends here. I myself am also interested in becoming a Black Swamp Palace elder, which also makes three of us, so may I know if Palace Master Garen is willing to accept us? Then all of us can be elders at the same time, wouldn't that be better?"

Garen smiled slightly. This was the process they had planned way in advance, so he wasn't surprised in the slightest.

"If the Silver Palace Master is willing to join, with our relationship, is there anything else that needs to be said?"

Ivycius nodded. His right hand gripped the sword hilt lightly.

Clang!!

Amidst gasps of surprise.

A rush of pure snow white shot out of nowhere, forming a white bridge of light as it flew out of the hall, shooting into the sky.

From the door of the Black Swamp Palace's main hall, a white bridge of light several meters wide shot straight into the sky. Forming a straight road several thousand meters long.

Whoosh-whoosh!!

Two flashes of black lightning descended, falling onto the surface of the shadow, instantly becoming two black-robed figures, a man and a woman.

The two of them steadied their footing slightly, and walked down the white sword-light bridge, but strangely, each of the steps the two of them took could cover more than ten meters of distance at once.

"Island Master Wukang, Island Master Skyharp(1), it's been a while." Ivycius stood, his usually ice-cold face actually smiling with some warmth.

The two on the sword bridge entered the palace hall quickly, and only then could everyone see their faces.

The man was clean-shaven, with one of his ears unnaturally large and fat, wearing a huge circlet of pearls that had more than ten large white pearls through it. His figure-fitting black silk robes did nothing to hide his firm and supple muscles.

Hearing Ivycius' voice, he chuckled.

"Little Vivi, after all these years, you still look so girly."

The crowd had just woken up from the awe from the moment, and upon hearing those words, some people nearly laughed out loud, hurriedly clapping their hands to their mouths out of fright.

Ivycius' expression didn't change, as though he hadn't heard that at all.

The other woman had plain features and dark skin, staring at Ivycius resentfully as soon as she got off the bridge.

"Vivi, for all these years, how could you be so cruel as to not visit me at all?" Her voice was unnaturally melodious, like the song of a kingfisher, clear and sweet, completely untainted.

A woman with a face like that made a huge contrast with Ivycius' handsome features, but to everyone's surprise, a hint of guilt flashed past Ivycius' eyes.

"I have let you down."

"The two of you, please sit." Garen hurriedly spoke up, so that the two old lovers wouldn't ruin the whole atmosphere with their exchange of gazes.

The two island masters bowed towards Garen slightly.

"Well met, Palace Master Garen."

Led by the maidservant, they walked to the seats beneath Ivycius and prepared to sit.

"Wait!"

This was the third interruption today.

But this time, nobody was surprised.

The one who had spoken was the Second Lord of Seven Night Tower, Blizzard, dissatisfaction flashing in his eyes.

"If it was the Silver Palace Master, the White Rose Sword Sage becoming an honorary elder, we have no opinion. The White Rose Sword Sage's abilities were trained through true battle since many years ago, we have heard of him even far away in the Northern Region." His Kovitan language was unnaturally fluent, "But has anyone heard of the two so-called island masters?"

The female disciple behind him instantly laughed lightly on cue.

"Teacher, I heard that the East Sea's Seventy-two Islands were more or less destroyed by the destructive battle back then, and most of those islands are now deserted. These two island masters... aren't the only people on their respective islands, are they?"

"How could you say that? No matter what, they're still your seniors, you have no right to speak here. When we get back, go into the Tundra Cave for three days and repent!" Blizzard scolded her, but his expression didn't look unhappy in the slightest.

"Yes, that is my mistake." The female disciple acted upset, lowering her head and apologizing.

The man with the large ear chuckled coldly, and turned around to look at Blizzard.

"The Northern Region's Seven Night Tower? You guys aren't showing off in the Northern Region, and came instead to the Central Region, don't slip up and get knocked off now, that would be bad." He laughed again coldly, "As for the situation on my Wukang Island, it's not up to you to worry. No matter how rundown, I can still call out a couple hundred Sea Dragoons."(2)

As soon as he said that, the contempt of Blizzard's face receded somewhat. Other people might not know what Sea Dragoons are, but they had interacted with the East Sea before, so they knew perfectly well.

On the seas, Sea Dragoons were a title only Spiritualized totem users could ascend to. They had true top-level power. Unlike their home in the extreme cold, the East Sea islands had ample produce, the supplies from the sea allowing those on the islands to live in relative surety. Perhaps due to the geography there, the place produced many totem users, but their flaw was that they had too few peak-level fighters, and Form Four was their highest. Form Five required the steadiness of both heart and body, and was a level that was extremely hard to reach without a background of deep history and culture.

"Looks like they were limited to Form Four and couldn't advance as well, so they ran here to the Central Region looking for a chance." The Angel of the Night communicated quietly with the Spellmaster Anjiad.

"I have never really heard of Wukang Island, but Skyharp Island is one of the large islands among the seventy-two, with decent overall power, but I didn't think they would have such a young island master." Spellmaster nodded.

"Do you want to go or shall I?" Angel of the Night asked directly.

Spellmaster chuckled, and didn't continue, just giving the Second Tower Lord's direction a glance.

Angel of the Night harrumphed, didn't say anything more.

"Whether you're strong or not isn't something you just say. Palace Master Garen's honorary elders are not a position just anyone can take." Blizzard said word by word, his gaze on Wukang growing sharper.

"I seem to know you." Next to him, Skyharp suddenly turned her head, staring at Blizzard hard. "More than thirty years ago, in the battle to obtain the Heart of the Snow Demon, weren't you the Blizzard that my father grievously injured with one palm hit?"

Blizzard immediately looked unhappy, that battle was the deepest scar of his life, and he still had that clear red palm print on the center of his chest right now, he couldn't dispel it no matter what he tried.

He had that old wound reopened to his face, and he was never a generous person to start with.

The killing intent flashed in his eyes, and countless pitch-black spots appeared on his skin, crowded and dense like that of a leopard's spots, instantly covering his entire body.

The left side of his face abruptly began to fade, while half a white owl's head appeared instead.

Boom!!

Blizzard shot out a palm, a pillar of black air spinning as it rushed towards Skyharp opposite him.

As expected, he was at the peak of Form Four, where he was about to merge with his totem. This sort of power could only be controlled by a totem user at the borderline, just like Garen right now, every move carrying the power of nearly one dragon, without him needing to waste totem power to activate the

totem. Such terrifying power was completely his own, as long as he had enough stamina, he could use it for several days and nights without any problem.

The black pillar spun and shot, morphing into a black disc that spun and sliced in mid-air, whooshing as it flew towards Skyharp.

Island Master Skyharp's expression grew serious.

She waved her right hand, and a beam of blue light shot out of her sleeves, meeting the black disc head-on.

In an instant, the blue light came into direct contact with the black disc.

Wooo!!!

A piercing vibrating sound rose in the large hall.

The black disc and the blue light froze in mid-air, neither giving way as they were suspended in mid-air.

The black air and the blue light that had been shot out sprayed everywhere, and then returned back to the black disc and blue light, without harming their surroundings in any way.

The whole hall was dyed black and blue.

After a short while of tug-of-war, the black disc began to press the blue light down slowly.

Psst!

Just then, a white thread shot through between the two of them, piercing right through the center of the black disc and the blue light, cutting them apart like a knife.

The white thread nailed itself into the palace wall with a thud, and was revealed to be a clean white rose. There were even some drops of crystal dew dripping off of it.

"Hmph!" Blizzard snorted coldly, and called back the black disc. He glanced at Ivycius.

Skyharp also called the blue light back into her sleeve. There was a slight sheen of sweat on her forehead, however, proving that just now hadn't been easy for her.

"Both of you are my esteemed guests, so please don't mention the previous generation's conflicts, for my sake, from now on we're all part of the same camp, so we should support and help each other." Garen finally spoke.

Both sides were powerful fighters that his Black Swamp Palace used their funds to support, so naturally he wouldn't want them to fight each other before he even had a chance to use them.

"You're right, Palace Master." Blizzard nodded, and used that excuse to end the conflict. Ivycius' power was obviously slightly over Form Four, he didn't say anything, but inside he was growing more and more wary of him.

Skyharp also smiled at Garen apologetically.

"Bring out the Elder Rings!"

Garen sat on the master seat, watching a few girls come up and give away three similar silver-dotted rings.

The six peak-level fighters all put them on.

In that moment, everyone underneath the large hall hurriedly clapped to support them, their applause thundering.

While Veska was grievously hurt and healing, Garen's power was boosted by this and continued growing.

The immense value of the Royal Treasury was enough to sponsor these fighters for a hundred years.

And that was setting aside the underground hall in the Royal District, and there were still some hidden department secrets. Garen himself wasn't the type to spend without earning.

With the help of these six fighters at the same level as him, right now, even if God Cloud came again, Garen was confident he could make sure God Cloud wouldn't be able to leave!

Right now he was buying time, to merge the totem himself and achieve a new level of power, he needed time. In this period of time, he must not have any weaknesses, must not get injured, and his emotions cannot get too extreme. Until this period was over, and he had utterly merged with the Nine-Headed Dragon. Meanwhile, he naturally needed enough power to protect himself.

Chapter 459: Development 1

Deep in the Black Swamp Palace after it was renamed, on a newly created training arena.

The family's Guard Captains, Maxilan and Edney stood at the sides, and there were eight newly-recruited disciples standing in the middle. They all wore identical extravagant black fighting clothes, so be it the men or women, they all looked extremely handsome and sharp.

Garen stood in front of them, his hands behind his back, his gaze almost solid as it swept across the many disciples.

He said nothing at all, and had been standing like that for a long time already, his gaze just kept staring at these newly-recruited disciples.

Rather than calling them his disciples, they were more like the experimental subjects he had chosen for his invented exercises. He needed practical applications to test whether or not the Black Water True Technique could truly allow normal people to overcome their limits, and different people had different

bodies, so naturally the effects of their training would be different as well. This was also in preparation for that thing that might happen in the future.

The three average Masters stood at the very front, and made no sound whatsoever, in complete contrast to the impatience on some of the others' faces. To be able to train themselves until the Master-level among the normal humans, they would naturally have exceptional patience.

The sunlight of dawn fell lightly on everyone there, reflecting a black-ish silk light.

Garen finally spoke.

"Other than myself, nobody has ever learned my own Black Water True Technique, so even I don't know what will happen when I teach it you all." He told them frankly that this was an experiment.

"There's still time now if you want to turn back."

The three masters, two men and one woman, were the three Garen favored the most, while the disciples behind them were a level behind, who didn't get such a high ranking, they were just particularly suited to the Black Water True Technique.

As for these second-level disciples, there were more women than men, three to two.

Upon hearing Garen's words, nobody reacted much, since they had defeated the odds to get here, of course they would have made all the mental preparations.

"Great, now I'll teach you the first level. After you've achieved that, then come to me for the second level." Garen didn't say any more, and passed down the first level of the Black Water True Technique secret technique directly.

After structuring the Black Water True Technique, there were four levels among the normal people, and then was the critical point, once they broke through that, it would be a new world for them, enabling them to activate totem power.

Garen explained each of the thousand words regarding the first level, word by word.

And then came the time to answer everyone's questions.

The time ticked by.

The three Masters didn't have many questions, they had long since obtained utter control over their own bodies, even though the first level of the Black Water True Technique didn't suit them particularly well, they still understood it in no time.

He glanced at the three Masters, satisfied.

"From today onwards, there will be an internal competition every week, and the top three would get certain rewards, these three would be the Black Swamp Palace's strongest disciples, if you can maintain your position consistently, your reward will be steadily increased. There will be unexpected surprises in store."

Garen said with a smile.

After the large-scale recruitment drive just yesterday, the influx of people into the Black Swamp Palace was extraordinary.

The small families and merchants who wanted to kiss up to him provided vast supplies and riches, just the money from the external self-sponsored disciples had reached a terrifying figure of several tens of thousands of golden rums, and this wasn't a one-time-only profit either, but their annual study fees. There were other expenses too, like accommodation fees and such.

These disciples stayed inside the Palace District, and every day these eight disciples would set up a platform, waiting for Garen to teach them the Black Water True Technique.

This was Garen especially letting his disciples form their own forces, each of them would create their own groups of interest, and as it went down, those would band into more groups. This way, the influence of the Black Swamp Palace would achieve extreme heights.

As for whether or not the spies from the other forces would learn his technique, Garen was not worried in the slightest.

Because the Black Water True Technique had a special characteristic, which was that he had invented it completely based on his own body, and it was the secret technique exercise that suited him best, so nobody could beat him at it.

The Form Five fighters from the other powers all had special techniques that suited them, it just wasn't convenient for them to spread it.

The only key difference between the Black Water True Technique and their secret techniques was that little bit of crucial technique required to transcend limits

This method was so that they could only transcend under Garen's own hand, and it was only theoretical too, without any practical precedent.

With his micro-control ability as the King of the Century, he needed to touch that most crucial point, and this was basically unreplicable. Because there wasn't another King of the Century here in this world.

Of course, maybe many, many years from now, someone would be able to discover the mysteries of it, but understanding its mysteries did not equal to being able to practice it. Because that was a hand technique from another world, and wasn't something that could be overcome with just imagination, it still required some immersion in another world's Secret Technique system as well as their style and influence.

In order to prevent the secret exercises leaking out, Garen had used all sorts of methods.

Other than this crucial hand he kept to himself, he also embedded all sorts of smokescreens and obstructions into the exercises. By putting in some useless hand techniques and training steps, he made it seem like a half-lie, half-truth.

And the Black Water True Technique was divided into two versions, one simple version that was only one of the moves from his Northern Capturing Hand plus a little bit of content from the Myriad Water

Jasper Technique, this simple version couldn't activate totem power, and its function was to allow the learner to be more suited to the Black Swamp Armor, so they can get used to the Green Vine Sphere's power.

Garen divided his Ten Thousand Mammoths Battle Skills into individual moves, and each move was made into a simplified version as well, merged with the Myriad Water Jasper Technique, to form the four Palace Districts, North, South, East and West.

The four Districts trained in different types of the Ten Thousand Mammoths Battle Skills, and once one had learned them all, the result would be a totem user's version, the Four Directions Battle Skills.

East King Hand, West Phoenix Fist, Southern Double Fist, Northern Capturing Hand.

Garen himself was quite curious, he didn't know how strong these simplified versions of his own martial arts essence would be once they were totemized.

He called the simplified versions the Four Direction Ten Thousand Mammoths, and he had listed out a Four Directions Sky Warrior for each district, in a throwback to his title from the Secret Technique World.

The Four Directions Sky Warriors had the same status as core disciples, or even higher, as they had to right to mobilize a certain proportion of the Black Swamp Palace's external powers, which basically meant he had gathered the influence of the external self-sponsored disciples and divided it among the four of them.

This was a very formidable power, because as more people swore allegiance to the Black Swamp Palace, the more totem users and forgers they had. After the collapse of the war, many totem users and forgers ran back to the Kingdom, and practically all the large powers were madly absorbing manpower right now.

The position of the Four Directions Sky Warriors came from battle, the four districts fought their own internal competitions, and the strongest one had the right to become a Sky Warrior, which would earn them Garen's personal bestowal of the Black Swamp Palace's four strongest suits of Black Swamp Armor.

That was the elite armor belonging to the four strongest guards.

This was the external side.

As for the core disciples, it would depend on what level they could reach.

If they were suitable, Garen would personally choose a totem from the Royal Treasury and bestow it upon them.

There were many totems in the Royal Treasury, even the rare and precious ones numbered up to at least several hundred. As for the regular totems, now that Garen had more and more forgers under his own wing, it wouldn't be too hard just to create them himself.

They could also choose the totems they liked, or ask the Black Swamp Palace's forgers to customize one for them.

After teaching the first level of the Black Water True Technique, Garen discussed the family's situation with Maxilan and Edney for a bit, and at the same time he advised them on some of their Black Water True Technique before he left the plaza, heading for the Palace District's Technique Hall.

On the way, he saw that many of the destroyed areas within the entire Palace District had been fixed, and in some of the places the forgers were concentrated on setting up Alarm Tactic Formations, while several teams of patrolling Black Swamp Guards occasionally wove their way through the surroundings, their footsteps resonating in unison.

When he walked past the Garden District, from a distance, Garen saw Kid talking to a little girl.

The little girl was trying hard to practice the West Phoenix Fist's basic moves, her black hair tied into a short ponytail, her little face full of determination as she ignored Kid's jokes and laughter beside her.

Kid was sprawled on a swing, and would occasionally say something, as though teasing the little girl.

Garen was just slightly surprised that he had accepted such a young self-sponsored student, and then he walked away directly.

That girl was no more than ten years old, give or take, but she seemed surprisingly determined. Perhaps she was a promising talent, but right now Garen had more than his fair share of promising talents, so he wasn't too bothered.

Nobody could fight him for genius disciples with a talent for secret techniques in this world.

Going past the Garden District, he went past a few areas of the Plaza District, which had the sounds of training coming from them.

Soon enough, he went into a small garden forest, and a white palace hall deep inside appeared in front of him instantly.

The palace hall was triangular in shape, like a pyramid, and had small round entrances on all four sides. The whole palace was divided into three floors, the lowest floor being the largest, a full fifty or sixty meters wide.

There were Silver Palace Guards and Black Swamp Guards standing guard at the entrances. Upon seeing Garen approaching, the guards all lowered their heads and bowed.

A young pretty girl walked out quickly from the small palace hall, it was Lala.

Her long red-brown hair was tied into a stupa-like shape at the side of her head, and she wore a black dress, a dark-red waist belt tied around her waist, the black-red colors creating a sharp contrast with her clear white skin.

"Palace Master." Lala had also changed the way she addressed him, lowering her head slightly at Garen.

"How's the situation?" Garen walked into the small palace hall, and asked casually.

"We've already recruited eighteen forgers, each of them at least Form Two. There are also two Form Three ones, they were professors from the destroyed Calm Bay City." Lala replied, following behind him.

Inside, the first floor was completely empty, all the forgers were doing their research on the upper floors, and they all lived nearby as well.

The construction here wasn't completely done yet, and some materials had yet to arrive either.

"Are there no Spiritualized Masters here?" Garen asked mildly, sweeping his gaze over the people leaving and entering the first floor's main corridor.

A forger was only a Master after achieving Spiritualization, it was much harder for them to level up as opposed to totem users, and most of their time was spent on their research.

"We did invite some, but putting aside the other two, there was one Master who had agreed at first, but some reason changed tack again." Lala was frowning slightly too.

Without a Master-level forger in charge, it would be very hard to customize and create high-level totems, and they wouldn't be able to create many excellent totems either. It was very detrimental to the development of the Black Swamp Palace as a whole.

"Changed tack?" Garen narrowed his eyes. "Investigate the reason, if there was some interference, finish them off."

"I suspect it's..."

"Don't need to tell me the reason, my Black Swamp Palace does not fear any power." Garen interrupted her. "Since they have intercepted, they should be ready to face our wrath. If you don't have enough manpower you can mobilize twenty Black Swamp Guards, if that's still enough then go apply from the Silver Palace, he won't refuse you."

"If a high-level totem user appears..."

"It just so happens that the Elder Angel is still missing some medicines and main ingredients, if they make a move just once, they'll reap plenty of rewards." Garen replied, walking to the door to a sealed room on the left.

"While I'm not around, you settle any problems on your own, if there's a problem you can't settle, then go ask the elders, if even the elders can't handle it, then only do you come to me."

"Understood." Lala replied crisply now, after following Garen for so long, she had long since gotten used to handling all sorts of matters."

Bam.

Garen pushed open the door and entered the sealed room.

The sealed room was utterly pitch black from top to bottom, there was a simple drawing of huge salamander dragon head carved into the center of the floor, its two blood-red eyes narrow, long and vicious, and they just happened to be the only source of light in this sealed room.

Garen closed the door, walked to the area in front of the dragon eyes, and sat down cross-legged.

In the darkness, soon enough, the three scarlet dots on his brow lit up slowly, emitting the same bloody red glow.

The Kingdom's Cloud Light District

Hathaway stood in her own garden, pruning flower branches, ever since she came back from the hospital last time, the conference was held, and Garen became one of the four main heads, the whole long line of changes catching her off guard.

And her position now had also become somewhat in the air.

Recently the Black Fire Palace was renamed into the Black Swamp Palace, and recruited six peak-level elders at once, causing its power to skyrocket. It had become a power that the entire Kingdom feared terribly.

The other powers were feeling threatened as well, so they hurriedly looked for strong fighters to join them. As a result, the situation in the Kingdom now was that everyone was peacefully developing on their own.

The First Princess and the Fourth Prince were both developing themselves hastily, faced with the terrifying prospect of Garen and six elite fighters at the same level as him, they were all feeling that sense of danger.

It was just that all these were quite distant from Hathaway.

At first she had hoped that Garen would be able to make a name for himself, develop and strengthen the family, and now that he had reached this target, as a member of the Trejons family, even if only a side branch, she could still feel the attitudes of those around her changing. Everything seemed to be changing for the better.

Picking up the watering can, she sprayed the clean water onto the pruned bushes lightly.

The early morning sunlight scattered onto the flower bushes, causing the drops of water to reflect the crystal clear sunlight.

"Little Sofie~~ Are you home?" Sylvia started yelling again.

In the end she hadn't left after all, and her family didn't leave either, choosing instead to stay, mostly because of Garen's influence from back then.

"Sylvia, are you done with today's work as well?" Hathaway turned around to see Sylvia attempting to ambush her. The voice had seemed so distant just now, but she had suddenly run up so close to her in such a short time.

Chapter 460: Development 2

"There you go again!" Hathaway glared at her mildly.

"I don't have work today either, so I got the day off. That's why I came to see you." Sylvia was all smiles.

"You sure are free." Hathaway shook her head.

"Where's the little girl?" Sylvia looked left and right, but still didn't see Dani.

"I don't know either, recently she's still been the same as ever, going out early and coming back late, playing like crazy." Hathaway's gaze was slightly helpless.

"She's still young, c'mon."

"But you sure are lucky now, with such an impressive cousin." Sylvia said enviously.

"What's so lucky about that? My life still goes on the same every day." Hathaway smiled sweetly. Now she had achieved everything she wanted to, the family business was on Garen's shoulders, and she didn't have to worry about that at all. Her only aim now was to raise Dani properly.

The Trejons' branch families had just come to visit her a few days ago, Garen was the Trejons family chief now, and these branches really wanted to return to the main family.

Speaking of which, these few branch families had been doing pretty well for themselves, and when Garen's reputation hit rock-bottom before he actually achieved anything, they didn't kick him while he was down, and instead they all reached out a helping hand, it was just that Garen didn't respond to them back then.

All their invitations had been ignored.

Hathaway was mulling over when she should mention it to Garen, there were two people from the Silver Palace standing right outside her door, she could easily pass any messages to Garen through them.

Hearing Sylvia's chattering voice next to her, she suddenly felt as though life was extremely peaceful. A calm taste of happiness began to spread in her heart.

Three days later...

In the sealed room--

Garen abruptly opened his eyes, the red light in eyes shooting out far, leaving two streaks of red behind them.

The red strings stayed in the air for a few seconds, before slowly fading away.

On his brow, the scarlet dot on the furthest right was vaguely becoming slightly darker.

Raising his arms slightly, the red shadows of two salamander dragon heads appeared on each of his palms.

Roar...

The deep dragon's roar reverberated slowly in the sealed room.

"The second dragon head."

Garen murmured, his gaze once more falling onto his attribute pane.

‘Black Water True Technique (Originally Myriad Water Jasper Technique): Sixth Level (six levels in total). Forcibly controls all liquids.

Poison Enhancement level two, Recovery Enhancement level two.’

"I knew there would be a change, at first five levels was the limit, but after merging in the second dragon head, it actually automatically reached the Derivation's sixth level. The Poison Enhancement and Recovery Enhancement were both originally my abilities, it doesn't really make a difference if they get stronger."

Garen frowned slightly, the Black Water True Technique was the technique he himself trained in, it was the true full version, and not the one he was teaching others. At first he had created and merged this secret technique, only he had used the simplified secret technique as the base, but he was surprised to find that it successfully merged with his own martial arts essence, forming this peak-level secret technique.

But now, after merging the second dragon head, the final result wasn't what he had expected.

The Nine-Headed Demon Dragon had lost two dragon heads, both merged into him, but all he got in return were some not very efficient enhancement effects.

After absorbing the Nine Headed Dragon, his secret technique shouldn't have been that weak.

He fell into deep thought.

He absorbed his totem in order to advance his secret technique, and then he meant to merge his totem and secret technique so that he could reach the peak of evolution.

Could it be that something was wrong with my secret technique?

But according to theory, there should never have been a problem.

"Since I'm already on this road, I don't have to worry anymore, I might as well walk to the end and then see how it works." Garen settled his heart.

After that, it was time to go out and check how the forgers were doing with their research.

Right now, he was forging Obscuro's crystal ball Derivator, he had quite a few on hand, all gained from the Silver Palace's elite warriors' recent raiding of Obscuro everywhere. But they were all Field-Level.

The forgers were trying to decipher the secret locks inside, but unfortunately, without a truly substantial researcher on board, their progress was minuscule.

If he could forge this thing, Garen's potential point problem would be happily settled. Using the Derivator to control the Silver Totems, he could hunt monsters and totem users, obtaining large amounts of potential points. To Garen, that was an irresistible temptation.

Upon leaving the sealed room, the maid waiting on call outside hurriedly offered up some drinking water.

Garen drank some clean water, went to freshen up, hurriedly finished his meal, and then went to check on the progress of the forgers, but instead he saw an old geezer with white hair surrounded by a large crowd among the forgers' experiment tables on the second floor, he seemed to be person-in-charge here, it was no longer the fatty from before.

The old man's expression was solemn, and when he saw Garen arrive, he was stunned for a moment before he came up to greet Garen of his own accord.

"Palace Master Garen."

The others also wanted to bow and greet him, but Garen waved his hand and stopped them.

"Your work is more important, don't mind me. I just want to ask a few questions, then I'll leave." He said with a smile.

After the second floor gradually calmed down, the geezer finally led Garen to a sealed crystal greenhouse.

"Master Calingan, after sending people to invite you so many times, I finally managed to get you over here." Garen smiled.

"You exaggerate, Palace Master, I also meant to join the Black Swamp Palace, it was just that something came up on the way, so I was blacked, but the problem has been solved now." The old man, Calingan, waved his hand. "I know why you are here too." (1)

He walked into the middle of the greenhouse, and the floor there began to make a wailing sound, as three white cylindrical pillars rose from the ground in a spiral.

In the middle of the cylindrical pillar, there was a hollow crystal container, and three pitch-black crystal ball floated inside.

"This is the success of our forgery, thank goodness there was some residual information and progress left behind from the royal family, it's just even so, the Crystal Derivator that we forged still lacked the core techniques. Even I can't do anything about that. So our progress now is only at about eighty percent."

Calingan replied, frowning.

Garen, however, looked slightly happy. "Very good, not bad at all! As expected of a Master, before you came, Master Calingan, our forgery progress was not even at the halfway point, but now we've reached eighty percent in no time!"

"You flatter, Palace Master..." Calingan was slightly guilty, he had planned to really buck up and gloriously display his own worth and importance, but he hadn't expected to fail at the very first step.

"This is not your fault." Garen shook his head. "At the center of the Crystal Derivator, there is a core made with a special mineral, the principles involved here are more complicated, and really hard to decipher in such a short time, there are principles involving resonance, and high-level transmission

equations may not work here, you guys need to change your mindset. Perhaps it might help if you research the structure of the hideouts."

"Hideouts?"

"That's right." Garen began to explain some of the information he knew to Calingan in detail. These were the Obscuro techniques and systems he had learned from Windling and Reylan.

He also had quite some expertise in this field, with the encouragement of his potential points, he could match what others took a decade or two to learn in one year, his natural capital was extremely considerable. He was a Master at all sorts of subjects.

The two of them discussed a bit in the greenhouse, and it was Calingan's first time meeting such a knowledgeable research sponsor. This made him even more excited, and he was starting to feel as though coming here was, without a doubt, the wisest decision of his life.

A researcher's biggest hope was to meet a boss who provided the funds but also knew the field, and not just an outsider who only wanted to see results.

Only then would the other party understand your research to the largest extent.

After the two of them exchanged some ideas, Garen noticed that it was getting slightly late, so he ate an employer's meal together with the researchers while encouraging them to continue their research without worry, ensuring they had no psychological pressure. Only then did he slowly leave.

When he left the Technique Hall, the sky outside was already turning vaguely red. A warm breeze blew past, feeling all warm and cozy, and there was the crisp chirping of the sparrows in the surrounding trees. Some of the researchers' families and children were taking strolls and resting nearby, some of them even leading pets like puppies and kittens.

On the way out of the garden forest, there were some elderly gathering together and playing chess, while others played with their little birds in cages. There were even two old geezers sparring energetically.

This was the biggest source of income for normal people Masters in the regular world, teaching the elderly to train their bodies and prolong their lives. Here, the power of martial arts seemed unbelievably weak.

Garen sighed inwardly, not saying anything, and many people around here didn't recognize him at all either, thinking he was just another researcher's family member.

When he left the garden forest, he saw Maxilan waiting outside. Once he saw Garen approach, Maxilan went up to him first.

"What's the matter?"

"The First Princess' side sent a message over, they're inviting you to a banquet." Maxilan paused, and continued, "Her First Highness also sent a letter."

He handed Garen a red envelope that he had already prepared beforehand.

Garen accepted it, and saw the very high-class Totem Light seal on it, unless you knew the password order and method, there was no way you could open it safely, to prevent others from peeking at the contents.

Garen tore apart the envelope sealed by Totem Light directly.

On a piece of white paper inside, there was just one line of small elegant writing.

‘The thing you’re looking for, is here with me.’(1)

Garen snorted coldly. With a pinch of one hand, the letter paper instantly became powder, that flew and scattered with the wind.

"Looks like I really do need to make a trip there."

The First Princess had obviously already guessed his intention, the forgery of Caeserton should probably be in her hands.

Garen wouldn't dare hope for the real Caeserton, after all it had already merged with the previous emperor's will, and was activated now too, so the situation now would be that anybody without a royal bloodline couldn't even think about controlling it.

And the next-level forgery would at least be an Ultimate Heirloom, if he could obtain this heirloom, then his abilities would rise by a huge leap. The Black Crow Formation pocket-watch from back then could already display Form Four power, and even that was a lower level Ultimate Heirloom forgery.

Now, a true Ultimate Heirloom would most probably achieve Form Five power.