

## Overlord 1181

### Chapter 1181: Ancestral Pond

Xiang Yangxuan was a cultivator of considerable strength. As a fifth-stage Heaven Battling Realm cultivator, he wouldn't have much trouble defeating Xiang Shaoyun. Thanks to his saint soul, Xiang Shaoyun was able to barely withstand the oppression, but he was still having a hard time.

Unlike earlier when he had just arrived at the clan, he no longer had access to the power left from his previous life. It was too hard for him to face Xiang Yangxuan with his actual strength.

"Answer! Am I right?" questioned Xiang Yangxuan with a look of pleased arrogance.

Xiang Shaoyun narrowed his eyes and spat coldly, "Nonsense!"

"Everyone, you see this. He is only a tiny Soul Foundation Realm cultivator. He was only able to defeat the first elder previously by relying on the ancestor's power that had momentarily attached to his body. Without that power, what is he? I say we strip him of his inheritance and give it to someone more talented," said Xiang Yangxuan, finally making his true goal known.

His words caused many eyes present to ripple with greed. This was quite a tempting suggestion. After all, Xiang Dingtian was someone in the Rebirth Realm. If one could obtain his memory inheritance, one might be able to reach the same realm as well.

"Done speaking?" asked Xiang Shaoyun calmly.

"What other excuse do you still have?" asked Xiang Yangxuan.

"Why do I need an excuse? Are you going to kill me and snatch my memories? Come give it a try. I won't mind killing someone as unfilial as you first," said Xiang Shaoyun coldly. He pushed the strength of his saint soul to the maximum and stirred his bloodline power. A resonance was formed with the blood essence in his blood-soaked robe, once again gaining the strength of the Rebirth Realm.

This blood-soaked robe contained Xiang Dingtian's blood essence and the emotions of the person he loved most. The period of 10,000 years with the two had transformed the robe into some sort of god-grade item. With the affinity between the robe and Xiang Shaoyun, it could unleash a strength

of considerable level. Of course, it was nowhere near as powerful as earlier when Xiang Shaoyun had directly borrowed the strength of his previous life.

Xiang Yangxuan was given a fright. He could sense the terrifying aura coming from Xiang Shaoyun's body while his own energy withered away.

"Y-you're only acting so brave because you're borrowing the power of the ancestor's robe. If you're really that great, take the robe off and fight me fair and square!" said Xiang Yangxuan.

"Do you have shit for brains? If I was as old as you, I could stomp you to death without lifting a finger," said Xiang Shaoyun with derision. "You think I'm only relying on the inheritance to activate the robe? How did someone so stupid reach your level of cultivation? You're so stupid you should just kill yourself and get your sorry life over with."

Xiang Yangxuan felt so humiliated that he wished he could have a hole to hide in. But since he had already started this conflict, he couldn't let it end so easily.

"Elders of the clan, I have a way of proving if he is really our ancestor. If he manages to get through the test, I will not doubt him ever again," said Xiang Yangxuan instead of wasting more time arguing with Xiang Shaoyun.

"What idea do you have?" asked Xiang Youjing.

He also wanted to know for sure if Xiang Shaoyun was really Xiang Dingtian's reincarnation.

"Let him go for a wash in the ancestral pond. If he can leave safely, I will believe that he is the ancestor reincarnated," suggested Xiang Yangxuan with a cold smile.

"Ancestral pond's baptism?" Everyone present wore complicated looks when they heard his suggestion.

"Ancestral pond? That place still exists?" asked Xiang Shaoyun with astonishment.

The Xiang Clan's ancestral pond was a bizarre place the first patriarch had created. Only someone with an absolutely powerful Xiang Clan bloodline could undergo a baptism in the pond. Anyone who survives the baptism would obtain the ancestral lightning bones and possess the strongest

battle physique a Xiang Clan member could possess. Someone with such a physique would also gain the potential to enter the Rebirth Realm.

Historically, very few people had been able to enter the pond. Only the absolute geniuses of the clan would be granted entry, and those who could survive were even fewer in number.

Rather than calling the pond a place of baptism, it would probably be more apt to call it a graveyard. In the last 10,000 years, not a single person had been able to survive the baptism. In fact, the most recent baptism survivor was Xiang Dingtian. From his previous life's memories, Xiang Shaoyun seemed to remember that the place had ceased to exist.

"The ancestral pond has naturally continued existing. I wonder...do you dare to accept the trial?" asked Xiang Yangxuan.

"Hehe, why not? It won't be my first time, anyway," said Xiang Shaoyun with a smile.

Although the ancestral pond was terrifyingly dangerous, he would obtain great benefits if he could survive the baptism.

The others were flabbergasted to see Xiang Shaoyun's complete lack of worry.

One of the old men asked, "You're really willing to enter the pond?"

"Of course. I naturally need to do something to convince people of my identity as the little ancestor," answered Xiang Shaoyun nonchalantly.

"Very well. Let's get going. If you can really survive, the clan will accord you the treatment an ancestor deserves," said Xiang Youjing.

"Good. Let's go. I don't have the time to talk nonsense here," said Xiang Shaoyun loftily as he threw Xiang Yangxuan a provocative glance.

Xiang Yangxuan inwardly sneered as he thought, Nine out of ten will die in the pond. Even with Xiang Dingtian's inheritance, you won't be able to survive.

Xiang Yangxuan had been hostile to Xiang Yangzhan since young. As Xiang Shaoyun was Xiang Yangzhan's son, he naturally didn't wish to see Xiang Shaoyun become their little ancestor. Life would become harder for him if he let it happen.

The group headed to the clan's forbidden zone.

The ancestral pond was located at a sealed place that could only be opened when eight Heaven Battling Realm experts worked together. The so-called pond was, in truth, a sealed lightning pond that could temper one's bones into true lightning bones and grant one the strongest physique.

Apart from that, the pond also contained the willpower of the first ancestor. If one failed to withstand the tempering of the lightning and willpower, one would die.

When the group lifted the seal, a tunnel appeared before them. A purple radiance flickered from within the tunnel, which was leaking an incredibly oppressive aura.

Beyond the tunnel was a purple sea of lightning. The sea contained the purest lightning energy that the first patriarch had confined to one place, transforming the area into a place to temper lightning bones.

"Enter. If you survive this, you will be able to leave by yourself. If you can't, you know what will happen," said Xiang Youjing with a complicated look in his eyes.

The others were also looking at Xiang Shaoyun with complicated expressions. They really wanted to see him leave alive, but a tiny part of them also wished that he wouldn't leave the pond alive. The two emotions were in contradiction with each other.

#### Chapter 1182: Lightning Origin Energy

Xiang Shaoyun flashed everyone a wide smile as he said, "Wait for my good news."

Then, he stepped into the purple tunnel without any hesitation. The eight Heaven Battling Realm cultivators' auras weakened the moment he entered, allowing the seal to reform.

Haha, let's see how you'll survive this, thought Xiang Yangxuan smugly.

He did not think that Xiang Shaoyun would survive the ancestral pond's baptism. After all, over the years, everyone they had sent was the strongest among those beyond the Heaven Battling Realm, but so many had failed. Xiang Shaoyun was only a second-stage Soul Foundation Realm cultivator. Even with the bloody robe helping him, he would still die.

However, Xiang Shaoyun naturally had his reasons for remaining so confident despite knowing how dangerous the pond was. Starfall lightning energy wrapped around Xiang Shaoyun's body, protecting him as he stepped into the pond with boundless lightning origin energy. The destructiveness of this energy was beyond anyone's imagination.

Xiang Shaoyun's strength had increased considerably with the robe's help, but he still felt like his body was on the verge of being blasted into pieces. He had a body tempered by the Limit Stimulation Technique. Even so, he still suffered greatly amid the boundless lightning origin energy.

He wailed in pain.

Numerous lightning tendrils flickered about like snakes, each as powerful as a Saint's attack. A regular Sovereign would be instantly killed. Xiang Shaoyun had to use both the bloody robe and the Radiant Saint Armor before he dared to even step into the pond. Without these two pieces of equipment, he would definitely have much less confidence.

He also activated the Nether Soul Dragon Headband to protect his saint soul. He could not afford to have his soul destroyed by the lightning energy. He clenched his teeth and ignored the intense pain as he charged madly ahead. The ancestral pond wasn't a place of sure death. Otherwise, nobody would have been able to survive in the pond. There was a certain spot in the pond that was actually a land of life.

This land of life wasn't near the entrance. One could only reach it after enduring the lightning origin energy near the entrance. At the land of life, one could find top-quality lightning liquid one could use to heal one's injuries. One could also slowly temper one's lightning bone there. Additionally, one would also be tested by the first ancestor's willpower. One could only reap the benefits of the ancestral pond and leave after passing all the tests.

Xiang Shaoyun was aware of all that. Thus, he naturally wouldn't waste any time staying near the entrance. Instead, he did everything he could to reach the center of the pond. The boundless lightning origin energy torched his entire body black. Not even the bloody robe and Radiant Saint Armor could fully protect him from the lightning energy that seemed to penetrate everything.

The intense pain almost caused his willpower to collapse fully. His lightning bone worked at full power to absorb the lightning energy all around him. A part of the lightning also entered his lightning star, causing the star to overflow with energy.

Xiang Shaoyun was already at the very peak of second-stage Soul Foundation Realm. He was ready to enter the third stage at any time. At this moment, he felt like he could no longer suppress his cultivation. However, this wasn't the most optimal time for a breakthrough.

"Charge! Charge!" Xiang Shaoyun repeatedly roared as he ran. He had never moved so fast in his life. He rushed through the sea of lightning, arriving at the center of the pond.

When he arrived at the center, he found a clump of incredibly pure lightning liquid filled with thick life force. Just by being near the lightning liquid, Xiang Shaoyun felt himself recover considerably.

He dove right into the clump of liquid and stopped moving. He was so tired he couldn't even lift a finger. He only wanted to lay down and forget about all the torture he had just gone through.

The top-quality lightning liquid was much better than regular lightning liquid. Even Saints would rarely stumble upon something of such quality. The lightning liquid in the pond could instantly heal even a Saint's injuries.

Xiang Shaoyun was still not a Saint, so he naturally didn't have any trouble recovering. Soaked amid the top-quality lightning liquid, his badly battered body healed at a speed visible to the naked eye. It was rare to see a substance with such thick life force.

With renewed vigor, Xiang Shaoyun felt like he had just taken a walk through hell before reaching heaven, two completely contrasting sensations. The peace did not last long. Suddenly, a long purple silhouette charged toward him. With a furious roar, it bit down at him.

Xiang Shaoyun immediately reacted. He opened his eyes, and his soul clone charged the purple silhouette.

"Corporeal willpower? Break!" Xiang Shaoyun roared as he blasted the silhouette with a boundless lightning strike.

He pushed his punch to its limits, and it erupted with a destructive profundity of lightning, attempting to destroy the purple silhouette. However, the purple silhouette actually behaved like a

living being and twisted its body to dodge the attack. Its heavy body then swept toward Xiang Shaoyun.

Rumble! Rumble!

Two different energies collided and exploded, causing the lightning liquid to splatter in all directions and dissipate. Anyone would feel terrible when witnessing such wastage.

Xiang Shaoyun's soul clone sent out a boundlessly powerful punch only to end up beaten back instead of defeating the silhouette.

When he focused, he noticed that the silhouette was actually a purple lightning dragon formed of lightning origin energy. It was also the manifestation of the first ancestor's willpower. Only by defeating the dragon would one be able to cultivate peacefully at the center of the ancestral pond.

Xiang Shaoyun's soul clone unleashed all its strength and started battling the lightning dragon. Borrowing the lightning origin energy in his surroundings, Xiang Shaoyun displayed a strength comparable to even a fourth-stage Saint.

Currently, his physical body was still far weaker than his soul. In fact, the two were in two completely different realms. Thus, it wasn't easy for him to fight those with cultivation levels higher than his soul clone. He had to wait until his physical body caught up in terms of strength before he could further strengthen his soul clone.

The purple lightning possessed a tiny bit of wisdom that mainly concerned matters of battle. The lightning was nimble and unpredictable, possessing powerful combat strength. It was at least a fifth-stage Saint and strong enough to deal with him.

However, Xiang Shaoyun had already battled the lightning dragon in his past life. He knew its weakness well and was only waiting for the moment to defeat it with one strike.

Right when the purple dragon wrapped its body around Xiang Shaoyun's clone, the clone turned incorporeal and phased through the dragon. His clone attacked the dragon's head.

Chapter 1183: Advancing to Third-Stage Soul Foundation Realm

The purple lightning dragon was the manifestation of the first ancestor's willpower. After fusing with the lightning origin energy, the willpower had obtained a valiant combat strength. Even regular Saints wouldn't be its match.

Xiang Shaoyun had faced this same dragon in his previous life, which was why he knew the dragon's weakness well. Only by wiping out the willpower imprinted on the lightning dragon would this danger be resolved. It was worth noting that he would also gain some benefits from defeating the dragon.

Plunging his saint soul into the purple dragon's body seemed like a suicidal action. One ought to know that all souls were immensely weak against powers of extreme yang. The lightning origin energy was one such power. It was basically the bane of all souls. Even Saints would have their souls destroyed upon contact.

However, as someone who had formed a saint soul at the Sovereign Realm, Xiang Shaoyun naturally had an extraordinary soul—a filthless soul that had been tempered by lightning and fire. It could withstand the powers of extreme yang.

When the soul dove into the dragon's body, it nearly collapsed, giving Xiang Shaoyun an intense headache. He felt like his head was about to split apart. Fortunately, he persevered and reached the dragon's core. There, he slammed his soul against the first ancestor's willpower.

The willpower wasn't threatening at all. It wrapped around Xiang Shaoyun's soul and isolated it from the lightning energy, protecting the soul from further damage. The willpower proceeded to disperse, followed by the dispersal of the lightning dragon.

Xiang Shaoyun took the opportunity to move his main body over and started absorbing the dispersing energy. Instantly, the purple dragon's energy rushed into his body, flooding him with energy.

More importantly, the energy was completely harmless and was much gentler than before, allowing Xiang Shaoyun to absorb it as he wished. As his lightning bone absorbed the energy, the bone became even more glossy and sleek. Its purple tinge deepened, and it became harder to suppress his overflowing lightning star.

Bringing the remnant willpower of the first ancestor, the soul clone returned to his head. He thus started his breakthrough. He sat down cross-legged amid the lightning liquid, surrounding his body with a boundless amount of life force. The life force was so abundant that breaking through felt easy.



His nine stars erupted at the same time as the energy in his body circulated incessantly. A nine-colored radiance burst from his body, making him look incredibly majestic. He looked incredibly dazzling, like a heavenly child who had descended upon the mundane world.

His soul foundation unfurled from his body. Numerous new complicated soul marks appeared on the two-layered soul foundation. Eventually, a third layer formed atop the second layer.

Seated cross-legged atop the third layer, his soul looked divine and emanated a sparkling and translucent radiance.

Each additional layer in one's soul foundation would bring a cultivator's strength up a notch and deepen the cultivator's comprehension of everything related to cultivation, enabling the cultivator to use all their techniques better. At the same time, the cultivator's soul would also be further strengthened.

This breakthrough, in particular, also enhanced Xiang Shaoyun's soul considerably, but he didn't let his soul grow too much. Instead, he consciously redirected the new soul power to reinforce his soul foundation and deepen the foundation's soul marks.

He aimed to suppress the speed of his soul's advancement to forge a stronger foundation for his soul. After he entered the third stage, not much of the dragon's energy was left. However, there was still a decent amount left. After all, energy of this level was comparable to the energy of a Saint.

If Xiang Shaoyun was a pure lightning cultivator, the amount of energy from the dragon could probably bring him straight to the peak of the Soul Foundation Realm. Perhaps it could have even pushed him into the Saint Realm.

It was fair to say that cultivating nine powers had caused him to miss many opportunities to rapidly improve his cultivation level. Left with no choice, he could only let the excess lightning origin energy enter his astral cosmos sea.

"I can slowly refine the remaining energy in the future. I can also let Money use it to cultivate," decided Xiang Shaoyun.

Not only had he survived the crisis, but he had even advanced into third-stage Soul Foundation Realm. One could say that he had benefited considerably after entering the Xiang Clan's ancestral

pond. However, it was still not the time to leave. He still needed to temper his lightning bone to its limits and obtain the first ancestor's acknowledgment before he could leave.

Prior to this, he had tempered his lightning bone with starfall lightning energy. Therefore, his lightning bone was already rather powerful. But that was not enough for him. He wanted to make use of the pond's lightning origin energy to temper his lightning bone again.

Having absorbed the lightning origin energy from the dragon, Xiang Shaoyun no longer had any trouble with the lightning around him. He remained seated in the lightning liquid and circulated his cultivation method. He absorbed strands of lightning origin energy to temper his lightning bone.

The Xiang Clan had a unique bone tempering technique that Xiang Shaoyun had never bothered using in the past since he disliked his heritage. Here, he had no choice but to use it. The tempering technique was no weaker than the Limit Stimulation Technique. In fact, it was much more effective for tempering bones.

As he chanted the mantra of the tempering technique, he circulated the berserk lightning energy to hammer every single bone in his body.

It was quite a barbaric technique, as it involved crushing every single bone in one's body before growing new bones with lightning liquid. The tempering would only be considered a success when one reached the point where the lightning origin energy could no longer damage one's bones.

Only after all the bones in one's body were fully tempered would one possess a complete Lightning Bone Physique that was no weaker than the Lightning Star Physique. This physique was the reason the clan had been able to survive for so many years. In the past, only those at the Rebirth Realm had been able to fully temper their bones with the tempering technique.

Xiang Shaoyun withstood the torture as he tempered every single bone in his body. Fortunately, he had already experienced tempering his bones in the past with the Limit Stimulation Technique. Thus, the tempering didn't feel too difficult. Otherwise, he wouldn't have been able to endure such torture with a Soul Foundation Realm cultivation level.

After 49 rounds of tempering, he finally finished tempering a single bone, reaching a point where the lightning origin energy could no longer damage it. He moved on to the second bone. Similarly, he needed 49 rounds to perfect it. On and on he went.

And thus, Xiang Shaoyun fully immersed himself in bliss and suffering as he forged the most terrifying Lightning Bone Physique in existence. Once the process was done, he would be a new person.

## Chapter 1184: Return

One year. One full year had passed, and Xiang Shaoyun had yet to leave the ancestral pond. The Xiang Clan's higher-ups all believed that there was no hope that he could still return. That day, Xiang Youjing and about 10 other people came to the ancestral pond. Among the group were several of the oldest ones in the clan and Xiang Yangxuan, who was firmly against Xiang Shaoyun. Each of them came with a different emotion.

"It has been an entire year, yet he still hasn't left. Looks like Yangxuan was right. He is probably someone who had obtained the ancestor's inheritance," said one of the old men with a sigh.

"Like I said, he had merely obtained some inheritance by luck. That was how he knew the ancestor's secrets. How can he be the ancestor's reincarnation?" said Xiang Yangxuan smugly.

Initially, he also wondered if Xiang Shaoyun could really be the ancestor's reincarnation. But regardless of whether it was true, he still couldn't let this young man continue growing. He felt too threatened by him. With Xiang Shaoyun failing to leave the ancestral pond, he felt relieved. So long as Xiang Shaoyun died there, the grudge between the two of them would end.

"Why don't we open the seal and check? He might still be alive," said a different old man who was unwilling to accept that Xiang Shaoyun was dead.

Even if Xiang Shaoyun wasn't the ancestor's reincarnation, he was still someone who had obtained the ancestor's inheritance. Letting him grow would only benefit the clan. Also, if he was really dead, wouldn't it mean that Xiang Dingtian's inheritance was lost forever?

"It doesn't matter if we open the seal. We won't be able to go far unless we use some god-grade equipment. But that's not worth it. We might even cause the ancestral pond to lose its power," said someone else.

A few more people also expressed that they did not wish to unseal the pond. Xiang Shaoyun should only rely on himself.

After thinking in silence for a bit, Xiang Youjing said, "Let's leave."

Of all the people present, his feelings were the most complicated. On the one hand, he had hoped that Xiang Shaoyun was the ancestor's reincarnation. In that case, he would be able to hear more about his father from Xiang Shaoyun. On the other hand, he did not really want Xiang Shaoyun to be the ancestor's reincarnation. Who would enjoy seeing some young descendant of a branch family climbing above them?

But when Xiang Shaoyun really did fail to come up from the ancestral pond, he felt somewhat regretful.

The group left while shaking their heads, sure that Xiang Shaoyun had failed. They had barely taken a few steps when thunder rumbled loudly around them.

Space cracked, and lightning energy started wreaking havoc around them. The area was flooded with abundant lightning energy, as though a lightning calamity was about to descend. Then, an opening appeared in the air, and more thunder rumbled around them, as if the child of lightning was arriving.

The Xiang Clan elders turned around, and their eyes flickered with astonishment at what they saw.

One of the older elders trembled and cried out, "Ancestor Xiang Dingtian has returned!"

He dropped onto his knees and prostrated himself, showing a full display of sincerity. Although the others hadn't lost themselves like them, they all still bowed deferentially.

As for Xiang Yangxuan, he turned pale with fright and exclaimed, "Impossible! How can you survive the ancestral pond?" This was too much for Xiang Yangxuan to accept. The person who had appeared from the ancestral pond was none other than Xiang Shaoyun.

Xiang Shaoyun had only finished tempering all his bones after spending an entire year improving them. Each of his bones was now comparable to a saint weapon in toughness, and he had reached a certain peak in how far he could push his bones.

One could say that he now had an entire frame of saint bones. Even his flesh and organs had gone through some sort of baptism. One could say that he had forged a saint body in advance. Regular Sovereigns would no longer be able to harm him easily with their attacks.

One could say that Xiang Shaoyun had experienced an unimaginably difficult tempering during the year he was in the ancestral pond. The torture he had gone through wasn't something anyone could endure.

After withstanding the tempering, Xiang Shaoyun's entire body had become filled with lightning energy. His hair had also turned purple. Of the nine powers he cultivated, the lightning power took the obvious leading role.

One could say that Xiang Shaoyun could now erupt with a combat strength much higher than before by relying on a single lightning star and his lightning bone. In fact, from now on, he could display so much strength with lightning that people would believe it even if he claimed that he was a pure lightning cultivator.

Xiang Shaoyun's appearance had further improved from the tempering. Any woman would be attracted by his wild and unrestrained bearing. The boundless and overbearing lightning energy made him look incredibly valiant, as though he was a magnificent child of lightning.

"You may all rise," said Xiang Shaoyun with a confident smile.

"The heavens are blessing us! Our Xiang Clan has finally received another chance to rise to the peak!" said the old man who had knelt down earlier in excitement.

But the moment he made his exclamation, the other elders donned odd expressions on their faces. Everyone knew that Xiang Dingtian was known for being extremely warlike. If the clan was to rely on him to rise again, would the tragedy from 10,000 years ago also repeat?

From their expressions, Xiang Shaoyun could see what they were thinking. He smiled and said, "I alone will not be enough to help the clan rise again. Everyone needs to put in the work. Also, I might remember my memories from my previous life, but I am now Xiang Shaoyun. I will only be Xiang Shaoyun."

He was speaking the truth. Not only did he remember his previous life, but he also remembered the life before it. He felt that there must be a reason for him to exist in this life. Perhaps there were much more important tasks waiting for him to complete.

Thus, he wasn't too interested in completing Xiang Dingtian's ambitions. At the very most, he would take his revenge against his enemies from his previous life to blow off some steam.

When the elders heard what he said, their expressions relaxed.

"After passing the trial, I believe that Xiang Shaoyun is the reincarnation of the ancestor," said Xiang Youjing after some hesitation. He then looked at Xiang Shaoyun and called out respectfully, "Uncle!"

He had essentially acknowledged Xiang Shaoyun's identity.

"You don't have to be too courteous. Just call me Shaoyun or Overlord," said Xiang Shaoyun.

"That's right. Youjing, we should just call him Overlord. As for seniority, it's enough for us to keep it in our hearts," said an old man.

The others quickly voiced their agreement. It was really a tad bit too hard for them to actually address Xiang Shaoyun as their ancestor.

Xiang Shaoyun's gaze landed on Xiang Yangxuan, who was hiding behind everyone else. "So, do you have any other tests?"

#### Chapter 1185: Official

Xiang Yangxuan did not have a good opinion of Xiang Shaoyun. In fact, Xiang Shaoyun could feel a deep sense of hostility from him. Thus, it was time to settle the bill.

An expression as ugly as the expression of someone who had just swallowed a fly appeared on Xiang Yangxuan's face. Xiang Yangxuan couldn't think of anything to say.

At this point, even if he could prove that Xiang Shaoyun wasn't Xiang Dingtian, he still wouldn't be able to change Xiang Shaoyun's status. After all, he was the first person to have survived in the ancestral pond in over 10,000 years. This fact alone made him valuable to the clan. Thus, he didn't even know what he could say.

Ultimately, Xiang Yangxuan could only bow silently. He said, "Greetings, little ancestor. I did not mean to be prejudiced against you. I was merely thinking of the clan."

From this, one could see that Xiang Yangxuan was someone who would be willing to change when required.

One of the older elders from Xiang Yangxuan's branch said, "Overlord, spare him this once. He was merely thinking for the entire clan and didn't mean to offend you."

A few more people also spoke out for Xiang Yangxuan. After all, Xiang Yangxuan was one of the most remarkable ones of his generation and had a chance of being the next patriarch. Therefore, he was not someone without status in the clan. They couldn't allow him to be brought down because of one mistake.

Xiang Shaoyun smiled and said in a carefree manner, "I only feel that he doesn't believe in me. Regardless, I am but a tiny junior in the clan. Who am I to question anyone here?"

In some way, Xiang Shaoyun's words were his way of venting some of his anger. He wanted to see just how the clan would deal with Xiang Yangxuan.

"It's not that serious, Overlord," said one of the older ones.

Losing Xiang Shaoyun's loyalty would be a great loss to the clan. Thus, they had to choose between Xiang Yangxuan and Xiang Shaoyun.

Xiang Youjing said, "Yangxuan showed disrespect toward the Overlord. Based on our rules, he committed the crime of disrespecting one's elders. Depending on the severity, punishment varies from being expelled from the clan to staring at the wall in contemplation for five years. In consideration that Yangxuan was acting in the clan's best interests, he will be punished to stare at the wall in contemplation for 10 years."

For a Saint, 10 years would be over in the blink of an eye, so staring at the wall was an extremely light punishment. However, it was more than enough for Xiang Shaoyun. Within 10 years, Xiang Shaoyun would be able to grow fully and take the time to establish a firm footing in the clan. Afterward, nobody would dare to disrespect him.

"Yes, first elder," said Xiang Yangxuan, not daring to disobey. The punishment seemed light, but it was greatly unfavorable for him in terms of competing to be the next patriarch. Thus, his hatred for Xiang Shaoyun deepened.

Then, Xiang Shaoyun followed the group back to the grand hall.

Only after asking about the current patriarch did Xiang Shaoyun find out that a Xiang Clan Rebirth Realm expert had brought the patriarch away from the clan. The two had gone to search for an opportunity for the patriarch to reach the Rebirth Realm. It had been a few years since they had left. As of now, there were still no updates. But since their soul slips hadn't dimmed, it was clear that the two were still alive.

Xiang Shaoyun nodded and stopped asking questions. He approved of the foundations the clan had retained after their fall. However, they were still somewhat lacking compared to those actual super organizations.

Xiang Youjing summoned all the clan's important individuals and allowed them to learn of Xiang Shaoyun, which was his way of legitimizing Xiang Shaoyun's status in the clan. With the patriarch missing, it would be unwise to let everyone in the clan know about him. Thus, only the important individuals were made aware.

Every single one of these important individuals was stunned when they saw Xiang Shaoyun. A young lad like him had suddenly turned into their little ancestor, which could only mean that there was something special about his identity. They found it hard to accept him, but their expressions changed after they heard from Xiang Youjing that Xiang Shaoyun had survived the ancestral pond's baptism.

"No way. Did he really survive the ancestral pond's baptism? That would be amazing if right!"

"After so many years, is our clan finally welcoming another strongest Lightning Bone Physique? No wonder all the sacred elders were gathered together. This little ancestor is going to overturn the heavens."

"So which branch is he from? He is so young. He probably has the best talent in our clan in over 10,000 years."

"Xiang Shaoyun? I don't recall hearing about him at all. Is he someone the clan had hidden away until today?"

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They started cheering. Learning of his survival had allowed them to look at Xiang Shaoyun in a completely new light. Many of the top talents present were envious of this heaven-defying talent.

"Due to the little ancestor's unique identity and the absence of the patriarch and the guardian, he will be excluded from any management roles in the clan. However, you still need to accord him the etiquette of a senior when you see him in the clan. Show him no disrespect, or you will be dealt with in accordance with the clan rules," warned Xiang Youjing solemnly.

Nobody dared to disobey him, and they answered, "Yes."

Xiang Shaoyun was given an independent residence similar in rank to the residences of the sacred elders. It was located deep in the clan, a place a regular person wouldn't be able to reach.

With that, Xiang Shaoyun obtained the authority to leave and enter the clan as he wished, becoming one of the clan's most important individuals. He felt somewhat melancholic when he realized how fast everything had changed.

"Little ancestor, we have carefully picked some servants to help take care of your residence. Please take a look at them," said an overseer respectfully.

Behind them were dozens of people, the majority being women. They all looked at Xiang Shaoyun with yearning, hoping that they would be selected. Xiang Shaoyun scanned the crowd and found that most of them were King Realm cultivators, and there were a few Emperors mixed in. Inwardly, he thought, A day will come when the Ziling Sect becomes this powerful. If I can make that happen, Father will be pleased.

He said to the overseer, "Get Ji Honglei over here and have her be my butler. She will handle the servant selection."

He then entered the residence's lounge. He did not know why he selected Ji Honglei to be his butler. Perhaps it was because she was the only one he knew in the clan, or perhaps he had developed some sympathy for her.

In short, he simply believed that she would be a good choice. As for whether some bad rumors would arise from it, he did not care. After all, he wouldn't stay here for long. He still needed to take care of his sect. Also, his child was probably already born. Little did he know that picking Ji Honglei as his butler had indeed created a tiny storm in the clan.

## Chapter 1186: Widow Issues

Ji Honglei was a famous widow in the clan. Not only was she beautiful, but she also had a decent background. In the past, she was married to an important descendant from the Xiang Clan's main branch. That descendant also had an astonishing talent in cultivation. Alas, he had died early.

There was a saying that a widow living alone could easily give rise to many issues. Thus, Ji Honglei had requested to avoid all affairs involving the clan and be relocated to the clan's fringe. However, things had a way to turn out contrary to what one wished in life. It wasn't easy for her to just live a calm life.

There would always be some arrogant Xiang Clan members coming to harass her, trying to make her theirs. After all, the clan had been in seclusion for many years. Although they had slowly started going to the outside world in recent years, they had failed to bring an outside woman back to the clan.

Thus, a beautiful young woman like Ji Honglei was very rare in the clan. When she became a widow, some of the restless men in the clan could no longer hold themselves back. Of them, someone named Xiang Libie harassed her the most. He was basically a lunatic that wouldn't give up as long as he didn't achieve his goal.

He had a decent talent in cultivation. Unfortunately, he had a bad character and was not well-liked in the clan. Otherwise, he would have become an important individual in the clan. He was a ninth-stage Soul Foundation Realm cultivator as someone not even 200 years old. He had very high hopes of reaching the Heaven Battling Realm before becoming 500 years old.

In the past, Ji Honglei was a peak Sovereign surpassing him in strength. Thus, he had never dared to cross the line too much with her. But when he became a ninth-stage Soul Foundation Realm expert, he gained the ability to defeat Ji Honglei using his lightning power.

With newfound confidence, he visited Ji Honglei's residence again. This time, he didn't even bother complying with the most basic of etiquettes and charged into the residence uninvited.

"Honglei, where are you? I'm thinking about you," said Xiang Libie. From how he was shouting in complete disregard of anyone's feelings, it was clear how boorish he was.

Ji Honglei, wearing a crimson outfit, revealed herself. She held a red sword in her hand as she glared at him and asked, "What are you doing here? Are you looking for more beatings?"

"I will not give up before conquering you beneath my crotch!" said Xiang Libie as he licked his lips.

"So it turns out your strength has grown. No wonder you dare to come again. But if you really dare to cross the line with me, the sacred elders won't spare you," said Ji Honglei, becoming visibly worried.

Even when Xiang Libie was only an eighth-stage Soul Foundation Realm cultivator, she could only barely suppress him. Now that he had reached the ninth stage, she no longer had the confidence to prevail over him.

"The sacred elders will not be bothered about the affair between us. Just be obedient and become my woman. I can end your lonely nights," said Xiang Libie bluntly.

"Bring it on. I will not hold back today. Let's create a big mess and see if the sacred elders will ignore you," said Ji Honglei, who decided to throw caution to the wind.

"What's the point of acting like this? I, Xiang Libie, am completely worthy of you," said Xiang Libie.

"I am a widow. I have my own bottom line to protect," said Ji Honglei.

"Bottom line? Screw the bottom line. Let me tear your bottom line apart," said Xiang Libie as his eyes turned red.

Just as he was about to make a move, an overseer arrived in a rush, forcing him to stop his action.

"Ji Honglei, come out. I have something I need to tell you," said the overseer.

Ji Honglei felt relieved. She hurriedly rushed outside the residence and asked, "What is it for you to come here personally?"

The overseer replied, "Something good. Come with me. The little ancestor is appointing you as his butler. You will be in charge of managing his household."

"Which little ancestor?" Ji Honglei was confused.

Xiang Libie was also growing curious.

"Xiang Shaoyun is the little ancestor, the one who had recently returned to the clan. Not everyone in the clan is aware of this yet, but all the sacred elders have approved of this. It is truly enviable that you have earned his favor," said the overseer with a look of envy.

Xiang Shaoyun was someone who had survived the ancestral pond's baptism. He had the strongest Lightning Bone Physique, and it was only a matter of time before he grew into one of the strongest in the clan. Serving under him, Ji Honglei would receive his protection and some other benefits. Her status in the clan would change entirely.

"Him? Sure. I'll go with you," said Ji Honglei, overjoyed.

She had long known about Xiang Shaoyun and knew he had entered the ancestral pond. A year had passed without updates, and she had thought he had gotten himself killed.

To her surprise, he was still alive and had become the clan's little ancestor, which she hadn't seen coming. But when she recalled how he was Xiang Dingtian's reincarnation, everything no longer seemed so surprising.

When Xiang Libie saw that Ji Honglei was about to be brought away, he shouted, "Overseer Xi, who is that little ancestor? How can he make Honglei his butler?"

"Hehe, just go back and ask around. You'll know. He is the rarest talent to have appeared in our clan in 10,000 years," said the overseer with a smile. He then moved away with Ji Honglei.

"Wait a minute. I'll go with you and see for myself just who this little ancestor is," said Xiang Libie.

"My affair has nothing to do with you. Please leave," said Ji Honglei firmly.

"That's not true at all. I'm your man," said Xiang Libie with a cold smirk. His words alarmed the overseer.

Ji Honglei snapped, "How shameless are you? How can you say something like that?"

"Hehe, I was merely telling the truth," said Xiang Libie, who doubled down on his shamelessness.

"Screw this!" Ji Honglei could no longer control herself and was about to attack.

The overseer hurriedly said, "Just come together. Let the little ancestor make his choice."

The overseer was smart enough to tell who was the liar. But since he didn't want to keep Xiang Shaoyun waiting, he decided to have Xiang Libie tag along. In any case, Xiang Libie probably wouldn't dare to be so impudent in Xiang Shaoyun's presence. After all, Xiang Shaoyun was residing in the district only sacred elders could live.

Soon, they arrived at Xiang Shaoyun's residence. Sure enough, both Ji Honglei and Xiang Libie were stunned when they arrived. They both knew very well the kind of status an individual residing here would have.

After bringing the two into the grand hall, the overseer said respectfully to Xiang Shaoyun, who had his eyes shut in rest, "Little ancestor, Ji Honglei is here."

Ji Honglei saluted Xiang Shaoyun and said gently, "Honglei greets the little ancestor. Honglei hereby pledges her undying loyalty to the little ancestor."

Before Xiang Shaoyun could say anything, Xiang Libie shouted, "This won't do. You're my woman. How can you serve him?"

#### Chapter 1187: Leave an Arm Behind as Punishment

Xiang Shaoyun opened his eyes, and his gaze landed on Xiang Libie. With one glance, he could see that Xiang Libie wasn't weak. He could also sense the man's undisguised hostility.

He ignored Xiang Libie and asked the overseer, "What is this?"

The overseer replied fearfully, "Xiang Libie insisted on coming to see you. I find it hard to refuse him."

"Well, he saw me. He may now leave," said Xiang Shaoyun, who wasn't even bothered to waste any breath talking to Xiang Libie.

"You don't need to chase me away. I'm leaving myself," said Xiang Libie unyieldingly. He then reached out to grab Ji Honglei.

Ji Honglei had not expected Xiang Libie to be so brazen, and her wrist was caught because she couldn't react in time.

"What are you doing? Let me go!" Ji Honglei shouted. The grip suppressed her pulse, and she could no longer circulate her energy.

"You're my woman. I naturally have the right to take you away. Not even a sacred elder can force you to stay," declared Xiang Libie fiercely. He then proceeded to drag Ji Honglei away.

Ji Honglei shouted, "Madman, let go of me! I'm not your woman. Don't ruin my reputation!"

She struggled to no avail since she couldn't circulate her energy. Meanwhile, the overseer stood stunned to the side, not knowing what to do. A sacred elder was backing Xiang Libie, which was why Xiang Libie dared to act so brazenly.

"What are you doing? Keep Ji Honglei here. She is already my butler," berated Xiang Shaoyun as he slammed his palm against the table.

The overseer recovered from his shock and hurriedly stopped Xiang Libie. He roared, "Xiang Libie, let go of her!"

Xiang Shaoyun had a unique status that placed him on an equal footing with the sacred elders. The overseer could not ignore his command.

"Overseer Xi, don't create trouble for yourself," warned Xiang Libie coldly.

"Libie, don't make things difficult for me. Release Honglei," demanded the overseer.

"You can't stop me. Piss off!" shouted Xiang Libie.

He then walked past the overseer and continued dragging Ji Honglei away. The overseer had no choice but to make a move against him. The overseer was an eighth-stage Soul Foundation Realm cultivator. He was definitely not a weakling, but he was unfortunately still far weaker than Xiang Libie.

Before his attack could reach him, Xiang Libie reacted and countered with a palm. Fueled by extraordinarily powerful lightning energy, the palm shot forth like a bolt of lightning and struck the overseer's chest.

The overseer was not his match. That one attack blasted him away.

"Too weak," said Xiang Libie smugly as he shot Xiang Shaoyun a provocative glance. He continued dragging Ji Honglei away.

Xiang Shaoyun had not imagined that the man would actually be so disrespectful. He had thought that with the strict ranks of seniority in the clan, nobody would dare create trouble so easily. Surprisingly, he had just settled down in this residence, yet someone was already creating trouble. This was the same as slapping his face. Just as Xiang Libie thought that he could leave unobstructed, a silhouette appeared before him like a specter.

"You dare stop me as well?" asked Xiang Libie mockingly.

"Admit your faults and let her go, and I'll let this slide," said Xiang Shaoyun calmly.

"If I refuse?" asked Xiang Libie coldly.

"You will have to leave an arm behind as punishment," said Xiang Shaoyun. He then walked forward.

He moved slowly, but his aura was already completely locked onto Xiang Libie. Escape was impossible. Xiang Libie could see that Xiang Shaoyun was only a third-stage Soul Foundation Realm cultivator. In his eyes, someone like Xiang Shaoyun wasn't even worthy of his attention. But when Xiang Shaoyun's aura focused on him, he found that he couldn't even budge.

"How is this possible? Get lost!" roared Xiang Libie as he released the aura of his nine-layered soul foundation, trying to break free of Xiang Shaoyun's suppression.

However, Xiang Shaoyun's aura only grew stronger. It was as though the master of the world had descended. Xiang Libie panicked when he realized he was completely helpless.

Xiang Shaoyun did not spend a year in the ancestral pond only tempering his bones. He had also tempered his saint soul repeatedly, greatly enhancing his soul's strength. Although his soul power was still stuck at first-stage Heaven Battling Realm, his soul power was strong enough to contend against a fifth-stage Heaven Battling Realm soul.

Thus, Xiang Libie was simply dreaming if he thought he stood a chance against a saint soul this powerful. Xiang Shaoyun advanced one step at a time while Xiang Libie could only watch blankly with fear flooding every fiber of his being. A purple energy saber formed before Xiang Shaoyun, and he slowly swung it at the arm holding Ji Honglei.

"N-no!" Xiang Libie despaired and cried out in fear.

He wanted to run. He wanted to struggle. However, he was completely helpless. The air around him compressed and locked him in place, making it so that he couldn't even lift a finger. The purple blade sliced through his arm. Blood splashed, and a severed arm dropped. Like a startled rabbit, Ji Honglei hurriedly moved away with disbelief in her eyes.

She knew Xiang Libie's strength very well. Someone as strong as him had lost his arm so easily; her disbelief was understandable. Of course, she also recalled how even the first elder had been beaten up by Xiang Shaoyun a year ago. Taking that into consideration, this wasn't as surprising anymore.

After cutting an arm off, Xiang Shaoyun released Xiang Libie and said, "If you keep bothering her, I'll cut off your head next."

He emanated the presence of an absolute master of the world, a master who nobody would dare disobey. Xiang Libie broke out in cold sweat from the intense pain. Facing Xiang Shaoyun's terrifying aura, the madness he was known for was nowhere to be seen.

In fact, he only pretended to be mad most of the time. He wasn't actually mad. If he continued acting mad against someone as ruthless as Xiang Shaoyun, he would die. He picked up his severed arm and left gloomily, not daring to make a single sound.



The injured overseer returned, lowered his head, and apologized, "Sorry, little ancestor. I failed at my task."

"Don't worry about it. Go heal up. Ji Honglei will be taking care of the affairs here," said Xiang Shaoyun with a wave of his hand. He then returned to the grand hall.

#### Chapter 1188: Preparing to Leave

Ji Honglei hurriedly followed behind Xiang Shaoyun as she thought, He still failed to escape me. This is great! She was confident that Xiang Shaoyun had probably fallen for her and that that was why he had selected her to be his butler. Her imaginations went wild at this assumption.

The two arrived at the grand hall. There, Xiang Shaoyun went straight to the point, "Are you willing to serve as my butler?"

Ji Honglei agreed without hesitation, "Yes." A bewitching look appeared on her face as she said, "I can be the butler, and I can also be your maid."

She then approached Xiang Shaoyun and pasted her voluptuous body against him. She had suffered many years of loneliness. Now that a man had caught her eyes, she did not wish to let go of him.

Xiang Shaoyun showed no reaction. "You're decent, but I don't like to gossip. Go to your own seat."

"Didn't you appoint me as your butler so I can warm your bed for you? Why keep pretending to be a gentleman, my dearest little ancestor?" said Ji Honglei coquettishly.

Xiang Shaoyun's voice turned solemn as he barked, "If you're going to continue acting like this, feel free to get lost."

Nowadays, Xiang Shaoyun wouldn't be so easily attracted to a woman. In fact, his mind was thinking about the Holy Hall at this moment. When Ji Honglei saw that Xiang Shaoyun was serious, she no longer dared to mess around. She went to her seat obediently and thought, What a fake gentleman.

"I need some manpower here. Make the selection for me. You will be in charge of this place from now on. If you're confident, run it well. If you're not, you can leave immediately," said Xiang Shaoyun seriously. "Also, I'll only be staying here for business."

He was making it clear to Ji Honglei that she wasn't hired because he was attracted to her. Ji Honglei understood what he was trying to say. Her expression dimmed as she thought, Is he looking down on me? Or had he simply selected me out of pity?

"Are you unwilling?" asked Xiang Shaoyun with a frown when she remained silent.

"No, I-I'm willing," answered Ji Honglei.

She had been harassed too much over the years. A backer like Xiang Shaoyun wouldn't be come by easily, and she didn't want to give it up. More importantly, she wanted to try making this backer like her.

Regardless of his current feelings for her, she had to first ensure she could stay here. Only then would she have more chances to approach him. One ought to admit that she was aiming rather high.

"Um. You can proceed to pick the servants. Feel free to pick a room for yourself. When I'm not around, you can freely use the cultivation resources available here," said Xiang Shaoyun with a wave of his hand.

Ji Honglei left the hall and started recruiting servants for the residence. She took only three days to thoroughly organize the residence. Xiang Shaoyun's daily life was taken care of flawlessly. It was becoming apparent that Ji Honglei was a very meticulous woman.

Naturally, Xiang Shaoyun felt smug over his choice of recruiting her.

One day, he went looking for Xiang Youjing. It was time for him to leave.

"Overlord, why did you come here personally? You can just summon me," said Xiang Youjing courteously.

Xiang Shaoyun flashed him a bright smile and said, "One doesn't visit a temple without a cause. This time, I'm here to inform you that I'll be leaving, first elder."

"Uh, Overlord, this is your home. Where are you going?" asked Xiang Youjing, slightly stunned.

"Be that as it may, my father's sect is still waiting for me to run. Enemies surround it on all sides, and I need to return and look after it personally," said Xiang Shaoyun.

Xiang Youjing gave it some thought before saying, "Our clan members have been going to the outside world in recent years. Are you willing to merge the sect with the clan, making it some sort of point of contact between the clan and the outside world?"

Xiang Shaoyun refused without hesitating, "Absolutely not. If I agree, things will only become troublesome in the future. However, I wouldn't mind connecting the two through teleportation formations to open up communication. What do you think?"

As a whole, the Xiang Clan was no weaker than the Holy Hall. Thus, Xiang Shaoyun was thinking of making use of the clan to protect the sect. In any case, he would repay the clan in the future when he becomes as strong as he was in his previous life.

If he was a pure lightning cultivator, regaining that level of strength would be easy. After all, with the experiences from his past life, he could advance rapidly. However, his cultivation of nine powers was dragging down his cultivation speed.

"This..." Xiang Youjing hesitated, not knowing what to say.

"What misgivings do you have?"

"This is a big decision. We need to wait for the patriarch to decide on it. What do you think?" asked Xiang Youjing.

This was too major for a first elder like him to decide by himself. He needed the patriarch's permission before making such big calls.

Xiang Shaoyun found Xiang Youjing's response reasonable and said, "What if I need something from the clan?"

"What do you need, Overlord? If it's not too hard to get and the clan has it, there won't be any issues," said Xiang Youjing.

Xiang Shaoyun did not hold back and listed out several important materials such as void stones and spirit sense stones.

These materials were considered rare for many organizations, but the Xiang Clan wouldn't have too much trouble gathering them.

Unsurprisingly, Xiang Youjing said, "These materials can probably be found in the clan. But I'll need about two days to gather them all."

"I'll be relying on you, senior brother," said Xiang Shaoyun.

"Are you going to construct teleportation formations with these materials?" asked Xiang Youjing.

Xiang Shaoyun nodded and said, "That's right. The sect is still too weak. We need to look for some backers so that we won't be swallowed whole by a bigger fish."

"Are you in some sort of big trouble, Overlord?" asked Xiang Youjing.

"Have you heard of the Di Clan?" asked Xiang Shaoyun.

"Di Clan?" Xiang Youjing muttered doubtfully. He shook his head and said, "No."

"They are probably a hermit clan like us. They might even be descendants of some royal clan. Otherwise, they wouldn't dare to use the surname Di," said Xiang Shaoyun with a heavy expression.

In the past, Xiang Shaoyun had never considered Di Batian's background. Now that he gave it some thought, he found that Di Batian might also very well be a member of a hermit clan. In his past life, he had heard a little about a clan known as the Di Clan, but he was unsure if it was the same clan.

The Di Clan he had heard of was the royal clan of a ruined nation, and it was an extremely powerful clan. If Di Batian was really from that Di Clan, the Ziling Sect might be their first target when they leave seclusion. This was why he was in such a rush to search for backers.

"A royal clan? Things will get really thorny, then," said Xiang Youjing with a sigh. "I will send some people to protect you when you leave. With your current strength, you won't be able to deal with enemies of that level."

#### Chapter 1189: Di Batian Reappears

Xiang Shaoyun took the materials Xiang Youjing gave him and, satisfied, left with the new Saint bodyguard assigned to him. When he was leaving, the people from the clan urged him repeatedly to protect himself well and grow strong as quickly as possible so that he could help the clan leave seclusion.

Although the clan already had some people moving around in the outside world, they still didn't dare to fully reappear as a clan. They were afraid that the many powerful organizations of the world would go after them if they did.

They needed the backing of more powerful experts capable of protecting them from any invasion before they would dare to end their seclusion. Xiang Shaoyun understood what they were thinking.

Before leaving with his assigned guardian, Xiang Chenge, Xiang Shaoyun had replied firmly to Xiang Youjing that he would definitely grow stronger and would return frequently.

Xiang Chenge was the one who had brought Xiang Shaoyun back to the clan. And now, he was leaving as Xiang Shaoyun's guardian. One ought to admit that the world worked in mysterious ways.

Xiang Chenge was a seventh-stage Heaven Battling Realm cultivator. Someone with his strength would probably be enough to keep Xiang Shaoyun safe. Xiang Youjing had also given Xiang Shaoyun a jade slip as insurance.

Xiang Shaoyun couldn't wait to return to the sect. Initially, he had wanted to first visit his newborn child at Holy Hall, but he was also afraid that the sect would be too worried about him. Thus, he decided to return to the sect before visiting the Holy Hall.

During the journey, he asked Xiang Chenge, "Do you feel mistreated being sent out with me?"

"You must be kidding, Overlord. I'm honored to be able to follow you and see the outside world," said Xiang Chenge earnestly.

The Xiang Clan had been in seclusion for a very long time. Thus, Xiang Chenge didn't have many chances to travel. Therefore, he was more than happy to come out with Xiang Shaoyun.

"So the clan really wants to end the seclusion badly?" asked Xiang Shaoyun.

"Who would want to hide in a shell forever?" said Xiang Chenge with a sigh.

"In that case, I will help the clan end their seclusion sooner. The world shall witness the might of our Xiang Clan," declared Xiang Shaoyun confidently.

"With the strongest physique of the clan, you will be able to do it, Overlord," said Xiang Chenge.

They traveled while chatting. It wouldn't take them too long to reach the sect. A year ago, the Xiang Clan had kidnapped Xiang Shaoyun. After the incident, Duo Ji had left for the Wumo Pass while the turtle, toad, and taurus had remained to take care of the sect.

The three Demon Saints were only in charge of the sect's safety, while Pang Tongyuan was in charge of all the other strategic decisions. Fortunately, the sect had been running smoothly prior to Xiang Shaoyun's disappearance. Otherwise, Pang Tongyuan would have had a hard time running the sect with his frail body.

As the sect grew, more and more people joined them. They now looked more like a tier-7 organization. Everyone in the sect thought they would continue growing smoothly and steadily.

Unfortunately, a crisis arrived. Di Batian had returned to the sect. He brought five people with him. Among the five, two were familiar faces, Di De and the beautiful woman. The other three were new faces.

Each of the three exuded an extraordinary aura, looking like someone who had transcended the mundane world. A bright saintly radiance covered their bodies and made it hard for one to look straight at them.

None of the three was weaker than Di Batian. In fact, one of them was emanating the aura of a Great Saint. Just by being there, his presence overshadowed everyone else. The three were none other than the experts Di Batian had invited from the Di Clan. They were naturally here to deal with

the silver-winged owl and Xiang Shaoyun. They did not attack immediately but hid in the void and spread their senses throughout the sect.

"I thought you said there was a Great Saint silver-winged owl in the Ziling Sect? Why can't I sense the owl?" questioned the Great Saint from the Di Clan.

Di Batian frowned and said, "I'm not sure. Perhaps it hid or just happened to be away."

"I can only sense three tiny Demon Saints. Just one of us is enough to flatten the entire sect if this is all they have. I really don't understand how they chased you out. This is an embarrassment," said a Di Clan Saint.

Di Batian replied, "If this is all they have, do you really think they could have driven me away? Those three Demon Saints are all new. The other experts have probably left. That little bastard had probably borrowed those helpers using his father's influence."

"If that is the case, you should have returned earlier to retake the sect. Everything will be fine after you connect the clan with the sect through teleportation formations. There is no need to make us come here. What a waste of time," said the Saint unhappily. It was obvious that Di Batian didn't have the full support of the helpers he had brought.

Di De couldn't watch on anymore and spoke up on behalf of Di Batian, "Elder Xun, do you really think that Batian is that useless? And do you really think he would give up on an organization he had spent 10 years developing if it wasn't for the appearance of opponents stronger than him?"

"Whatever you say, a loser is a loser. With us here, let's get everything done. Come on, time to start," said Elder Xun.

"Ok. I will personally retake this place. If any other experts appear, please assist me, lords," said Di Batian. He then charged toward the sect with the beautiful woman.

He unleashed his aura as a sixth-stage Heaven Battling Realm cultivator, engulfing the entire Ziling Sect in a massive storm. He then thrust a palm attack toward the grand hall. Instantly, the attack struck, creating a massive explosion.

About half the main peak collapsed. Even this was the result of Di Batian holding back. If he was attacking with all his strength, he could flatten the entire peak.

The people from the Ziling Sect were all alarmed.

"Who is it! You dare attack our Ziling Sect? Audacious!" the turtle, toad, and taurus appeared.

"This sect master has returned. People of the Di Sect, what are you waiting for? Come and welcome your sect master's return," demanded Di Batian from high above the sky.

He was filled with confidence and was no longer afraid of the silver-winged owl. An uproar erupted in the sect. The older members recognized the newcomer. He was none other than Di Batian, the previous sect master. Their expressions turned complicated.

"I-it's the previous sect master! H-he's back!" someone cried out.

"What previous sect master? He is nothing but a traitor. Since he dares to come back, he can forget about leaving with his life," said someone else.

Soon after, Di Batian shot him a glance. Some sort of force closed in on him and lifted him into the sky. Glaring at him, Di Batian roared, "Die!"

He was completely helpless against Di Batian. He was crushed into mincemeat.

#### Chapter 1190: Taurus' Death

Blood splattered everywhere from the sky, causing the Ziling Sect members to panic. They realized that Di Batian would not stop until he succeeded.

"This fellow is very scary. Toad, you'll be the vanguard," said the turtle.

"You're slightly stronger than me. You should be the vanguard and showcase your strength instead," said the toad.

"I'll kill him!" said the taurus. He was much more courageous than the two. With a roar, he transformed into his true form and charged Di Batian.



His two horns, which were akin to the sharpest of blades, pierced through the air and shot toward Di Batian. After becoming a Demon Saint, the taurus' confidence had grown greatly. He believed himself capable of facing all opponents.

He might be able to showcase his might when facing an opponent at the same cultivation level, and he might even be able to put up a fight against a second-stage Saint. But Di Batian was a sixth-stage Heaven Battling Realm cultivator. The taurus was too weak against such an opponent.

Di Batian glanced at the taurus with scorn and said, "A tiny taurus dares to stand against me? You overestimate yourself."

He reached out with his palm, instantly sealing the taurus where he stood. The taurus struggled to no avail. Di Batian was too terrifying.

"Activate the formations," shouted someone from the sect.

The formations activated, and strands of energy erupted to protect the sect's important places. As for the turtle and the toad, they also charged out. The turtle punched, and the toad used his devouring ability, the pair unleashing two entirely different and shockingly powerful attacks at Di Batian.

They were holding nothing back in their attempt to save the taurus. With the two working together, they could threaten even a fourth-stage Saint. The beautiful woman by Di Batian's side wanted to make a move, but she wasn't confident she could stop the two incoming attacks. She wore a solemn expression, and just as she was about to grit her teeth and take them on, Di Batian launched another palm attack.

With his overwhelming might, Di Batian instantly erased the two attacks. The sky above the sect cracked from the impact, and chaotic energy currents spread everywhere.

"Trying to save this taurus? You can't," said Di Batian with thick killing intent. He pulled his other palm back before unleashing more power at the taurus, trying to squeeze the taurus to death.

Squeezed by space itself, the taurus' body started deforming. He wailed in pain and struggled with all his strength. Alas, he still couldn't budge. In the blink of an eye, Di Batian crushed his massive body. Just like that, a brand new Demon Saint was killed. His blood dyed the sky red, filling the Ziling Sect people with fear. How were they supposed to contend against such strength?

"Where is the young sect master? Why is he still nowhere to be seen? Di Batian must be stopped, or the sect will be destroyed."

"M-maybe we should surrender. We really might die if we try to fight."

"You useless coward. The young sect master has been good to us. How can we surrender? Even if we have to fight to the death, we can't surrender!"

"The young sect master will definitely show himself. And there will definitely be other Saints showing up to stop this tragedy."

"We have survived even the Dragon Society's invasion. Di Batian will naturally leave with his tail between his legs as well."

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Meanwhile, the turtle swallowed and said, "Shit. This fellow is too scary. Not even the two of us are his match."

"What should we do now? Do we fight, or do we run? You decide," said the toad.

Before the turtle could say anything, Di Batian's gaze focused on them. "Yield, and you'll be spared. Otherwise, die."

"You really think we're afraid of you? With this saint here, there is no place for you to act all cocky," said the turtle unyieldingly.

He then transformed back to his true form, revealing to everyone a gold-scaled dragon turtle. A boundless aura roiled out in all directions, making him look incredibly powerful.

In this form, the turtle could contend against even fourth-stage Saints. The flux goldthorn energy he emanated was not to be underestimated. The toad also stopped holding back. He transformed back into his goldmark toad form, and numerous golden runes protruded from his back and made him look incredibly valiant.

The turtle swung his paw and unleashed a punch powered by flux goldthorn energy toward Di Batian. In the wake of his punch, space cracked, and a blinding golden radiance flooded the sky, making it hard for anyone else to witness the battle clearly.

The toad also made his move. The golden runes on his back hovered into the air and bombarded Di Batian with golden chains. The two attacks were so powerful the sky itself seemed to overturn. The scene of the battle was akin to the wreckages of a natural disaster, a place that could strike fear in the heart of all the onlookers.

When the two Demon Saints worked together in such a manner, even a fifth-stage Saint would have to move out of their way. However, Di Batian was a sixth-stage Saint. He was far stronger than the two Demon Saints.

With a sneer, Di Batian pushed his palm forward several times, shattering the two incoming attacks before sending the turtle and the toad flying. He didn't want to waste more time, so he manifested two energy claws and grabbed both the turtle and the toad, dragging them toward him.

The two were far stronger than the taurus. After some struggle, they were able to barely escape Di Batian's clutches. However, Di Batian's strength was far beyond their expectations. He transformed into two and simultaneously attacked both the turtle and the toad.

His attack was straightforward and overbearing, instantly striking the two. They couldn't even do anything before they were sent flying. Blood flowed from all over their bodies, and they felt like their bodies were going to burst open from the strikes' impact.

Fortunately, their bodies had been strengthened by flux goldthorn energy. Unlike the taurus, they weren't killed instantly. Even so, they didn't have a good time. They slammed into the nearby mountain, causing the mountain to collapse. Even if they survived, they were probably now badly injured.

Di Batian did not intend to give them any chances. He once again reached out to grab them.

"Little bastard Xiang Shaoyun, what are you waiting for? Show yourself, or I'll kill them," shouted Di Batian as he overlooked the Ziling Sect from the sky.

The people from the sect didn't dare to breathe too deeply. Everyone was afraid to catch Di Batian's attention. They were all waiting for Xiang Shaoyun to appear and turn the fight around. Alas, Xiang Shaoyun was still nowhere to be seen, and despair started sinking in.

"Who do you think you are? Our young sect master is not a person someone like you can call out as you wish," an overbearing voice suddenly sounded from the horizon.