

Overlord 181

Chapter 181: Before the Auction

An auction house was something that was present in all major cities. Items sold in the auction house would generally be rare and top-end items. Naturally, through auction, the price of the items sold would also be much higher than the market price.

The Cloud Margin City's auction would be held once per month. According to the shopkeeper, the next auction would be held in two days. Thus, Xiang Shaoyun was left with no choice but to wait.

He continued having Mo Mo visit the various stores and search for an item of extreme cold, but it was too bad that they did not find any. After all, a lot of people were eying the millennium earthcore fire. The people planning to go searching for the fire would naturally make their preparations as well. Nobody would be so stupid as to go without preparing and throw their lives away.

Regardless of whether an item of extreme cold could be found during the auction, Xiang Shaoyun would have to first ensure that he had sufficient wealth on hand. Thus, he took out some vicious gold stones and sent Mo Mo to ask Gong Lianda if the Gong Clan was interested in them. If the Gong Clan showed interest, he would sell the stones to them as a way to allow them to benefit in some way.

The vicious gold stones were similarly obtained from the Golden River Valley. These stones contained vicious gold energy within, and cultivators practicing vicious gold energy would be able to rely on one of these stones to increase their comprehension of vicious gold power, increasing their combat prowess.

These stones were no less valuable than regular goldsteel stones. After seeing the vicious gold stones, Gong Lianda bought all of them without any hesitation. He was clear on what the stones could do. If he sold them at the auction, he would also be able to earn a large sum of wealth. After all, these stones were comparatively rare as well.

Xiang Shaoyun made 1,500 mid-grade spirit crystals from the vicious gold stones. Now, he had a total of 18,500 mid-grade spirit crystals on him. But that wasn't enough for him. Thus, he took out almost all the regular goldsteel stones he had and sold them all to the Cloud Margin Forging Pavilion.

This time, he sold no less than 1,000 catties of goldsteel stones and made over 10,000 mid-grade spirit crystals, increasing his wealth to about 30,000 mid-grade spirit crystals, which made him

richer than even some regular King Realm cultivators. It was a sum of wealth the smaller clans would never be able to take out.

That was the benefit of gathering a large number of materials. After selling all the stones, a large space was emptied in Xiang Shaoyun's astral cosmos sea. He was very pleased with the result.

Two days passed in a flash. Today, Xiang Shaoyun arrived at the auction house with Mo Mo.

The auction was also considered a business of the Cloud Margin Pavilion, and a large number of cultivators had arrived to take part in it. Numerous cultivators mounted on various different beasts could be seen, and roars filled the air. The place in front of the auction house was bustling.

This time, a lot of young cultivators had arrived as well. The men were handsome and heroic, while the women were elegant and graceful. They were all young Transformation Realm experts. They were naturally here for the same reason as Xiang Shaoyun—to look for an item of extreme cold at the auction.

At this time, a young man riding a flame wolf charged over. He emanated a dreadful aura, and his rushed approach caused the nearby cultivators to scatter in panic. The young man was extraordinarily handsome, dressed in a flaming red armor with a flaming red spear hanging on his back. His entire person looked like a dazzling sun. His appearance caused an uproar among the nearby cultivators.

"It's Xie Sanqian! He's here as well! He is a freak in terms of cultivation!"

"Yeah, he is a genius with a six-star physique, capable of battling those above his cultivation realm. It is said that he will enter the King Realm before 30 years old."

"His purpose here at the auction is pretty clear. He had already declared some time ago that the earthcore fire would definitely be his."

Xie Sanqian was an inner disciple of Cloud Margin Pavilion. At the young age of 17, he was already a fifth-stage Transformation Realm cultivator. He had recently caught the eyes of an elder. The moment he entered the late stage of the Transformation Realm, he would be accepted as that elder's personal disciple.

From a different direction, a young woman was also riding over on a red-scaled elephant in a carefree manner. This young woman had an even more astonishing background. She was a personal disciple in the Cloud Margin Pavilion and was already an eighth-stage Transformation Realm cultivator.

Her name was Li Yaxuan. She was 20 years old and was the granddaughter of a King Realm elder. She lounged gracefully on the red-scaled elephant with a lazy expression, her posture showcasing her seductive figure, which attracted the gazes of all the men.

"Even Li Yaxuan is here? I thought she has a Skysoar Realm grandfather? Why is she even here?"

"Maybe she's only here to join in on the fun? Or maybe she's here to look for a man! She once declared that any man her age capable of defeating her will be her cultivation partner."

"How many people her age can defeat her, though? She has a combat prowess comparable to a peak Transformation Realm cultivator. Apart from the few freaks in the Cloud Margin Pavilion, nobody her age is her match."

"Li Yaxuan is totally a seductress. Just the sight of her causes my blood to boil."

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Apart from Xie Sanqian and Li Yaxuan, the renowned Bamboo Swordsman, Ye Xuan, had also arrived. Ye Xuan was not a member of the Cloud Margin Pavilion. It was rumored that a Cloud Margin Pavilion elder once wanted to accept him as a disciple but was rejected.

At that time, a lot of people insulted him for being stupid for letting go of such a large opportunity. But he eventually relied on himself and cultivated a mighty combat prowess. Apart from these people, some decently powerful Transformation Realm disciples of the Cloud Margin Pavilion and other organizations had also arrived.

Xiang Shaoyun watched on as everyone arrived. Inwardly, he thought, Looks like it won't be easy to get the earthcore fire. But nobody can hope to stop me! When Xiang Shaoyun and Mo Mo were about to enter the auction hall, a few people suddenly blocked their way.

"Big brother, it's him!" one of them pointed at Xiang Shaoyun and shouted.

The person blocking their way was none other than Wen Jinnuo. Standing beside him was a person Xiang Shaoyun remembered clearly, Wen Jinrui. At Wu Town, Wen Jinrui once fought Xiang Shaoyun over a tiger's tooth at the business district. He was ultimately scared off by Elder Zhen Peng. After that, he even fell victim to Xiang Shaoyun's scheme and was forced to leave the Wu Town in a sorry manner.

Back then, he was only a peak Astral Realm cultivator. Now, he was already a fourth-stage Transformation Realm cultivator and was much stronger than Wen Jinnuo. Reaching that level in the span of one year could only prove that he had gotten quite lucky in his cultivation.

Now, Wen Jinrui was an inner disciple of the Cloud Margin Pavilion, causing him to be even more haughty than before. After hearing about the incident between their clan and Elder Tao Ran, he was forced to leave the pavilion and figure out what was going on. As for why they were here, they were naturally here for the item of extreme cold. Meeting Xiang Shaoyun was merely a coincidence.

Wen Jinrui glared at Xiang Shaoyun and berated, "Kid, you dare to scheme against the Wen Clan? Do you think we don't dare to do anything to you?"

Xiang Shaoyun did not seem bothered about them at all and merely told them off with an indifferent gaze, "A good dog will know to not block the way. Piss off."

Chapter 182: Icesnow Fruit

"Are you looking to die?" Wen Jinrui's face darkened.

Despite his anger, he did not do anything. He was clear that the moment he attacked, the Cloud Margin Forging Pavilion people would be dissatisfied with him. At that time, the Wen Clan would suffer even more.

Of course, part of the reason Wen Jinrui was able to hold himself back was due to the mask covering Xiang Shaoyun's real appearance. If he saw Xiang Shaoyun's real face, he would most likely lose control over himself and proceed to attack.

"Hehe, sure, try and attack me. Let's see who will be the one to die," Xiang Shaoyun sneered.

"You're cocky, but I refuse to believe you will stay in the city forever. The moment you leave the city, killing you will be as easy as killing a bug," said Wen Jinrui.

"If you are done talking, piss off," Xiang Shaoyun shouted.

Traces of the tiger's roar were mixed within his shout. In such a short distance, the Wen Clan brothers felt their eardrums humming from the impact. Taking advantage of their momentary stun, Xiang Shaoyun entered the auction hall with Mo Mo.

When the Wen Clan brothers recovered, they both stared at Xiang Shaoyun hatefully. They really wanted to kill him.

As for Xiang Shaoyun, he tried looking for a VIP room after entering. Unfortunately, the rooms had all been booked. Thus, he was forced to squeeze with the crowd in the main hall.

I have to show myself in front of everyone here? This is annoying! Xiang Shaoyun sat down and grumbled inwardly.

He was worried that if he did manage to buy an item of extreme cold, it would be hard for him to even leave. A lot of people would love nothing more than to reap without sowing. But now, he had no choice but to act in accordance with the circumstances. In any case, he had the human skin mask. He could take the mask off and appear with a new identity anytime he wanted.

Soon, the auction house was filled with people. An auctioneer walked onto the stage and announced the start of the auction. They started the auction with some tier-3 weapons. Sabers, swords, spears...the weapons were taken out one after another. The crowd's excitement grew as the auction proceeded.

Xiang Shaoyun did not care about these weapons, but that did not apply to many people there. Even Mo Mo was growing excited when she saw the weapons, and it was especially true when she saw a female-styled longsword being put up for auction. She liked the sword she saw a lot, to the point she had the urge to start bidding as well.

She was once the second head of the Redwolf Bandits. Thus, she was also quite wealthy and could afford to join the bidding, but she couldn't bring herself to do it with Xiang Shaoyun keeping silent beside her.

Xiang Shaoyun noticed and said, "If anything catches your eyes, feel free to bid. I'm not a cruel leader who gives my followers zero freedom."

Mo Mo was overjoyed. "Thank you, young master."

Thus, she started bidding. Unfortunately, the people of Cloud Margin Pavilion were too rich. She was soon outbid. She sank into sorrow at the realization that after being a bandit for so many years, she couldn't even afford a sword. It was too sad.

"520 low-grade spirit crystals going once! Any new bids?" the auctioneer asked.

"520 low-grade spirit crystals going twice..."

Xiang Shaoyun shot the hesitating Mo Mo a glance before saying, "600 low-grade spirit crystals."

The increment was too large. Thus, the other bidders all gave up. After all, a tier-3 weapon would generally not be worth more than 500 low-grade spirit crystals. Paying 100 low-grade spirit crystals above the market price was not worth it for many people.

After winning the bid, Xiang Shaoyun asked Mo Mo, "You don't even have a few hundred low-grade spirit crystals? What kind of second head were you?"

Mo Mo blushed and said, "I gave some of my wealth away when disbanding the brothers."

That answered Xiang Shaoyun's question.

"Um, you did well," he praised. After a slight pause, he added, "Feel free to bid for anything that catches your eyes later. I am not one to let my followers down."

Mo Mo was overjoyed. "Thank you, young master."

Soon after, the herb auction segment arrived. The herbs being auctioned were spirit medicines of at least mid-grade and above, with a majority of them being top-grade spirit medicines. Then, an icesnow fruit appeared, causing a large uproar among the crowd.

"This particular icesnow fruit is 500 years old, a top-grade spirit fruit of excellent quality. For those cultivating the power of frost, this fruit will be very helpful. At the same time, it can create frost

energy, granting one resistance against regular flames. The starting price of this fruit is 300 low-grade spirit crystals. Each increment can be no lower than 10 low-grade spirit crystals," said the auctioneer.

Lying quietly in a jade case with frost energy rippling out of it repeatedly, the icesnow fruit looked incredibly tantalizing.

"This icesnow fruit is mine! 400 low-grade spirit crystals!" someone immediately placed his bid.

"Dream on. I bid 450 low-grade spirit crystals!"

"I bid 500 low-grade spirit crystals!"

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Instantly, the price soared. Before long, it reached the price of 700 low-grade spirit crystals, far surpassing the price of a regular top-grade spirit medicine.

After all, a regular low-grade spirit medicine was worth only a few low-grade spirit crystals and would not exceed 20 low-grade spirit crystals. As for a mid-grade spirit medicine, it was usually worth between 100 to 200 low-grade spirit crystals, while a top-grade spirit medicine was worth about 300 to 500 spirit crystals. But now, the price offered for this fruit had already surpassed the average price by about 200 low-grade spirit crystals.

At this time, a young man in a flaming red armor shouted, "750 low-grade spirit crystals from me, Xie Sanqian. If everyone can do me a favor and allow me to have this fruit, I will forever remember it."

He was Xie Sanqian, the young genius who was not willing to miss out on the fruit. A lot of people stopped bidding, not willing to fight over the fruit with him. But Xiang Shaoyun was similarly not willing to miss out on the fruit either. It would never be bad to gather as many items of extreme cold as possible.

Xiang Shaoyun placed his bid indifferently, "1,000 low-grade spirit crystals."

As soon as he made his bid, he felt Xie Sanqian's sharp gaze land on him. Xiang Shaoyun met Xie Sanqian's gaze and gave him a completely nonchalant smile. In Xie Sanqian's eyes, that smile was a provocation. Xie Sanqian snorted coldly and increased his bid. Xiang Shaoyun showed no fear and increased his bid as well. This time, he increased it by 100 low-grade spirit crystals, showing a generosity surpassing Xie Sanqian's.

"1,300 low-grade spirit crystals!" Xie Sanqian shouted. This was the most he was willing to pay.

At this point, the price was already slightly over his budget. He still had to save some of his funds for the items that were going to be auctioned next in case something he wanted would appear later.

"1,500 low-grade spirit crystals!" Xiang Shaoyun increased his bid, still as calm as ever, causing many people to look at him in a new light.

"Who is this person exactly? He is showing Xie Sanqian no respect whatsoever. From his looks, he seems extremely wealthy as well."

"He doesn't look familiar. Is he from out of town? Otherwise, he wouldn't be so stupid as to provoke Xie Sanqian."

"Maybe he has a backer as well. But it does not matter. When he is in Cloud Margin City, even if he is a dragon or a tiger, he would have to lie down obediently."

"Just watch on. This is unrelated to us. Although the icesnow fruit is an excellent fruit, it is still not good enough to resist the earthcore fire."

Chapter 183: Coldstar Stone

Xie Sanqian did not continue increasing his bid. He merely gave Xiang Shaoyun a vicious glare and committed him to his memory. Wen Jinrui was the one who suddenly took part: "1,600 low-grade spirit crystals from me!"

Xiang Shaoyun gave Wen Jinrui a glance, and Wen Jinrui gave him the middle finger provocatively, greatly annoying Xiang Shaoyun.

"1,700 low-grade spirit crystals," Xiang Shaoyun said.

Wen Jinrui continued upping his bid, "1,700 low-grade spirit crystals."

"1,900 low-grade spirit crystals."

"2,000 low-grade spirit crystals."

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The two increased their bids one after another, and when Xiang Shaoyun increased the bid to 2,500 low-grade spirit crystals, Wen Jinrui finally stopped.

"Congratulations for getting the icesnow fruit!" Wen Jinrui sneered. He did not have any intention of getting the fruit in the first place. The only reason he joined the bidding war was to annoy Xiang Shaoyun and make him pay more.

To the side, Wen Jinnuo chimed in, "He is stupid but rich, there's no helping it."

Xiang Shaoyun glanced at the two and replied nonchalantly, "Yes, you're right. I have nothing else, but I have a lot of money."

Those words caused the crowd to raise their eyebrows. Some concluded that he was someone who had recently become rich, while some concluded that he was probably a person with a powerful background.

The auction proceeded with battle techniques, cultivation methods, and some damaged king-grade items. More and more people joined in on the bidding war. For them, these battle techniques and cultivation methods were more worth their money than the fruit earlier.

On the other hand, Xiang Shaoyun showed no interest in the battle techniques and cultivation methods. However, he did not forget to instruct Mo Mo to give the Wen Clan brothers some trouble.

He first told Mo Mo to bid for an incomplete king-grade battle technique. The Wen Clan did not miss the chance to mess with their bid and started bidding as well. But the moment they increased the bid to a point nobody else was bidding, Mo Mo stopped.

The Wen Clan brothers were stunned. They never intended to buy this incomplete king-grade battle technique at all!

Wen Jinnuo wiped his sweat and asked, "Big brother, what should we do? How can we even afford 3,800 low-grade spirit crystals?"

Wen Jinrui had also broken out in cold sweat. He forced himself to calm down and said, "How about asking for father's help? For him, 3,800 low-grade spirit crystals are nothing!"

"B-but without paying, they won't even let us leave!" Wen Jinnuo replied with a sullen face.

They felt like they had raised a rock only to slam it on their own feet. Xiang Shaoyun saw the changes in their expressions from far away and smiled. "Trying to scheme against this young master? You are not enough."

Time passed, and finally, they reached the end of the auction. It was finally time for the auction hall to take out the best treasures they had to auction. The first item was a complete king weapon, starting at 1,000 mid-grade spirit crystals, equivalent to 10,000 low-grade spirit crystals. Its price alone was enough to stop many people in their tracks.

At this point, most of those who were still bidding were basically King Realm cultivators possessing a wealth normal people couldn't compare to. Apart from these Kings, the only ones still bidding were the representatives of the various organizations and clans. A king weapon was extremely attractive to them. Not only would a king weapon increase one's combat power, it was also a symbol of status.

"Young master, are you not interested in the king weapon?" Mo Mo asked curiously when she saw Xiang Shaoyun had his eyes shut in rest.

She was aware that Xiang Shaoyun could totally afford a king weapon. When she saw him doing nothing, her curiosity was piqued. Xiang Shaoyun replied, "A king weapon is only a tool. Without actual strength, not even a king weapon will do much for a person."

Mo Mo savored those words for a bit before saying admiringly, "Young master is wise."

"Um. So long as you stay loyal, king-grade battle techniques and cultivation methods will all be available to you. Don't worry," Xiang Shaoyun said, placating Mo Mo.

To ensure a follower would stay loyal, one had to be sufficiently powerful and needed to provide the follower sufficient benefits for staying loyal. It was something a leader needed to know, and it wasn't a concept that everyone understood. Due to his background as the young master of a powerful sect, Xiang Shaoyun knew more about this than the regular person.

When Mo Mo heard the promise, her heart nearly popped out. If there weren't so many people present, she would have hugged Xiang Shaoyun and planted a kiss on his face in her excitement.

King-grade battle techniques and cultivation methods were things she would never be able to obtain on her own, but she longed greatly for them and wanted nothing more than to obtain one.

Maybe I need to find a chance to seduce the young master, Mo Mo thought to herself.

After two king weapons were auctioned off, a king medicine was put on auction. As the excitement of the crowd was already at an all-time high, the bidding war became even crazier.

That was a king medicine!

It was something all King Realm cultivators longed for, and it was something very hard to obtain. Just having one appear here to be auctioned off was proof of the Cloud Margin Pavilion's wealth.

After two king medicines were auctioned off, an item of extreme cold that drove all the Transformation Realm cultivators crazy appeared—a coldstar stone! The coldstar stone was a rare stone that would only appear at a location of extreme cold. Holding the stone in the hand would instantly turn a person into an ice statue. It was a supreme treasure for those cultivating the power of frost.

"This is it!" Xiang Shaoyun's eyes lit up.

The coldstar stone was capable of resisting the most extreme of flames. It would be the best tool one could have when approaching the earthcore fire. The starting price of this coldstar stone was 1,500 mid-grade spirit crystals. It was not cheap at all.

"2,000 mid-grade spirit crystals. The stone belongs to me, Ye Xuan," said Ye Xuan who had been staying silent all the while.

Apart from him, the many inner disciples of Cloud Margin Pavilion and even the personal disciples were starting to bid as well. Additionally, a few clans were also joining in the bidding. Everyone knew that with the coldstar stone, they would have a chance to approach the earthcore fire. With that, they would have a shot at subduing the earthcore fire.

Thus, regardless of the price, everyone wanted to obtain the coldstar stone. After a while, the price reached 3,000 mid-grade spirit crystals. It was an extremely high price, but a lot of people were still bidding madly.

"I offer 3,500 mid-grade spirit crystals," Li Yaxuan's voice rang out.

Another voice rang out from a different VIP room, "3,600 mid-grade spirit crystals from me."

Xie Sanqian placed his bid as well, "3,700 mid-grade spirit crystals from me."

By this point, each increment was about 100 mid-grade spirit crystals. Nobody was madly raising the price in large increments anymore. After all, they were bidding with mid-grade spirit crystals, not low-grade spirit crystals. Not everyone would be able to wantonly spend mid-grade spirit crystals.

When the price reached about 4,000 mid-grade spirit crystals, the number of bidders started dropping. The latest bid was placed by an unknown person from within a VIP room. His determination to obtain the stone was clear for all to see.

That price forced even Xie Sanqian to give up on it. On the other hand, Ye Xuan was still bidding, causing many people to see him in a new light. Many here knew that the Ye Clan was only a tiny clan. When had they become so rich?

They immediately concluded that Ye Xuan was most definitely hiding a big secret. When the price reached 4,500 mid-grade spirit crystals, Li Yaxuan was forced to stop as well. That price was already far beyond the coldstar stone's actual market price.

Just as everyone slowly stopped bidding, a lazy voice suddenly rang out, "5,000 mid-grade spirit crystals."

Chapter 184: The Headband From the Ancient Forbidden Grounds

The new bidder was none other than Xiang Shaoyun. He had been waiting for everyone to be done bidding before he joined in. His timing was perfect. After he spoke, he attracted everyone's gaze. Everyone started wondering who this ordinary-looking man actually was for him to be so rich. They recalled how that man had said earlier that he had a lot of money. It would seem like he wasn't kidding at all when he had said that.

"He must have made all those spirit crystals from selling the top-quality goldsteel stone," Wen Jinnuo said to his brother with an envious look.

"Hmph. He can't stay cocky for long. Soon, everything he has will be ours," Wen Jinrui narrowed his eyes and said.

Li Yaxuan, Xie Sanqian, and Ye Xuan were also starting to pay attention to Xiang Shaoyun. They could sense that Xiang Shaoyun did not feel particularly strong. On the other hand, the young woman by Xiang Shaoyun's side attracted more of their attention.

A voice rang out from the VIP room, "5,100 mid-grade spirit crystals."

Xiang Shaoyun replied without any hesitation, "6,000 mid-grade spirit crystals."

His act of increasing the bid by 900 mid-grade spirit crystals in one go created an uproar.

"Who exactly is that person? Is he stupid? Why is he raising the bid by such a large increment?"

"I guess he is so rich he has no place to spend his spirit crystals. That is why he is using the spirit crystals so wastefully."

"No, if he can get the coldstar stone and then the earthcore fire through these spirit crystals, it would be completely worth it. However, it won't be easy at all to get the earthcore fire."

"Just keep watching. That kid might have a strong background for him to be acting so fearlessly."

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Xiang Shaoyun did not care at all what these people thought of him. In his eyes, spirit crystals were merely a currency to be spent. After spending them, he could always earn more. As for the coldstar stone, it was extremely rare, and it might be the only one he could get for now. Thus, he could not miss out on it.

"This young master has just offered 6,000 mid-grade spirit crystals. Any other bids?" asked the auctioneer in excitement. He was only expecting to auction the coldstar stone off for about 4,500 mid-grade spirit crystals. Surprisingly, a whale had appeared today.

"7,000 mid-grade spirit crystals. If you can offer more, I will give up," said the person in the VIP room after a short silence.

"Sure. 7,100 mid-grade spirit crystals. Thank you," Xiang Shaoyun smiled.

After listening to Xiang Shaoyun's final offer, everyone heaved a sigh of relief and thought that the fellow was still normal after all. If Xiang Shaoyun had insisted on increasing the price by another 1,000 mid-grade spirit crystals, they would most likely have gone crazy on his behalf.

Xiang Shaoyun had successfully won the bid, but the actual trade would only be made after the end of the auction.

Heh, this trip is worth it after all, Xiang Shaoyun thought joyfully.

"Alright. Let us move on to our final item," announced the auctioneer before signaling the employees to bring out an item. The moment the item appeared, the Nether Soul Domain in Xiang Shaoyun's head suddenly reacted. It grew so excited it nearly charged out of his head.

What is that? Xiang Shaoyun immediately turned solemn.

The auctioneer then removed the black cloth covering the item, revealing an item enclosed within a crystal case. It was a crude looking headband with the shape of a coiling dragon. On the hoop, pieces similar to dragon scales could be seen. Two roaring dragon heads connected the two ends of the headband. The dragons, seeming incredibly lively, looked like they were fighting over a pearl.

Something seemed to be missing from the pearl in between the two dragon heads, which was most likely the most important part of the headband. Without it, the headband looked incredibly normal,

like an average ornament. Everyone was confused when they saw the headband that had lost the power it should have had.

"This is an item obtained from the Ancient Forbidden Grounds. Although it looks completely worthless now, is anyone interested at all to figure out if there is any secret hidden within it?" asked the auctioneer.

Some of the people were moved when they heard the statement. The Ancient Forbidden Grounds was an extremely dangerous place that only those at the peak of King Realm and beyond could enter. Would an item from that place be an ordinary item? Everyone would be curious, and all of them now wanted a chance to properly study the headband.

At this time, the auctioneer spoke again, "Of course, you don't have to be afraid of this investment being a loss. The headband is at least a king equipment, and wearing it will protect your head against the attack of king weapons. Alright then. The starting bid is 5,000 mid-grade spirit crystals. Each increment can be no lower than 500 mid-grade spirit crystals."

This time, nobody impatiently placed a bid immediately after the auctioneer finished his introduction. They all knew the item would definitely not be an ordinary item. The Cloud Margin Pavilion had most likely studied it extensively. They had probably found nothing if they were actually putting something this valuable up for auction.

Nobody here was an idiot. Thus, they were hesitating. Even after a long while, nobody was saying anything. The auctioneer grew somewhat nervous seeing that.

"This is an ancient headband. Are none of you interested? Perhaps a great secret is hidden within. If you miss out on it, you won't get a second chance," said the auctioneer.

Someone said, "If it is really something good, why would the Cloud Margin Pavilion auction it off? I reckon it is probably worthless."

With someone taking the lead, others started echoing the same sentiment.

"Yeah. A starting bid of 5,000 mid-grade spirit crystals for something like this is too much. How about 3,000 mid-grade spirit crystals? If that is the price, I don't mind paying it. Consider it a research fee."

"That's right. This item has definitely been proven to be useless. It doesn't matter how tough it is if it is completely out of energy. How can something like that even protect one's head? That is clearly a lie."

"Even if the Cloud Margin Pavilion can't figure out this thing's secret, it doesn't mean nobody can. But that price is too expensive."

"Forget it, let's leave. Can't believe I waited so long just for something like this."

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Some of them started leaving. The auctioneer smiled bitterly, not knowing what to say anymore. After all, he himself was aware that despite the item's origin, after losing its function, it was now useless.

At this time, Xiang Shaoyun said indifferently, "I offer 5,000 mid-grade spirit crystals. I don't mind using it purely as a head ornament. It does look quite trendy, after all."

The auctioneer nearly staggered and fell to the ground. Spending 5,000 mid-grade spirit crystals for a head ornament? Those were some really boastful words. The people still remaining in the auction hall looked at Xiang Shaoyun with complicated expressions. Some were envious, some were sneering, some were full of hate...but none were fighting over the headband with him.

The auctioneer heaved a sigh of relief for being able to auction off the final item. If he failed to auction it off, he would be the one to shoulder the blame. The instant Xiang Shaoyun heard the confirmation that his bid was successful, he heaved a breath of relief and thought, Luckily I got Mo Mo to taunt the crowd for a bit. Otherwise, I wouldn't have been able to get this thing so easily.

Chapter 185: I Am Overlord Xiang

That's right. Mo Mo had caused the disturbance under Xiang Shaoyun's order. Otherwise, he wouldn't have obtained the headband so easily. This headband was too important for him. He had to obtain it regardless of price. For him to actually get it so easily was quite a pleasant surprise.

At this time, the people who had bought something from the auction started lining up to complete the transaction. Xiang Shaoyun let others go first and was the last to walk over. He found that two other people were standing at the side. They were facing a different direction, not daring to look at him.

Xiang Shaoyun couldn't help but laugh before asking, "Young masters of Wen Clan, what are you doing standing here?"

"Hmph. They sure are gutsy to place bids without having the money to back it up. If it wasn't out of respect for Wen Clan, we would have killed them immediately," said someone coldly.

"We have only forgotten the money. Don't worry, my father will come with the spirit crystals soon!" Wen Jinrui replied gloomily.

"Haha, you don't even have a few thousand spirit crystals on you, and you dare to place bids here? This is enlightening to see!" Xiang Shaoyun roared with laughter.

He only planned to annoy the Wen Clan brothers for a bit. Little did he expect that they were so special, coming to the auction without enough spirit crystals on them. He felt really good when he saw them suffering like this.

The Wen Clan brothers couldn't even offer a retort. They could only glare at Xiang Shaoyun furiously, hoping that with their gazes alone they could pierce Xiang Shaoyun's heart 10,000 times.

Xiang Shaoyun proceeded to add salt to the wound and said, "Do you want me to pay for you? Just return me double of what I paid as interest later."

The brothers were so angry they nearly vomited blood. This person was truly hateful to be sneering at them like this.

Xiang Shaoyun ignored them and took out a large pile of spirit crystals to pay for the items he bought. He had spent over 10,000 spirit crystals in total. In the eyes of many people, that was a large sum of money. Even some King Realm cultivators were poorer than him. It caused the Wen Clan brothers to be filled with envy.

An auctioneer stepped forth and smiled, "How should I address this young master?"

Xiang Shaoyun replied, "I am Overlord Xiang."

"Overlord Xiang? What a fine name! What an ingenious name!" The auctioneer smiled. He paused for a bit and said, "This is a VIP card. In the future, whenever you participate in our auction, you will be entitled to a VIP room. We can also help search for all the items you need on your behalf. If the items you employ us to purchase are valuable enough, we can even give you a special discount on the fees!"

Hearing that filled the Wen Clan brothers with even more envy. The VIP card was not something anyone could get. Generally, the card was only issued to people of powerful organizations and King Realm experts who had made their own name. Other people would not be able to get one so easily. The main reason this auctioneer offered Xiang Shaoyun the card was because they had already done an investigation on Xiang Shaoyun.

According to their investigation, Xiang Shaoyun had emperor-grade materials in his possession and had traded with the Cloud Margin Forging Pavilion before. That alone was enough to earn the respect of the auctioneer.

Moreover, when Xiang Shaoyun was placing his bids, he was completely calm, uncaring even. That was a temperament a regular person would never have. That was why this auctioneer had decided to offer him a VIP card.

Xiang Shaoyun was not surprised at all. He calmly accepted the card and said, "Thank you."

"Young Master Xiang, as a holder of our VIP card, you can now hire our men to work as your security." The auctioneer asked, "Are you interested—"

Xiang Shaoyun was now the owner of the icesnow fruit, the coldstar stone, and the headband. Each of those items were something many people coveted. The moment he left the auction house, he would be tailed. That was why the auctioneer asked if he wanted security.

Xiang Shaoyun spoke before the auctioneer finished, "Thank you for the offer, but I won't be needing the security service."

After saying that, he put away the items he bought and left with Mo Mo. The auctioneer blanked out slightly before thinking to himself, Looks like this young master's identity is not simple at all.

The moment Xiang Shaoyun walked out the auction house with Mo Mo, he could sense several sharp gazes land on him. It was obvious these people were all looking at him like a lamb for slaughter. All of them wanted nothing more than to slaughter this fat lamb here.

However, not a single one of them dared to be the first to attack. After all, creating chaos in the city was prohibited. At this time, Xie Sanqian came rushing over on a flame wolf and blocked Xiang Shaoyun's path.

He pointed his spear at Xiang Shaoyun and shouted, "Hand over the coldstar stone!"

One had to admit that Xie Sanqian was truly too brazen. He was fearlessly committing robbery under broad daylight. But those who knew Xie Sanqian would know that he had always been a direct and straightforward person. Since he had the backing of a Cloud Margin Pavilion elder, not many people would offend him easily.

"Impudent!" Mo Mo stepped forth and berated. As a follower, she had to share Xiang Shaoyun's burden.

"Get out of my way!" Xie Sanqian shouted coldly.

Right after he shouted, his flame wolf pounced forward. The flame wolf was quick and violent, giving Mo Mo a sense of pressure she had never felt before. However, she had no reason to retreat. She drew out the tier-3 sword she had just gotten and stabbed forth, the power of her eighth-stage Transformation Realm erupting fully.

The flame wolf spat a clump of flame forward that collided with the sword energy, creating a loud explosion. Mo Mo was forced to retreat repeatedly and was nearly burnt by the flame.

Eighth-stage Great Demon! Mo Mo instantly cried out inwardly.

If the demonic beast wasn't at the same cultivation level as her, it wouldn't have been able to force her into retreat so easily. Before she could react, the flame wolf streaked forth again and clawed at her with its sharp claws. Mo Mo waved her sword around repeatedly yet wasn't able to deal any damage to the flame wolf. Instead, she was forced to roll away to avoid the incoming attack.

"Mo Mo, come back," Xiang Shaoyun said.

Xie Sanqian stopped the wolf from attacking and looked at Xiang Shaoyun coldly. "If you know what's good for you, hand over the coldstar stone. Or else, you won't be able to leave this place!"

Before Xiang Shaoyun could say anything, Ye Xuan's voice rang out, "I want the coldstar stone as well."

Xie Sanqian shot Ye Xuan a glance and said, "Ye Xuan, don't come out and humiliate yourself!"

"Nobody is humiliating himself. A battle is all that is needed to reveal everything," answered Ye Xuan calmly.

"So you both want the coldstar stone? Anyone else?" Xiang Shaoyun asked as he gazed at the few others who were eying him from not far away. He was still as calm as ever.

Chapter 186: Challenging Xie Sanqian

When the people in the area saw Xiang Shaoyun's gaze, they began stirring.

"Is this kid challenging us?" someone said unhappily.

"Since he is challenging us, let us fulfill his wish. He has a lot of good stuff on him right now," said someone else.

Three people stepped forward, trying to surround Xiang Shaoyun.

Xie Sanqian stabbed his spear into the ground before shouting at the newcomers, "This has nothing to do with you. F*ck off!"

Ye Xuan also threw a sharp gaze at the newcomers, the pressure causing the newcomers to stop in their steps. Xie Sanqian and Ye Xuan were arrogant individuals. How could they allow someone else to take part?

The three newcomers hesitated slightly before retreating. In terms of strength and background, none of them could compare with the two before them. Thus, it would be wise for them to not offend the two.

Xiang Shaoyun smiled and said, "So are the two of you going to come at me together?"

"You think too highly of yourself. After I lop your head off your body, you will learn the consequence of disobeying me," said Xie Sanqian, who had a brash temperament. He then charged forward riding on his flame wolf.

He moved as fast as the wind and instantly arrived before Xiang Shaoyun. A spear stabbed forth and sent a flaming wolf pouncing on Xiang Shaoyun. Xie Sanqian was a fifth-stage Transformation Realm cultivator with outstanding combat prowess that enabled him to easily fight against those at the sixth or seventh stage of the Transformation Realm. This attack of his was enough to easily kill any fifth-stage Transformation Realm cultivator.

"How violent," Xiang Shaoyun sighed before he moved as well.

His body flickered and avoided the attack. He then reached out and grabbed the spear before dragging Xie Sanqian off the flame wolf. Xie Sanqian was caught by complete surprise, as he had not expected Xiang Shaoyun to have such strength. After all, his opponent was only a second-stage Transformation Realm cultivator but was demonstrating strength beyond the capabilities of even a fifth-stage Transformation Realm cultivator.

Xie Sanqian was pulled off the flame wolf, but thanks to his rich combat experience, he flipped his body and kicked at Xiang Shaoyun the moment he was pulled off. With the immediate follow up, Xiang Shaoyun was not given any chance to follow up the pull with an attack of his own. That was the difference between a Cloud Margin Pavilion disciple and a regular cultivator.

Xiang Shaoyun reacted speedily as well. He immediately released the spear and turned his arm into a shield and blocked the incoming kick. A regular second-stage Transformation Realm cultivator would have no way of blocking Xie Sanqian's kick, but for Xiang Shaoyun, blocking the kick was no trouble at all. He even followed up with a sudden attack of his own as his other hand shot up toward his opponent.

Star Destroying Finger!

The beam came abruptly, and with the distance between the two, Xie Sanqian was completely helpless, as he was yet to have the time to switch his posture.

Bang!

The finger attack blasted him away. The outer energy barrier on his body even cracked from the attack. Fortunately, he still had an armor protecting him. Otherwise, the attack would have seriously

injured him. Even so, he was sent flying and tumbling on the ground, looking completely opposite of his regular heroic self.

"Bastard! Flame wolf, go! Swallow him alive!" Xie Sanqian shouted furiously. Since he started cultivating, he had never suffered a defeat in the hands of someone with a lower cultivation level. Today was a first, and the defeat was under the hands of someone who looked so ordinary.

He even concluded that his opponent must have hidden his real strength. Otherwise, he would not have suffered a defeat. The flame wolf pounced Xiang Shaoyun at Xie Sanqian's command. The eighth-stage Great Demon flame wolf was naturally mighty. It was extremely fast, and its attack was incomparably sharp.

The wolf opened its massive jaw, baring its terrifying fangs. In the past year, Xiang Shaoyun had gone through numerous battles and had killed a lot of demonic beasts as well. Thus, this was nothing for him.

"Scram!" Xiang Shaoyun roared at the flame wolf. Traces of tiger's roar accompanied the majestic sound wave and spread throughout the whole area.

The flame wolf had the sensation that a tiger king had appeared before it, and fear immediately covered its eyes. Xiang Shaoyun took the chance to surround his fist with a layer of lightning energy before sending a punch at the wolf.

Lightning Bolt Fist!

The fist shot forward with the power of an overbearing lightning bolt.

Bang! Bang!

Xiang Shaoyun started raining punches on the wolf, turning it into a punching bag. Even the thick skin of the wolf was torn by the beating as blood splashed everywhere.

"Howl!"

The wolf roared in pain as it whipped its tail at Xiang Shaoyun's shoulder, leaving a burning pain. The wolf took the chance and counterattacked, clawing at Xiang Shaoyun repeatedly with its

flaming claws, pushing Xiang Shaoyun into retreat. An eighth-stage Great Demon would not be so easily defeated.

The wolf then spat a mouthful of flame from its mouth, sending a furious wave of flame that burned their surroundings. Using the Overlord's Nine Nether Steps, Xiang Shaoyun was able to barely avoid the flame attack before moving to the side of the wolf. There, both his fists shot forward.

Gold Helix Fist!

The fist energy then changed from purple to gold. The incredibly sharp energy transformed into a massive spiraling drill that blasted the flame wolf away. Right this moment, Xie Sanqian, who had gotten a short respite, arrived with an ambush.

Mo Mo wanted to stop the ambush, but she was forced to keep watch on Ye Xuan instead. In any case, she was confident that her young master would most certainly be able to deal with Xie Sanqian's ambush.

The moment Xie Sanqian attacked, he turned into a massive fireball that crashed forward at Xiang Shaoyun with a prowess comparable to someone in the seventh-stage Transformation Realm. This was a genius of Cloud Margin Pavilion, capable of battling those with cultivation levels two stages above him.

Unfortunately, his opponent was Xiang Shaoyun, one capable of battling those with a cultivation level of more than two stages above him. Thus, Xie Sanqian's defeat was already sealed before the fight had even begun.

Xiang Shaoyun suddenly moved with wondrous footwork and dodged the incoming attack as if he had a pair of eyes on his back. He then charged Xie Sanqian, releasing one Gold Helix Fist after another, sending Xie Sanqian flying away while coughing blood.

"It's my turn," Ye Xuan said.

His Bamboo Sword instantly left the sheath and danced straight through the air toward his target like a viper. Mo Mo had been paying close attention to him, but she was still too slow to stop the attack.

"Young master, watch out!" Mo Mo could only give Xiang Shaoyun a warning.

The sword transformed into one bamboo viper then split into seven bamboo vipers that snaked at Xiang Shaoyun from seven different directions, all heading toward Xiang Shaoyun's vitals.

Chapter 187: Your Killer Is Overlord Xiang

Xiang Shaoyun had all his attention on Xie Sanqian. Although he had still been on guard against any ambushes, the sudden attack had still caught him by surprise. He had been able to see that this Ye Xuan was a seventh-stage Transformation Realm cultivator, but the combat prowess Ye Xuan had erupted with was no weaker than a peak eighth-stage Transformation Realm cultivator. His prowess was even comparable to some ninth-stage Transformation Realm cultivators.

Signs of human sword unity could be seen from this attack. Perhaps what Ye Xuan needed was merely one more push before fully entering the human sword unity phase. Ye Xuan was one year older than Li Yaxuan, and he seemed to not be part of any organization. Thus, for him to grow to this point in cultivation was a terrific accomplishment.

Xiang Shaoyun could sense that all his escape paths had been blocked. Since he could no longer avoid the attack, the only thing he could do was activate all his power. Layers of energy barriers were erected in his attempt to reduce the impact of the attack. Right after the outer barriers were erected, the attack arrived.

Cling! Clank!

The sword energies threw themselves at Xiang Shaoyun repeatedly in the form of vipers, creating numerous depressions and cracks in the barrier.

"Die!" Ye Xuan held nothing back and poured all his power into his sword, increasing the might of the sword energies, completely surrounding Xiang Shaoyun's barrier.

"Young master!" Mo Mo shouted. She had finally arrived.

She swung her sword at Ye Xuan with her full power, not giving him any chance to kill Xiang Shaoyun. The interruption forced Ye Xuan to shift his focus and deal with Mo Mo's full-powered attack.

As for Xiang Shaoyun, the impact of Ye Xuan's attack sent him flying far away. Blood sprayed out of many parts of his body, causing him to gnash his teeth in pain. "I was too careless!"

He had been too confident, thinking that not many Transformation Realm cultivators could harm him with his current strength. He was finally taught a lesson for his overconfidence. If it wasn't for the fact that his body was much stronger than others his cultivation level, Ye Xuan's attack would have been enough to kill him as opposed to only injuring him.

Xiang Shaoyun stood up and shouted, "Mo Mo, step aside!"

Xiang Shaoyun's Overlord Skyslaying Saber appeared in his hand as he vowed that, to prove his own strength, he had to obtain complete victory in this battle. Mo Mo withdrew herself, and Ye Xuan allowed her to leave. He stood there and stared at Xiang Shaoyun in astonishment, evidently not expecting Xiang Shaoyun to be able to get back on his feet so quickly. Moreover, he did not seem like he had been badly injured at all.

"You are a fine individual, but unfortunately, you made a wrong life choice. In your next life, remember that you were killed by Overlord Xiang," Xiang Shaoyun said as he strode toward Ye Xuan one step at a time, dragging his Overlord Skyslaying Saber behind him.

The presence of dragon and tiger surged out of his body, and his entire being turned majestic. His aura seemed unstoppable. The crowd around them were astonished. None of them had expected that this ordinary looking young man would have such an extraordinary bearing.

Even Li Yaxuan, who had been nonchalantly watching the battle, grew serious, and her eyes lit up. As for Ye Xuan, he could sense a powerful pressure pressing down on him; traces of fear started surfacing in his mind uncontrollably.

No! This is not possible! I, Ye Xuan, fear no one! How can I be afraid? Ye Xuan yelled in his heart and tightened his grip on his Bamboo Sword. He erupted with all his power and attacked Xiang Shaoyun once again.

Thousand Devouring Bamboo Viper!

A large number of bamboo vipers appeared out of nowhere. They all opened their jaws wide, creating an incomparably terrifying scene. This was a true king-grade battle technique and was much stronger than Ye Xuan's previous attack. It was strong enough to fight any ninth-stage Transformation Realm cultivators.

An attack like this was definitely among the strongest in the entirety of the Transformation Realm. This was an attack Ye Xuan had decided to use after making up his mind to finish off Xiang Shaoyun.

Not far away, the injured Xie Sanqian sensed the prowess of the attack and cried out inwardly, That Ye Xuan is actually so powerful? He better get rid of that guy!

It had been very long since Xie Sanqian had last tasted defeat. Thus, he could not stand the thought of Xiang Shaoyun staying alive. Just as Xiang Shaoyun was fully enveloped by the attack, he moved. He swung his saber nonchalantly, the saber moving at an unimaginably fast speed. The saber energy only appeared in everyone's vision for a split second before vanishing.

The numerous bamboo vipers were instantly split by the cut; not a single one of them survived unharmed. The scene of one slash to kill a thousand vipers unfolded before everyone present, causing many of them to gasp in amazement.

Not only that, Ye Xuan was also sent flying, and a cut had appeared on his stomach with blood flowing out of it unceasingly. He pressed his hands on the wound, trying to stop the bleeding to no avail.

Kneeling on the ground, Ye Xuan stared with wide eyes at Xiang Shaoyun in disbelief and said, "T-this i-is s-saber intent!"

He had been trying to comprehend human sword unity for a while, hoping that a day would come when he managed to comprehend sword intent. He had yet to comprehend it. Instead, he got a full taste of how saber intent felt, and it was this saber intent that gave him a flash of realization and helped him realize how powerful he would be after mastering sword intent.

Unfortunately, he no longer had any chance to master sword intent. That slash of Xiang Shaoyun's had severed his life. Even in his death, Ye Xuan remained indignant. What he sought after was finally within reach. To die at a time like this was something nobody could accept.

Ye Xuan's death caused a large uproar.

"That slash...I couldn't see it clearly at all. What saber technique is that? It feels so scary!"

"Is that a king-grade technique? Otherwise, how can it be so terrifyingly destructive? Ye Xuan's attack was already very powerful, but it was like paper before that saber technique!"

"Ye Xuan was actually killed! He was quite the genius. I had never expected that he would die a young death. What a waste."

"And even Xie Sanqian suffered defeat. This person definitely has an extraordinary background. Perhaps he is a genius from some other town, or perhaps he is someone from a hidden powerful organization. His strength is terrifying!"

"I have a feeling that slash is similar to the legendary human saber unity!"

...

It's human weapon unity! Saber intent! Li Yaxuan cried out inwardly.

Others might not be able to sense it, but she could clearly sense how extraordinary the slash was. It was definitely a saber intent. Even Xie Sanqian no longer dared to act brashly. He hopped back on the flame wolf and quickly rode away.

Xiang Shaoyun wanted to give chase, but he sensed a few auras locking down on him. If he did give chase, he would be a target of all those people.

"I will spare you. If you dare provoke me again, I won't show mercy," Xiang Shaoyun shouted in the direction Xie Sanqian had fled. In saying that, he established his dominance and also warned the others who were still thinking of robbing him.

Chapter 188: Nether Dragon Soul Curse

Due to his act of killing in public, Xiang Shaoyun had attracted the attention of the enforcers. This time, the enforcers did not say anything at all. They only quickly cleaned up Ye Xuan's corpse before leaving.

Xiang Shaoyun wasn't surprised. He was merely a victim and was acting in self defense. If he still had to be punished, it would only show that the Cloud Margin Pavilion was an unjust organization.

As for whether there would be any trouble because of killing Ye Xuan, he did not have the time to consider it for now. He had to quickly leave to avoid being dragged into more trouble.

If he stayed and waited until a King Realm expert decided to make a move on him, he would be completely helpless. Just as Xiang Shaoyun and Mo Mo were about to leave, Li Yaxuan suddenly rushed toward them.

Xiang Shaoyun glanced at the young woman lazily and smiled. "Are you going to attack as well?"

He could sense that this woman was even stronger than Xie Sanqian and Ye Xuan. If she was here to attack, she would be a troublesome opponent.

"Since you have bought two items of extreme cold, you must certainly be aiming for the earthcore fire. I propose a partnership. What do you think?" Li Yaxuan extended an offer of cooperation instead.

The people around them were all envious when they heard Li Yaxuan's invitation. Li Yaxuan was a prized genius of the Cloud Margin Pavilion. Not only was she beautiful, she also had amazing talent in cultivation. Wherever she went, she was the center of attention.

Now that she had personally invited a seemingly ordinary man to join her, the crowd found it hard to accept. Unexpectedly, Xiang Shaoyun rejected her without the slightest hesitation. "Thank you for the offer, but I don't work with strangers."

After saying that, he left with Mo Mo without sparing Li Yaxuan another glance. Everyone was dumbstruck. That fellow had actually rejected Li Yaxuan's invitation. They found it unforgivable.

Some of them had the urge to go teach Xiang Shaoyun a lesson, but when they recalled that Xiang Shaoyun had just killed Ye Xuan, they suppressed their urge.

Li Yaxuan did not appear dissatisfied. She smiled and muttered as she gazed at Xiang Shaoyun's departing back, "What an interesting fellow."

On their way back, Mo Mo asked Xiang Shaoyun curiously, "Young master, why did you reject that young miss? She is both pretty and strong. If you can—"

Xiang Shaoyun waved his hand before she could finish and said, "Never lightly trust a pretty woman."

Mo Mo asked, "Why?"

"Because they are too good at lying," Xiang Shaoyun sighed. Suddenly, a graceful figure surfaced in his head, and his heart started aching.

Both Xiang Shaoyun and Mo Mo arrived at the Cloud Margin Restaurant smoothly. Here they would be much safer. After returning to the restaurant, Xiang Shaoyun recovered from his bad mood.

The battle earlier had exhausted quite a lot of his energy. Ye Xuan's ambush had also caused him to suffer some internal injuries. He had to first recover before doing anything else. He had a feeling that he was going to enter the third stage of the Transformation Realm soon.

Ever since he reached the second stage at the Golden River Valley, he had been focusing on consolidating his cultivation base. Only recently did he start growing again. After the Redwolf Bandit battle and the battle earlier, he had reached the very peak of the second stage.

He could feel the astral energy within his body boiling to the point his aura was turning unstable. However, he still suppressed the energy instead of letting himself break through.

Now was not the best time for him to break through. He was in no rush anyway. It would be better to keep suppressing and consolidating his cultivation base for a while more before breaking through.

He was already growing fast enough. He had to put more focus on his foundations, which would enable him to travel further in his path of cultivation. After recovering slightly, Xiang Shaoyun took out the items he had purchased from the auction impatiently.

Right this instant, the Nether Soul Domain within his head began to stir again. Xiang Shaoyun wanted to suppress it, but when he sensed the thirst originating from his very soul, he decided to let nature take its course.

"You better not be some sinister item," Xiang Shaoyun muttered as he stared at the crude headband.

He then loosened up his control over his consciousness, allowing the Nether Soul Domain to expand. An indescribable power seemed to have appeared, trying to summon the headband. The headband actually reacted to the summons as it started emanating clumps of dark misty radiance.

Swish!

The Nether Soul Domain enveloped the headband and pulled it into Xiang Shaoyun's head. After entering the space within Xiang Shaoyun's head, the headband merged completely with the Nether Soul Domain. The two started emanating a similar aura, an aura that gave Xiang Shaoyun an extremely intimate sensation. The black mist emanated by the headband started roiling in his head as the loop turned into a roaring black dragon.

"Roar! Roar!"

The roar was so dreadfully powerful that Xiang Shaoyun's soul couldn't stand the impact, and he fell unconscious. After an unknown amount of time, Xiang Shaoyun woke up with a dazed mind.

"AHHHH!"

The first sensation he felt after waking up was a sharp pain, causing him to yell. He grabbed at his head and dove onto his bed as he thought anxiously, Is this the backlash of absorbing a sinister item? Just as he was about to shout for Mo Mo, an odd symbol suddenly appeared within his mind. The symbol was different from a regular human language; it represented an ancient and profound mnemonic chant.

Nether Dragon Soul Curse!

This was the name of a mnemonic chant originating from the Imperial Nether Clan. The mnemonic chant was a secret exclusive to the Imperial Nether Clan and was not something the members of other clans could cultivate.

Only the members of the Imperial Nether Clan would be able to awaken a Nether Soul Domain that enabled them to cultivate this curse. The benefit of cultivating the Nether Dragon Soul Curse was that Xiang Shaoyun would be able to control the Nether Dragon Soul Headband that was currently in his head.

And what was the benefit of controlling the Nether Dragon Soul Headband? The headband's controller could attach the headband to a person, turning that person into a puppet. In other words, this headband was a tool allowing one to control others. The Nether Dragon Soul Curse was a fearsome curse from the ancient past. Once cursed, one's soul would be locked up by the headband. Escape was nearly impossible.

After obtaining the curse, the pain vanished. As for the Nether Dragon Soul Headband, a clump of an odd black radiance had appeared where the two ends of the headband connected. It looked like a black gem, and it had fully activated the headband's functionality.

It was also at this moment that Xiang Shaoyun realized that the headband wasn't damaged. Instead, its previous owner had merely died, causing the Nether Soul Domain to vanish and leave an empty space where the ends of the headband connected.

Now that a new member of the Imperial Nether Clan had appeared and obtained control over the headband, its dreadful power had reappeared in the world.

Chapter 189: Be My Bed Warming Maid

In the blink of an eye, three days passed. Xiang Shaoyun had stayed at home, practicing the Nether Dragon Soul Curse mnemonic chant. If others found out that he was cultivating a sinister curse like this, he would become a public enemy. But in truth, Xiang Shaoyun couldn't care less about what others thought of him.

He was very clear on the concept of winner takes all. As long as one was strong enough, whether the technique one used was virtuous or sinister would not matter. Nobody would dare to judge; strength equalled truth.

Xiang Shaoyun was in a rush to increase his combat prowess and cultivation level. This Nether Dragon Soul Curse was a secret technique capable of increasing his strength. Since he met the requirement to cultivate it, he would naturally cultivate it.

In the span of three days, he had completely memorized the entirety of the curse. He had also gained the ability to control the Nether Dragon Soul Headband and sent it outside his head.

But to reach the point where he could use the curse, he still needed more soul power. Without sufficient soul power, he would not be able to unleash the might of the Nether Dragon Soul Headband.

Even with Xiang Shaoyun's above average soul power, he would likely only be able to unleash about 10 percent of the headband's power. Even so, that 10 percent was already enough to exert control over regular King Realm cultivators.

Of course, actually getting the headband on a King Realm cultivator was an entirely different matter. Thus, he needed more strength to actually make use of the Nether Dragon Soul Headband's power. The real power of the headband would not be displayed if the owner was one who had to resort to trickery to actually place the headband on someone.

"I should be able to capture a King who is not paying attention or seriously injured. When my soul power grows in the future, I will be able to utilize the might of the Nether Dragon Soul Headband and capture someone by force," Xiang Shaoyun concluded.

For the current him, strengthening his soul was the fastest way he could start using the Nether Dragon Soul Headband. But it wasn't easy to strengthen one's soul. Fortunately, the Nether Dragon Soul Curse was a technique that could strengthen one's soul as well, which made things a lot easier for Xiang Shaoyun.

"The 5,000 mid-grade spirit crystals are totally worth it," Xiang Shaoyun muttered gleefully. At the same time, he started wondering why he possessed a Nether Soul Domain. The Nether Soul Domain was something that had grown naturally within him, which could only prove that he had the bloodline of the Imperial Nether Clan coursing in his veins.

As for what clan or race the Imperial Nether Clan was, Xiang Shaoyun was completely clueless. If the white tiger's soul had not mentioned the term at the Golden River Valley, he wouldn't even know that there was such a clan.

"I know my family tree clearly. My father's side is unlikely to have any relationship with the Imperial Nether Clan. Perhaps the bloodline came from my mother's side?" Xiang Shaoyun guessed. After a slight pause, he sighed and muttered, "Since my birth, Father has been telling me that Mother passed away. This will be a puzzle I can't solve. Forget it. It doesn't matter."

Right this moment, Mo Mo's voice rang out from outside the room, "Young master, Miss Qinyin is here."

"Good timing." Xiang Shaoyun stood up and smiled. When he opened the door, he saw Gong Qinyin standing there in a martial outfit. Her eyes were as beautiful as the moon, her face as graceful as a blooming flower, her body as tantalizing as an exotic snake. Her entire person was

radiating allure. She had not changed physically. Rather, this was a change in her temperament brought about by an increase in her strength.

"You've reached the Transformation Realm!" Xiang Shaoyun cried out in astonishment when he saw her. Before he gave Gong Qinyin the Earth Star Spring liquid, she was only an eighth-stage Astral Realm cultivator. In a short few days, she had entered the Transformation Realm, breaking through one minor realm and one major realm. That was a very fast speed.

Gong Qinyin smiled, something she rarely did, and said, "It is all thanks to you. Without your Earth Star Spring liquid, it would have been impossible for me to grow so fast, and without you, my father would have never allocated me resources to help me grow."

The current Gong Qinyin was no longer prejudiced against Xiang Shaoyun. In fact, an odd feeling toward Xiang Shaoyun was starting to grow in her heart.

"That's good to hear. With your growth, our search will be much easier," said Xiang Shaoyun. He preferred to go search for the earthcore fire alone. After all, he saw Gong Qinyin as a burden rather than help.

But she was the one who told him the millennium earthcore fire's location. If he went alone, it would feel like he was abandoning her after making use of her. He would not do something like that. Now that she was a first-stage Transformation Realm cultivator, she would be able to protect herself better. He would not have to worry as much anymore.

"I heard what happened at the auction. I did not expect that you would have actually grown so strong. You won't think that I'm a burden, right?" Gong Qinyin asked, seemingly able to see through Xiang Shaoyun's mind.

She stared straight into Xiang Shaoyun's eyes with her pretty eyes, and facing that pair of eyes, Xiang Shaoyun was too embarrassed to even lie anymore. He rubbed his nose and said awkwardly, "A bit. But don't worry. I won't dump you."

"Who cares about being dumped by you? Hmph!" Gong Qinyin replied with a slight blush.

"What are you thinking about? I was talking about dumping you so that you wouldn't be a burden," Xiang Shaoyun said.

Gong Qinyin rolled her eyes. After rearranging her thoughts, she said solemnly, "Xiang Shaoyun, I need you to promise me one thing. No matter what, you have to promise me."

"Say it," Xiang Shaoyun said.

"If you do manage to obtain the earthcore fire, please help me with one thing. If you help me with that, I will be eternally grateful, and the Gong Clan will give you a generous reward for it as well," Gong Qinyin said in an extremely serious manner.

"What help do you need? Make it clear," Xiang Shaoyun asked.

Gong Qinyin pursed her lips and said, "The old man of my clan needs it to heal himself."

"Got it. I will help you if I do get it." Xiang Shaoyun nodded without any hesitation.

"I'll be thanking you in advance, then!" Gong Qinyin was overjoyed.

"Don't be in a rush to thank me. So many people are hunting for the earthcore fire. I am not confident I can get it either," Xiang Shaoyun said. He paused for a bit and added, "But if I do succeed, can you make me one promise after I help your clan's old man?"

"What do you need? If it is something I can do, I will do it without as much as a frown!" Gong Qinyin said unhesitatingly.

"Be my bed warming maid," Xiang Shaoyun said directly.

The moment he said those words, Gong Qinyin's face was covered by a layer of frost, and she clenched her fists tightly.

"Haha, it's a joke. Just pretend you heard none of it," Xiang Shaoyun laughed before quickly fleeing.

But as he fled, he heard a soft response, "If you can meet my requirement, I...I can agree to become your dual cultivation partner."

Huh? Did she misunderstand something? I wanted a bed warming maid, not a dual cultivation partner, Xiang Shaoyun muttered inwardly. But he was too embarrassed to correct her as he was worried that he would hurt her feelings instead.

But unknown to him, Gong Qinyin took his silence as a tacit agreement. And thus the seed for a future trouble was planted.

Chapter 190: Arriving at the Flame Mountain

Cloud Margin City, Wen Clan.

"Clan leader, Cloud Dragon Town has canceled our partnership and is going to stop buying weapons from us."

"Clan leader, the Tang Clan has canceled the purchasing contract with us. They are even demanding that we refund their deposit."

"Clan leader, the weapon sale in the city has stopped completely. Even after dropping the price, nobody is buying from us."

...

Wen Dongyou listened to the reports streaming in with an ashen face.

He smashed a cup on the ground before roaring furiously, "Scram! All of you, scram! I don't want to hear any reports for now!"

The servants quickly retreated while the Wen Clan brothers arrived silently.

"Father," Wen Jinrui and Wen Jinnuo greeted their father.

When Wen Dongyou saw his sons, he became even angrier. "You useless bastards! You still have the guts to show your face here? Get your ass back to the Cloud Margin Pavilion and focus on cultivation. Don't come see me before reaching the King Realm."

Each time Wen Dongyou recalled how his two sons were detained at the auction house, he felt extremely embarrassed. The event had turned the Wen Clan into the city's laughing stock.

More importantly, the Wen Clan had also become a target of the Cloud Margin Forging Pavilion's suppression. They had to wait until their ancestor left his secluded cultivation before they could start negotiating with the pavilion and try reversing the situation.

"Father, please calm your anger. It is not worth harming your body from anger because of something like this," Wen Jinrui advised. He continued, "That fellow has just left the restaurant. He is probably heading out to search for the earthcore fire."

Wen Dongyou narrowed his eyes. "That Overlord Xiang bastard?"

"That's right. Father, we can immediately send some people to capture him. Everything he has will be ours, and we can also vent our anger on him," Wen Jinrui said.

Wen Jinnuo also spoke with murderous intent, "That's right. We can't let him continue living. Him living is a symbol of disgrace for our Wen Clan."

Wen Dongyou pondered for a bit before a ruthless glint surfaced on his eyes. "You two will stay out of this. Return to the Cloud Margin Pavilion immediately. That bastard won't live to see the sun tomorrow."

...

Meanwhile, Xiang Shaoyun, Gong Qinyin, Mo Mo, and a few Transformation Realm experts of the Gong Clan were heading outside Cloud Margin City. They were heading toward an area bordering the Cloud Tiger Town and Cloud Dragon Town. That was where the millennium earthcore fire was located.

Both Cloud Tiger Town and Cloud Dragon Town were among the top towns under Cloud Margin City. As for the Cloud Tiger Palace and Cloud Dragon Pavilion, both had numerous experts as well.

The millennium earthcore fire was initially something the two academies fought for, but after the Cloud Margin Pavilion found out about it, the earthcore fire no longer had anything to do with them.

Fortunately, Cloud Margin Pavilion had ultimately decreed that anyone below the King Realm would be allowed to hunt for the earthcore fire. They called it giving the youngsters a chance, but in truth, it was merely an act of turning the place into a training ground for their disciples.

Xiang Shaoyun only found out that five Transformation Realm experts had been sent by Gong Lianda to help with the millennium earthcore fire when he was leaving the city. Gong Qinyin was apologetic as she said, "The millennium earthcore fire is too important. Our Gong Clan will give our all to get it."

"Um, I guess that's good as well. Only the capable will be able to get it anyway," Xiang Shaoyun said.

It did not matter how many Transformation Realm experts the Gong Clan sent. After all, even without them, there would still be other Transformation Realm experts fighting over the earthcore fire with him. In any case, all he had to do was try his best. About half a day after they set off, someone suddenly flew toward them from the sky.

"Overlord Xiang, die!" the newcomer was already shouting when he was up in the air. Like a hawk, he dove straight down at Xiang Shaoyun.

"A King!" Xiang Shaoyun immediately felt a great sense of crisis. But it was impossible for him to dodge a sudden attack of a King. Numerous escape plans surfaced in his mind, but he ultimately found that before absolute strength, all his tricks were nothing.

Even so, he wouldn't stand there and wait for his death. His nine stars, lightning bone, and Nether Soul Domain all fully activated as he braced himself to face the incoming attack with his full strength. Right this moment, a figure suddenly flew over from a different direction and sent an attack at the King Realm cultivator.

Rumble!

The King Realm cultivator wasn't even able to react before he was struck and sent flying far away. It was unknown if he had survived the attack. Xiang Shaoyun, Gong Qinyin, and the others were all stunned to see the sudden change.

The King was instantly beaten away with only a single move. That was something none of them had expected. Xiang Shaoyun could not understand who that person was. Was it someone from the Cloud Margin Forging Pavilion? Or was it someone from the Gong Clan?

Both seemed unlikely. He wasn't that close with the Cloud Margin Forging Pavilion yet. As for the Gong Clan, it wouldn't be easy for them to send an expert capable of instantly killing a King Realm cultivator.

When Xiang Shaoyun looked over, he only saw a figure streaking toward the King Realm cultivator who had been sent flying. That person did not return.

Who could it be? Xiang Shaoyun wondered inwardly. He thought about Duo Ji, who used to protect him in the dark, but from the person's outline, it was definitely not Duo Ji.

"Sure enough, you have an extraordinary background," Gong Qinyin whispered into Xiang Shaoyun's ear.

Xiang Shaoyun smiled bitterly. "If I tell you I have no idea who that is, would you believe me?"

Gong Qinyin rolled her eyes.

Xiang Shaoyun couldn't be bothered to explain himself. He said, "Let's speed up. After arriving, it is better for us to go separate ways. I will only bring you more trouble if we stay together."

"Do you think I would be afraid of trouble? Are you looking down on me?" Gong Qinyin asked.

Xiang Shaoyun was speechless. He found that Gong Qinyin was quite a loyal girl. They increased their speed, and the Gong Clan people no longer dared to be rude toward Xiang Shaoyun. In fact, when they looked at him now, admiration could be seen in their eyes.

When they were sent by the clan, Gong Lianda had already told them to take care of Xiang Shaoyun whenever possible. At first, they had found it unacceptable. After all, in their eyes, Xiang Shaoyun was someone unrelated to them.

But now, they found that Xiang Shaoyun did not even need them. They should be the ones hoping that Xiang Shayun would take care of them. After two and a half days, they finally arrived near the Flame Mountain. Nobody else had gotten in their way. Thus, they were able to arrive smoothly.

The so-called Flame Mountain was merely a dormant volcano that had suddenly erupted, turning the area surrounding the volcano into a burning wasteland. From far away, the only thing one could see was a sea of flame. It was quite a breathtaking scene. Just as they were about to proceed, a group suddenly blocked their way.