

Overlord 551

Chapter 551: I'm Now Your Master

Mu Qingyu was someone who had reached the Dragon Ascension Realm before 30 years old. This was a showcase of remarkable talent. In the past, he had fought Feng Xiaosha once and had only suffered a slight defeat by a single move. Since then, he had become Feng Xiaosha's follower. In fact, he was also one of the Dragon Phoenix Academy's special-recruit disciples.

He cultivated the powers of wood and flame, possessing an outstanding combat prowess. He also had a powerful unique flame within him, a flame that allowed him to ignite the chains in the Imperial Nether Prison. Xiang Shaoyun was astonished, but he wasn't the least bit anxious.

"Qingyu, save me!" Wang Xin begged for help. Mu Qingyu did not give up on his companion. He shot several flaming beams from his finger and freed Wang Xin from the chains as well.

"Xiang Shaoyun, if you know what's good for you, release us. It will benefit all of us. Otherwise, you will suffer alongside us!" said Mu Qingyu coldly.

When he saw how calm Xiang Shaoyun was, he gave up on his thought to immediately attack. The calmness was proof that his opponent did not fear his flame.

Beside him, Wang Xin was furious. "What's the point of talking to him? Just kill him!"

"Haha, if he is really capable of doing so, he wouldn't have bothered trying to intimidate me," Xiang Shaoyun roared with laughter. "I wanted to kill both of you, but I've changed my mind. Both of you shall submit to me."

He started chanting his curse, sending numerous ancient symbols flying through the air toward the two. At the same time, numerous chains shot out once again and tied Wang Xin up. As for Mu Qingyu, he was already on guard. He reacted immediately and unleashed the green flame within his body, burning everything in his surroundings.

"The Nether Soul Domain might be scary, but it is still something formed of soul power. Therefore, a power of extreme yang like my flame is its nemesis. I refuse to believe you can resist my flame!" shouted Mu Qingyu confidently.

Sure enough, his green flame destroyed the ancient symbols and chains. At the same time, Mu Qingyu charged Xiang Shaoyun's soul body.

"Perish!" Mu Qingyu shouted as he slashed forward with his flaming saber, creating a tiger-shaped green flame that furiously bit at Xiang Shaoyun's soul body.

There was no mistake in Mu Qingyu's judgment. Unfortunately for him, he was unaware of the ghostrunes that also lived in the Nether Soul Domain. His failure was already predetermined. Before his attack could even reach Xiang Shaoyun, he felt his soul under attack, assaulting him with intense pain.

It was at that instant that the attack he had launched crumbled. He had to prioritize guarding his soul. Otherwise, he would be in deep trouble. Like the heart, one's soul was also vital for survival. The moment it was destroyed, there was no hope of survival.

Alas, he was completely incapable of guarding against the incoming soul attacks. Even though he was a Dragon Ascension Realm cultivator whose soul had already taken form, he couldn't resist the attacks. At the same time, Xiang Shaoyun took the chance to chant his curse again. One ancient symbol after another drifted through the air and entered Mu Qingyu's head, branding his soul.

Mu Qingyu was already having a hard time dealing with the attacks from the ghostrunes, and with the invasion of the ancient symbols, his defense nearly crumbled apart. On the brink of collapse, he begged, "Spare me! I am willing to submit!"

He was afraid that his soul would be erased just like that. If he allowed that to happen, he would die a complete death. Xiang Shaoyun ignored him and continued chanting. Not far away, the tied up Wang Xin felt a chill down his spine. He struggled repeatedly, unleashing an unending torrent of gold energy in hope of escaping his predicament. Unfortunately, all his struggles bore no result.

"Damn it! What to do? What to do?" Wang Xin cursed anxiously. Before he could think of anything, Mu Qingyu's defense finally crumbled apart. A brand was etched deep into his soul.

"Ahhhh!"

Xiang Shaoyun continued chanting, giving Mu Qingyu a sensation that countless needles were stabbing into his head, causing Mu Qingyu to wail miserably. The wails were so miserable that Wang Xin felt his legs go limp in fear.

"Xiang Shaoyun, release me, or I will self-destruct by exploding my body! I refuse to believe your Nether Soul Domain can survive the explosion!" Wang Xin was left with no choice but to issue such a threat.

"Ignorant," Xiang Shaoyun replied with disdain. It was then Wang Xin's turn to enjoy Mu Qingyu's treatment. And just like that, two special-recruits of the Dragon Phoenix Academy became Xiang Shaoyun's subordinate.

Done with subduing them, Xiang Shaoyun removed the Nether Soul Domain and heaved a breath of relief as he muttered, "The Nether Soul Domain fears the flames of extreme yang the most. This is a fatal weakness. Looks like I have to temper it with Yun Flame in the future. Perhaps I will get a pleasant surprise out of it."

He then looked at Mu Qingyu and Wang Xin, who were prostrating on the ground like stray dogs. With a grin on his face, he said, "I am now your master. Understand?"

The two no longer dared to resist as they replied weakly, "Yes, master."

"Very well. I have some soul spring liquid here. Consume them and heal up before returning to Feng Xiaosha's side. As for how to explain what happened here, think of something yourself. Oh, don't let me sense any malice toward me. I can kill you with a single thought," said Xiang Shaoyun as he gave the two a drop of soul spring each.

After the repeated tortures, the two were greatly frightened of him. They did not dare to show any disloyalty. In this situation, they couldn't even commit suicide if they wanted. That was how scary the Nether Dragon Soul Headband's control was.

Xiang Shaoyun had no intention to stay any longer. After retrieving the storage rings of the five he killed, he refined a large amount of spirit stones to regain his energy before resuming his travels toward the Dragon Phoenix Academy. After a few days of continuous battles, he had a sensation that he could no longer suppress his strength. He was going to break through to the next stage anytime soon. In fact, if it wasn't for the armor he wore suppressing him, he would have broken through by now.

However, he was very grateful that he had obtained the armor from Ugly Gambler. It allowed him to suppress his cultivation base repeatedly, forging an increasingly stable foundation. He hadn't

traveled for long when he noticed Tang Longfei and company returning. He met up with them and asked, "Big Brother Tang, why are you returning?"

"When we saw that you weren't returning, we thought something bad happened to you. Now that you're fine, we won't have to worry anymore," said Tang Longfei. In fact, they had enough time to reach the academy. However, they ultimately decided to look for Xiang Shaoyun, worried that something bad might have happened to him. It was clear Tang Longfei was a person loyal to his friends.

"Don't worry. I won't die so easily. Let's go. Travel at top speed. I believe we will reach the academy soon!" said Xiang Shaoyun confidently.

Chapter 552: Arriving at Dragon Phoenix Academy

Dragon Phoenix Academy, one of the Four Great Ancient Academies.

This was an ancient academy that had existed for nearly 100 thousand years. Their aim was to train powerful human cultivators to protect and maintain the peace of the dominion. One ought to know that the dominion was mainly a territory of humans. Of course, it also contained many powerful races. The moment humans showed weakness, they would definitely suffer the cleansing of the other races, losing the places they could live, and might even suffer extinction.

The Four Great Ancient Academies shouldered the burden of nurturing generation after generation of powerful humans. They maintained absolute neutrality and would not be involved in the struggles between any organizations or be bothered about any injustices that might be happening.

The only time they would take action was when the entire human race was threatened. With their strength, they would destroy the calamity. The Dragon Phoenix Academy was located at the Dragon Phoenix Mountain Range, occupying an area larger than three cities. The academy was constructed on a space surrounded by mountains, akin to a city among mountains.

Looking at the academy from far away, one would have a sensation that the auras of dragons and phoenixes were swirling above the academy, enveloping the academy with an enigmatic ancient aura.

Thin mist drifted about the mountain peaks, and rows upon rows of elegant and ancient buildings could vaguely be seen behind the mist. Every now and then, flying beasts would fly across the sky. The entire academy gave off a sensation that one had arrived at a divine kingdom.

At this moment, Xiang Shaoyun, Tang Longfei, and company had passed through numerous obstacles to arrive before the Dragon Phoenix Academy's entrance. The entrance was placed between two mountains, looking like the mouth of a massive dragon. The 81 steps of stairs before it were akin to the teeth of a dragon, shining with a luster that exuded extraordinariness.

When they looked up the stairs, two massive pillars entered their vision. In between the pillars was a board with "Dragon Phoenix Academy" written on it. The words were written with vigorous and fascinating strokes and were flamboyant and bold—powerful yet elegant, exceedingly shocking to behold.

"Is this the Dragon Phoenix Academy? We're finally here!" Ning Wenhuan cried out, no longer able to hide her excitement.

"Yes. We have to get through the remaining rounds of the test as well and become official disciples of the Dragon Phoenix Academy!" Tang Longfei said as he clenched his fists tightly.

Even Lady Shura, who had always remained calm, couldn't help but to grab at Xiang Shaoyun and declare, "I will definitely be able to join the academy!"

"Um. You must remain confident in yourself," said Xiang Shaoyun with a nod.

As for the Han Clan sisters, the influence of the others and the grand aura the academy exuded also caused them to be filled with excitement. On their way here, they had been in deep thought. They had also confirmed the relationship between Xiang Shaoyun and Lady Shura.

The combat prowess Lady Shura had displayed was far beyond what they were capable of. In fact, not even Ning Wenhuan was comparable to Lady Shura. Thus, for the sisters, it was understandable why Xiang Shaoyun would select her over them. Therefore, they made a firm resolution to quickly catch up to him to change his opinion of them.

The group looked for an empty spot and sat down cross-legged to take a short break. They had only spent six days to reach this place and had one additional day remaining. Therefore, they had to wait for the others to arrive as well before they could know the contents of the second round.

As they waited, the number of people arriving was neither high nor low, and the final number of people that could arrive after one more day was unknown. But from what they saw so far, it was certain that at least half of the original participants would fail to arrive. Xiang Shaoyun was about to

sink into meditation when he caught the glimpse of a group of people. They instantly filled his eyes with fury.

"Di Tong, Di Shang!" Xiang Shaoyun exclaimed.

The two were accompanied by a few other young geniuses. Di Lin, who he hated most, was nowhere to be seen, but he was sure this enemy of his must have arrived as well. Both Di Tong and Di Shang also looked at Xiang Shaoyun, and as they saw him, a sharp glint appeared in their eyes.

A toying smile appeared on Di Shang's face as he said, "Little Brother Yun, you're here as well? This is worthy of celebration!"

Xiang Shaoyun clenched his fists tightly, to the point cracking sounds could be heard. It was obvious how much anger he was in. This was the first time Lady Shura and Han Clan sisters saw him so furious. They thus looked over at Di Tong and Di Shang, quickly memorizing the two faces.

"Shaoyun, calm down. Private battles are prohibited here," Tang Longfei said through voice transmission.

"Oh? It can't be that a stray dog like you wishes to make a move against us, right?" Di Shang provoked, as he could see the fury in Xiang Shaoyun's eyes. So long as Xiang Shaoyun attacked, he would be immediately disqualified. This provocation was a ruse by Di Shang.

"Is this Xiang Shaoyun, the son of your Ziling Sect's previous sect master? The rumored useless trash?" asked a young man beside Di Shang.

"Yeah. I wonder how he got so lucky to actually obtain a little bit of combat prowess. But he's nothing special," said Di Shang with disdain.

"True. It is quite surprising that someone this weak can actually reach this far. I reckon he won't be able to get through the second round," said the young man. The young man was La Yun, a genius from Celestial King Province's Setting Sun Sect. His strength was similar to Di Tong, a peak King.

Xiang Shaoyun took a deep breath and suppressed the fury in his heart. Wearing a mocking smile, he then swept his gaze over Di Shang. "Traitors from the Di Clan, it won't be long before I trample upon you one by one. Enjoy the remaining time you have left."

"Repeat what you just said if you dare, stray dog!" Di Shang was infuriated.

"Sure. Everyone in the Di Clan is a traitor. Your father Di Batian is one, his nine bastard sons are similarly traitors. My father had treated all of you as family, but you actually stole his sect while he was away. What are you if not traitors?" said Xiang Shaoyun, his voice laced with contempt. He then looked at the people around the Di Clan brothers and said, "You guys have to be careful as well. They have a history of stepping on others while they're down, betraying their friends. Don't end up falling for their tricks and still feel deeply grateful to them. I know this from experience."

Those words thoroughly angered Di Shang who almost wanted to attack. Di Tong quickly dragged him back and said, "Don't fall for his provocation!"

Di Tong then met Xiang Shaoyun's gaze and said, "Little Brother Yun, why are you saying all those words of anger? It's your fault for being too useless. None of the elders are willing to submit under your rule. Everyone was afraid that you would be the ruin of the sect. That was why they had elected my father as the temporary sect master. If the old sect master is still able to return, we will naturally return the sect. Fine, why don't you come back to us? We will try to persuade the elders to continue acknowledging you as the young master."

Chapter 553: Second Round

Di Tong's words sounded mild but were in actuality sharp, hinting at Xiang Shaoyun's incompetence being the reason why he had lost the support of the sect, resulting in Di Batian being elected the sect master.

"Hehe, I have no comment on someone who bullies the young," said Xiang Shaoyun with a sneer. "I hope you can get through the test and join the academy as well. At that time, I will issue a formal challenge to both of you. I hope you won't hide like a coward when the time comes. Also, you better not cry that a special-recruit like me is bullying ordinary disciples like you."

Those words immediately attracted the attention of the people around him.

"He's actually a special-recruit? That's not possible, right? Why is a special-recruit taking part in the test?"

"Hehe, don't you know that this Xiang Shaoyun is the one who had killed Da Zixuan? People like him are probably only taking the test to temper himself."

"So it's him! I heard about it! He's only a seventh-stage King and is already capable of killing a War Emperor. I reckon it won't be long before he becomes a Super War Emperor. A freak like this will definitely grow into an exceedingly terrifying existence. Looks like the people who had offended him would no longer be able to sleep in peace."

"He is a freak that had once suffered betrayal. Since he wants revenge, he will definitely be making friends with the other geniuses in the Dragon Phoenix Academy. If he manages to advance into the Emperor Realm, perhaps we can consider being his friend as well."

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The status of a special-recruit was indeed useful. After Xiang Shaoyun made his status known, the young geniuses around him immediately changed their opinion of him. On top of that, those young geniuses were even looking at the Di Clan brothers with toying looks, as if wordlessly telling them, "Since you're dumb enough to offend a freak like that, just prepare yourself for suffering."

"Don't get too cocky, stray dog. So what if you're a special-recruit? My little brother Di Lin is also a special-recruit! You are destined to be trampled by my little brother. If you're smart, piss off from the academy. Perhaps you will suffer less insults that way," said Di Shang anxiously.

"Are you referring to my best friend Di Lin? Haha, sure, let's see who will be trampling over who in the end," said Xiang Shaoyun as he laughed murderously.

Di Shang still wanted to retort, but Di Tong dragged him away. Now was not the time to get into a conflict with Xiang Shaoyun. Since everyone would enter the academy, they had plenty of time to settle the grudge.

"Shaoyun, after we join the academy, we can kill them off one by one!" said Tang Longfei.

"No, Big Brother Tang. This is my personal affair. I need to kill them with my own hands. I won't spare them," said Xiang Shaoyun as he shook his head. He then sank into silence as he sat in meditation.

Since Di Lin was present, that other person must have arrived as well. Once, Xiang Shaoyun and that young lady were known as the perfect pair, enjoying the attention of the entire sect. As for him

and Di Lin, they treated each other as brothers and were closer than biological brothers. Alas, the two people closest to him had betrayed him. The pain of betrayal was etched deeply in his heart.

Di Lin, Xia Yunxi, I sincerely hope both of you are still living well, thought Xiang Shaoyun coldly.

In a flash, another day passed. Finally, the period of the seven days had ended. A large number of geniuses had arrived, and most of them looked to be in a rather sorry state. Evidently, this hadn't been an easy journey. Initially, there were more than 100,000 participants in the test. More than half had been disqualified in the very first round. There were about 60,000 of them left. At this time, the people from the Dragon Phoenix Academy appeared again.

They arrived on the same cart pulled by eight demonic beasts, and the same old man with a crew cut announced, "Everyone, prepare for the second round. Those capable of stepping through the entrance within two hours will be official disciples of the academy. The second round begins."

At that announcement, the participants charged toward the stairs before the entrance. However, the moment they arrived, multicolored light rippled from the stairs and an incorporeal wall appeared. The participants in front crashed right into the wall and were directly jolted back.

"Ahhhh!"

Those in front were completely unprepared and were sent flying and wailing in pain. Those following tightly behind them were also implicated. Chaos erupted.

"Damn it! The stairs are protected by a formation! I knew we wouldn't be able to get through the test so easily!"

"Sure enough, the test is not so easy. Looks like I have to do my best. I must become a disciple of the Dragon Phoenix Academy!"

"Since I'm already here, there is no retreat. This formation won't be able to stop me!"

"Get out of my way, you trash! Watch how I climb the stairs!"

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After the initial chaos, the participants became cautious and started doing all they could to climb the stairs. The stairs were about one kilometer wide, leaving plenty of space for a large number of people to climb at the same time. But since everyone wanted to be the first to reach the top, the participants started pushing and shoving.

Some were completely incapable of taking the first step, while some started climbing. However, those who managed to start climbing stopped after a step or two. Based on their looks, it seemed they were exerting a lot of energy as if a massive mountain had landed on their shoulders. At this time, Xiang Shaoyun and company prepared to climb as well.

"Big Brother Tang, Big Sister Ning, Lady Shura, do your best!" Xiang Shaoyun cheered them on.

"Same for you," the three replied as they charged the stairs.

"You are not strong enough to climb these stairs, so you don't have to partake in this round. I believe I will be able to bring both of you in after passing the test," said Xiang Shaoyun toward the Han Clan sisters.

The two nodded. "Alright. All the best!"

Regardless of their feelings toward him, at this point, they both hoped he could get through the test with his own strength. Xiang Shaoyun nodded and started dashing toward the stairs as well. He found that Tang Longfei, Ning Wenhua, and Lady Shura were still at the outer periphery of the crowd and weren't able to approach the stairs at all. After all, there were too many participants, and everyone wanted to be at the front.

"Over here, Big Brother Tang. Let's charge together," Xiang Shaoyun called out to them.

They thus grouped up and erupted with their auras, forcing their way through the crowd. However, the people at the front were also doing their best to push at each other. It wouldn't be so easy to force a path through them.

"Get out of my way or suffer the consequences!" Xiang Shaoyun howled. At this point, there was no need to hold back. Everyone's focus should be to get ahead of the others.

"Piss off if you don't want to die!" replied furiously the person in front of Xiang Shaoyun. Right after he said that, silver lightning bolts rained down.

Rumble! Rumble!

Chapter 554: I Think He Is Breaking Through

The rain of silver lightning presented quite a striking visual impact. They bombarded the person directly ahead of Xiang Shaoyun, and as the person's flesh and blood sprayed everywhere, he wailed in pain.

"Ah, damn it! Why am I being struck by lightning? It hurts!"

"Move away! Move away! Someone's summoning lightning bolts, and these aren't even regular lightning bolts! They are much more powerful!"

"That's a madman! Let him through or all of us will suffer! Damn it! Why am I so unlucky to stumble upon someone like this!"

"Piss off! Piss off! Ahhhh, it hurts! I'm going to die soon!"

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Chaos erupted in Xiang Shaoyun's vicinity as the crowd scattered, worried that the silver lightning bolts would bombard them to death. With Xiang Shaoyun opening up a path, Tang Longfei, Ning Wenhuan, and Lady Shura followed behind him and quickly arrived before the first step of stairs.

There, Xiang Shaoyun dispersed his lightning power and said, "Let's go up together."

"Haha, Shaoyun is really full of vitality. I won't stand on ceremony, then," said Tang Longfei with a hearty laugh. His near 90 percent completion draconic aura swirled around him as he took his first step onto the stairs.

His leg landed firmly; he wasn't jolted off. Ripples of light flickered around him as a pressure was laid on him, forming some sort of resonance with the draconic aura around him. Ning Wenhuan and Lady Shura did not dare to be careless and quickly released their respective auras as well.

Ning Wenhuan's draconic aura was 40 percent complete, and she managed to take the first step as well. As for Lady Shura, she formed the apparition of a shura that overlapped with her body, granting her the strength of a War Emperor. With that, she easily took her first step as well.

It was apparent now that the stairs exerted different levels of suppression. Each of the 81 steps of stairs had a different level of suppression, and just because one could take the first step did not mean that one would be able to complete all 81 steps.

Xiang Shaoyun no longer waited and took the first step as well. A certain pressure surged out of the stairs as he felt a certain pressure bearing down on him. The pressure was equivalent to the presence of a peak King, capable of contending against the presences of any King.

Without overcoming this pressure, one would not be able to take the first step. A pressure of this level gave them some trouble, but it still wasn't that bad. Xiang Shaoyun completed the first step easily and continued to take the second step. The pressure exerted by the second step increased significantly, but it still wasn't able to trouble him too much.

Xiang Shaoyun climbed seven steps in a row. By then, the combination of the pressure and the weight of his armor caused him to slow down. Here, under the surface of the jade step were numerous crude runes that were pulsing repeatedly, exuding a pressure equivalent to the presence of an Emperor. At the same time, the gravity present at this step had also been enhanced. The combined pressure was enough to cause a regular King to directly collapse.

Xiang Shaoyun was forced to release more of his strength before he continued climbing. At this time, some people were starting to get far ahead of others. Of these people, some were Emperors that were also special-recruits. Some of them had draconic auras of around 95 percent completion, existences that had almost reached the Dragon Ascension Realm. These were the geniuses that had arrived from various places.

Tang Longfei wasn't too slow either. He had reached the 23rd step, and was the fastest of their group. But at this point, he was starting to have a hard time as well.

"How can I allow a tiny formation to stop me from becoming a Dragon Phoenix Academy disciple?" Tang Longfei roared as his draconic aura surged and instantly reached 90 percent completion. As if wind had gathered beneath his feet, he climbed more than 10 steps in a row before stopping again.

As for Ning Wenhuan and Lady Shura, they initially climbed side by side. But as they climbed higher, Lady Shura gradually pulled ahead.

This woman is already so powerful before even forming her draconic aura? thought Ning Wenhuan with shock as she gazed at Lady Shura's back. Her competitiveness ignited within her as she exerted even more strength to climb the stairs. The Han Clan sisters, who were watching not far away, were getting nervous.

"Big sister, look, Young Master Xiang has stopped. What's the matter?" Han Xuewei asked in a worried manner.

"I don't understand. With his strength, he should be able to easily reach the top. Is it due to his cultivation level?" Han Qianwei muttered in confusion. "Or perhaps he's trying to keep a low profile?"

"I doubt so. Perhaps something unforeseen has happened? I hope he can get to the top smoothly," said Han Xuewei, her eyes filled with hope.

Xiang Shaoyun had just arrived at the 16th step, and here, he had encountered something unforeseen. He found that the suppression it exerted helped him further compress his cultivation base, causing his foundation to become much firmer.

With the suppression of his heavy armor, his energy circulation had slowed considerably. However, that did not equate to a drop of cultivation speed. Rather, it helped build a thick and solid foundation.

In other words, with the armor on, a single round of circulation was equivalent to several rounds of regular circulations. He was able to gain much more strength from circulating his energy in such a condition.

With the pressure the stairs exerted, his circulation speed had dropped even further, but that also helped quickly compress his cultivation base. His energy composition, which was originally loose, became much more solid, causing a qualitative change within him, granting him a might far surpassing what he had in the past.

Additionally, the pressure had also triggered his devil blood to surge and squeeze even more of his potential from his physical flesh, allowing his physical flesh to grow rapidly as well. One could say

that the 16th step's intense pressure had unleashed the potential of Xiang Shaoyun's freakish physique.

If that was all, he would still continue climbing the stairs rapidly. However, he had stopped climbing because he could no longer suppress his compressed cultivation base, which was on the verge of erupting into the eighth stage. It was at this moment that Di Tong and Di Shang surpassed him not far away.

Di Shang glanced over and sneered, "Taking the test with just this much? Heh, just wait for elimination, stray dog."

He was aware that even special-recruit disciples would be disqualified if they failed to get through the test. Xiang Shaoyun ignored Di Shang. With his eyes shut, he climbed a few more steps before suddenly sitting down cross-legged.

"Haha, it's always good to know when to give up. Just stay here obediently and wait for the test to end," Di Shang roared with laughter.

Beside him, a solemn look appeared on Di Tong's face. He frowned before his pupils suddenly shrank as he exclaimed, "No, h-he seems to be breaking through?"

"What? How is that possible?" Di Shang cried out in shock.

It did not matter if Di Shang was willing to believe it or not. Xiang Shaoyun's aura surged to the sky as the spiritual energy in the surroundings started converging around him before pouring into his body. It immediately caused an uproar.

Chapter 555: Everyone's Reaction

Standing beyond the entrance observing the test were the Dragon Phoenix Academy elders. Leading the group was the crew cut old man. He was a high-level elder with an illustrious status in the academy. His name was Liu Xutian. Apart from him, the recruiting elder Xiao Wei, who had previously gone to the Bloodsin City, was here as well.

"There are a lot of decent talents among this batch of recruits," praised Liu Xutian as he looked at the young geniuses rushing up the stairs.

"Yeah. A lot of them have even reached the Dragon Ascension Realm. If they can reach this height at such a young age, it wouldn't be hard for them to become a Saint as well," said an elder.

"Look at that kid, he's not even 20, yet he's already a ninth-stage Skysoar Realm cultivator. He seems to be a War Emperor as well, not lacking at all compared with those freaks," said a different elder while pointing at a young man in a blue outfit.

"You're better off focusing on that crafty girl. Look, she's going to reach the top soon, and she's not even 15! What a freak!" said a different person while pointing at a girl that was ahead of the other participants.

As they conversed, they kept pointing at different youngsters, their eyes filled with praise. The reason why these elders were standing here watching the recruits climb the stairs was to scout for future disciples. Any recruit lucky enough to catch the eyes of one of them would enjoy immense benefits in the academy.

At this time, a middle-aged man beside Xiao Wei asked, "Xiao Wei, I heard you only issued nine special-recruit medals this time round. Are there so few talents at the Bloodsin City? Or were you too picky?"

That person spoke words that contained a second meaning, and he was being quite rude about it.

"Feng Huosuo, don't bother using your sarcastic remarks. Each medal was only issued after strict scrutiny. Although there are only 9 of them, they are definitely much more talented than the 29 special-recruits you found," said Xiao Wei mockingly.

"Sure, keep boasting. I heard that you have even recruited a seventh-stage Skysoar Realm kid, the same kid stuck at the 16th step," said Feng Huosuo as he intentionally raised the volume of his voice, his gaze landing on Xiang Shaoyun, bringing Xiang Shaoyun a lot of attention.

"Yes, he is the kid who obtained my ninth medal," said Xiao Wei. "He is also the special-recruit I'm most satisfied with."

"Hahaha, you have a really unique taste. Someone who can't advance past the 16th step is actually worthy of being a special-recruit. I really wonder what your requirements are when recruiting," Feng Huosuo sneered.

The other elders also had odd looks on their faces, clearly in agreement with Feng Huosuo. After all, although being a seventh-stage Skysoar Realm cultivator at that age showcased decent talent, it was nothing compared to the many geniuses present. And now, that person did not even seem capable of advancing past the 16th step. It was obvious that the young man wasn't anything special if he was stuck there.

Xiao Wei appeared calm, but inwardly, he thought, What is that kid doing?

After all, he had personally witnessed Xiang Shaoyun defeat a first-stage Dragon Ascension Realm cultivator. That was a performance of battling one several stages higher in cultivation, the performance of a freak! A freak like that shouldn't have any difficulty in the test.

A smirk appeared on Feng Huosuo's face as he asked, "He's not your illegitimate child, right?"

"Bullshit! Do you think I'm the same kind of person as you? Someone who issues the special-recruit medals to his own family members?" Xiao Wei turned furious.

"Hmph. Even if I do that, my recruits are still better than that kid," said Feng Huosuo coldly.

Right after that, a different elder exclaimed in astonishment, "Huh? That kid seems to be doing something. Is he trying to break through here?"

"That seems to be the case. All the spiritual energy in the area is converging around him. What a daredevil," remarked a different elder.

"Those who dare to break through on the stairs are either those failing to suppress their strength anymore or those who are attempting a last minute breakthrough to increase their strength so as to better climb the stairs. Whichever he is, this is not a good place for a breakthrough since the pressure of the stairs will harm him," said another elder.

"What is this? He is totally messing around!" Xiao Wei cursed as his face turned ashen. He had not expected that Xiang Shaoyun would be so daring that he would attempt a breakthrough right here.

These jade stairs contained not only the presence of an Emperor, but they were also enhanced by several formations to exert massive pressure on cultivators. This was an environment capable of purifying one's astral energy, not the kind of environment one should attempt a breakthrough at.

Xiao Wei was already furious after Feng Huosuo mocked him. When he saw Xiang Shaoyun doing something he deemed rash, it was like pouring oil on fire.

"Haha, did this kid hit his head somewhere?" Feng Huosuo did not miss out on the chance to further mock Xiao Wei.

On the other hand, Di Tong and Di Shang had not thought of all the things those elders had thought of. They only felt extremely annoyed at the fact that Xiang Shaoyun could still make a breakthrough under such pressure. They wished to see Xiang Shaoyun drop dead immediately, not see him grow stronger and stronger.

"Keep going. If he can't finish the breakthrough within two hours, he will be disqualified," Di Tong said.

"Elder brother, what will happen if I interfere with his breakthrough?" Di Shang asked with a ruthless look in his eyes.

"No, you can't. The academy elders won't spare you for doing something like that," said Di Tong.

Interfering with the breakthrough of others was in itself an act of taboo. If Di Shang dared to do that publicly, he would be immediately killed by the academy elders, and even Di Tong, the elder brother, might be adversely affected. He had no intention of sacrificing their prospects just to get rid of one Xiang Shaoyun.

After some hesitation, Di Shang decided to listen and continued climbing the stairs. The people coming up from behind were all astonished to see someone sitting cross-legged.

Some felt that he was being irksome, while some thought that he was trying too hard to show off. Regardless of their opinions, they all ignored him. Their sole focus was to get to the top of the stairs. Soon, half the allotted time passed. A portion of the participants had already reached the top, each and every one cheering in excitement.

"Ahhh! I'm finally a Dragon Phoenix Academy disciple! In the future, I will definitely become an existence lording over large swathes of land!"

"Dragon Phoenix Academy, I'm here! This is the beginning of my path to the peak of martial cultivation! Nobody can hope to stop my rise!"

"My many years of hard work have been repaid! Father, Mother, soon you will hear of this. You will be proud of me!"

"Haha, in the not too distant future, my name will spread across the dominion!"

Chapter 556: Bleeding From the Seven Orifices

Most of these young geniuses had been destined for greatness since birth, growing up showered with glory in their respective organizations. When facing the other young geniuses that came from all over the dominion, their competitiveness was ignited. None was willing to fall behind anyone.

Joining the Dragon Phoenix Academy practically guaranteed glory. They were akin to a fish that had transformed into a dragon, officially embarking on their path to greatness. Thus, it was understandable why they would be overwhelmed with excitement after passing the test. The elders also understood their feelings. After all, a few thousand years prior, these elders had also experienced the same when they first joined the academy.

Relying on his perseverance, Tang Longfei finally reached the top, and he only had a few final steps left before he could complete the test. The draconic aura around him was growing thicker and thicker, yet he was moving slower and slower. His entire body was drenched wet with sweat, and he was almost fully exhausted.

"I am the number one young master of the Bloodsin City. How can I fall here? Obstacles, scram!" Tang Longfei roared as his spirits surged. Once again, he exceeded his limits, and with a final spurt of energy, he charged to the 81st step, completing the test to become a Dragon Phoenix Academy disciple.

The moment he reached his destination, he collapsed onto the ground and gasped for breath. The act of climbing the stairs was similar to fighting an expert to the death, and it greatly exhausted him. Shortly after, Lady Shura also managed to reach the top.

The shura apparition hanging behind her was extremely conspicuous, attracting the gazes of several elders. As for Ning Wenhuan, she still had one third of the stairs to cover. She would have to rely on herself to reach the top with the remaining time.

Meanwhile, Xiang Shaoyun was still in the process of breaking through. Due to the effect of the formations, the flow of spiritual energy in the air wasn't too smooth. Fortunately, he had the astral

cosmos sea within him. After using a large number of spirit crystals, his body became abundant with energy.

However, the massive amount of energy he had did not seem to be enough. Under the pressure exerted by the formations, the energy was compressed and purified, and as a result, the amount of energy he required for breakthrough kept increasing.

Fortunately, he was rich enough. Otherwise, he wouldn't have enough spirit crystals to support his breakthrough. After using even more spirit crystals, he was able to barely gather the amount of energy required.

The energy gathered in his nine stars before flowing through his meridians and acupoints. The purified energy pushed the limits of his body, bringing him to the next stage. In the process, his entire body was enveloped by a layer of rippling energy.

The breakthrough that seemed so near seemed to have suddenly become difficult, as if additional shackles had been placed within him by the formations, disrupting his energy flow. If the breakthrough failed, he would suffer a backlash from his own energy. At that time, he would be injured and might even suffer damage to his foundations.

That was why the elders weren't too optimistic about his chances of breaking through on the steps. Only now did Xiang Shaoyun realize the situation he was in, and he started getting anxious. He had initially expected the breakthrough to be smooth and had not expected something like this would happen.

He was akin to a boiling pot of water. The steam was trying to leave the pot, and if the lid wasn't removed, the pot would eventually implode due to the pressure. A possible solution was removing the armor on him to reduce the suppression on him, allowing him to better resist the pressure brought by the formations.

However, in his current condition, the act of removing his armor would be a distraction. Thus, he braced himself and absorbed even more energy into his body. At the same time, he used even more spirit crystals, flooding his body with a terrifying amount of energy, pushing himself to the brink of implosion. The people passing by him could see that he was bleeding from the seven orifices and were given a big fright.

Standing at the entrance, Xiao Wei became even more anxious. "That damnable kid is actually absorbing even more energy? Is he trying to kill himself?"

He could see that Xiang Shaoyun was in a crisis. If no help was given, death through bodily implosion was very possible.

"Hehe, Xiao Wei, what a nice disciple you have recruited," mocked Feng Huosuo.

Xiao Wei had nothing to say; his heart was filled with disappointment for Xiang Shaoyun wasting a special-recruit quota. Toward the end of the time limit, quite a number of people had already reached the top. Naturally, there were still a lot of people struggling on the stairs, and some had already given up. Since the pressure wasn't something they could withstand, it was pointless to keep struggling. They all wore listless looks.

Tang Longfei and Lady Shura also noticed Xiang Shaoyun's condition. Their hearts were filled with worry. As for Di Tong, who had also arrived at the top, his face was filled with joy. He wanted nothing more than for Xiang Shaoyun to fail. On the other hand, Di Shang was still stuck at the final 10 steps. However, he did not appear nervous. Rather, he turned around to look at Xiang Shaoyun.

When he saw Xiang Shaoyun bleeding from his seven orifices, he laughed, "Haha, interesting. Do you think you can get through the test just by breaking through? Hah, look how you've played yourself to death!"

Not far from the stairs, the Han Clan sisters couldn't see Xiang Shaoyun clearly, but they also similarly sensed that he was in a terrible condition. Before long, the time period allotted for the test would end. If Xiang Shaoyun still remained where he was, he would be disqualified.

That also signified that they wouldn't be able to join either. They felt that it was a pity, but they felt even more indignation on behalf of Xiang Shaoyun. After all, they both knew his strength and did not believe that he should have been eliminated at this stage.

Time passed, and in the final 30 minutes, a change finally occurred with Xiang Shaoyun.

"Roar! Roar!"

Abruptly, apparitions of dragon and tiger surged out of his body and roared, unleashing a terrifying pressure that caused the stairs to ripple around him. At the same time, all nine of his stars erupted like a volcanic eruption.

The terrifying explosion of energy charged the final node within his body, forcefully smashing through it. Ordinarily, an energy eruption of this level would cause a backlash and directly destroy Xiang Shaoyun's acupoints and meridians. But with the suppression of his armor and the formations, the energy was suppressed, and it coursed smoothly within him, reaching every corner of his body.

Chapter 557: What an Excellent Recruit

Before the Dragon Phoenix Academy's entrance, many elders sensed Xiang Shaoyun's change.

Even Liu Xutian was impressed. "This kid has guts!"

He already had this opinion the moment Xiang Shaoyun had opted to break through on the stairs. He had merely been keeping it to himself. Now that Xiang Shaoyun's breakthrough was about to succeed, he finally expressed his opinion. It wasn't that he enjoyed telling the obvious, but he just wasn't interested in participating in the argument between Xiao Wei and Feng Huosuo.

"Well done! The breakthrough was successful! Hahaha!" Xiao Wei shouted cheerily. He was in a terrible mood being mocked repeatedly by Feng Huosuo. Finally, he could vent his frustration.

On the other hand, Feng Huosuo's face turned ghastly. "Just because he managed to break through does not mean he will become a disciple of the academy. There's not much time left."

"Hah, you don't have to worry about that. He is a special-recruit. Even if he's a little bit late, I reckon the academy won't mind accepting a disciple so outstanding," said Xiao Wei.

"Hmph. Even after breaking through, he will only be an eighth-stage Skysoar Realm cultivator. If he can't even get through the test, it only means that he is not qualified to be a special-recruit," said Feng Huosuo coldly. He then said to Liu Xutian, "Elder Liu, please be just when the time comes for you to make a decision!"

Xiao Wei did not look too happy. He knew that this Elder Liu was known for being strictly impartial and incorruptible.

"If he can reach the top, he will remain a special-recruit disciple. If he can't reach the top, he will be eliminated like the rest," said Liu Xutian, not showing any leniency whatsoever.

There was less than half an hour remaining. After successfully reaching the eighth stage, Xiang Shaoyun was in excellent form. His soul power was growing, his Nether Soul Domain was expanding, his body was surging with power, and his stars and astral cosmos sea were enlarging. His meridians and acupoints were also being cleansed once again as his blood raged within him. The heavy weight of his armor felt almost nonexistent, and the pressure the stairs exerted on him was negligible.

Tang Longfei cried out anxiously, "Shaoyun, get up here! There's not much time left!"

When Xiang Shaoyun heard that, he stood up and wiped the blood off the corners of his lips and muttered mockingly, "This is the most dangerous breakthrough yet, but it feels quite nice."

He then stretched lazily before lifting his head and resumed his climb. This time, when he moved, he was hovering slightly above the ground. He was no longer forced to take firm steps on the stairs.

Everyone was shocked by the sight. One ought to know that each step of the stairs contained a different type of pressure. Even regular Emperors wouldn't be able to hover above the stairs. The stairs' pressure wasn't supposed to be something ordinary humans could withstand. Those young geniuses wouldn't have taken so much time to reach the top otherwise.

And now, Xiang Shaoyun seemed to be moving completely unobstructed, as if he was immune to the pressure. It was hard to believe. Of course, the people present also knew that only after possessing a certain degree of strength would one be able to do so.

In fact, the elders of the Dragon Phoenix Academy knew that doing this required not only strength, but also a certain degree of comprehension of presence. Currently, Xiang Shaoyun was exuding the presence of dragon and tiger. This was not just the presence of a King. Rather, it was a type of unrivaled presence.

This was a presence formed of an unrivaled will, etching an unrivaled overbearingness onto his soul, allowing him to charge ahead fearlessly with an unstoppable momentum. Thus, the pressure the stairs exerted did not affect him as badly as others had imagined.

Although he had seemed to have trouble climbing the initial steps, it was mostly due to the heavy armor he wore. Now that he had advanced by a stage, he was able to neutralize the pressure the armor brought him. Combined with his unrivaled presence, he was able to hover above the stairs. In a few seconds, he crossed more than half of them. It was an extremely fast speed.

"H-how is that possible? He is climbing as easily as he walks on flat land! How is he doing it?"

"He had only broken through to the eighth-stage Skysoar Realm, not the Emperor Realm! How can he ignore the pressure? I refuse to believe this! He must be cheating!"

"Did no one notice the presence of dragon and tiger around him? It is no weaker than the presence of an actual Emperor. His powerful presence is able to neutralize the pressure of the stairs. That's why he's not affected!"

"That Xiang Shaoyun is amazing! Looks like he is another one of those freaks. No wonder he managed to kill Da Zixuan so easily."

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An uproar erupted among the young geniuses who couldn't help talking about what they had just seen. Even the elders were impressed.

"What a good recruit! Possessing such a presence at this age. He has a bright future ahead of him! Few recruits of this batch can do the same! This kid is mine!" said an elder.

A different elder said, "Haha, you're not the one who recruited him. Everyone has the right to take him as a disciple, and he also has the right to select his master. I think I'll be a better teacher for him."

The other elders also started volunteering to take Xiang Shaoyun as a personal disciple, and some of them even got agitated bickering. After all, it wasn't easy to find a good successor. An excellent disciple like this was extremely rare.

Liu Xutian asked Xiao Wei, "Xiao Wei, you're this kid's recruiter. What do you think?"

Finally, all the elders focused on Xiao Wei.

Xiao Wei sank into thought before he smiled and said, "Since I was the one who had recruited him, it's best I teach him myself."

In fact, he already had this thought when he saw Xiang Shaoyun at the Bloodsin City. However, Xiang Shaoyun's cultivation level was still a tad bit too low. Xiao Wei's initial plan was to let Xiang Shaoyun cultivate for about a year at the academy and reach ninth-stage Skysoar Realm before accepting him as a disciple. However, Xiang Shaoyun had attracted the attention of so many elders. He was definitely not willing to lose someone like Xiang Shaoyun.

Liu Xutian had a look of regret as he said, "Alright. We'll talk after he passes the test."

Evidently, Elder Liu Xutian had also been attracted by Xiang Shaoyun's potential. Meanwhile, Xiang Shaoyun had reached the 72nd step of stairs. Here, he could sense some suppression on his soul, but still not enough to pose him any sort of trouble. After all, his soul power had reached a level comparable to a peak Emperor's, getting nearer and nearer to the level of a Sovereign's.

No wonder so many people stopped here. This place has a suppression on both the flesh and the soul, thought Xiang Shaoyun as he continued his climb. With a few jumps, he reached the top.

Chapter 558: Physique Assessment

When Xiang Shaoyun reached the top, the Han Clan sisters burst out in tears.

"Big Sister, he passed, he passed!" Han Xuewei cheered.

"Yes, it is only natural that he managed to get through the test," replied Han Qianwei.

They hugged each other, unable to hide their excitement. Xiang Shaoyun passing the test also meant that they would be able to join the academy as well. And finally, the test reached its end. Less than 20,000 people had passed, while about 40,000 people had been eliminated.

Including everyone who had participated in the first round, only slightly more than 10 percent of the participants had passed. One ought to know that the participants were the young geniuses from all over the dominion. They were all individuals with massive popularity where they came from. But here, at the gathering of young geniuses, the halo around them no longer seemed so bright.

"Damn it! I was three steps away! Elders, I beg for a chance to join the academy!" begged a crying young man who was stuck at the 78th step.

"So what if you were three steps away? I was only one step away, yet I wasn't given a chance either. I refuse to believe that I won't be able to do something with my life without joining the Dragon Phoenix Academy!" said an unyielding young man as he left without any hesitation.

It was natural that there would be all sorts of reactions to failing the entrance test. There were also a lot of failed participants who did not leave directly. Rather, they were gathered in front of the stairs. They weren't staying because they hoped that the elders would accept them as disciples. Rather, they were hoping that some of the special-recruit disciples would accept them as followers, allowing them to join the academy in a different way.

However, they wouldn't be able to stay for more than three days. If they weren't accepted by anyone within that time period, their journey of entering the Dragon Phoenix Academy would come to an end.

"Alright. Congratulations to all who have passed. You are now officially Dragon Phoenix Academy disciples," declared Liu Xutian. The young geniuses were overjoyed. This was a moment they had waited a long time for.

Liu Xutian continued, "You have an additional test left, the assessment of your stars for your talent. I'm sure all of you are familiar with this test. Those with better potential will have a chance to become core disciples or even personal disciples of the elders present. Of course, the result of this assessment will not change the fact that you are already the disciples of the academy."

Everyone understood the purpose of this assessment. After all, they had all taken similar assessments when they were young. With so many young geniuses gathered, an assessment was necessary to dig out the freaks among the geniuses.

And thus, Liu Xutian led the new disciples into the academy proper. Shortly after, nine old stones entered their vision. The nine stones were glossy and clean and seemed to be rippling with the radiance of nine different colors, looking extremely enigmatic.

Many of the knowledgeable ones were able to see with a glance that these were nine-colored stones, a saint-grade stone best used for assessing one's stars. These stones were extremely rare and hard to get, yet there were nine of them. It was evident how wealthy the Dragon Phoenix Academy was. A number of overseers arrived and started issuing the new disciples their respective badges.

The disciples were required to drip a drop of their blood onto the badges and leave a simple record of their personal information behind. These badges would also be responsible for recording their growth and achievements in the academy moving forward.

When all the procedures were done, Liu Xutian announced, "Alright. Now, go before the assessment stones to assess your stars."

The disciples started lining up before the nine stones to take the assessment one by one.

"Let me be the first," said a young man confidently. When he placed his palm on the stone, it was as if everything within his body were revealed to the stone.

Swish! Swish!

Abruptly, the stars in the skies high above started shining as strands of astral energy flowed toward the young man. At the same time, seven stars separated themselves from the others, revealing seven bright stars that were fascinating and enchanting.

Seven-stars physique!

"Tan Linfu, primary-grade seven-star physique, regular disciple," an overseer's voice rang out.

The young man was astonished as he asked, "How can I be just a regular disciple with my seven-star physique?"

"I'm only in charge of recording the result. I don't have the time to answer questions. You can stand to the side and wait if you have any issues," said the overseer expressionlessly.

At the same time, a different disciple was also undergoing an assessment. Six stars appeared in the sky, shining brightly.

An overseer announced, "Qian Jinsheng, high-grade six-star physique, regular disciple."

At this time, a different overseer's voice rang out, "Mo Luo, mid-grade seven-star physique, core disciple."

As more and more disciples took their assessments and were assigned their corresponding positions in the academy, the new disciples finally understood the requirements for core and regular disciples.

They learned that astral physiques could also be graded as primary, mid, and high. Those below the mid-grade seven-star physique could only be regular disciples. Those with better physiques could become core disciples. That was also why the first young man with a seven-star physique could only be a regular disciple: he only had a primary-grade seven-star physique and did not meet the requirement of a core disciple.

As for the method of determining the grade of one's physique, that depended on the condition of the stars that had appeared. Those that were slightly dim would be primary-grade physiques. Those that were clear were mid-grade physiques. As for those that were bright, they were high-grade physiques.

After a while of assessment, it was revealed that these young geniuses possessed at least a mid-grade six-star physique. A majority of them had a high-grade six-star physique and a primary-grade seven-star physique.

Only a small number of them possessed a mid-grade seven-star physique or even better physiques. Not a single one of them had a physique below six-star. As for physiques of eight-star and above, it hadn't appeared thus far.

One ought to know that in regular cities, even possessing a five-star physique would make one a genius. It was clear how talented all these new disciples were. In fact, a long time ago, not even seven-star physique holders could join the academy because the strength of a cultivator relied not only on one's physique but also on one's process of growth.

The geniuses capable of joining the Dragon Phoenix Academy not only had great physiques, but they had also been nurtured properly to grant them the strength required to step foot here. Time passed, and finally, the first eight-star physique appeared.

Eight stars hung on the sky, forming an outline akin to a graceful celestial crossing the sky, presenting an enchanting and enigmatic scene. This was a physique that gave rise to envy in the hearts of many people present.

Chapter 559: Di Lin and Xia Yunxi

"Li Li, primary-grade eight-star physique, core disciple," announced the overseer.

Li Li was a woman of an extraordinary temperament. She was in her early twenties, yet her draconic aura was already about 70 percent complete. She attracted the attention of many elders,

who then attempted to take her as a personal disciple. After all, even in the Dragon Phoenix Academy, an eight-star physique was still rather rare.

Subsequently, a few more seven-star physique holders appeared. They were also accepted by the various elders as personal disciples. Of course, some unique six-star physique holders were also made core disciples. From this, it was obvious one had to either possess at least a mid-grade seven-star physique or a unique physique to qualify as a core disciple.

Xiang Shaoyun and company felt their horizons expanding as they watched the assessment. Of course, the people currently taking the assessment weren't too special. Toward the end, the special-recruit disciples would be the ones that would cause a commotion with their physiques.

"Shaoyun, as a special-recruit, you are destined to be a core disciple. So what physique do you have exactly?" Ning Wenhuan asked curiously. During the second round of the test, she had reached the top of the stairs toward the end of the allotted time period, officially becoming a disciple of the Dragon Phoenix Academy as well.

Xiang Shaoyun rubbed his nose and said, "You'll know after I take my assessment."

His physique was a tad bit too special. He was afraid she would think he was showing off if he told her straight away.

"My guess is an eight-star physique. Otherwise, your combat prowess wouldn't be so scary," said Tang Longfei with a smile. He then sighed, "I have a barely seven-star physique. I reckon I can only be a regular disciple."

"Big Brother Tang, physique only decides one's talent. True strength comes from hard work, and only through hard work will one be able to reach the summit," said Xiang Shaoyun.

"Haha, I know that well. In the entirety of the dominion, a seven-star physique is already considered an upper-tier physique. I won't look down on myself," said Tang Longfei cheerily.

They continued chatting idly as a few more eight-star physique holders appeared. Two of them were even a pair of twin sisters. One was He Yuyuan while the other was He Ziyuan. Both of them were also remarkable beauties. The looks of the twin sisters stirred the lust of many men present, giving them an intense desire to conquer the two women. The dream of wrapping an arm each around a pair of beautiful twin sisters proved fatal to these young men.

Before long, it was the turns of Tang Longfei, Ning Wenhua, and Lady Shura to take their assessment. Tang Longfei possessed a primary-grade seven-star physique, while Ning Wenhua possessed a high-grade six-star physique. Both of them could only become regular disciples.

As for Lady Shura, she had an excellent high-grade seven-star physique, causing both Tang Longfei and Ning Wenhua to be shocked and envious. They had never imagined that this masked woman actually had such an excellent physique. But when they recalled how she was Xiang Shaoyun's woman, they became less surprised.

In a flash, two days passed.

During this period, astral projections appeared without stop in the sky, illuminating the area in a festival of lights. Such a scene lived up to a recruitment exam that would only be held every 100 years.

Among the 20,000 new disciples, about 100 eight-star physiques had appeared. Additionally, about 300 unique physiques had appeared as well. As for the rest, they were basically either six-star or seven-star physiques. Very few of them had physiques below six-star.

For those with physiques below six-star, they were mostly those who had stumbled upon some fortuitous encounters to obtain the strength they had now, or those with some unique energies in their bodies. However, the academy wasn't really optimistic about their futures.

As for nine-star physiques, none had appeared so far. Xiang Shaoyun had also learned that Di Tong had a high-grade seven-star physique. That was quite a decent physique. Even so, in his eyes, Di Tong was still worthless. He was only curious about Di Lin's physique.

Finally, it was time for the special-recruit disciples to take their assessment. The special-recruit disciples were basically guaranteed to be core disciples. The only reason they were assessed was so the elders could pick their personal disciples from them. Of course, the assessment also served as a way to see which of these special-recruit disciples would have brighter futures.

At this time, Shou Xie appeared beside Xiang Shaoyun as they lined up together. He said, "I knew you would have no problem getting through the test."

Facing Shou Xie the socializer, Xiang Shaoyun smiled and asked, "I thought you were a special-recruit? Why are you here?"

"I'm just going through the motions. In any case, I won't be disqualified from this," said Shou Xie with a smile. "By the way, I managed to get to know a few geniuses with unique abilities. I'll introduce them to you later."

"Sure," Xiang Shaoyun answered.

"So are you going to teach me the devil taming technique or not?" Shou Xie asked as he rubbed his palms.

"I'm telling the truth. I really don't know something like that," said Xiang Shaoyun seriously.

When Shou Xie saw how serious Xiang Shaoyun was, his face dimmed as he said, "Looks like you're telling the truth. Well, I will have to search the academy for one, then. I think they will have something like that."

Xiang Shaoyun nodded and did not say anything else. Prior to this, he had made a new friend, Huo Xudong, who eventually betrayed him. Thus, he had been rather cold toward the friendliness Shou Xie showed.

Now that they were all within the Dragon Phoenix Academy, he was in a much better mental state than before. Thus, his attitude toward Shou Xie had also warmed somewhat. Suddenly, he found that Huo Xudong was also one of the special-recruits. He was even walking beside Di Lin.

At the sight of that, the fury within him started raging. The two people who had betrayed him had actually appeared before him. He had the urge to kill them immediately. Apart from the two, he also saw a beauty, a remarkable and eye-catching beauty who was walking alongside Di Lin.

Her long hair gently drifted about, her robe exquisite and bright, her waistline slender, her chest and rear bountiful, her bearing graceful and noble. She was akin to a peacock with its tail spread, and exuded a sense of cold beauty. Walking side by side, Di Lin and the woman were akin to a match made in heaven, attracting attention wherever they went.

"Di Lin! Xia Yunxi!" Xiang Shaoyun clenched his teeth in fury.

The two sensed his gaze and looked over at the same time. The woman beside Di Lin trembled slightly as her eyes rippled with emotions. At this time, Di Lin's arm wrapped around her waist as the corners of his lips curled up, "Ah, your former lover. We should go say hi."

Then, he dragged the woman along as he approached Xiang Shaoyun, ignoring whether the woman was actually willing to do so or not.

"It has been a while. You're still alive? That's amazing!" said Di Lin with a sneer laced with contempt on his face.

Xia Yunxi gazed at Xiang Shaoyun with mixed looks on her face before saying, "It has been a while."

Chapter 560: Your Life Will Always Be Mine

Once upon a time, there were three children who ate, drank, and fooled around together. It was a period of pure innocence, one that left a rich aftertaste whenever one recalled it.

Among them was a boy, a playful and naughty boy with a carefree temperament. At times, he enjoyed hiding in the library reading all sorts of books, looking incomparably refined. Another one of them was a boy as well. He was akin to being the first boy's little attendant, constantly issuing commands on behalf of the first boy. He was his trusted aide. He would always work hard on cultivation during his free time and rarely neglected anything related to cultivation. The third child was a girl. She was smart and had grown up alongside them. The first boy, a self-proclaimed boy king, had also proclaimed her his queen.

Time passed, and the three children grew up. The boy king still spent all his time fooling around, and he was as weak as a scholar. The second boy had become an outstanding cultivator who would always remain by the boy king's side, helping him resolve all his troubles. As for the girl, she transformed into a woman, and her thoughts were no longer as simple as before. She came to a realization that although the boy king had an extraordinary status, he had a bleak future. On the contrary, the second boy was so outstanding he seemed perfect, causing her to have a change of heart.

One day, a massive change occurred. The boy king became a prince of misfortune, being chased in humiliation. As for the boy and the girl who were the closest ones to the boy king, they betrayed him, becoming the enemies he detested most. Now adults, the three met again. Things did not devolve into violence the moment they met, and they had instead clashed through words.

After taking a deep breath, Xiang Shaoyun calmed down completely. In the past, he deeply hated them. But now, his hatred for them had lessened considerably. It was not that he had forgiven them. Rather, after spending all this time tempering himself, he was no longer in the same mental state. When he met them once again, his thoughts of them also changed as a result.

He hated them less because he now knew he was also one of the culprits for his misfortune. If he had not wasted all his time fooling around back then and had instead focused on cultivation, things would be completely different now. As for the girl, she would have stayed by his side until the end of her life.

Alas, he had been too useless. He was arrogant and conceited, resulting in him losing everything his father had built. He hated himself, he lamented what the boy had done, and he pitied the girl.

"Yes, it has been a while. So you two have indeed gotten together. Congratulations!" said Xiang Shaoyun, an indifferent smile on his face. His smile was akin to the brightest sun, causing the halo around the remarkable youth before him to dim. As for the young woman before him, her heartbeat accelerated.

Di Lin had not expected that Xiang Shaoyun would show such an attitude when facing them. He had assumed that Xiang Shaoyun would fly into a rage out of humiliation. Inwardly, he thought, He is definitely feigning his indifference!

"Yes. Yunxi has been good to me. You know it, she has always been gentle and considerate since young," said Di Lin with a smile. He then lowered his voice, "By the way, she's exceedingly intoxicating on the bed. Many times, I can't even stop even when I want to!"

A trace of anger surfaced in Xia Yunxi's eyes, but it quickly faded.

"Hehe, as long as you like it. It's not like she's related to me anyway," said Xiang Shaoyun. Even so, he still felt some pain in his heart upon hearing that. Without a doubt, he used to love the woman before him dearly. However, they could no longer return to how they were in the past.

"True. Looks like you have really forgotten about the past. I was worried that you wouldn't be able to let go of your feelings for Yunxi!" said Di Lin, a look of pride on his face.

"Whether you're here to show off or mock me, remember this: Di Lin, your life will always be mine," said Xiang Shaoyun, suddenly turning serious.

Your life will always be mine!

Like a sharp edge, that sentence stabbed right into Di Lin's heart, giving him intense displeasure. Once upon a time, the boy king had possessed numerous guards. As for the other boy, although he also had a considerably high status, he was completely incomparable to the boy king. One time, the boy encountered an accident and nearly died. The boy king was the one who ordered the guards to save the boy's life.

At that time, the boy king said one sentence: "Your life will always be mine!"

The boy thought of that as a joke, but to hear the same words after so many years, it left a bad taste in his mouth.

"Haha, you are still as conceited as ever. We will know soon whose life is whose," said Di Lin with a hearty laugh. He then looked at Huo Xudong, "Big Brother Huo, are you not going to say anything to your old friend?"

Huo Xudong rubbed his bald head and smiled, "Brother Xiang, it has been a while!"

"Rats enjoy digging because they love living in darkness. Now that a rat has actually come under the sunlight, it seems like the rat is starting to look down on the might of humans. Don't forget to slaughter the rat when given the chance. Don't let the rat get too cocky," said Xiang Shaoyun, completely ignoring Huo Xudong.

His words might seem completely random, but Huo Xudong was still angered. A sinister look surfaced on his face. Just as he was about to say something, Liu Xutian told them it was their turn to take their assessments, interrupting their conversation.

After Di Lin, Xia Yunxi and Huo Xudong left, Shou Xie praised, "Young Master Xiang is not only mighty when it comes to fighting, but you're also mighty when it comes to bickering! You have my respects!"

Xiang Shaoyun ignored the remark. The smile on his face vanished, replaced by a gloomy look. Although he had come to accept the fact of his past incompetence, some grudges couldn't be forgotten just like that. The only way of resolving this grudge of his was through blood.

When the special-recruits started their assessment, numerous additional elders appeared. Unsurprisingly, the first special-recruit disciple was an eight-star physique holder. The second special-recruit disciple was the holder of a seven-star physique and also a unique physique.

He did not have a lot of stars, but his unique physique made up for that. In fact, the unique physique gave him an even better talent than those with more stars. The special-recruit disciples stepped forth one after another, revealing one freakish physique after another. The regular disciples were completely dumbstruck.

Only now were they convinced that these special-recruit disciples were indeed freaks that they couldn't compete with. Only when they saw about one dozen special-recruits with unique talents such as Shou Xie did they feel somewhat comforted. These people merely had unique talents, but their physiques were nothing special.

It was a pity that after more than half the special-recruit disciples took their assessment, a nine-star physique holder had yet to appear. In fact, not even a high-grade eight-star physique holder had appeared.

Finally, it was Xia Yunxi's turn to take the assessment.