

## Overlord 571

### Chapter 571: High-Level Evil Spirit

Within the Dragon Phoenix Academy's Back Graveyard, a sturdy figure slowly walked out from the darkness. The figure was filled with a corrosive aura. Evidently, this was a corpse, one without any life left in it. Occupying this corpse was an evil spirit. It was an evil spirit at the cultivation level of late-stage Sovereign Realm, and it possessed a dreadfully sinister consciousness.

It had awakened from its slumber after sensing an aura filled with vitality. And without any hesitation, it had rushed straight to the outer fringe of the Back Graveyard. Before long, it appeared not far from Xiang Shaoyun's position. Its eye sockets were empty, with two clumps of radiance pulsing within them, looking incredibly eerie.

"What a young body. I finally have a chance at rebirth," muttered the evil spirit in joy as it charged Xiang Shaoyun. But before it could even approach Xiang Shaoyun, the nether prison devil puppet attacked mercilessly and stopped it.

Unwilling to back off, the evil spirit clashed with the puppet. Evidently, the evil spirit was comparable to the puppet in strength. Thus, Xiang Shaoyun stopped cultivating and stood up. Looking at the battle, his face turned slightly solemn as he said, "Is this a Sovereign Realm zombie? No, that doesn't seem to be the case."

The corpse occupied by the evil spirit was not as sturdy as the puppet. After a short while of close combat, it was destroyed. The evil spirit ignored the corpse and flew out before pouncing at Xiang Shaoyun.

"Give your body up," said the evil spirit as he charged toward Xiang Shaoyun's head.

Without any hesitation, Xiang Shaoyun activated Yun Flame's power. The moment the evil spirit approached, Yun Flame's power harmed it, causing it to quickly retreat in pain.

"Damn it! You actually have a flame of extreme yang? But that is not enough to stop me from taking over your body!" cursed the evil spirit before it fled.

A slight worry surfaced in Xiang Shaoyun's heart as he looked at the fleeing evil spirit. He did not dare to allow a high-level evil spirit like this into his Nether Soul Domain. Although the ghostrunes were the nemeses of evil spirits, he still feared that a mishap might happen. If the evil spirit ended up taking over his Nether Soul Domain, he would be in deep trouble.

Although the nether prison devil puppet was sufficiently powerful, it couldn't do anything toward these evil spirits that did not have physical bodies. After leaving, the evil spirit would definitely return prepared. That was the source of Xiang Shaoyun's worry.

"Forget it. It's not like I have any other options. I'll just have to face whatever it throws at me," said Xiang Shaoyun to himself.

Before long, he found that a large number of skeletons were advancing toward him. One ought to know that these skeletons were supposed to only stay in their own territories. Now that they had all come here, it was clear this was the handiwork of that evil spirit. Furthermore, some of these skeletons could even fly. Each of the skeletons had traces of the evil spirit's soul power on them.

"Things are getting troublesome," muttered Xiang Shaoyun, who started getting anxious.

Without any hesitation, he stored the three birds into his astral cosmos sea. It had been proven that the astral cosmos sea was capable of storing living beings. Money was living proof of that. He also did the same with the nether prison devil puppet.

"Kid, have you given up? Come, obediently sacrifice your soul to me," said the evil spirit.

Xiang Shaoyun ignored its words and activated his Nether Shadow Evanescence, vanishing right where he stood. The Nether Shadow Evanescence was one of the three greatest abilities of the Imperial Nether Clan due to the trait of invisibility in the Imperial Nether Clan's bloodline.

After absorbing the power of the dark heart, Xiang Shaoyun's bloodline had grown considerably due to the combination of his devilish energy and dark energy. Thus, he could now easily hide himself for about an hour in this state. When the evil spirit saw that Xiang Shaoyun had disappeared, it grew anxious.

"You won't be able to hide from me! I will definitely find you!" roared the evil spirit.

Generally, as evil spirits existed in an incorporeal form, they could easily detect the existence of illusions. Regular concealment techniques wouldn't work against them. However, the trait of invisibility in the Imperial Nether Clan's bloodline was too powerful. Thus, when Xiang Shaoyun used the Nether Shadow Evanescence, not even the evil spirit could locate him.

After Xiang Shaoyun confirmed that the evil spirit couldn't sense him, he brazenly approached it. He was sure that a conscious evil spirit couldn't stay floating out in the world for a prolonged period of time because it would result in complete death through the exhaustion of soul power.

The evil spirit, behaving as if it had gone mad, ordered the skeletons to search everywhere for Xiang Shaoyun. The evil spirit itself also flew everywhere, trying to sense where Xiang Shaoyun was hiding. It was completely oblivious to the fact that Xiang Shaoyun was slowly approaching it. But when Xiang Shaoyun finally got near it, its acute soul perception detected some abnormalities. It was at that time that a beam of flame shot out from Xiang Shaoyun's finger.

Swish!

The finger beam attack was his fastest attack. Carrying Yun Flame's power with it, the beam shot forth and struck the evil spirit, which couldn't react in time. The evil spirit wailed as a portion of its soul power was destroyed, causing its body to become even more translucent.

"I'm going to crush you!" After being injured, the evil spirit's temper worsened, and it bombarded Xiang Shaoyun's location with a flying skeleton.

However, Xiang Shaoyun had long moved away after releasing his attack. From a different direction, he shot another beam of flame toward the evil spirit. Such flame of extreme yang was the nemesis of the evil spirit, and each time the evil spirit was struck, its soul power greatly decreased. Completely helpless against Xiang Shaoyun, it decided to flee.

But at this point, Xiang Shaoyun no longer feared it. After the evil spirit left, Xiang Shaoyun did not remain. Instead, he left as well. He decided to return to the place where he had met the vampire bats and see if he could find anything there. In any case, the vampire bats weren't that much of a threat to him. It wouldn't be a bad idea to switch his camp location. Before long, he arrived at the territory of the vampire bats.

The moment the vampire bats detected Xiang Shaoyun, they attacked. He couldn't even be bothered to fight them. He directly released the nether prison devil puppet to deal with them. These vampire bats were all Emperors, and thus, they couldn't pose any threat to the puppet.

Xiang Shaoyun had his guesses that although the academy might be harsh toward him, they would still allow him a chance to live. So long as he stayed away from the depths of the Back Graveyard, he would be fine.

## Chapter 572: Gravekeeper Elder

The vampire bat territory wasn't much safer than the big-winged vicious bird territory. Xiang Shaoyun hadn't even taken over the territory for long before he was swarmed by a large number of evil spirits. Fortunately, he was practically immune toward these low-level evil spirits. Anyone else would probably not have it as easy as him here.

For Xiang Shaoyun, this was just another camp. At this kind of desolate land, apart from cultivating, he had nothing else to do. At present, with his filthless soul, his comprehension ability had grown to a brand new level. Thus, he was able to quickly master the dark and earth battle techniques he had been practicing previously. Afterwards, he started refining the 3,000-year-old root essence. The root essence contained the power of wood, and it constantly exuded a rich vitality, a power filled with life.

After refining the root essence, Xiang Shaoyun's cultivation reached peak eighth-stage Skysoar Realm, and he would be able to enter the ninth-stage at any time. At this point, he decided to go all in and refine the 1,000-year-old congealed liquid ball and the radiant meteorite as well.

The power of water represented an unending wave of softness, capable of constraining force with softness, containing both strength and gentleness. The power of light represented purity, radiance, holiness, and justice. After refining both powers into his body, an astonishing phenomenon appeared within him.

All nine of his stars started radiating brilliantly, and strands of energy started swirling about within his body. They connected with the astral cosmos sea, forming a river of stars that was vast and wondrous. His entire person started radiating nine different colors, covering his surroundings with a serene, gorgeous, and beautiful curtain of light.

The evil spirits nearby seemed to have been purified as they all suddenly turned completely silent and calm. Their evil aura slowly faded away, as if a senior monk was conducting a purification ritual on them, setting them back on the right path, removing their stubbornness. And just like that, the nearby evil spirits all dissipated into nothingness.

As for the other evil beings in the area, something exceedingly rare happened. They all sank into silence and became completely calm. The nine-colored radiance started cleansing the devilish and evil auras from their bodies as they greedily absorbed the nine-colored energy that had appeared in the area. The grand guardians and the principal of the academy were witnessing everything that was happening, and they were all deeply shocked.

"Shit! Shit! Shit! This kid has fully formed his nine astral powers. It is basically impossible to make him focus on only one power now," exclaimed the old man in a gold outfit.

"Old Gold, can you focus on the main issue here? The power this kid exudes feels somewhat different!" complained the purple-haired old man.

"Yes, it's indeed different. About 10,000 years ago, the academy had also nurtured several nine-star physique holders, but not one of them had been able to release nine powers at the same time. This kid has actually accomplished that! This is unbelievable!" said the principal.

"He is able to reach this level in only half a year. I didn't even notice him taking out anything from his storage ring. He has probably formed an astral cosmos sea as well. Otherwise, he wouldn't have suddenly refined different unique powers out of nowhere. Also, he seems to be completely immune to the possession of the evil spirits. Not even a true top Emperor can accomplish that. This kid is too astonishing," said the beautiful woman.

"I feel like this kid probably possesses one of those strongest physiques depicted in the legends," said the heroic middle-aged man. "Looks like the Back Graveyard is not a suitable place for this kid. We should just put him at my place. I will supervise him properly and see if he can really cultivate all nine powers."

After saying that, he prepared to head toward the Back Graveyard, but before he could leave, the purple-haired old man grabbed his arm and said, "Hah, are you not giving up? This kid can only be my disciple!"

Meanwhile, the old man in a gold outfit noiselessly left for the Back Graveyard. When the others noticed, they cursed and followed him. They possessed an incredible speed, instantly covering the large distance between where they were and the Back Graveyard.

Just as they were about to enter, a sloppy old man walked out. He appeared to be sweeping the floor before the Back Graveyard's entrance. The old man had long silver hair that cascaded down his shoulders. His stooped figure did not hide the fact that he had a tall and sturdy body. When he swept the floor, he moved slowly and weakly, yet he was extremely serious. Not a speck of dust could be seen on the ground.

When the grand guardians saw the old man, their eyes were filled with admiration. They bowed to him respectfully before proceeding to enter the Back Graveyard. Right at that moment, the old man stopped sweeping the floor. His mouth did not open, but an ethereal voice rang out, "Return. Stop

monitoring this child in the future. I don't have much time left. Let me give this child some pointers with the little time I have remaining."

If one focused, one would notice that the old man was actually blind. However, his empty eyes seemed to be exuding a certain indescribable might that nobody dared look straight at. A look of overwhelming shock covered the faces of the grand guardians when they heard his words.

They had been living in the academy for many, many years, yet they had never once heard the old man speak. They knew that he was the oldest senior of the academy and had once contributed greatly to the academy. He was blind, deaf, and mute. Ever since these grand guardians had joined the academy, this old man had been guarding the Back Graveyard. Everyone addressed him as the gravekeeper elder.

None of them knew how long he had lived, yet the massive contribution he had brought to the academy was worthy of their respect. Not one of them could see the old man's actual strength.

At times, they even suspected that the old man was a regular human because of the apparent lack of astral energy around him. Yet he had lived for so many years, surpassing the lifespan of ordinary humans. It gave them a feeling that he had reached a level where he had abandoned complexity and returned to the original simplicity. However, he also exuded a thick aura of death, as if he was going to die at any moment.

Regardless, these grand guardians all knew this elder was definitely stronger than them. One ought to know that they had all stayed at the academy for tens of thousands of years. Thus, their shock was understandable since this was the first time they had heard the old man speak after so long.

They could feel that although this elder was blind, he seemed to know about everything they were doing. Also, the secret technique he used to speak earlier was not one an ordinary person could use. They wanted to refuse, yet they couldn't even bring themselves to voice their objections. They exchanged gazes, each of them hesitating whether to take the lead and object.

At this time, the gravekeeper elder said, "Leave without worries. I won't instruct him for more than half a year. After that, any of you can take him as a disciple. I won't interfere."

## Chapter 573: Change

The gravekeeper elder made it very clear that he would only be instructing Xiang Shaoyun for half a year. After that, he would no longer interfere in Xiang Shaoyun's affairs. At the same time, he

expressed that he wouldn't take Xiang Shaoyun as a disciple and that the elders needn't worry about it.

One could say that the gravekeeper elder was being very humble, especially considering the fact that his status and strength was much higher than these grand guardians. These grand guardians would need to be completely stupid to still refuse him in such a situation.

"We shall obey the gravekeeper's command," said the grand guardians with a bow before leaving. When they returned to the white stone where they had been observing Xiang Shaoyun, they took one final look at the scene before reluctantly erasing it.

"Old Purple, what do you think the gravekeeper is up to?" asked the old man in a gold outfit.

"How am I supposed to know?" said the purple-haired old man.

"I mean, will the gravekeeper allow that kid to continue cultivating nine powers or will he make that kid cultivate only one power?" asked the old man in gold outfit.

"There is no way of knowing," said the heroic middle-aged man as he rubbed his forehead.

The principal said, "The gravekeeper has witnessed more things than all of us. He knows what he's doing, and he will make the best choice. Just wait. Also, a few decent successors have appeared from this batch as well. I need to go back and focus on them. We can't let the fellows from the other academies notice them."

He then left. The others also left one after another.

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Time passed, and at the Back Graveyard, Xiang Shaoyun had reached late ninth-stage Skysoar Realm as a result of refining both the congealed water ball and the radiant meteorite. On top of that, the accumulation from all the different powers he had refined previously and the unique phenomenon that had appeared within his body had also contributed to his rise in cultivation level.

Why had that nine-colored phenomenon happened? It was due to the nine stars within his body reaching some sort of balance that created a resonance between the nine stars. After filling all nine

of his stars with unique energies, the amount of nine-colored fog within the astral cosmos sea had also grown.

Money continued absorbing the nine-colored fog hungrily. His strength grew considerably. By the time he left the astral cosmos sea, it would probably be the time for yet another breakthrough. As for the three little birds, at first, they weren't used to life in the astral cosmos sea. But when they noticed the nine-colored fog, they started absorbing it in peace. Their bodies were cleansed, and they benefited greatly from absorbing it.

After spending some time compressing the energies within him, Xiang Shaoyun started checking his own condition using inner gaze. He found with astonishment that the nine stars were all shining with a unique luster and were surrounding his astral cosmos sea, creating a seemingly boundless river of stars.

"Without realizing it, my astral cosmos sea has grown so big. I'm afraid not even a Soul Foundation Realm Sovereign can compete with me in regards to the astral cosmos sea," muttered Xiang Shaoyun proudly.

Soon after, he circulated the nine energies around his entire body one time, and in doing so, he immersed himself in his newly gained strength and was filled with satisfaction. He opened his eyes, revealing a gaze so sharp it seemed capable of slicing the sky apart, so bright everything seemed to dim in comparison.

His current senses had improved even further than before. It was as if nothing in his surroundings could escape his senses. Even a tiny ant crawling on the ground far away could be sensed clearly. This was not the kind of sharpness the Nether Soul Domain alone could grant.

At the same time, his bearing seemed to have turned somewhat ethereal, making him look like a son of god that had just descended from the heavens. And the change of bearing was not something as simple as a change in physical appearance. Rather, he emanated a sort of feeling that made it very clear he was an extraordinary person.

In the past, he had needed to use his unrivaled will to unleash a pressure capable of pushing someone into admitting defeat without even trying to fight. Now, he no longer needed to make a conscious effort to achieve the same effect. It was a change brought by the increase of his strength, the accumulation of nine unique powers in his nine stars, and the transformation of his soul into a filthless soul.



One could say that Xiang Shaoyun had finally created his vessel of cultivation and battle, reaching a turning point in his path of cultivation. One should not look down on him just because he wasn't an Emperor. Just from all he had accomplished thus far, not even an Emperor was comparable to him.

Finally, Xiang Shaoyun stood up and gazed toward the depths of the Back Graveyard. He was wondering if he should continue going deeper. One ought to know that all the evil spirits nearby had dissipated after he had purified them. And he was in need of more evil spirits to feed his ghostrunes.

If others knew what he was thinking, they would probably curse that he was a madman. Others wanted nothing more than to avoid meeting evil spirits, yet he wanted to seek for more evil spirits. If he wasn't a madman, what was he?

Just as he was about to move, he found that a crooked figure had suddenly appeared before him. Although the newcomer had a crooked figure, that did not hide the fact that he had a sturdy body. His long silver hair was also rather conspicuous.

Xiang Shaoyun was given a fright. He almost assumed that it was an evil spirit with a solid form. If that was the case, it could only mean that it was an extremely powerful evil spirit. Without any hesitation, he unfurled his wings and attempted to flee.

At that time, the newcomer said, "You don't need to be afraid. I am a human, not a spirit. You can call me the gravekeeper elder. I am in charge of the Back Graveyard."

"Gravekeeper elder? Why did I not see you when I first came?" Xiang Shaoyun asked vigilantly.

"That was because you were thrown in here. With such a situation, it's not weird that you haven't seen me," said the gravekeeper elder without moving his mouth.

"Then why are you showing yourself now? Are you going to bring me out?" asked Xiang Shaoyun. He kept getting an eerie sensation from that person, especially that pair of empty eyes. They seemed to contain endless dreadfulness, a pair of eyes one did not dare look straight into.

"It's still not the time for you to leave yet," said the gravekeeper elder. "I am showing myself because the time has come for me to appear."

Xiang Shaoyun was completely confused as he thought to himself, What in the world does that mean?

"Since you're not here to take me away, I won't be taking much more of your time, then," said Xiang Shaoyun as he cupped his hands and saluted the elder before flying toward a different direction.

He was still filled with suspicion toward the gravekeeper elder. After all, the gravekeeper elder looked more like an evil spirit that had hidden its form than a human. But Xiang Shaoyun had only flown for a short while when the gravekeeper elder appeared before him yet again. In his shock, he stopped moving.

"What do you actually want?" Xiang Shaoyun asked as he released Yun Flame's power and wrapped it around himself.

"Come with me if you have the guts," said the gravekeeper elder before flying toward a different direction.

#### Chapter 574: Ancient Secret

Looking at the departing gravekeeper elder, Xiang Shaoyun found that with a simple step, the elder was able to close a massive distance, as if the distance was nonexistent. Xiang Shaoyun was quite knowledgeable himself. With a single look, he exclaimed, "Shrinking space stage!"

Footwork intent was separated into stages, respectively the moving like the wind, shrinking space, and so close yet worlds apart. Seeing the shrinking space stage greatly surprised Xiang Shaoyun. Without any hesitation, he chased after the gravekeeper elder.

He was flying at full speed with his wings, moving at a speed comparable to a third-stage Emperor. And yet, he couldn't even approach the elder and could only follow from far behind. He even had the feeling that the elder had already slowed down. Otherwise, he wouldn't even be able to keep up.

For some reason, as he traveled with the gravekeeper elder, all the evil spirits and beasts seemed to have vanished. Not one of them had appeared. After flying for a while, Xiang Shaoyun found that the elder had stopped before a spartan building.

The building was crudely built with some wood, and there was only a single building. The surroundings were still as desolate as everywhere else in the graveyard, but when looking at the distance from his position, one would find that farther ahead was a lush area with verdant hills and limpid water. A gravestone stood there, exuding a solemn yet refined aura.

Without a doubt, that was the proper graveyard part of the entire Back Graveyard. The part he had been in was merely the graveyard of the evil spirits. The building was built within the evil spirits' part, but it wasn't too far from the proper graveyard part. It was obvious this was the gravekeeper elder's place of residence.

Looks like he's really a human, thought Xiang Shaoyun.

He had been suspecting that the gravekeeper elder was actually an evil spirit that had hidden his true form. After all, the outer appearance of the gravekeeper elder was a tad bit too scary. The gravekeeper elder sat down on a stone chair in front of the building and said without looking at Xiang Shaoyun, "Sit."

Xiang Shaoyun did not dare to sit down. Instead, he bowed at the gravekeeper elder and said, "It's better if this kid remains standing."

Facing an old man with extraordinary strength, he was filled with respect.

"Just sit if I tell you to. I don't really care about matters concerning etiquette," said the gravekeeper elder.

Xiang Shaoyun hesitated slightly before he sat down at the other stone chair. Inwardly, he wondered, Why does this gravekeeper elder want from me?

The gravekeeper elder seemed to have read Xiang Shaoyun's mind as he explained forthrightly, "I am more or less aware of your current situation. I am going to tell you something, and I will only say it once. Pay attention. In all the years the dominion has existed, many nine-star physiques have appeared before. But a high-grade version like yours is very rare. Your physique is basically one blessed by the heavens, allowing you great efficiency when cultivating.

"It is generally believed that only by cultivating a single power will one be able to combine the strength of all nine stars and unleash an ultimate combat prowess. That is also the fastest way one can advance, with very few troubles in advancement.

"Of course, some also prefer cultivating two different powers, but that will greatly reduce one's cultivation speed. Furthermore, the resulting combat prowess isn't that much stronger than cultivating only a single power. The only benefit is gaining the ability to use the two powers and complement each other for unique effects.

“As for cultivating three or more powers, that is a choice almost no one will make. That is mainly because someone doing so will lack the ability to use all the different powers together, resulting in a lower combat prowess.

"Of course, there are people that refused to admit defeat and insisted on cultivating multiple powers, and all of them have ended miserably. The only type of people capable of cultivating five powers are those possessing a Primal Astral Physique. This physique grants one an innate physique with five stars of five different powers.

“For someone not born with this physique, it is extremely hard to cultivate this physique through effort alone. After all, the main advantage of this physique is the balance between the five powers, and that balance is something almost impossible to achieve artificially. After all, the Primal Astral Physique is one of the strongest combative physiques in existence.

"As for nine-star physiques, it is extremely hard to balance nine different powers. However, there is an ancient legend claiming that a legendary physique known as the Nine Heavens Celestial Physique, also known as the Major Primal Astral Physique, exists. It is a physique granting someone an innate ability to absorb nine different astral energies, accomplishing something nobody else can accomplish.

“It is said that this is a physique only the ancient god involved in the creation of the world possessed, and that ancient god is also the ancient ancestor of us humans. He is the creator of the dominion, the sky, and the stars above us.

"Throughout the years, many humans have tried recreating someone comparable to the ancient god. Children with a nine-star physique were all requested to cultivate nine different powers. Us, the Dragon Phoenix Academy, also once did that. We called it the Strongest Physique Cultivation Project. However, it all ended in failure. All those nine-star physiques had gone to waste, and thus, nobody wants to ever see a nine-star physique holder cultivate nine different powers and walk the path of no return ever again."

Xiang Shaoyun's face turned ghastly as he listened, his will to continue down the same path wavering.

Have I really made the wrong choice? Xiang Shaoyun asked himself.

He had also seen a lot of ancient records depicting the failures of cultivating nine powers. However, he had assumed that the records only referred to a small portion of those who had tried. He thought that he would be different with his talent, creating a path unique to himself.

But from what the gravekeeper elder had just said, since the ancient times, humanity had been trying to cultivate such physiques. Even the Dragon Phoenix Academy had done so before, and they had all failed.

Anyone with a nine-star physique was a remarkable talent. Xiang Shaoyun was not stupid enough to believe he was better than all of them. Since all of them had failed, would he still have the courage to attempt something nobody had accomplished before?

Perhaps it was as the gravekeeper elder said, it was a path of no return, something impossible to succeed. The Nine Heavens Celestial Physique was merely a legend left behind by the ancient humans. There was no way to even confirm if that physique had once existed before.

"Then is it fine if I opt to cultivate one power now?" Xiang Shaoyun asked. Yes, he was finally scared. After all, he had filled his nine stars with different powers. Was it too late to give up now?

#### Chapter 575: The Wondrous Ancient Mantra

Had the gravekeeper elder told Xiang Shaoyun all that just to make him give up on cultivating nine powers? What he said next shocked Xiang Shaoyun even more.

"I did not tell you all that to make you give up on cultivating nine powers. I only want you to know how hard this path is and to give you another chance to make your choice," said the gravekeeper elder.

Xiang Shaoyun had not expected those words at all. He had thought that the elder had merely been trying to persuade him to give up and focus on only one power instead. But now, it seemed like the elder was still supportive of him cultivating nine powers. It greatly confused him.

Xiang Shaoyun sank into thought, not knowing what to say. He had full confidence the gravekeeper elder was telling him the truth, yet he couldn't accept just giving up on the path he had chosen. What would be the best choice?

The difference between the two choices was akin to heaven and earth. Either was an extreme option of an opposite direction. He sat there in contemplation for three days and three nights. During that time, he remained motionless and silent, his eyes shut in thought.

The gravekeeper elder sat by his side and was in no hurry. At this time, the three birds within the astral cosmos sea suddenly started crying. They were no longer as small as before, with their wings reaching about two meters in length.

From how joyful they looked, it was obvious they had gone through yet another breakthrough. During the past half year of residing in the astral cosmos sea, they seemed to have broken through many times.

Xiang Shaoyun once tried to release them from the astral cosmos sea so they could get a breather at the outside world. But they would rather stay in the cramped astral cosmos sea than leave. He had long known that the three had benefited greatly from the nine-colored fog. That was why they had refused to leave. In fact, they were behaving exactly like Money!

As Xiang Shaoyun looked at the nine-colored fog and the changes within the astral cosmos sea, a resoluteness he never had before suddenly rose within him. He opened his eyes, looked at the gravekeeper elder, and declared, "I will stick to my path!"

The gravekeeper elder showed no reaction. He merely replied blandly, "Ok. Since you have made your choice, I hope you won't regret it in the future. After entering the Dragon Ascension Realm, it will be too late to change."

"Yes, I have already considered this carefully," said Xiang Shaoyun firmly.

"Good. Then let me teach you a mantra. Remember it," the gravekeeper elder went straight down to business. Without waiting for Xiang Shaoyun's agreement, he started teaching him a complicated and ancient mantra.

"Separating the heaven and the earth, the primal chaos was born, the essence of the five elements, the stars moved, yin and yang were lacking..."

After possessing a filthless soul, Xiang Shaoyun's memory had improved considerably. The complicated ancient mantra was forcefully memorized, yet he couldn't understand its meaning. The mantra seemed to be depicting the changes of the world, yet it also seemed like a cultivation mantra. It was too complicated.

"How much have you memorized so far?" asked the gravekeeper elder.

"Everything, but I don't really understand it," said Xiang Shaoyun.

The face of the gravekeeper elder shifted slightly, but since he was blind, no emotion could be seen within his eyes. He said, "This is an incomplete ancient mantra I had accidentally obtained. It depicts the evolution of the world, how the primal chaos gave rise to the five elements, the revolution of the yin and yang amid the universe, and the great dao. Perhaps the purpose of this ancient mantra is to enlighten one on the powers of the natural world. So long as you can understand it, you will gain a decent comprehension of the nine powers you cultivate. Perhaps it will help you see the light of hope on that path of no return you tread. If not even this mantra can help you, I can't do anything either."

Xiang Shaoyun had guessed that the ancient mantra was important, but he had never imagined that it would be this important. He stood up and gave the gravekeeper elder a deep bow, expressing his gratitude.

"You don't need to feel grateful at all. I am only doing this because I wish to one day witness a legendary physique personally," said the gravekeeper elder. "Also, I have already told those kids outside that I will be keeping you here for half a year. Spend this time studying the mantra. If you have any inspiration, you can look for me. We can discuss it together, trying our best to increase the tiny brightness you might find on your path of no return."

Xiang Shaoyun nodded. "Yes, elder."

He could see that this elder was going to personally instruct him in the coming half year. His heart was filled with excitement, and he wished to live up to the elder's expectations. And thus, he cleared his mind of all thoughts and started comprehending the ancient mantra.

As he repeated the mantra over and over in his mind, he increasingly understood how complicated it was. It focused on the dao of heaven and earth, the dao of primal chaos, and the dao of yin and yang. All three were the strongest daos in existence, and they were the most complicated and abstruse of all powers in existence.

Initially, he was able to gain a superficial understanding of some of it, but when he tried deepening his understanding, he found that there were countless permutations, and it was very difficult to get a clear understanding of any sort.

Half a month later, he asked the gravekeeper elder his first question, "What is the origin of heaven and earth?"

"Some people say that heaven and earth were created by the ancient god. But the ancient god is the ancestor of humanity. As the saying goes, heaven, earth, and human. With heaven comes earth, and with earth comes human. Thus, we can reject that theory. What I understand from the ancient mantra is that heaven and earth originated from the power of the firmament," answered the gravekeeper elder.

"What is the origin of the power of the firmament then?" Xiang Shaoyun asked.

"It is eternal."

"Did the primal chaos come into existence during the creation of heaven and earth, or prior to the existence of heaven and earth?"

"The period of time during the creation of heaven and earth was also a period prior to the existence of heaven and earth."

"Does that mean that primal chaos took form during the creation, and prior to creation, it was a part of the firmament?"

"It's good that you can understand that much. This is proof that you are working very hard on comprehending the mantra. Yes, according to the mantra, that's the case."

...

One old and one young, they exchanged some thoughts once every few days. Often, Xiang Shaoyun would be the one asking a question, and the gravekeeper elder would be the one answering.

Slowly, doubt cleared from Xiang Shaoyun's heart, allowing him to gain a deeper level of understanding of the mantra. It was most definitely a wondrous ancient mantra, one with a great significance. As Xiang Shaoyun mentioned numerous fresh points, the gravekeeper elder also learned something new.



After all, Xiang Shaoyun had a filthless soul, pushing his intelligence to a freakish level. Each time he studied the mantra, he would have a different sensation, as if the mantra represented every single dao in the world, an all-encompassing mantra that contained everything in existence. Because of that, his resolution to cultivate nine different powers grew firmer.

#### Chapter 576: Simply a Mess

In a flash, three months passed. During the three months, Xiang Shaoyun had not left the gravekeeper elder once. Each time he felt like he was starting to get a gist of the ancient mantra, he would discover something new, making him continue his exploration indefinitely.

Even the gravekeeper elder was astonished as he thought, There might really be hope for this child to be successful!

"Alright. Your current understanding of the mantra is no longer any lower than mine. In the future, you will have to keep comprehending it yourself," said the gravekeeper elder. "Next, show me your battle techniques."

He then beckoned in a random direction. A pile of bones rose and walked over.

"Don't summon your puppet, and fight them with your own strength," said the gravekeeper elder.

Xiang Shaoyun nodded and charged the group of skeletons. He was no longer apprehensive of everything like when he had first arrived. He was also curious as to how much he had improved after several months of cultivation since he had now reached peak ninth-stage Skysoar Realm.

Although he hadn't actually focused much on his cultivation base in the past three months, his strength was still growing steadily. The passive growth was something that had started happening after he filled his nine stars with energy. That was why his physique was considered a freakish physique. Without the heavy armor constantly suppressing him, his growth would be even faster. As he approached the skeletons, he started using all the battle techniques he knew.

Lightning Bolt Fist!

Seven Scorching Sun Claws!

White Tiger Manifestation!

Six Goldplate Manual!

Vicious Prison Finger!

...

Xiang Shaoyun practically showed all the battle techniques he knew. He attacked the skeletons repeatedly, knocking them down again and again. However, there were too many of them. He couldn't completely destroy them, and there seemed to be an unending amount of them. Thus, fighting them was extremely exhausting.

Fortunately, Xiang Shaoyun had solid foundations that allowed him to become stronger the longer he fought. He even used his self-created Havoc Dance. Although there was no energy circulating around the skeletons' bodies, each time they attacked, they would still create some energy flow.

Xiang Shaoyun was able to accurately grasp those minute energy flows, allowing him to deal with all the incoming attacks appropriately and remain unharmed. During the battle, he found that the sensitivity of his senses had increased by more than five times and was comparable to late stage Dragon Ascension Realm cultivators.

In fact, even that was a conservative estimation. Xiang Shaoyun knew very well that it was due to his newly gained filthless soul. As the battle raged on, he became even more engrossed in the battle and even drew his Overlord Skyslaying Saber and used the first three stances of the Nine Overlord Skyslaying Saber Technique.

With his Overlord's Nine Nether Steps, he moved about freely amidst the skeletons while he swung his saber, destroying numerous skeletons. They couldn't deal any sort of damage to him.

Rumble! Rumble!

The attacks created numerous explosions everywhere, displaying an offensive might that was completely beyond the Skysoar Realm and was comparable to those in the Dragon Ascension Realm. The gravekeeper elder sat there silently; his eyes still appeared empty and blank, yet it felt like he was able to clearly see Xiang Shaoyun's every action.

After an unknown amount of time, the elder finally said, "Ok. That's all for now."

Hearing that, Xiang Shaoyun quickly returned to the elder's side with his Overlord's Nine Nether Steps. He was dripping with sweat, completely exhausted from the battle. However, he could sense that the stars within his body had formed an unending cycle of circulation that helped quickly replenish his energy. That had never happened before.

Looks like filling all the nine stars has finally helped showcase the advantage of my physique, thought Xiang Shaoyun with a smile.

The unending cycle was the best tool for one to quickly grow and maintain one's condition during battle. Little did he know that this was only happening because the powers contained within his nine stars had also changed.

In the past, he only had several unique powers within him, whereas the rest of his stars only contained regular energies. Thus, there was no balance between the stars, and because of that, such an unending cycle had never happened.

"What do you think about your battle techniques?" asked the gravekeeper elder.

Xiang Shaoyun thought for a bit and said, "Decent, I guess."

"Hehe, looks like you are very happy with your usage of battle techniques," the gravekeeper elder suddenly laughed. His face then turned solemn as he berated, "What a mess!"

Xiang Shaoyun had not expected that remark, and he turned somewhat sullen. He was proficient in many types of battle techniques, and he believed that he had a good understanding of battle techniques and actual combat situations. He wouldn't have prevailed over so many opponents in the past otherwise. He believed the gravekeeper elder had only given him that evaluation due to the elder's high cultivation level.

"Hehe, looks like you're unconvinced," said the elder. "Watch."

Right after he said that, seven figures appeared around them. All seven of them were the afterimages of the elder, and each of them was respectively demonstrating one of the battle techniques Xiang Shaoyun had used earlier.

Xiang Shaoyun focused on the seven figures, and initially, he did not feel like what they were doing was any different from what he did. But the more he watched, the more alarmed he became.

The figures were most definitely demonstrating the exact techniques he had used while battling the skeletons, yet the prowess they released was much greater compared to his versions.

In comparison, if Xiang Shaoyun was considered proficient in those techniques, then the elder's grasp on those techniques could be considered perfect. Using the same techniques with a different application of force and some other minor tweaks had completely changed their prowess.

Xiang Shaoyun's version of those techniques were cultivated in accordance to their learning materials. One could say that he was displaying a textbook version. As for the gravekeeper elder, his version was flexible, and each change of his seemed capable of pushing their might to the peak.

In conclusion, the elder's changes had not only strengthened the techniques but had also simplified and turned them ingenious, allowing the techniques to flow together smoothly. He was displaying the techniques' perfect forms.

#### Chapter 577: Dao of Tactics

Only then did Xiang Shaoyun understand that he deserved the gravekeeper elder's remark of a "complete mess". The battle techniques displayed by the gravekeeper elder's afterimages weren't even used alongside any sort of astral energy.

Only the forms of the techniques were displayed, yet that was enough to give Xiang Shaoyun a feeling of inferiority. With the absence of astral energy, one couldn't even say that the gravekeeper elder was merely using his higher cultivation level to embarrass Xiang Shaoyun.

When the afterimages vanished, the gravekeeper elder looked at Xiang Shaoyun and asked, "Do you understand?"

Xiang Shaoyun nodded deeply and said, "Yes. Thank you for your guidance, elder."

He then bowed. In truth, he had the urge to take this elder as his master, but the other party did not seem to have such intention at all. Thus, he couldn't bring himself to mention it. Perhaps he could do so when a better opportunity arose. He had to become the disciple of this elder who was most definitely an ultimate expert with deep and unmeasurable strength.

"It's your turn to demonstrate your battle techniques all over again," said the gravekeeper elder as he controlled the skeletons to attack again.

Xiang Shaoyun hadn't even gotten the chance to properly digest what he had just learned, yet he had to start fighting again. He could only brace himself and charge the skeletons.

Initially, he was still fighting in his usual style. But gradually, the images of how the gravekeeper elder had used his techniques surfaced in his mind, allowing him to slightly change how he fought.

After changing his fighting style, his attacks had obviously become much simpler yet more effective, with an increase in might and incisiveness. Of course, it wouldn't be easy to reach the kind of perfection the gravekeeper elder had previously displayed.

For three days in a row, Xiang Shaoyun had at least one battle per day with the skeletons. After each battle, he learned a lot. The battle techniques he displayed became simpler and simpler, his movements becoming smoother and smoother.

For him to accomplish this in such a short period of time, he truly had freakish comprehension. Of course, the continuous battles had also dealt him a considerable number of superficial wounds. He looked rather sorry at the moment. He did not hate the gravekeeper elder for that. Rather, he was filled with gratefulness. Such a cultivation method was extremely helpful to him, allowing him to reap great benefits.

The gravekeeper elder continued his teachings, "Any move is never unchanging. Just like the move prediction technique you used, any move that can defeat an opponent in the simplest and most effective manner is the strongest move. Don't be trapped by the limitations of stances. You will only by limiting yourself that way, and it will be very hard for you to reach the stage of transforming complexity to simplicity. This is simply the dao of details."

"Dao of details!" Xiang Shaoyun exclaimed.

He then knelt down before the gravekeeper elder, "Elder, I beg you to accept me as your disciple and teach me more daos that are stronger."

From what the gravekeeper elder had taught him during this period of time, Xiang Shaoyun was already seeing the elder as his master. Now would be the best opportunity to formalize the

relationship. Unfortunately, before his knees could touch the ground, an incorporeal power propped his knees up, making it impossible to kneel.

"I am not teaching you because I want to take you as a disciple. I am merely doing something for the academy," said the gravekeeper elder.

"Doing something for the academy does not conflict with accepting me as a disciple," Xiang Shaoyun said. "Do you think I'm unqualified?"

"No. I am merely a cripple in charge of guarding a graveyard. Qualifications do not matter here. It's mainly because my path of cultivation does not suit you and I'm limited in what I can teach you. I don't want to waste your future," said the gravekeeper elder with a sigh. "Alright, let's talk about your move prediction technique."

Xiang Shaoyun was disappointed to learn that the elder had no intention to take him as a disciple. But he quickly readjusted his mindset and started telling the gravekeeper elder about his self-created technique.

The gravekeeper elder also gave him some opinions, allowing him to gain a brand new understanding of his self-created technique. Based on what the gravekeeper elder said, the technique couldn't be classified as a battle technique. Rather, it was in a sense a tactical technique.

The so-called tactical technique was a technique that worked similar to how a game of chess would unfold where knowledge of the opponent would allow one to grasp victory. Xiang Shaoyun's Havoc Dance was a technique that relied on his ability to sense an opponent's energy flow and weak points, allowing him to predict the moves of the opponent and react accordingly. Thus, it was quite similar to a game of chess.

Of course, Xiang Shaoyun only knew a tiny bit of the concept of tactical technique. His comprehension wasn't even enough for him to be considered someone possessing basic mastery. According to the gravekeeper elder, there was once an expert capable of reaching a stage of knowing before the opponent.

Basically, it was a stage where one knew what the opponent would do before the opponent themselves knew. One would thus be able to react accordingly, slowly setting the opponent up before dealing a single fatal blow to finish them off.

Xiang Shaoyun was completely dumbstruck when he heard the elder's explanation. He had always thought that although he wasn't a pioneer in move prediction, at the very least, he had a basic mastery in it. But now, he found that he had merely been a frog in a well.

Since the ancient times, many geniuses had appeared. Numerous paths had been explored, and numerous creations had arisen. Xiang Shaoyun was still too far off the level of a pioneer.

"Of course, don't be disheartened. You did well thinking of this technique yourself. At your age, this is a terrific accomplishment. As for whether you can reach the knowing before the opponent stage, it will depend on yourself. But the dao of tactical technique can be considered a part of the dao of craftiness. It has its very own uniqueness, and you will have to slowly comprehend it yourself.

"However, you are already going against the tide with your nine different powers. If you still need to spend time comprehending craftiness, you won't have enough time. I think you should focus on your nine powers first before doing anything else," advised the gravekeeper elder earnestly.

Xiang Shaoyun nodded. "I will remember your teachings."

"Alright, let me teach you a battle technique to make up for both of us not being able to become master and disciple. Watch carefully," said the gravekeeper elder as an afterimage appeared.

The afterimage was demonstrating a fist technique. The moves were bold and seemingly simple, yet it contained a domineering might capable of shaking the heavens and swallowing the stars.

After a glance, Xiang Shaoyun was completely engrossed in it. He had never imagined that a fist technique could present such a striking visual impact that caused his blood to boil with excitement. He was completely infatuated.

After a while, the afterimage vanished. Xiang Shaoyun stood still, as if he was still engrossed in what he had seen. The gravekeeper elder did not disturb him. After writing some words on the ground, he vanished into thin air, as if he had never been there in the first place.

Chapter 578: Cosmos Dao Destroying Fist

Cosmos Dao Destroying Fist!

These were the words left behind by the gravekeeper elder, the name of the fist technique he had just demonstrated. It was an extremely domineering name, one that matched the technique's might. Xiang Shaoyun blanked out for a long time after looking at the words on the ground.

The gravekeeper elder was nowhere to be seen. Xiang Shaoyun was filled with excitement, but he also had a sense of loss. The gravekeeper elder had taught him so much yet had not accepted him as a disciple, leaving before he could even voice his gratefulness.

Xiang Shaoyun swept his gaze at the building before him. He knelt down and kowtowed three times respectfully before saying, "No matter what, I already consider you my master. I, Xiang Shaoyun, will not forget the favor you have shown me. I will let the Cosmos Dao Destroying Fist shine brightly and spread its fame far and wide."

After saying that, he sat down cross-legged and started replaying the Cosmos Dao Destroying Fist move by move in his Nether Soul Domain. His soul body also moved along and started practicing the fist technique.

Gift of visualization!

It was one of the unique talents granted to Xiang Shaoyun by the Nether Soul Domain. He had known of this talent ever since he had started cultivating, and it was a talent he frequently utilized, one that helped him be successful in every endeavor.

This Cosmos Dao Destroying Fist did not come with an accompanying mantra. However, the gravekeeper elder had personally taught and demonstrated it. Each move showcased the key point of the technique, and by comprehending these moves, the fist technique could be mastered.

The Cosmos Dao Destroying Fist did not have complicated moves, but it had a great emphasis on the utilization of force, borrowing the power of stars to reverse the cosmos and destroy the dao. That was the essence of this fist technique.

Using the Nether Soul Domain, Xiang Shaoyun replayed the fist technique again and again. His soul body also practiced it repeatedly, and after many attempts, he finally started gaining some comprehension of it. This was a fist technique without an element. Thus, it could be used alongside any type of astral energy. That was also part of the reason why the fist technique was so valuable.

One ought to know that the higher the cultivation, the more a cultivator relied on astral energy in battle. This particular fist technique worked in a completely different manner. It was able to utilize



both the astral energy within a cultivator and all the energies in the surroundings to unleash its might.

Xiang Shaoyun had a vague feeling that the Cosmos Dao Destroying Fist was not just another fist technique. It was akin to a celestial fist technique. After completely memorizing all the moves, he stood up and started moving his body, sending a completely ordinary and mediocre punch toward the thin air.

Instantly, it was as if nine stars had appeared around him. A projection of the cosmos overturning and a river of stars roiling appeared around him as an ancient aura spread out, releasing a domineering destructive might that could plant fear in anyone's heart.

The natural energy in the surrounding air was pulled over to the fist and moved alongside it, filling the fist with an incomparable explosiveness. Unfortunately, even with Xiang Shaoyun's strength, he could only display one percent of the fist's might. Yet just that little bit of might was enough to awe any Emperor in existence.

Xiang Shaoyun brandished his fists repeatedly, his movements bold, crushing complexity with simplicity, exuding an exceeding overbearingness. He had only cultivated for a short while, yet he had already exhausted a great amount of energy. The exhaustion rate was comparable to the Nine Overlord Skyslaying Saber Technique, perhaps even higher.

He thus sat down to recover. Suddenly, he thought of the nine-colored fog within his body and wondered what would happen if he powered the fist with the fog. At that thought, he couldn't hold back his curiosity and quickly stood up and charged toward the pile of bones. When they sensed him approaching, they reformed into skeletons and swarmed him.

Cosmos Dao Destroying Fist!

With roar, Xiang Shaoyun drew out the nine-colored fog from within his astral cosmos sea, shrouding himself with a nine-colored radiance, making him seem filled with energy. As he threw the punch at the skeletons, the destructive force surrounding his fist surged while the projection of nine stars around him sharpened.

A torrential might seemingly capable of shattering stars swept forth. A series of explosions erupted as a large number of skeletons were transformed into powder. One ought to know that these skeletons were formed of sovereign-grade bones that were comparable to top-tier emperor weapons in toughness. In fact, even some sovereign weapons would have difficulty outright destroying them.

Xiang Shaoyun himself had personally experienced their toughness. But now, after powering the Cosmos Dao Destroying Fist with his nine-colored fog, the bones became so fragile, directly reduced into fine powder by his punch. It was too shocking. Even he stood there in stupefaction as he gazed at the large expanse of white powder before him.

"Haha, my persistence to cultivate nine powers is correct!" Xiang Shaoyun finally recovered from his shock and started howling with laughter.

The nine-colored fog was formed of nine different powers, containing both the power of life and destruction. Perhaps that was the ultimate secret of cultivating nine powers. It was a realization that caused Xiang Shaoyun to be wild with joy.

After all, he had been hesitating ever since he had heard the gravekeeper elder's narrative, not knowing what kind of setback was waiting ahead of him. But after once again witnessing the prowess of the nine-colored fog, he regained hope and no longer felt so lost about his future. He was now confident that his choice was right. Perhaps others had failed because they hadn't been able to form the nine-colored fog in their astral cosmos seas like him.

And thus, Xiang Shaoyun spent his days studying both the ancient mantra and the Cosmos Dao Destroying Fist every single day. He also started forming more nine-colored fog within him with the powers of his nine stars.

The nine-colored fog within him had become extremely thick ever since he had absorbed the gathered astral energies during his assessment. And with his recent growth his strength, his astral cosmos sea had expanded considerably, allowing him to gather a rather sizable amount of nine-colored fog within himself.

Furthermore, after filling all nine of his stars with nine unique powers, he was able to form an unending cycle within him that constantly replenished him with energy. Thus, he no longer needed to worry that the nine-colored fog would be fully exhausted before he could even do much with it.

After spending about two months in cultivation, his cultivation base was now extremely robust, pushing him to the very peak of the Skysoar Realm. He only needed to finish forming his draconic aura and he would be able to easily enter the Emperor Realm.

It was at this time that the academy finally sent some people to take him out. Xiao Wei was not among them. Instead, they were the grand guardians. Naturally, Xiang Shaoyun had a rather

unsightly expression when he saw the grand guardians. After all, they had been trying to make him cripple himself and restart his cultivation focusing on a single power.

This time, when the grand guardians saw that Xiang Shaoyun was still cultivating nine powers, their eyes were filled with mixed emotions. Finally, they held themselves back and did not even mention making him focus on one power. Instead, the principal sent him off.

## Chapter 579: The Changes After One Year

Thus far, the newest recruits had entered the academy for one year. During this period of time, many disciples had risen in fame, and a ranking of top 100 disciples had also been released. The ranking was known as the Dragon Phoenix List, and each of the disciples on the list was an extraordinary genius.

Of the 100 disciples, the hidden genius disciples, Baili Yixiao the Smiling Swordsman occupied the first place. Zhan Wushuang the Fist Emperor occupied the second place, Yu Ziyang the Holy Son of the Yu Clan occupied the third place, Ouyang Chuanqi of Ouyang Clan occupied the fourth place, Huang Wuji of the Dusk Dynasty occupied the fifth place, Yu Caidie the Holy Maiden of the Yu Clan occupied the sixth place, Han Chenfei of the Glacier Palace occupied the seventh place, Xiao Xie of the Severing Saber Manor occupied the eighth place, Long Shi occupied the ninth place, Ye Linshan occupied the tenth place, and so on.

The first eight disciples were more or less the same eight strongest freaks. Meanwhile Long Shi and Ye Linshan had squeezed themselves into the top 10. Both of them had displayed an extraordinary talent during the assessment. They possessed high-grade eight-star innate elemental physiques, comparable to Di Lin's physique.

Di Lin hadn't been able to enter the top 10 and wasn't even part of the top 20. He currently occupied the 39th place. But the only reason for that was due to his relatively lower cultivation level due to his age. Given a year or two, he would be able to climb higher.

As for Huo Xudong, he was within the top 100, while people like Di Tong and Tang Longfei weren't even part of the top 100. One ought to know the weight of this ranking list. The placings were all based on the accomplishments of the new disciples after a year of hard work.

Some of the disciples who had failed to enter the top 100 weren't necessarily weaker; they simply hadn't been as dazzling as those on the list. Naturally, many of the disciples were working hard to one day enter the list. Just by entering the list, they would be guaranteed a certain status amid the numerous geniuses of the dominion.

During the year, Tang Longfei, Lady Shura, and Ning Wenhua had been cultivating hard. Tang Longfei was now a first-stage Dragon Ascension Realm cultivator, and when ranked among all the disciples, he was within top 5,000.

The top 100 list was known as the Dragon Phoenix List while the top 1,000 list was known as the Jiao Luan List. As for the list including all the new disciples, it was known as the Serpent Fowl List.

The naming style of three rankings were rather interesting. From a serpent to a jiao, and from a jiao to a dragon. From a fowl to a luan, and from a luan to a phoenix. The three were the same lists that had been repeatedly used generation after generation in the academy.

As for Tang Longfei, he occupied the upper-middle range of the Serpent Fowl List. After all, there were about 20,000 new disciples in their batch in addition to the large number of followers. Thus, competition was tight.

As for Xiang Shaoyun, who had initially astonished everyone, he was now ranked at the middle range of the Serpent Fowl List. The reason his ranking was so low was because rumors of him cultivating nine different powers had spread. He had even been locked up at the forbidden Back Graveyard by the principal.

It was an extremely harsh punishment, and those who had left the Back Graveyard had mostly ended up with slight mental issues or had completely gone mad. Some had even directly died there. In short, very few people had survived that place intact.

Since Xiang Shaoyun was only an eighth-stage Skysoar Realm cultivator, nobody believed he would end well after being thrown there, which was the reason for his low ranking. Everyone believed that after a period of time, his name would probably be removed altogether.

As the followers of Xiang Shaoyun, Han Qianwei and Han Xuwei had indirectly suffered the humiliation on his behalf. Due to their beauty, the two were akin to snow lotuses that gave one an urge to pluck them. Furthermore, the two weren't too strong and were at the bottom of the Serpent Fowl List, even if they had already reached initial eighth-stage Skysoar Realm from peak sixth-stage.

In the eyes of the various geniuses, they were still completely insignificant. Because of that, the two turned into the prey of many men who wanted to make them theirs. For them, having these two as maids would be a decent option. In their eyes, they weren't even qualified as lovers.

It gave the two sisters an intense sense of humiliation, and their confidence was completely shattered. Back then, they had still aimed to be Xiang Shaoyun's women, but now, it seemed like they weren't even qualified to be his women. That realization had changed their expectations, and if Xiang Shaoyun was able to leave safely, they would willingly serve as his followers without hoping for more.

Only when they managed to catch up with someone like Lady Shura would they entertain the thought of being his women. One ought to know that Lady Shura's draconic aura had reached 90 percent completion. She was almost an Emperor, and with her Shura Physique, she ranked quite high in the Serpent Fowl List and wasn't too far off from entering the Jiao Luan List.

The Shura Physique was a unique physique that wasn't any worse than the innate elemental physiques of those freaks. Thus, it was clear Lady Shura would have a bright future. Furthermore, she was also a core disciple.

Because of that, she now had her very own villa. She had also settled the Han Clan sisters in her villa, allowing them to cultivate there. Otherwise, there probably wouldn't be anything left of the sisters.

After all, private battles were not prohibited in the Dragon Phoenix Academy. So long as one did not kill or cripple an opponent, nobody would care about private battles. Those who had joined one of the various factions in the academy would receive the protection of the faction, and that would serve as a deterring force. If a faction member was targeted by someone, the faction would work together against the aggressor.

For now, Lady Shura and the Han Clan sisters had yet to join any faction. The time for them to wait around was almost up, and if they still remained without a faction after this, trouble would come looking.

Di Lin headed a faction called the Di Alliance, and this was a faction that had been constantly creating trouble for Lady Shura and the Han Clan sisters. Today, Yi Xuan had arrived at Lady Shura's villa with seven other people from the Di Alliance.

Yi Xuan had joined the academy as a regular disciple. He had subsequently encountered Di Lin and flattered him enough to become a member of the Di Alliance. It was unknown how he had earned Di Lin's grace, but he was able to quickly become one of Di Lin's trusted aides. With that, his status within the Di Alliance quickly became extraordinary.

He had long taken a liking to the Han Clan sisters. He wanted to have them for himself, annoying Xiang Shaoyun by making him relive the experience of having his women snatched from him. Of course, the main reason he did this was so he could help vent Di Lin's anger at Xiang Shaoyun.

Someone with Yi Xuan's status was not supposed to be qualified to enter the residential area of core disciples. But by his side this time was Yue Huangquan, a core disciple ranked higher than Lady Shura on the Serpent Fowl List. He was very close to entering the Jiao Luan List and had a cultivation level of first-stage Dragon Ascension Realm. He was also why the group was able to smoothly arrive before Lady Shura's villa. There, Yi Xuan directly kicked the door open, showing no fear whatsoever.

"Get out here right this moment, Lady Shura. Today, I am taking the Han Clan girls away with me," shouted Yi Xuan brazenly.

#### Chapter 580: The Trouble of Lady Shura and the Han Clan Sisters

Lady Shura and Han Clan sisters left their rooms after hearing the shout. These days, many factions had come to invite them to join their respective factions. After all, Lady Shura occupied the upper middle ranges in the Serpent Fowl List and possessed decent combat prowess.

However, she had not agreed to any invitations and had remained unaffiliated with the Han Clan sisters. Yi Xuan was going overboard coming in force to take the Han Clan sisters with him. Lady Shura still wore her same mask, her eyes exuding a captivating splendor, and her hourglass figure was still as enchanting as ever.

A lot of people were interested in her. If it wasn't for the somewhat irksome mask she wore all the time, there would be a lot of playboys pursuing her already. One could say that her mask had helped her avoid quite a number of troubles.

Lady Shura looked at the intruders coldly and berated, "You are acting too impudently! Are you ignoring the academy rules?"

Although personal battles were not prohibited by the academy, intruding upon someone's residence like this was most definitely a taboo. It was not that Yi Xuan and company weren't aware of it, but they had bribed the patrols to temporarily stay away from the area. That was why they were acting so fearlessly.

"Hmph. It is not your place to decide if we are being impudent. Today, the two Han Clan girls better obediently come with me. If they do, I will let this matter end here. Of course, Lady Shura, you're

always welcome to join the Di Alliance as well. That way, we can have your back as well. Choose one between the two options, or I will have no choice but to be a bully today. In any case, the two girls had joined as followers and aren't protected by the academy," said Yi Xuan.

The expressions of the Han Clan sisters fell. They had initially thought that after joining they would receive the care and guidance of the academy. Unfortunately, they had both been mistaken. Any sort of care, guidance, or resources were reliant upon the person they were following. That person would be the one to fight for all that on their behalf.

With Xiang Shaoyun nowhere to be seen, they had been in an extremely passive situation. If it wasn't for Lady Shura, they didn't even know what would have happened to them by now. With Yi Xuan so blatantly bullying them, they no longer wanted to swallow the humiliation.

"Even if we die, we won't go with you!" said Han Qianwei resolutely.

"At most, we'll leave the academy," said Han Xuewei.

"Haha, sure, go and die if you want. I won't stop you. But after joining the academy, it won't be so easy to leave," said Yi Xuan as he roared with laughter. "Why are you being so stubborn? Xiang Shaoyun has been banished to the forbidden zone. He won't be able to leave anymore. There is no future in remaining his followers. Only by following me will you two have a chance to accomplish something in the academy. Why are you being stupid together with this woman?"

"Stop wasting your time. This is unrelated to Lady Shura. We will fight you to the death!" Han Qianwei said.

She had reached this decision because she did not want to burden Lady Shura. As she spoke, she grabbed her younger sister's hand and started leaving the villa. So long as they left, Yi Xuan and company would not dare to do anything to Lady Shura. After all, she was still a core disciple.

But right as they were about to leave, Lady Shura stopped them and said indifferently, "Before Shaoyun shows himself, you are not allowed to leave this place."

"Lady Shura, let us go. We will only bring you trouble," said Han Qianwei.

"If I'm afraid of trouble, I wouldn't have brought you here in the first place," said Lady Shura. She then drew her weapon and looked at Di Shang's group coldly. "Bring it on. If you don't kill me today, let's see who will be the one to ultimately suffer after I make a big deal out of this."

Lady Shura was prepared to throw caution to the wind. Thus, she was unafraid of making a big fuss. It was the only way to deter them from creating more trouble for her.

"Senior Brother Yue, I'll have to trouble you to deal with this girl. Let's end the battle as quickly as possible," said Yi Xuan respectfully.

The young man beside him had soft facial features, wielded an s-shaped sword, wore snake-skin armor, and exuded a sinister and cold aura. Anyone he focused on would feel extremely unwell, as if that person had been bitten by a viper.

"Lady Shura, become my lover. I like you," said Yue Huangquan as he scanned Lady Shura's seductive body with a lustful look.

Unlike others, Yue Huangquan cared less about someone's face. Instead, he liked someone like Lady Shura who was mysterious and seductive. That was why he had been willing to take the risk of bringing Yi Xuan and the others to her residence.

One could say that both Yi Xuan and Yue Huangquan were here for their own reasons. The only reply Yue Huangquan received was Lady Shura's sword, which was aimed straight at his throat. The moment she attacked, she used her full strength, not worried whatsoever that she would kill him.

Yue Huangquan was no pushover either. He moved his body to the side and dodged the attack before grabbing at her wrist. She was unable to avoid the grab in time, and her opponent even took the chance to grab at her chest.

Shura's Battle Projection!

She activated the Shura's Battle Projection, erupting with a powerful aura as a projection of a shura appeared around her. She forcefully broke free of Yue Huangquan and repeatedly kicked at his lower body.

However, Yue Huangquan displayed the might of an expert above Lady Shura in the Serpent Fowl List. With snakelike footwork, he avoided the kicks and sent his aura of an Emperor out to suppress



Lady Shura. He sent a series of snake-shaped attacks toward the protruding parts of Lady Shura's body. Just based on what he was doing in the midst of battle, this fellow was a pervert through and through.

Meanwhile, Yi Xuan sneered, "Both of you, come with me obediently."

He dashed at the sisters and grabbed at their vitals, attempting to subdue them with a single move. He was now a first-stage Dragon Ascension Realm cultivator. The sisters were not his match. Before they could even react, he had grabbed both their necks.

He shouted to Lady Shura, "Lady Shura, surrender or I'll kill both of them!"

His words distracted Lady Shura, allowing Yue Huangquan to strike her stomach, sending her flying and coughing blood.

"Haha, come with us as well. After doing the deed, you will definitely be willing to become my woman!" said Yue Huangquan after subduing Lady Shura as he laughed joyfully. Right that moment, two figures streaked toward them.

One of them roared furiously, "You dare to take advantage of this young master's woman? What impudence!"