

Overlord 81

Chapter 81: Results of the Seclusion

Xia Liuhui strutted into Xiang Shaoyun's residence, and borrowing Xiang Shaoyun's glory, he basked in all the attention he was getting from the crowd.

This is such an amazing feeling, Xia Liuhui thought to himself, not wanting to ever part from this feeling. When he saw Little White, who was on guard duty in the courtyard, he said, "I know I'm handsome, kitty. Stop staring at me like that."

Little White immediately dashed over and bit his foot.

"AHHH! Stop! Let go! It hurts like hell! Let go, or I won't forget this!" Xia Liuhui yelled miserably as he shook his leg repeatedly, trying to fling Little White away. But no matter how hard he tried, he couldn't shake Little White off. He was almost tearing up from the pain.

"Little White, let go," Xiang Shaoyun's voice rang out. At that command, Little White released Xia Liuhui. He meowed once at Xia Liuhui before strutting away proudly to lie down at the corner of the courtyard.

Xia Liuhui had a miserable expression on his face as he complained, "Boss, what was that? It hurts so much!"

"It's your fault for calling him kitty," Xiang Shaoyun said. He then continued, "Tell the people outside to leave. I need some time to stabilize my cultivation."

"Yes boss! On it!" Xia Liuhui answered before running outside.

In the courtyard, Xiang Shaoyun sighed as he muttered, "Looks like fame is not necessarily a good thing. Guess I'll need to disappear from the public eye for a bit."

Thus, in the coming days, Xiang Shaoyun started cultivating in seclusion. He did not join the Martial Hall Palace so he could fight for power and wealth, nor did he care much for fame. He only wanted a place where he could silently cultivate and quickly grow.

After plundering Wu Fuxiang, Xiang Shaoyun had gained a considerable amount of resources. On top of that, he could also take what he needed from the Martial Hall Palace. Because of that, he no longer needed to worry over resources. With no hesitation whatsoever, he gathered the resources he required to increase his cultivation and expand his astral cosmos sea.

The speed of Xiang Shaoyun's growth had been fast enough. What he needed on top of the speed was a stable growth. The first thing he did during his seclusion was strengthen his battle techniques. He learned a tier-3 primary-grade saber technique called the Berserk Lightning Blade, and he also got the final mantra of the Star Destroying Finger from the Battle Techniques Hall to further improve his Star Destroying Finger.

Xiang Shaoyun did not plan to practice too many battle techniques at once. It was not like he would find it hard to remember all those battle techniques, but he wanted a stable growth right now. In any case, he already had a large number of tier-4 battle techniques in his head that he could start practicing the moment he reached the Transformation Realm.

The Berserk Lightning Blade was a lightning elemental battle technique, and it only had three stances. Each stance was incredibly powerful, and this battle technique was enough for him for now.

As for the Star Destroying Finger, Xiang Shaoyun had been strengthening it. His Star Destroying Finger was much stronger now, as the energy he shot out of his finger could already pierce through stones and tier-2 armors.

Apart from that, after putting some work into the Overlord's Nine Nether Steps, his speed had also increased significantly. Even eighth-stage Astral Realm cultivators would be hard pressed to match him in terms of speed now.

However, the Overlord's Nine Nether Steps was not just a movement technique. Xiang Shaoyun knew full well that this was in fact a battle technique that he could actually use to battle.

Upon full mastery of the Overlord's Nine Nether Steps, a single step could destroy mountains and rivers, awing the heavens with its might. But that level was of course still far from his reach.

Additionally, Xiang Shaoyun had also fully mastered the Golden Wolf Sword Technique and Lightning Spear Technique. He could now unleash 100 percent of the two battle techniques' strength, greatly increasing his flexibility during combat.

One could say that the one month of cultivation had granted Xiang Shaoyun the number of battle techniques a proper Astral Realm cultivator should have. The seclusion had also helped him fully consolidate his cultivation at the fourth stage.

His previous growth had been too fast. Without properly tempering himself, he would be left with a shaky foundation. Thus, he had been absorbing the purple qi of the first ray of sun and the boundless power of the moon and stars without actually increasing his cultivation. Instead, he suppressed the absorbed energy to temper and stabilize his cultivation base.

One night, Xiang Shaoyun was seated in the courtyard. Like a monk in deep meditation, he sat completely motionless. Occasionally, rays of starlight would shine upon him as a large amount of energy gathered in his body. In this condition, his entire being emanated an extremely mysterious and majestic feeling, and he looked like the son of heavens that had descended upon the mundane world.

Generally, when a person reached the Astral Realm, that person would be able to start absorbing astral energy from the stars to grow in strength. But most people could only absorb a small amount of astral energy. In fact, the amount of astral energy a regular person could absorb was so miniscule it was hardly noticeable. That was completely unlike Xiang Shaoyun's current condition where a dense amount of astral energy was surrounding him.

Elder Zhen Peng, who was guarding Xiang Shaoyun in the dark, was shocked by this scene.

"Is the young master's physique really only five-star? From his current condition, even if he actually has a six-star physique, it wouldn't be a surprise. Or perhaps, his actual physique is..." Elder Zhen Peng cut this line of thought short as it was simply too terrifying.

Many people would fight over getting a disciple with such freakish talent.

Within Xiang Shaoyun's body, a wave of starlight rippled everywhere before finally combining with the astral cosmos sea, forming a dazzling river of stars. Purple qi could be seen floating and drifting about on this river, creating an incredibly mysterious world in his body.

Presently, the astral cosmos sea was already two square meters in size. This was the result of him spending one whole month nurturing his astral cosmos sea with spirit medicines. A size of two square meters was already a decent storing space. Xiang Shaoyun was very pleased with this result.

The night passed quickly and morning arrived. This morning, Xiang Shaoyun started absorbing the purple qi to once again grow his strength. After spending a month suppressing and stabilizing his cultivation, it was now time for further growth.

A large amount of purple qi was being absorbed, and when the purple qi entered his body, his lightning bone absorbed a large portion. In truth, the lightning bone only constituted a tiny part of his spine, the tiny part that was purple in color. To fully turn his entire spine into the color of purple lightning, he would require a much larger amount of energy.

Nevertheless, just from this tiny lightning bone, traces of the natural purple lightning energy could be found. This so-called natural purple lightning energy was a sort of innate lightning energy.

The current Xiang Shaoyun had yet to discover the actual function of the lightning bone, but after reaching the Transformation Realm, he would gain the inner gaze ability. He could then start controlling the lightning bone and gain an even more terrifying power.

Done with meditating, Xiang Shaoyun stood up. With an elated expression, he muttered to himself, "It has been a month. Time to pay the Hall of Limits another visit. Or maybe I should go out on a trip instead. Hiding indoors all the time will only stunt the growth of my combat prowess."

After telling Elder Zhen Peng that he was leaving, Xiang Shaoyun started making his preparation to visit the town with Little White. With Wu Fuxiang's death, the Wu Clan was now shrouded in fear. It was unlikely that they would try anything against him.

"Young master, please allow me to come with you. I don't want to see you in danger ever again," Elder Zhen Peng said.

Xiang Shaoyun hesitated slightly before saying, "Fine, we'll go together. In any case, I only wanted to take a breather outside."

And since Elder Zhen Peng was already going with him, Xiang Shaoyun decided to invite Xia Liuhui along as well. But right after they left, their departure was noticed. Shortly after, a pigeon was sent flying toward a certain direction.

Chapter 82: Black Gold

Wu Town was considered a middle-tier town within the Cloud Margin City's territory. Despite being a middle-tier town, it had a large population. The market was always crowded with all sorts of

people. Ordinary citizens, traveling merchants, cultivators, and many other types of people filled the market with hustle and bustle.

"Boss, I thought you were a cultivation addict. Why do you have the time to bring me out?" Xia Liuhui asked.

"Cultivating is something that needs to be done a step at a time. It is pointless to spend all the time cultivating. Occasional breaks might very well help you grow instead," Xiang Shaoyun said.

"Is that so?" Xia Liuhui couldn't really get what Xiang Shaoyun was saying.

On the other hand, Elder Zhen Peng behind them seemed to have realized something. "Perhaps I have been spending too much time in seclusion. I should have taken the time to experience the emotions of the mundane world. That way, I will be able to further improve my mental state."

Xiang Shaoyun strolled around aimlessly as he was really out here only to take a breather with no specific goal in mind. But they hadn't even been in town for long before Elder Zhen Peng spoke using voice transmission, "Young master, I think someone is tailing us."

Xiang Shaoyun frowned, Is the Wu Clan still not giving up?

At this thought, he slowed down before whispering to Elder Zhen Peng, "Just pretend we haven't realized yet. Let's see what they want first. We'll take care of them later."

"Yes, young master." Elder Zhen Peng nodded.

After strolling through the market, they arrived at a distribution center. When Xiang Shaoyun saw that there were a lot of cultivators here, he squeezed into the crowd.

Here, a large number of stalls could be found. Even Astral Realm and Transformation Realm cultivators could be seen selling items. A large variety of items were being sold, such as medicines, herbs, precious ores, and rare treasures.

"Wow, there are so many things here!" Xia Liuhui cried out in surprise.

"Let's go. If you see anything you want, just let me know. Your boss will buy it for you!" Xiang Shaoyun offered generously.

"Hehe, thank you in advance, boss," Xia Liuhui said as he rubbed his hands gleefully.

Xiang Shaoyun also started browsing through the stalls.

Although there really weren't many nice things being sold in a small town like this, it was still a nice place to stroll around while trying to figure out the goal of the people following them.

With Elder Zhen Peng present, he really wasn't worried that the Wu Clan would be able to do anything to him. Thus, Xiang Shaoyun browsed the stalls and strolled around in a completely relaxed mood.

There were many goods being sold, but very few of them were actually things Xiang Shaoyun really needed. After all, he was backed by the Martial Hall Palace now, and he could directly take what he needed from them. What this market had was incomparable to what the Martial Hall Palace had to offer.

"Huh? It's an agave! Too bad it's only half a stalk, so the medical efficacy is about 70 or 80 percent reduced," Xiang Shaoyun muttered as he crouched down before a stall and looked at a dragon-shaped vine.

Agave was a high-grade spirit medicine capable of greatly strengthening one's physical flesh. There was only half an agave here, and from how it looked, someone had probably gnawed off the other half. Thus, its medical efficacy had dropped greatly.

"How much for this?" Xiang Shaoyun asked the stall owner.

The stall owner answered nonchalantly, "Twenty low-grade spirit crystals."

"But normal low-grade spirit medicines are only worth about five spirit crystals. Your agave only has the medical efficacy comparable to a low-grade spirit medicine. I don't think anyone will buy it at 20 spirit crystals," Xiang Shaoyun said as he shook his head. He wasn't some spendthrift fool.

Xiang Shaoyun was about to leave when his gaze landed on a piece of pitch-black stone. At the sight of that stone, a trace of astonishment surfaced in his eyes.

"Fifteen spirit crystals. Take it or leave it," said the stall owner.

"I can agree with the price if this stone is included as well," Xiang Shaoyun said as he weighed the pitch-black stone in his hand.

The stall owner hesitated slightly but eventually relented. "Deal."

Xiang Shaoyun quickly paid the stall owner and kept the agave and black stone away.

I did not expect to see black gold here. Haha, I got lucky! Xiang Shaoyun thought gleefully.

Ordinary people would have no idea what this black stone was. But Xiang Shaoyun was a knowledgeable person who only needed a single glance to know that this was in fact a piece of black gold.

The black gold was a top-tier refining material. It was incomparably hard, and a tiny bit of it was enough to increase the quality of even a king weapon. It was a top quality material in the eyes of many blacksmiths. A black gold of this size was in fact worth at least 500 high-grade spirit crystals. Xiang Shaoyun had only spent 15 low-grade spirit crystals for it. It was as good as getting it for free.

Xiang Shaoyun had no plans of selling this black gold, however. He planned to use it to cultivate his own fate weapon. Although the black gold was not really the perfect material he had in mind, in his current situation, he would have to settle for it. He would first use it to create an early form of his weapon. In the future when he obtained better materials, he could then further improve his weapon.

Generally speaking, to cultivate one's own fate weapon, one needed to first reach an extremely high cultivation level and have an astral cosmos sea. Xiang Shaoyun had already formed an astral cosmos sea when he was only an Astral Realm cultivator. Since he had met the main requirement to form a fate weapon, he could start cultivating it much earlier than most people could.

After buying the agave and the black gold, Xiang Shaoyun directly kept them into his astral cosmos sea. With that, it would be hard for others to even know he had something like that in his

possession. He continued strolling around when Little White suddenly meowed anxiously. After meowing, he ran toward a certain stall before Xiang Shaoyun could react.

"Little White, stand right there!" Xiang Shaoyun commanded. But he was still too slow. Little White was already at the stall and had a certain object in his mouth. The owner of the stall was obviously not an ordinary person. He sent his energy out his body, and with a wave of his palm, he sent Little White flying away.

"Where did this animal come from? You're trying to steal from me?" The stall owner was actually a Transformation Realm cultivator. His ability to send his energy outside his body made him look quite impressive.

"Little White!" Xiang Shaoyun cried out before dashing toward Little White.

Fortunately, Little White wasn't injured. After shaking his head, he stood back up and was about to pounce the stall again, but Xiang Shaoyun grabbed him and lifted him up.

"Stop messing around. Just tell me if you want anything," Xiang Shaoyun scolded.

After being scolded, Little White showed a wronged expression and pointed at the stall with his paw.

"Kid, take your pet away. If you keep messing around with me, I won't let you off so lightly anymore," the stall owner threatened.

"Is that so?" said Elder Zhen Peng as he appeared behind Xiang Shaoyun. Just as he was about to suppress the stall owner with his presence, Xiang Shaoyun waved his hand and said, "Little White was the one at fault. We don't have to be offended by this." He then clasped his hand and saluted the stall owner and said, "My apologies. Seems like my pet has taken a liking to something you're selling. May I have a look at what it is?"

Chapter 83: Even More Shameless Than Robbing

"Sure," said the stall owner with fear in his eyes as he stole a glance at Elder Zhen Peng.

Although Elder Zhen Peng had yet to release his presence earlier, the stall owner had a feeling that this was a scary person.

Xiang Shaoyun nodded and asked Little White, "So what do you want?"

Little White meowed before running to the stall. He longingly pointed at something that looked like a beast tooth.

Xiang Shaoyun glanced at the tooth and asked, "How much for this?"

"This is a king-tier tiger tooth. It won't be cheap. You need at least 100 low-grade spirit crystals for it," said the stall owner.

"If it is really a king-tier tiger tooth, this price is indeed rather cheap. But this tiger tooth is already partially destroyed. It is not worth that much. I will take it for 50 low-grade spirit crystals," Xiang Shaoyun bargained.

The stall owner shook his head. "No, at least 90 spirit crystals. I won't be selling it for any cheaper."

The stall owner judged that Xiang Shaoyun was a young master visiting the town. It was likely that this young master was quite wealthy. Thus, the stall owner had no qualms with charging Xiang Shaoyun a high price.

He was sure Xiang Shaoyun was a young master because not even himself was actually sure that this tiger tooth was actually a king-tier tooth yet Xiang Shaoyun knew what it was. It was something the stall owner had only gotten by fluke.

"No, still too expensive. If you are really trying to sell it, I'll take it for 60 spirit crystals. Otherwise, forget it." Xiang Shaoyun shook his head.

The stall owner hesitated slightly before offering, "Final offer, 80 spirit crystals."

"Fine, 80 it is then." Xiang Shaoyun couldn't be bothered to continue bargaining.

Right this moment, an arrogant voice rang out, "I'll take this tiger tooth for 100 low-grade spirit crystals."

When Xiang Shaoyun turned around, he saw a young man coming over mounted on a ferocious-looking beast. He was surrounded by a group of underlings, and each of them was also riding a demonic beast. As a whole the group looked quite impressive.

The young man was dressed in a gorgeous outfit, and he carried himself with boundless arrogance. He was evidently an extremely conceited person. The young man was at the late stage of the Astral Realm. To reach this cultivation level at this age, his cultivation talent was quite good. Apart from that, he also had Transformation Realm cultivators among his group of underlings. Looking at the soot and dust on them, it was quite clear they were not locals and had also traveled here from afar.

"Eighty spirit crystals, here." Xiang Shaoyun ignored the young man and tossed over a sack of spirit crystals before reaching out to grab the tiger tooth. These were the spirit crystals he had looted from Wu Fuxiang. He had in fact obtained over 10,000 spirit crystals there, and he had a few hundred of them stored in his astral cosmos sea at all time.

Wu Fuxiang was the previous head of the Wu Town, and thus, he was a very wealthy person.

"Wait a minute. Did you not hear me? I'm taking the tiger tooth," the young man said unhappily. He then spoke to the stall owner, "Are you deaf? I am offering 100 spirit crystals, a higher price than what he offered."

The stall owner appeared rather annoyed with the young man. But in order to earn more money, he still decided to stop Xiang Shaoyun. He said, "That's right. The highest bidder wins all. But since you're here first, if you can match his price, I'll still sell it to you."

Xiang Shaoyun narrowed his eyes and said, "Are you sure?"

"Yes!" the stall owner said.

"Kid, f*ck off if you can't afford it," the young man berated Xiang Shaoyun.

Xiang Shaoyun turned and looked at the young man before saying, "Where did this dog come from? Why is he barking non-stop here?"

"Bastard! Teach him a lesson!" the young man commanded furiously.

Right after the young man said that, Elder Zhen Peng stepped forth while a terrifying pressure rippled out of him.

"Piss off!" Elder Zhen Peng berated. He was not speaking loudly, but his tone of voice, which left no room for discussion, still made him sound rather imposing. The young man and his underlings could now sense that Elder Zhen Peng was a King Realm cultivator. Their faces turned unsightly at that realization.

"Young Master Wen, this is a King Realm cultivator. We need to leave," an old man whispered.

"A King? There is a King in a small town like this?" the young man muttered in indignation.

After a slight hesitation, he glared at Xiang Shaoyun and said, "I, Wen Jinrui, will remember this. I will be sure to take good care of you guys when you visit the Cloud Margin City in the future."

Then, they all left. The stall owner was completely stunned by what he saw. He originally planned to get himself more profit, but it seemed like his decision had now come back to bite him.

"This tiger tooth is now mine," Xiang Shaoyun glanced at the stall owner and said.

"Yes, yes, take it. Free of charge," the stall owner offered the tiger tooth respectfully.

This young man had a King by his side. If the King was angered, he could kill the stall owner with only a wave of his hand. How would the stall owner still dare to accept payment for the tiger tooth?

"I am not a robber," Xiang Shaoyun said.

"No, no, that is not robbing. This is me paying my respects to the most respected young master." The stall owner waved his hands repeatedly. Inwardly, he was thinking to himself that he would take even 50 spirit crystals at this point.

"Take this. I don't intend to owe anyone anything," Xiang Shaoyun said with a magnanimous expression as he picked one spirit crystal out of the pouch before passing it to the stall owner.

Then, Xiang Shaoyun turned and started walking toward Xia Liuhui with the tiger tooth in hand. Staring at the single spirit crystal on his palm, the stall owner felt like crying. Inwardly, he was wailing without stop, This is even more shameless than robbing!

Meanwhile, Xia Liuhui was busy browsing a stall opened by a young woman. But in truth, he was only pretending while stealing glances at the young woman.

"Kid, are you done staring? If you're not done, go back home and gawk at your mom instead," the young woman shouted impatiently.

This young woman wasn't an exceptionally beautiful woman, but she had a mature charm to her that was extremely alluring for inexperienced youngsters like Xia Liuhui.

Caught gawking, Xia Liuhui blushed as he continued with his act and pointed at a random item, "I want to buy that."

"This is a low-grade spirit medicine, the blue chamomile fruit, with a price of 10 spirit crystals. Can you even afford it?" the young woman asked with contempt.

"I-I..." Xia Liuhui stuttered, not knowing what to say.

He would be able to afford 10 gold coins, but he wouldn't be able to afford 10 spirit crystals even if he had to prostitute himself.

"Just piss off already. Trying to take advantage of me? Why don't you go look at yourself in the mirror," the young woman said with a look of disgust on her face.

"Deal. Pack the blue chamomile fruit for my brother," Xiang Shaoyun walked over and interjected. As he spoke, 10 spirit crystals appeared in his palm as he handed them to Xia Liuhui.

"B-boss!" Xia Liuhui was extremely touched by this gesture.

"Take it. In the future, if you want to gawk at women, just gawk openly and bravely. What is there to be embarrassed off? If you are capable enough, you can get any woman you want!" Xiang Shaoyun said before staring straight at the young woman. His invasive gaze caused the young

woman to quickly lower her head. Her heart started thumping rapidly while her face blushed as she thought, This young man...there is a certain charm to him!

Before the young woman had even recovered from her thoughts, Xia Liuhui had already left with Xiang Shaoyun after leaving behind the spirit crystals.

Chapter 84: Kill

"Old Peng, are they still tailing us?" Xiang Shaoyun asked.

Elder Zhen Peng nodded. "Yes. They have been tailing us all this time. I think they are waiting for an opening before making their move."

"Since they are waiting for an opening, let's give them an opening. Elder Zhen Peng, leave with Xia Liuhui first. Let's see if I am their actual target. When they show themselves, we can then deal with all of them at once," Xiang Shaoyun said.

"Boss, what if I leave alone?" Xia Liuhui said.

"No, the two of you need to leave together. If Old Peng stays, they won't dare to try anything," Xiang Shaoyun said.

Elder Zhen Peng agreed with that line of thought. Thus, he nodded and left with Xia Liuhui.

"If it's still the Wu Clan, perhaps it's time to erase them from the Wu Town," Xiang Shaoyun muttered with a ruthless glint in his eyes.

Xiang Shaoyun headed toward the less populated area of the town with Little White. He even increased the speed of his steps. The people tailing him immediately passed on a message to the others before quickly running after him. He headed outside the town at a moderate speed, one that was just enough for the people following him to keep up.

"Kid, stop right there!" a shout suddenly rang out behind him.

"W-who a-are you people? W-why are you c-chasing after me?" Xiang Shaoyun asked in panic.

Instead of stopping, he ran even faster. The group chasing after him were all mounted on demonic beasts, and there were more than ten of them.

"I say, stand right there! Disobey and you will die!" the leader of the group shouted. He was a Transformation Realm cultivator, and he was moving very quickly. At this point, Xiang Shaoyun was running with all his might.

The people behind Xiang Shaoyun were getting closer and closer when he suddenly noticed that there was a new group of people ahead of him. The new group was Wen Jinrui's group he had met at the market earlier. His eyes lit up as he quickly shouted at Wen Jinrui, "Hold right there! This young master is here to teach you people a lesson!"

Wen Jinrui's group had also noticed that a group of people was approaching, and when they saw Xiang Shaoyun pointing at them while shouting, they came to a conclusion that the group was there for them.

"Protect the young master!" shouted the old man beside Wen Jinrui.

"What is there to fear? If they dare try anything, kill them all. Do they really think a single King Realm cultivator is enough to face the Wen Clan?" Wen Jinrui said with a frown on his face.

"Since they have a King Realm cultivator working as a guard, they must have a rather powerful background as well. But if they do try to attack us, we'll just fight them. We have nothing to fear," the old man said.

"Stand right there!" shouted the group behind Xiang Shaoyun.

From the perspective of Wen Jinrui's group, Xiang Shaoyun was chasing after them with a group of people, with the people behind Xiang Shaoyun being his underlings. That was why Wen Jinrui tensed up when he saw the approaching group.

"You sure are ballsy to try snatching something I have my eyes on. Time for you to suffer!" Xiang Shaoyun continued shouting. At this point, the group chasing Xiang Shaoyun was right behind him. Thus, it looked very much like he was leading them against Wen Jinrui's group.

"Screw you! You might be the one to suffer instead! Kill!" Wen Jinrui was never a cowardly person. When he saw Xiang Shaoyun coming with a large group, he commanded his men to attack instead of waiting like sitting ducks.

The group behind Xiang Shaoyun was only there for him. But before they were given a chance to say anything, Wen Jinrui's men were already assaulting them.

Xiang Shaoyun dodged an attack aimed at him. He slammed his palm into the attacker before shouting, "Kill! Go go go!"

"Kill! Kill them all!" Wen Jinrui thought Xiang Shaoyun really was trying to kill him and his men, so he also commanded his men to attack to kill.

As for the group chasing Xiang Shaoyun, they were completely caught by surprise. Only when one of them was killed did they start going mad as well.

"You dare attack us, members of the Mad Lion Hunting Group? Die!" the leader howled before charging toward Wen Jinrui's men with his saber raised.

And thus, a chaotic battle broke out. The two groups fought valiantly while Xiang Shaoyun sneaked around the battlefield with his excellent footwork without actually getting involved in the fight.

"Ahhhh!"

The battle raged on as the two groups killed each other off. Blood sprayed everywhere.

While sneaking amid the chaos, Xiang Shaoyun did not forget to keep shouting for them to kill. Toward the end, a Transformation Realm expert nearly struck him. Fortunately, he was able to flee in time. Otherwise, he would've gotten himself killed.

"Damn, time for me to leave." Xiang Shaoyun finally left the battlefield.

"Kid, stop right there! Kill him first!" commanded Wen Jinrui, seated on his mount.

At his command, the demonic beast charged Xiang Shaoyun. As a whole, Wen Jinrui's group held the advantage in the battle. Although they had fewer people, the Transformation Realm experts they had were stronger.

The Transformation Realm experts worked together as they slaughtered the Mad Lion Hunting Group people one after another, to the point the people of the Mad Lion Hunting Group trembled with fear.

Wen Jinrui was an eighth-stage Astral Realm cultivator. Riding a mount that was a peak Intermediate Demon, he quickly caught up to Xiang Shaoyun before sending a flying blade toward Xiang Shaoyun's back.

Sensing the danger, Xiang Shaoyun immediately bent down and narrowly avoided the sneak attack. At the exact instant he bent down, the demonic beast arrived and stomped down at him.

The demonic beast was a bear-type beast. Its stomp was extremely powerful, and if the attack landed, anyone would be turned into mincemeat. At this moment of crisis, Little White finally showed his prowess. He roared, releasing a roar of a king of beasts that shocked the bear so much it shivered and paused slightly.

Taking the opportunity of the bear pausing, Little White jumped on it and furiously bit at it.. As for Xiang Shaoyun, he took the opportunity to roll out of the way before standing up. After standing up, he sent an Astral Realm cultivator who had just arrived flying with a kick.

"Little White, don't waste any time on them. Let's go," Xiang Shaoyun said.

Hearing that, Little White hopped away after tearing a piece of meat off the bear. He ran after Xiang Shaoyun.

"Damn it! Get him!" Wen Jinrui yelled.

Hearing the command, the Transformation Realm old man killed a random Mad Lion Hunting Group member near him before chasing after Xiang Shaoyun.

"Die!" yelled the old man as he clawed at Xiang Shaoyun.

An energy claw shot out of his hand and hurtled toward Xiang Shaoyun. If the attack hit, Xiang Shaoyun would definitely be turned into mincemeat.

"Elder Zhen Peng, where are you?" Xiang Shaoyun finally called for help after sensing a danger he couldn't avoid.

"Those who dare harm my young master will die!" Elder Zhen Peng yelled as he appeared suddenly from the sky. He landed a kick on the old man's head.

Bang!

The old man's head exploded.

Chapter 85: I Hate Traitors The Most

Just like that, a Transformation Realm expert was killed by having his head smashed apart. Fear rippled through the crowd at his death.

"Damn it. I don't care who you are. But since you dare kill members of our Wen Clan, you should be ready to face the wrath of the Wen Clan as well," Wen Jinrui cried out fearfully. Even as he shouted, he retreated and no longer dared to keep attacking Xiang Shaoyun. As for the two groups in battle, they all separated from one another as well. A large number of them had been killed, and the survivors looked extremely miserable.

"Young master, shall I...," Elder Zhen Peng asked as he made a throat-slitting gesture.

That frightened Wen Jinrui even more, nearly causing him to fall off his mount from fear. He quickly urged his mount to flee, "Go, run!"

He then fled with his mount, leaving all his underlings behind. When the others saw Wen Jinrui fleeing, they started scattering in all directions. None of them was unafraid of death. The Mad Lion Hunting Group members were also fleeing madly.

"Young master, do I...," Elder Zhen Peng asked.

"Forget those people. As for the other group, leave one alive and kill the rest," said Xiang Shaoyun as he pointed at the Mad Lion Hunting Group members. Elder Zhen Peng obeyed and chased after them. Soon, all but one of them were killed, and Elder Zhen Peng captured the sole survivor, a Transformation Realm hunter.

"Don't kill me. Please don't kill me! I am only following orders!" the Transformation Realm hunter begged, completely losing all his courage upon knowing that Elder Zhen Peng was a King Realm cultivator.

"Mad Lion Hunting Group, how did your people find me?" Xiang Shaoyun asked. When he encountered them at the Hundred Beast Mountain Range, he had been able to escape without even revealing his identity to them. Thus, it did not make sense for them to come after him. And since they were really coming for him, something he was unaware of might have happened. He had to figure out what was going on.

"It was the people from your Martial Hall Palace who told us!" The hunter did not dare to hide anything.

"What?" Xiang Shaoyun cried out in astonishment. That was the worst answer he could get. The moment he heard that, he already had a rough idea who the traitor was. Who could it be apart from Mei Lianhua?

"Why are you chasing after me so relentlessly?" Xiang Shaoyun asked with an unsightly expression.

"Because they said that apart from getting the Earth Star Spring, you had also gotten a large number of spiritual treasures. That was how you have been growing so fast. That was why we came after you. Please spare me. I won't ever attempt to do anything against you anymore," the hunter begged.

"Don't worry, I won't do anything to you," Xiang Shaoyun said and gestured at Elder Zhen Peng before he turned and started leaving. Just as the Transformation Realm hunter thought he had been spared, Elder Zhen Peng's palm struck his forehead.

Bang!

Just like that, the Transformation Realm hunter was killed. His last thought before his death was, I thought he said he wasn't going to do anything to me?

Xiang Shaoyun muttered to himself, "I didn't do anything to you, but that does not apply to the people around me."

Xiang Shaoyun had decided that he would never spare anyone who had ever tried to kill him.

"Old Peng, do you know about the Mad Lion Hunting Group?" Xiang Shaoyun asked.

"Of course. It is a very powerful demon hunting group," Elder Zhen Peng answered. He proceeded to give Xiang Shaoyun a rough explanation about the Mad Lion Hunting Group. After listening to Elder Zhen Peng, Xiang Shaoyun finally understood that the Mad Lion Hunting Group was no ordinary demon hunting group.

The Mad Lion Hunting Group was a group formed by a large number of experts in the surrounding regions. Their commander was a ninth-stage Transformation Realm expert, and they had four deputy commanders who were all late-stage Transformation Realm experts as well. Additionally, their members were filled with numerous experts in both the Transformation and Astral Realms. One could say that it was definitely an incredibly powerful organization.

They mainly operated in the Hundred Beast Mountain Range, and they even involved themselves in banditry. More importantly, it was rumored that they were also connected with a certain organization at the Cloud Margin City. The Cloud Margin City was the largest city in the region, surrounded by over a hundred towns. Wu Town was one of those towns.

Xiang Shaoyun was very clear on the difference between a city and a town. A proper city was a place where experts converged, and any random organization of a decent size could very well be much more powerful than the Martial Hall Palace. A town was incomparable to a city. Because of that, although the Mad Lion Hunting Group had many enemies, many of their enemies were helpless to do anything.

"Looks like the Mad Lion Hunting Group is no pushover," Xiang Shaoyun muttered to himself with his eyes narrowed.

"If the young master wants them dead, I can go do it right now," Elder Zhen Peng said as a show of loyalty.

Xiang Shaoyun shook his head. "No. They are all going to be my stepping stones."

Although Xiang Shaoyun was only 15 years old, he had a deep ambition and ideas in his mind that many people couldn't understand. Back then, he was a frivolous young man. After that incident, he had quickly matured. He might usually behave like an undisciplined child, but his thoughts were something very few people could actually understand.

"Let's return to the Martial Hall Palace. I hate traitors the most," Xiang Shaoyun said with loathing. After returning to the Martial Hall Palace, he first went to meet Xia Liuhui.

"Boss, are you fine?" Xia Liuhui asked anxiously.

His concern filled Xiang Shaoyun's heart with warmth. "I'm fine, brother."

No matter how many people betrayed him, he still had a brother loyal to him.

"Boss, what's going on? You seem off," Xia Liuhui asked as he could sense that Xiang Shaoyun was acting differently today. In the past, Xiang Shaoyun would usually call him Xia Liu, but today, Xiang Shaoyun was actually calling him brother. The change was too sudden. One could say that some people really did enjoy wallowing in degeneracy.

"I have something I need your help with," Xiang Shaoyun said seriously.

"Just say it boss. I will do whatever I can," Xia Liuhui slapped his chest and promised.

"I want you to challenge Mo Buhui and trample him," Xiang Shaoyun said.

"Challenging Mo Buhui? Sure, I'll do it!" Xia Liuhui agreed after a short astonishment. He knew his boss had his reasons for this. So he did not question it.

"If you want a woman, you must first become strong yourself. You can do it," Xiang Shaoyun patted Xia Liuhui's shoulder before heading off to look for Lu Xiaoqing. Lu Xiaoqing had been cultivating in seclusion all this while, but the moment Xiang Shaoyun arrived, she left seclusion to meet him.

"You're here!" Lu Xiaoqing was overjoyed. An enchanting smile bloomed on her flawless face.

"I need you to challenge Mei Lianhua to a duel," Xiang Shaoyun went straight to the point.

Lu Xiaoqing blanked out slightly, but immediately after, pure confidence surfaced on her face. She said, "Ok. I'll defeat her."

After getting the Earth Star Spring from Xiang Shaoyun, her strength had skyrocketed. She had now reached the third stage of the Astral Realm, and coupled with her bitter cultivation in recent days, defeating Mei Lianhua wouldn't be a problem. More importantly, this was Xiang Shaoyun's request of her. Thus, she would complete it no matter what.

Chapter 86: Who Can Do It?

Xia Liuhui and Lu Xiaoqing had respectively challenged Mo Buhui and Mei Lianhua at the same time. This news shocked the people in the Martial Hall Palace. Lu Xiaoqing challenging Mei Lianhua was still understandable since they were both among the top 10 outer peak disciples, and they were probably evenly matched.

But Xia Liuhui, a completely unknown person, actually dared to challenge Mo Buhui. Nobody could understand why. But when they recalled that Xia Liuhui's boss was Xiang Shaoyun, their shock lessened.

While Xia Liuhui and Lu Xiaoqing were challenging their respective targets, Xiang Shaoyun was at the Hall of Limits. He did not show up, not because he did not care about Xia Liuhui and Lu Xiaoqing but because he was sure they would win.

Of course, there was also the fact that in his heart, both Mo Buhui and Mei Lianhua were two insignificant individuals not worth more of his time. Because of that, he did not bother watching the duels. His priority was still his own growth.

This time, he broke through three limit rooms in a row, and by the time he was done, he was already in an incomparably sorry state, as he had sustained terrible injuries. The seventh and eighth rooms were supposed to be challenged by only those at the late stage of the Astral Realm.

Since Xiang Shaoyun had combat prowess comparable to a late-stage Astral Realm cultivator, both those rooms weren't that hard for him. But he countered troubles in the ninth room. That was a room that generally only those at the eighth or ninth stage of the Astral Realm could survive. He suffered greatly in that room, but he eventually survived and broke through its limit.

After he was done challenging the three rooms, he received word that Xia Liuhui and Lu Xiaoqing had both emerged victorious in their duels. Xia Liuhui's fame thus spread, and he was even accepted as a personal disciple by an elder.

As for Lu Xiaoqing, she was now known as the most outstanding female disciple after Gong Qinyin. Xiang Shaoyun was happy for them, but then again, this was a result he had expected.

The only reason he had them challenge Mo Buhui and Mei Lianhua was to break the two's cultivation spirits, causing them to be forever stuck at the same cultivation level, to forever wallow in degeneracy from then on. Doing that was much better than giving them an easy death. More importantly, he couldn't be bothered to personally lift his finger against them.

Of course, he also feared that if he did personally move on them, he wouldn't be able to hold his anger and would end up killing them instead. If he did kill the two, it would only adversely affect his status in the Martial Hall Palace.

Perhaps I need to start making some plans, Xiang Shaoyun thought to himself.

Xiang Shaoyun spent three days recovering from his injuries. During the period, Xia Liuhui and Lu Xiaoqing did come to visit, and even some elders had come to visit him as well. Although the elders were visiting Xiang Shaoyun, their actual target was Elder Zhen Peng, as all of them wished to receive some sort of guidance in cultivation.

After the three days, Palace Master Yang Gaochuan summoned Xiang Shaoyun to the meeting palace. The meeting palace was in fact a place only the elders and the higher ups of Martial Hall Palace could enter. Regular disciples were never allowed in.

Xiang Shaoyun had no idea why he was summoned, but the summon wasn't something he could refuse. Thus, he went as summoned. When he arrived, he found that apart from Yang Gaochuan, many elders and overseers were there, so were a few youngsters he didn't know.

When Xiang Shaoyun arrived, many gazes landed on him, especially the youngsters, who were all sizing him up. He greeted the people before standing aside. A graceful figure then walked into the room. When Xiang Shaoyun saw the newcomer, his expression shifted as he thought helplessly to himself, Looks like I can't run from her forever.

He was expecting the newcomer to start picking on him, but the newcomer merely greeted the others before standing aside as well. She did not even spare him a glance.

Huh? Has this girl forgotten about me? But that doesn't make any sense, Xiang Shaoyun mused inwardly.

It was at this moment that he sensed the newcomer staring daggers at him. In his astonishment, he continued his inner monologue, Shit, looks like she was only pretending to not recognize me.

When the others noticed that Xiang Shaoyun was staring at the newcomer without even blinking his eyes, their hearts were filled with contempt of his shamelessness. It was fine for a man to want to check out girls, but doing it so blatantly was simply shameless.

"Cough, cough, Xiang Shaoyun, take a seat there," Yang Gaochuan said, pulling everyone's mind back from their thoughts.

"Oh, sure," Xiang Shaoyun answered, recovering from his thoughts. He then headed over to the empty seat.

As soon as he sat down, one of the youngsters said unhappily, "Palace master, I can't accept this. Why is he given a seat while we are left standing?"

Xiang Shaoyun blanked out when he heard that.

"Xiang Shaoyun has made a unique contribution to the Martial Hall Palace. That is why he can have a seat here," Yang Gaochuan replied. He had already found out from Elder Zhen Peng that Xiang Shaoyun was the reason he had been able to enter the King Realm. That feat was considered a unique contribution.

"What is the unique contribution? Palace master, please clear our doubts. Perhaps we can do the same as well," the youngster pushed on. This youngster was Ye Tianlong, the personal disciple of the first elder, a seventh-stage Astral Realm expert.

On the day this Ye Tianlong returned to the Martial Hall Palace, he had personally witnessed Xiang Shaoyun defeating Li Tianba and the others in the arena. He had been filled with resentment over Xiang Shaoyun ever since then, as he felt threatened by Xiang Shaoyun. To be frank, he was merely envious of Xiang Shaoyun.

"That is not something you need to know," Yang Gaochuan rebuked unhappily. A disciple dared to challenge a palace master like him? That disciple was thinking too highly of himself.

But Ye Tianlong was not willing to let it go. "Palace master, we are all loyal disciples of the Martial Hall Palace. I am confident we can all do what he did as well. Please tell us, palace master."

He then bowed deeply at Yang Gaochuan, and from how he was behaving, it was as if he would stay bowed until he was told the answer.

"Impudent!" the first elder berated.

The first elder, Jie Shi, was as influential in the Martial Hall Palace as the palace master. He looked like a middle-aged man, but in truth, he was over 80 years old. He was at the peak of the Transformation Realm and was one of the few people in the Martial Hall Palace with a chance to step into the King Realm.

Yang Gaochuan waved his hand and said, "First elder, since he wants to know, I'll just tell him." He then looked straight at Ye Tianlong and said, "As a first-stage Astral Realm cultivator, Xiang Shaoyun had broken through four limit rooms consecutively from the third to the sixth room. Were you capable of that when you were at the same cultivation level?"

At those words, shock appeared on the faces of everyone there.

Ye Tianlong also stood straight with a look of utter shock as he shouted, "No, that's not possible!"

"What, are you accusing me of lying to you?" Yang Gaochuan frowned.

"No, this disciple dares not," Ye Tianlong quickly corrected himself.

"That's not all. When Xiang Shaoyun was still in the Basic Realm, he had broken through the first and second limit rooms. Just three days ago, he had broken through the seventh, eighth, and ninth limit rooms. He is still only a fourth-stage Astral Realm cultivator. So which of you here can do the same?" Yang Gaochuan questioned.

Chapter 87: Battle of Towns

The heavyweight news hit Ye Tianlong's brain one after another, making him feel like his mind was going to stop working from sheer shock.

How is that possible? How is that possible? Ye Tianlong howled inwardly. He had personally experienced how difficult it was to challenge the limit rooms. Not one of his challenge attempts in the past had been a success. He found it hard to accept the fact that Xiang Shaoyun had done all that. He was not alone as many people found what the palace master said hard to believe.

"Palace master, i-is that t-true?" Qing Xiuhe, the vice palace master, asked.

"Why would I joke about something like that? The Hall of Limits' overseer can be the witness," Yang Gaochuan said.

"That is certainly an excellent accomplishment. He deserves a seat," said Tan Guanghua, the other vice palace master who rarely showed himself among the disciples.

Tan Guanghua was mainly in charge of the Martial Hall Palace's external affairs. Thus, he wasn't as well known as Qing Xiuhe in the palace. In truth, his status was higher than Qing Xiuhe.

"That's right. That is an outstanding achievement that will go down in the history of our Martial Hall Palace."

"If the palace master had not revealed it, we would still be in the dark about this. What a fine Xiang Shaoyun. Looks like he will be an excellent secret weapon of the Martial Hall Palace during the coming Battle of Towns."

"If he can increase his cultivation level by one more stage in the coming few months, he can very well get an even better result for us in the Battle of Towns."

"Yes, if he manages to get a spot in the top 10 for the Martial Hall Palace, we will be able to obtain the rewards offered by the Cloud Margin City. With the rewards, we might be able to nurture yet another King Realm cultivator in addition to a large number of Transformation Realm cultivators."

...

The elders were all looking at Xiang Shaoyun with bright eyes. As of this moment, they had all acknowledged his status in the Martial Hall Palace. As for the youngsters, they were all staring at Xiang Shaoyun in disbelief.

Bah, so what? A day will come when you kneel before me, begging for mercy, thought the graceful girl amid the crowd.

This graceful girl was none other than Gong Qinyin, the person Xiang Shaoyun had accidentally offended previously. After returning to the Martial Hall Palace, she hadn't gone looking for Xiang Shaoyun for revenge. It wasn't that she had forgiven him, but that she had simply witnessed Xiang Shaoyun's fight with Li Tianba. From the duel, she concluded that Xiang Shaoyun was stronger than her. Because of that, she didn't brashly go looking for Xiang Shaoyun. Instead, she focused her efforts cultivating more.

It had been two months since they last met, and right now, Gong Qinyin was already at the fifth stage of the Astral Realm. Her speed of growth was truly astonishingly fast.

A few other people arrived as well, including Lu Xiaoqing's senior sister, Chen Xin. The mischievous Chen Xin did not forget to stick her tongue out at Xiang Shaoyun when he looked at her.

"Alright, everyone is here, so I will get started," Yang Gaochuan said. "In a few months, the once-every-three-years Battle of Towns will be held. Every Battle of Towns is a grand occasion for the Cloud Margin City, and 130 towns around the Cloud Margin City would be participating in it. There, geniuses will gather to compete for the glory of their towns..."

It did not take everyone long to know what their next task was. The so-called Battle of Towns was a competition between the young cultivators of the various towns. The result of the competition would also determine each town's placing. The Cloud Margin City would also give rewards to the participants based on the result of the competition.

Apart from the participants of the competition, the organizations whose disciples were in the top 10 would also be greatly rewarded. One could say that this competition was extremely important for the young cultivators and the various towns.

It was worth noting that the type of rewards the Cloud Margin City would give was something the resources available to these towns couldn't compare with. The rewards given would be useful even to those at the King Realm and above.

But it was not easy to get in the top 10 with over a hundred towns participating. The Martial Hall Palace had participated in tens of Battle of Towns, yet their best result was when they had managed to get ninth place that one time.

And that was the only time they had ever gotten into the top 10. Despite their less than ideal results, they would still not miss a single Battle of Towns. That was because participating in the Battle of Towns was in itself a great training process for the disciples. It would help the disciples grow stronger, which was beneficial for the Martial Hall Palace.

But of course, as with everything in life, there were pros and cons to participating in the Battle of Towns. The Battle of Towns was filled with uncertainties, and it had an extremely high mortality rate. Each time it was held, at least 70 percent of the participants would die.

The 10 disciples here wouldn't be the only participants of the town. Each town had 50 slots, and with a mortality rate of 70 percent, the number of deaths was extremely high.

The 10 disciples here were also the most remarkable disciples of the Martial Hall Palace in the recent three years. High hopes were placed on them to bring glory to the Martial Hall Palace.

"You are not only gathered here so we can tell you about the competition. We also wish to remind you all to make use of the final three months you have to advance your cultivation. During this period, all the resources of the Martial Hall Palace will be made available for all of you. Try to improve as much as you can. Do know that there will be many geniuses from other towns participating in the competition, and some of them will be even more talented than you. I even heard that some of them are already in the Transformation Realm," Yang Gaochuan said.

When the disciples heard that there were already Transformation Realm cultivators among the disciples of other towns, their expressions turned solemn.

The 10 people here were the disciples of Martial Hall Palace who were either the strongest or the most talented of their peers. All of them were prideful youths, thinking that they were already the best in their age group. Upon figuring out that some of their peers were already in the Transformation Realm, they started to feel the pressure.

The difference between them and a Transformation Realm cultivator was still too big. Not even 10 peak Astral Realm cultivators could defeat 1 Transformation Realm cultivator. Thus, it wasn't hard to imagine how terrifying their opponents in the competition would be.

"Mo Zhu, you are the eldest senior brother, so the burden on you will be the heaviest. Be sure to look after your juniors. Got it?" Tan Guanghua said.

Mo Zhu was the pride of Tan Guanghua, and he was already a ninth-stage Astral Realm cultivator. He was only 18 years old this year, and he looked very heroic and handsome in his training outfit, with his tall and straight posture and the sword hanging on his back.

Even when speaking, he carried himself in a refined manner. "I, Mo Zhu, will do my best to look after the juniors."

"But if he has to take care of his juniors, wouldn't it rob him of his chance to fight for a better placing? Will it be proper to expect him to babysit his juniors?" Qing Xiuhe asked.

"Not really. I believe Mo Zhu will be able to find a perfect balance between taking care of his juniors and fighting for a good result." Tan Guanghua was filled with confidence toward his disciple.

"Alright. We're done here. Feel free to request anything you need. The Martial Hall Palace will support all of you to the best of our ability," Yang Gaochuan said. He paused slightly and looked at Xiang Shaoyun before saying, "Everyone may leave now. Xiang Shaoyun, you stay."

Chapter 88: This Young Master Is Very Busy

When the disciples heard Yang Gaochuan tell Xiang Shaoyun to stay, they all looked at him with an odd gaze. Of the 10, Xiang Shaoyun had the lowest cultivation level yet he was the one who received the best treatment from the Martial Hall Palace. Thus, it was understandable that he would be a target of resentment.

"I wonder what the palace master needs from me?" Xiang Shaoyun asked.

Yang Gaochuan stared at Xiang Shaoyun for a bit before a kindly expression surfaced on his face as he said, "Shaoyun, isn't Qinyin pretty?"

That question completely confused Xiang Shaoyun. "Where do those words stem from, palace master? Well, she looks decent, I suppose."

"Kid, you are not being honest. I saw you staring at her just now," Yang Gaochuan teased, speaking unlike how a person of his stature would usually speak.

"Oh, I was only randomly looking around. Is that a problem?" Xiang Shaoyun countered in a self-righteous manner.

"Haha, you're right. Young people like you should not be afraid to show your love. There is nothing bad about that," Yang Gaochuan said, laughing heartily.

That confused Xiang Shaoyun even more.

Yang Gaochuan continued speaking matter-of-factly, "To speak the truth, Qinyin is the disciple I am proudest of, and she is no less talented than you. Both of you are the perfect match for each other. I do sincerely hope that the two of you can—"

But before he could finish his words, Xiang Shaoyun interrupted him. "Hold on. Palace master, you are overthinking it. I have never thought of that at all."

What a joke. As far as he was concerned, Gong Qinyun was like a fierce tigress. He loved himself too much to consider taking someone like her as his wife.

"Why? Do you think she is not worthy of you?" Yang Gaochuan asked, his voice turning cold.

Xiang Shaoyun replied, "This is not the question of who is worthy of who. We are both still too young. It is still not the time for us to talk about love and marriage."

"You are clearly lying. Let me tell you something. You might be talented and have Elder Zhen Peng as your follower, but if you manage to obtain the affection of Qinyin as well, you will be guaranteed to reach at least the King Realm in your cultivation," Yang Gaochuan enticed Xiang Shaoyun.

The more Xiang Shaoyun listened to the palace master, the more confused he became. He had a feeling this palace master was trying to matchmake him with that tigress.

"Palace master, that is only a one-sided wish of yours. You should ask for Miss Qinyin's opinion before making up your mind. If she is really willing, I won't mind accepting her either," Xiang

Shaoyun said. He could no longer be bothered to keep explaining himself. Inwardly, he added an additional sentence, I won't mind accepting her as a maid to warm my bed.

If Yang Gaochuan heard that inner monologue of his, he would probably be coughing blood in fury. Gong Qinyin was his pride, and the number of talented young men pursuing her was so high it was uncountable. And yet this kid here was thinking of letting her be his bed-warming maid?

"Sigh, you really don't understand what's good for you. Fine, just don't regret this in the future," Yang Gaochuan said with a regretful tone. He then continued, "There are four more months before the Battle of Towns. Do you have the confidence to increase your cultivation by three stages before then?"

"Two stages," Xiang Shaoyun said. He added, "It won't be easy at all."

In truth, he was confident he could do it, but he was trying to be humble. After all, his actual plan was to reach the Transformation Realm in a year. If he wanted to meet his goal, he naturally had to be able to do something like increase three stages of cultivation in a few months.

"I know it's difficult, but I hope you can do it. I believe you can create a miracle," Yang Gaochuan said. He was placing his hopes on Xiang Shaoyun.

With his cultivation of fourth-stage Astral Realm, Xiang Shaoyun had defeated Li Tianba who was an eighth-stage Astral Realm cultivator. After increasing his cultivation by four stages, he would be able to face even those at the peak of the Astral Realm. That would greatly increase the hope of the Martial Hall Palace entering the top 10.

"Palace master, you are stressing me out." Xiang Shaoyun shrugged. "Why not give me a few stalks of mid-grade or high-grade spirit medicines? With that, it will be much easier for me to advance my cultivation by three stages."

"Kid, do you think spirit medicines are some common vegetables? Not long ago, the Medicine Hall's overseer told me that you have already withdrawn a large number of low-grade spirit medicines. Are those not enough? Furthermore, using spirit medicines will only give you a shaky foundation. If you really can't increase your cultivation in time, you can just wait and join the next Battle of Towns three years later. At that time, you'll probably be in the Transformation Realm already. Entering the top 10 won't be a problem then," Yang Gaochuan said.

At this point, Yang Gaochuan seemed to have suddenly realized something as he said, "Yes, I was in too much of a rush. You should be joining the next Battle of Towns instead. Yes, you should sit this one out. Three years later, our Martial Hall Palace will amaze the world with a single brilliant feat! Yes! Why didn't I think of this earlier? Three years is nothing for us!"

"Huh? No, I don't think that's proper." Xiang Shaoyun blanked out. Although he had no idea what the Battle of Towns looked like, he still knew that it would be a good opportunity to temper himself. In fact, joining it might help him grow even faster. More importantly, he couldn't afford to sit around waiting for three whole years.

"What's not proper about that? I have only been focusing on your victory over Li Tianba. That was why I had placed all my hope on you. But now that I think about it, it's better if we wait," Yang Gaochuan said.

"No way. Three years is too long," Xiang Shaoyun said gloomily.

"No, it's not long at all. Alright, you will be sitting this one out. You may leave now," Yang Gaochuan waved his hand.

Xiang Shaoyun grew anxious as he said, "There are still four more months. I am confident I can increase my cultivation by about two or three stages!"

"Even so, that is still somewhat risky. It is best to wait for the next Battle of Towns. By then, you will have entered the Transformation Realm but still meet the age requirement to participate. Child, you have to be patient," Yang Gaochuan advised.

"I would rather not join at all if I have to wait." Xiang Shaoyun grew angry. If he had to wait three years, there was no point in participating. After all, by that time, the competition might no longer be the perfect venue for him to temper himself. He had many other places he could be at.

"Why are you so impatient, child? Being impatient is not good for your cultivation," Yang Gaochuan continued advising.

Xiang Shaoyun did not feel like talking to this person anymore as he directly turned and waved his hand. He walked away, saying, "Don't look for me if there is nothing important. Even if there is something important, don't look for me either. This young master is very busy."

The angered Xiang Shaoyun couldn't even be bothered to show the palace master any respect anymore.

Yang Gaochuan blanked out before he called out, "Fine, fine. Kid, come back. We can talk it out."

Xiang Shaoyun pretended he didn't hear anything and continued leaving.

"Fine. Do you still want to advance quickly or not? If you are so capable, be sure to not come back," Yang Gaochuan grumbled then added, "I originally planned to open the Martial Palace to help you quickly increase your cultivation, but looks like you are not interested in that after all."

Yang Gaochuan was indeed an old fox. He successfully attracted Xiang Shaoyun's attention with those words.

"Palace master, what is that Martial Palace you speak of?" Xiang Shaoyun turned around and asked.

"Just leave. It's not like we are lacking in disciples," Yang Gaochuan said resentfully. He would have long ago slapped to death any other disciple showing such disrespect. Unfortunately, this kid here was the one he didn't dare touch.

"Come on, my dearest palace master. You are a wise leader, a brilliant and magnanimous leader who is always kind and fair. You are also young and powerful, tall and handsome..." Xiang Shaoyun started buttering up the palace master.

In fact, the praises were so much that they embarrassed the palace master himself.

Chapter 89: Martial Palace Inheritance

The Martial Palace was in fact a forbidden zone at the Martial Hall Palace. There, the inheritance intent of King Realm cultivators, also known as Skysoar Realm cultivators, could be found. Generally, only those at the peak Transformation Realm were allowed to enter and comprehend the inheritance intent. Yang Gaochuan was planning to make an exception for Xiang Shaoyun. From this, it was clear how highly he looked upon Xiang Shaoyun.

The so-called inheritance intent was the remnant of a King Realm cultivator's comprehension on the path of cultivation left behind upon death. In the Martial Palace, they were preserved and protected by magical formations so the people of the later generations could learn from them.

Different inheritance intent would bring about different results. Some would help a cultivator break through into a new realm, some would allow a cultivator to comprehend a powerful battle technique, some would allow a cultivator to comprehend the presence of a king, and so on.

Each person had a different comprehension skill, thus, the effect of an inheritance intent would also be different for everyone. Most of the time, only a very small number of people could actually fully comprehend the entirety of an inheritance intent.

After all, the intent was a remnant of the dead, and it no longer had a thought of its own. Actually capturing and comprehending it was not something a normal person could do. If it wasn't for Xiang Shaoyun's remarkable talent, Yang Gaochuan wouldn't even consider letting him enter.

It was worth noting that each time the Martial Palace was opened, the inheritance intents within would become weaker. Thus, opening it for an unsuitable person was a very unfavorable thing to do.

Only if the corpses of the King Realm cultivators that had passed while meditating in a lotus position were in there would the inheritance intents be replenished naturally upon exhaustion.

Yang Gaochuan brought Xiang Shaoyun to the depths of the Martial Hall Palace. There, a crude stone palace could be seen on a mountain, and before the stone palace were two demonic beasts at the Great Demon rank, both standing guard before the palace.

When Yang Gaochuan and Xiang Shaoyun arrived, the two Great Demons opened their eyes. At that instant, a vicious aura appeared slightly before it vanished. Yang Gaochuan stole a glance at Xiang Shaoyun and found that Xiang Shaoyun was still perfectly calm, seemingly completely unaffected by the two guardian beasts.

This calmness alone was something very few disciple could compare with. Yang Gaochuan mused inwardly, This kid has a mysterious background. Perhaps he really is a young master from a declining large clan?

Rumble. Rumble.

The entrance of the stone palace opened by itself, leaking out a sort of profound sensation, carrying with it an incorporeal pressure that gave them a heavy feeling.

"Go in yourself. What you can gain from here will rely only on yourself," said Yang Gaochuan as he stopped at the entrance.

Xiang Shaoyun nodded at Yang Gaochuan before striding forward with his head held high. The inside of the stone palace looked gloomy. Faint whistling sounds were ringing in the air, as if there were spirits wailing and roaring here, giving off an extremely creepy feeling.

With a bright heart, one would fear no evil spirits! Xiang Shaoyun chanted inwardly to steady his mind before stepping into the main hall of the stone palace. There, he saw seven large coffins, and on each coffin, the name and the history of a King Realm cultivator were carved.

"Zhang Gongyue, first palace master of the Martial Hall Palace, fifth-stage Skysoar Realm, lived to the age of 374 years old."

"Luo He, first generation's first elder, third-stage Skysoar Realm, lived to the age of 259 years old."

"Feng Yusheng, second generation's palace master, fourth-stage Skysoar Realm, lived to the age of 350 years old."

...

Xiang Shaoyun browsed through all the histories and found that these seven Kings were mostly the predecessors of the Martial Hall Palace. What caught his attention the most was one particular coffin with "Unnamed" carved on it, and it was written that this unnamed person had reached peak Skysoar Realm.

The unnamed coffin was placed at the end of the hall, yet the strength of the unnamed person was the highest of them all. The reason for that arrangement was because this unnamed person wasn't actually a member of the Martial Hall Palace. For some unknown reason, his coffin was placed here after his death.

"Peak Skysoar Realm, well, this is decently strong, I suppose," Xiang Shaoyun muttered to himself. He wandered back and forth in the hall, trying to sense the inheritance intent of the Kings.

Xiang Shaoyun did not intend to bite off more than he could chew. Thus, he stopped in front of the coffin of the weakest King in the room. This was the coffin of a first-stage Skysoar Realm, and he was not as long lived as the others, as he only lived to about 100 years old. For a King, dying at that age was considered dying at a young age.

Xiang Shaoyun stood before the coffin. He bowed to it as a sign of respect, and he sat down in a lotus position on the praying mat before the coffin. He tossed all distracting thoughts out of his mind and shut his eyes. He then sensed the hazy intent on the coffin with his heart.

Nobody knew better than Xiang Shaoyun that the so-called King's intent was in fact an extremely weak strain of consciousness a King left behind upon death. Of course, inheritance intent left behind by experts above the King Realm would be much clearer and thicker.

Generally, it wouldn't be easy for a low-level cultivator to catch on to this weak strain of intent. If the cultivator did not know some special tricks for it, establishing a connection with the strain of intent was basically impossible.

Xiang Shaoyun was a well-read person who had studied many ancient texts. This could be considered one of the gains he had acquired during the 10 years he spent not cultivating. Because of that, he understood what he needed to do in order to establish a connection with the inheritance intent.

The lump of consciousness known as inheritance intent was in fact a weak collection of energy that had not fully dissipated upon the death of a cultivator, and this collection of energy would naturally disperse as time went on. Only extremely powerful intents would be able to last forever.

As for the intents here, even with the help of the Martial Hall Palace's formation, it was still very hard to preserve them for a long time. Xiang Shaoyun released a strain of his consciousness as he fully activated his gift of visualization. As of this moment, his mind was akin to a hazy empty space, and he needed to establish a connection between this hazy empty space and the space before the coffin.

To comprehend an inheritance intent, which was a form of consciousness, one had to use one's own consciousness to sense and understand before ultimately combining the two together. Shortly after, a strain of indistinct consciousness entered the hazy empty space in Xiang Shaoyun's mind.

"Ahhhh!"

Numerous wails containing endless sorrow echoed repeatedly in his mind, a sorrow that would cause a person to feel grief just from listening to the wails. This grief was comparable to the grief one felt when left by one's beloved. That sharp pain in one's heart, as if one's heart had been shattered, was something extremely hard to bear.

Xiang Shaoyun was infected by the sorrow—or perhaps he had once experienced the same—as he resonated with the strain of consciousness. Vaguely, he saw a sweet and happy couple. They cultivated together, went through difficulties together, grew together, and left their marks in numerous dangerous situations.

But ultimately, his beloved stabbed the cultivator in his back. The reason? His beloved was merely a chess piece sent to his side by his enemy. The cultivator then personally killed his beloved and transformed his grief into strength and directly broke through to the King Realm. He proceeded to kill all his enemies, and after doing so, he himself died from excessive sadness.

The entire scene quickly flitted across Xiang Shaoyun's mind. It moved so fast an ordinary person wouldn't even be able to notice it. But Xiang Shaoyun used his gift of visualization to capture the entire scene, enlarging it to finally understand the story being told by the strain of consciousness.

Even in his death, the King Realm cultivator still couldn't forget the betrayal of his beloved. He was certain his beloved had sincerely loved him, and if so, why had she decided to stab him in the back?

He eventually found out that his beloved had been forced, as she had been threatened with the lives of her family members. And from that realization, he created a king-grade sword technique named the Sword of Sorrow.

Chapter 90: You Dare to Not Reveal Yourself?

Sword of Sorrow!

This was a sword technique born of negative emotions consisting of grief, sorrow, and heartache. A slash of a sorrowful sword to create a fountain of tears and blood! Only one at the extremities of sorrow would be able to comprehend the essence of this sword technique.

Scenes of betrayals Xiang Shaoyun had personally experienced flitted through his mind one after another. The pain of being betrayed by his brothers and woman was deeply etched into his bones, and it was a feeling he would never forget his entire life.

As sorrow flooded Xiang Shaoyun's mind, the intent in the coffin turned clearer and clearer as strains of incorporeal energy converged into Xiang Shaoyun. Tears streamed down his eyes without stop. The tears flowed down uncontrollably, and he couldn't stop them even if he wanted to. These were the tears from the depths of his heart, tears originating from his truest emotion.

Abruptly, Xiang Shaoyun bit his own lip and stood up straight. He shouted, "Wallowing in grief and sorrow is only something the weak will do. I, Xiang Shaoyun, am a natural-born king. Even if the entire world betrays me, I will not shed a drop of a tear. F*ck off!"

As Xiang Shaoyun shouted, his kingly presence stirred, and an unyielding willpower surged out and blocked the consciousness of the dead King. He regained his clarity of mind, and his tears stopped flowing. Not a trace of sorrow could be found on his resolute face.

"All of you were mighty King Realm cultivators, but all of you were among the weakest of King Realm cultivators. I am a natural born king, the king of kings. Now, show me, what sort of legacy have you guys left behind." Xiang Shaoyun changed his mind and decided to no longer bother with slowly comprehending these intents. Instead, he unfurled his presence of a king, causing the aura around him to immediately change. He now looked like a child of the heavens, an imposing and overbearing king of kings.

As his kingly presence spread, the nine stars within his astral sea erupted as well. The astral energy from his stars converged in his astral cosmos sea, and at the same time, his purple lightning bone started shining brightly. His body dazzled, as if he was a humanoid river of stars.

He activated his gift of visualization as he wrapped his consciousness around all the coffins. It was unknown if it were these coffins that were sentient or if it were the inheritance intents that had sensed Xiang Shaoyun's kingly presence, but three lumps of consciousness proceeded to hover out of three different coffins.

The three coffins were respectively the coffins of Zhang Gongyue the first palace master, Feng Yushen the second palace master, and a second-stage Skysoar Realm cultivator.

The intent left behind by Zhang Gongyue constituted mainly of stubbornness, a stubbornness to pass on the Martial Hall Palace to the future generations. His entire life had been dedicated to growing the Martial Hall Palace, and because of that, this lump of consciousness contained selflessness, an inheritance intent filled with a desire to teach.

The lump of consciousness also contained the comprehension he had gained while breaking through into the King Realm. Any peak Transformation Realm cultivator would be able to easily enter the King Realm if they got their hands on this lump of consciousness.

Unfortunately, Xiang Shaoyun was still an Astral Realm cultivator. Thus, this particular inheritance intent wasn't too helpful for him. But it still helped further enrich his experience, which he could make use of during his eventual breakthrough.

The second lump of consciousness belonged to the second palace master, Feng Yusheng. This was a King Realm cultivator who had pursued the apex of speed, and the inheritance he left behind was a gust of wind. The gust of wind moved at a speed so fast it was nearly undetectable.

If it wasn't for Xiang Shaoyun's gift of visualization that allowed him to slow down, record, and reflect on these lumps of consciousness, he wouldn't have been able to notice this gust of wind.

The wind was shapeless, the wind was quick and violent, the wind was destructive, the wind was vast and boundless...numerous core theories of the power of wind could be found in the gust of wind.

As for the third lump of consciousness belonging to a second-stage King Realm cultivator, it was rather indistinct and much weaker than the others. But from this lump of consciousness, Xiang Shaoyun found the reason this cultivator had been able to step into the King Realm. It was because this cultivator had worked much harder than others, his achievement was all thanks to hard work.

He wasn't a particularly talented cultivator, and after numerous sufferings, he relied on his own hard work and advanced step by step until he eventually reached the King Realm. This was an inheritance intent filled with tenacity. Tenacity was something important for many people but doable for only a small number.

Xiang Shaoyun was able to fully capture all three of these inheritance intents. But of the three, the most helpful for Xiang Shaoyun was the gust of wind. The comprehension of wind would allow him to better understand the Overlord's Nine Nether Steps, allowing him to move even faster.

The tenacity also proved helpful, however, since it pointed a clear direction in his future path. A mediocre cultivator had been able to reach the King Realm through hard work alone. Xiang Shaoyun was a natural born king. Thus, instead of being lazy, he should learn from this cultivator so that he could reach an even higher height in his path of cultivation.

These two intents did not give Xiang Shaoyun an immediate boost in strength, but they helped him understand the direction he should be taking his cultivation. In fact, his actual gains were immeasurable. These intents were akin to a guiding light that could light up his path of cultivation.

"Not bad, not bad at all. In fact, if you had all been supplied with more resources, you guys could have reached an even higher height. It's a pity, really," Xiang Shaoyun lamented.

The owners of all three of the intents were decently talented people. The first palace master focused too much on teaching, resulting in a limited achievement in his own cultivation. But it was also his very same selfless heart that had helped him reach the King Realm.

The second palace master was in fact a genius in cultivation, as he had slightly comprehended the essence of wind. If given the right opportunities, he would have been able to reach an even higher height. For some unknown reason, his cultivation had stopped at the fourth-stage King Realm.

As for the final King Realm cultivator, he had been shackled by his poor talent. Regardless of the amount of hard work he put into cultivating, the King Realm was his limit. It was also too bad that he was based in such a poor region where there were no sufficient resources to help him improve his physique.

Xiang Shaoyun sat on the praying mat in a lotus position and started meditating on the two latter intents, and after he made sure he had committed everything to mind, he walked toward the other direction.

Of the seven remaining coffins, four of them were reacting. The other three coffins were goners as their inheritance intents had dispersed along with the passage of time. Currently, Xiang Shaoyun was heading toward the unnamed coffin. He refused to believe that a peak King Realm expert would leave nothing behind. His coffin wouldn't be stored here if that were the case.

When Xiang Shaoyun arrived before the coffin, he rested one palm on the coffin as he berated, "You dare to not reveal yourself before this young master?"

As Xiang Shaoyun spoke, his kingly presence swept out and crushed down upon the coffin. He wanted to use a straightforward method to force the intent out. If even after doing this there was still nothing, it could only mean that nothing was left of this unnamed cultivator either. He sent his senses in, and when it almost seemed as if he wouldn't find anything, the purple bone in his body reacted.

Swish!

An incorporeal energy surged out of his purple bone and flowed through his arm toward the coffin. The purple energy shrouded the coffin, seemingly trying to enter the coffin. But since this coffin was reinforced by a formation, the purple energy couldn't enter no matter what.

Suddenly, a loud rumble rang out from within the coffin.

Bang!