

PARAGON 91

## Chapter 91 -: Advent Of Death

This scene was all too familiar with Wei Wuyin. He had raided various camps in his lifetime, not just hunting down the remnants of the Violet Moon Sect, but chasing down condemned families or clans. The cultivation world was cruel.

Even the Scarlet Solaris Sect was nearly besieged by the Elven Race and in that siege, he was decapitated. While this happened in an alternate future where the Black Skeleton hadn't intervened, it just went to show that actions can easily lead to the utter demise of even one of the Five Great Sects.

Therefore, his heart was calm and even-paced in its beats. The violence in the hearts of the elites beside him, however, erupted in full-force. Their hands gripped their weapons intensely, and their eyes blazed with a fierce intent to commit atrocities to their fellow human.

"Go!" Dong Fa viciously shouted as he coldly swept his gaze at the people below, his spiritual sense wildly descended to inspect and locate strong targets. That was his objective, to eliminate the Mortal Gods that posed the greatest threat to his allies.

The atmosphere that was serene and lively one second before was overturned into a gloom and murky at this very moment. Those below, within their homes and on the streets, soon realized the calamity that had been brought to their lives.

Woosh!

An arrow was the first weapon of death that claimed a life. It was aimed at a teenage boy whose clear and pure eyes still had a hint of confusion and uncertainty. The arrow was like the reaper's scythe as it approached, slicing through the air, and piercing into his skull. It was a truly spectacular long-range shot as it squarely hit his glabella.

His eyes instantly lost muscle restraint as they went in different directions, tinged with blood from blood vessels exploding from the impacting force of the arrow, and glaring crimson blood, brain matter, and bone pieces fell from the back of his skull.

Thud.

He fell backwards. Dead.

"AHHHHHHH!!!"

This was the spark as a terrified shriek of the young woman beside him reached an insane octave range. Unfortunately, such an impressive scream was cut short by a blade of wind that sliced into her neck and the necks of three beside her. Blood gushed like a geyser, reaching the skies and dying the ground crimson.

It had begun.

The members of the Earth-Sky Alliance descended with their qi primed for slaughter. They executed decisive and swift acts of death dealing, ending anyone that had an ounce of Qi Condensation cultivation with extreme prejudice.

From where he stood, he realized the slaughter was truly two-fold as the northern side had commenced their actions. He could see figures descending from the walls, swords and various other weapons in hand as they struck with clear intent.

Wei Wuyin didn't need to embroil himself in such simple slaughter. He was similarly trying to find an opponent. As an Imperial Clan, they must have Godlord level figures. After all, the majority of Godlords of Wu Country was a part of the Imperial Clan, and the Yuhei Country shouldn't be too different.

"Nooo! Stop!!! Argh!"

"I'll fight you with my life on t—"

"Don't hurt my boy! PLEASE!!!"

The slaughter below was accompanied by various reactions and voices, yet they all ended with an untimely and gruesome death. In the matter of a minute, hundreds of people were brutally killed with an extreme swiftness. Many ran away, seeking shelter at the residences of experts they knew. It was the safety they yearned for, but it collapsed as elites of war arrived and killed these idols of safety with ease.

A few fights broke out that lasted longer than a few seconds. The experts awoke and reacted, those at the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Phase. But they were cruelly crushed as Jian Daiyu and Dong Fa would act, giving support or directly killing these experts in conjunction with their allies.

Even Mortal Gods were ganged up on, killed by these elites.

As they swept towards the central area, Wei Wuyin frowned as no Seventh or Eighth Phase expert had shown themselves yet. His brows furrowed as he felt a little out of place. He started to venture in and occasionally saw young women and children ensnared and restrained.

They had eyes of burning fear and desperation as they saw him casually walk by. "Something's not right," this feeling continued to propagate in his heart. As he observed the battlefield that was more like a slaughter, he saw Dong Fa, Jian Daiyu, and Mei Yang killing to their hearts' content.

They seemed to be approaching the castle together, piercing their way forward while leaving a trail of bodies or captured individuals.

It wasn't long before they swept through the streets and buildings, thousands dying beneath the swords of these members, yet the true experts hadn't taken action. Were they leaving or establishing a defensive front with the castle as the centerpiece.

His eyes narrowed as he observed the castle. The four of them arrived nearly simultaneously, covering the four directions of the castle in perfect symmetry. Their qi primed and ready to act. This mission seemed too easy, so they were all on guard.

At this exact moment, in the castle, Yuhei Yan and Yuhei Chan were located in the main hall. Surrounding them was six figures, all Mortal Gods. They were solemn and somber. The merciless slaughter occurring outside caused their eyes to become bloodshot and their veins to nearly pop in frustration and hatred. From there, they witnessed all this with the support of observation spiritual formations. A screen was split into four and revealed four individuals: Jian Daiyu, Dong Fa, Mei Yang, and Wei Wuyin.

"We've locked on to all peak-Mortal Gods and above, father." Yuhei Chen spoke through clenched teeth. His utter hatred and anger caused his voice to reverberate with a sharp tone.

Yuhei Yan sighed in his heart. It took too long to prepare, and this resulted in the deaths of their clanmates. It was unjust and his failure. He had to take several breaths before he said, "Activate the Array. After, we'll take action and kill the rest. Be ready." His words were cold and carried the burning blaze of rage within.

"Yes!" The six Mortal Gods roared.

Outside, Wei Wuyin and the others frowned at the silent response. "I don't sense a Qi Array, so I don't understand their actions." This thought flitted through not only Wei Wuyin but the others. A Qi Array usually had faint fluctuations of circulation, constantly primed for the ready in a moment's notice. Therefore, it was easy to spot the existence of one.

As for spiritual formations, they leaked minute traces of spiritual energy that gave away their existence. It was this very reason why long ago Wei Wuyin noticed the Alert Formation of the Task Force all those years ago, and even the layered and concealed assault formation too.

However, sometimes it was the methods that broke convention that posed the greatest threat to elite experts such as themselves. After all, the Yuhei Clan was under the rule of an expert that exceeded the Qi Condensation Realm, and even if you prepared for the unexpected, if it was outside of your realm of belief or understanding, what preparations could be made?

「Astral Array: Nine Heavenly Waves」

"All of you shall perish!" Yuhei Yan's voice resounded like epic thunder unleashed in the annals of myth. It brought about terrifying horror in the hearts of the invaders, their eyes lifted.

An astrological phenomena had occurred. The world that was originally bright and beloved by sunlight disappeared, followed by a dark-green and scarlet-colored aurora borealis. It shimmered into existence that blocked the sunlight from piercing through, causing absolute night to descend for a moment.

Their hearts quivered as they observed this.

"What the hell?!" Wei Wuyin's heart raced as he realized the power and existence above was far beyond his comprehension. It seemed to draw its strength from the world, not materials set at key locations with connecting spiritual formations.

Mei Yang's expression darkened, "An array in the sky?!" She had never witnessed this before. Her own heart shook with the feeling of inevitable crisis. Her eyes flashed, without any hesitation her spiritual qi erupted. Her body was wreathed in a bright fiery qi that seemed to originate from sunlight. She became a miniature sun that brightened the world from its dusky and abrupt darkness.

「*Helios Fire Art: Encountering Sun to Another World*」

This was an advanced Movement Art that ignited her Spirit of Qi, drawing out its most epic and vital energies stored throughout her cultivation journey. She was incredibly decisive, not hesitating to execute a self-harming art. Her speed was exceptional as she blazed a path, ignoring the other Scarlet Solaris Sect members that were gawking at the sky.

Wei Wuyin's eyes shifted as Mei Yang had already traversed outside the valley in a blink. Yet, when he saw the phenomenon above, it vastly exceeded a mere few miles, likely covering hundreds of miles. He didn't take her route. Instead, he settled down and executed a three-layered ward of Elemental Qi, Saber Qi, and Draconic Qi.

He summoned Element within his grasp and calmly waited for the assault. This array exceeded imagination, so using your energy to run felt as if you'll only delay the inevitable in his heart. Surprisingly, he was calm and ready.

However, the other two saw Mei Yang depart and felt a pressing crisis. They hastily followed suit, executing movement arts to split into different directions in hopes it'll divide the array's focus.

Then, it arrived.

Sssssshhhhhhhh!! Swish!

It was like the sound of ocean waves crashing with the world, low pitched and irregular like the thundering stomach of a god. It was terrifying.

From the skies, a pulsating wave blasted forth and targeted four locations. It was exceptionally fast and in the literal blink of a mortal eye, it was already before Jian Baiyu, Dong Fa, Mei Yang, and Wei Wuyin.

When it was truly unleashed, they didn't even travel more than a few feet as it arrived before each of them. Even Mei Yang's far figure was caught. She was aghast as she realized her folly and situation, despairing fear flashing in those usually charming eyes. The power in this wave of green and scarlet energy was far beyond her limits, but she was a fighter.

She executed several layers of wards and defended as best she could, but these hasty defenses were insufficient before these waves.

Crack! Shatter!!

The wave decimated her wards easily and engulfed her entire body. A heart-rending scream escaped her powerful lungs as the wave battered her flesh, tearing skin from meat and meat from bone. Her clothes were obliterated as her naked body was revealed, yet the inconsistent proportions and mangled pieces of flesh left only one shying away in horror.

Fortunately for her, her powerful body refined by spiritual qi allowed her flesh and blood to reach astonishing levels of durability, forcefully resisting the wave enough for her to survive with breath in her lungs. She blasted away, igniting her Spirit of Qi to the maximum as she once more executed her movement art.

In seconds, she left.

She was impressively decisive and demonstrated incredible force of will to push through.

As for Dong Fa and Jian Daiyu...they weren't so lucky.

They lacked spiritual qi and the ability to react appropriately. They couldn't even muster up wards to defend before the wave of energy smashed into them without mercy.

Dong Fa's icy body erupted in light, but the continuous battering caused his body to simply explode on the spot. Blood mist and mangled flesh was all that was left of his existence.

Wei Wuyin's eyes sharpened as he turned his gaze towards Jian Daiyu, his heart aching. This was a woman he wanted to bed in this lifetime, a high-level beauty waiting to be conquered yet...

In the last moments of her life, she was fierce and unyielding. As a sword cultivator, she never conceded without putting up a last fight, making all sword cultivators proud. With her sword in hand, she turned and faced the wave. While she couldn't formulate a ward or even execute a Qi Art, she resisted the wave with her sword, will, and intent.

It bought her exactly 0.31 seconds beyond Dong Fa. She brandished her sword with vigor, slicing twice in small horizontal movements. The wave first hit her sword, shattering it into dust and fragments and entered her mouth and body. However, she was relentless.

Her clothes were the next to go as her body lasted a tad bit longer. Wei Wuyin was capable of seeing her perfect, soft, and impressive body for less than a tenth of a second before her skin was blasted off revealing toned muscles and traces of blood.

She seemed to want to roar defiantly, as if to fight against fate. Yet no voice was heard as her flesh was ripped off, a tearing sound reminiscent of removing wax from skin resounded as her flesh exploded backwards into mist. At this point, she was completely dead.

Her skeletal frame was the only thing that remained that glimmered with sharp energies. It seemed the reason her bones lasted just a tad bit longer was due to them being refined by sword energies for an exceptionally long period of time.

In Wei Wuyin's mind, he now realized why she seemed like a literal sword. But in the end that skeleton was turned into dust by the pressing and vicious wave.

She was no more.

Wei Wuyin's heart bled as he watched a beauty snuffed out of existence. A beauty he had made plans for and had his eye on. How unfortunate, but such was the path of cultivation and death could be the result of a single mistake.

As for him, the wave smacked into his wards yet failed to penetrate through the first layer. His Elemental Qi was borne from a Divine Heart of Elemental Qi and nine high-level elemental essences combined, this coupled with the spiritual qi base of two Spirits of Qi and two Sixth Phase Hearts of Qi made his qi exceptional beyond belief.

It was incredibly easy, barely an inconvenience to block this deadly wave.

When he was a mere Sixth Phase expert with only two Hearts of Qi and Eight Elements, he one-shot a Mortal God with a single strike. Now, he was an Eighth Phase expert with two Spirits of Qi and two Hearts of Qi with Elemental Qi. The 'Divine' aspects of his Divine Spirits of Qi denoted its exceptional

spiritual qualities—Spiritual Strength, Aura, and Energies—that vastly exceeded the norm for its cultivation.

Since Spiritual Qi was defined by these traits, his strength was at an entirely different level.

"This wave strikes nine times consecutively; no wonder its so strong." Wei Wuyin calmly commented as he lifted his gaze to observe the astrological phenomenon that was dissipating in the sky. It seemed that the array was a one-time counterassault.

From the castle, eight figures shot out with vigorous movements. They held weapons of war and emanated boundless killing intent. Yuhei Yan was at the lead, but him and the rest halted as they paused in disbelief.

Wei Wuyin was still here?

No, Wei Wuyin was still alive?!

Wei Wuyin's silver eyes roamed slowly on these figures, focusing on Yuhei Yan. He thought for a moment. His desire to do battle was slowly dwindling as he realized that this individual likely couldn't last a single blow from his saber. After all, even Mei Yang was nearly killed by that astonishing wave yet his simple Elemental Qi Ward had completely blocked it.

How could a measly Godlord rival his current cultivation? It would be laughable to think he would be able to fight to his fullest here.

Instead, he brandished Element and calmly said while rubbing the back of his neck, "In truth, I'm just a last minute add-on. How about we come to a deal and I'll just step aside?"

These people sacrificed their people's lives for a chance to overturn the situation and succeeded. If he hadn't shown up, they would've ran out already and slaughtered the remnant forces left behind. If he decided, he could kill them and let the plundering happen. To be honest, he held a heart-felt respect for their decisive actions.

But, why was he doing this?

Benefits!

If he could get things that plundering them whole couldn't get him, then why wouldn't he extort them instead? Why did he need to get his hands bloody if he could obtain everything without spilling a single drop of blood?

Yuhei Yan was a smart man, excluding his blind trust in family. He quickly realized that Wei Wuyin's cultivation was insurmountable and his will would determine their fate. With a grave voice, he spoke solemnly, "What do you want?"

Wei Wuyin placed his Element on his shoulder and grinned.

## **Chapter 92 -: The Realm Beyond**

With a content smile, Wei Wuyin left the Yuhei Clan's hidden valley with brisk steps. He was overjoyed by his gains. Gains gained without having to take a single life at that. In the beginning of this incursion,

Wei Wuyin had only sought to offer support and engage in a fight with high-level figures; thus, he hadn't killed a single person today. Despite that, he definitely obtained the most out of the four parties.

In fact, the fates of those that remained amongst the Sky Sword Sect, Earth-Sky Alliance, and Scarlet Solaris Sect was dealt with by the Yuhei Yan, the Yuhei Clan's Godlord. Without Mei Yang, Jian Daiyu, and Dong Fa to fend off the top-tier experts of the Yuhei Clan, the others were mere fodder before their attacks. The resulting delivery of vengeance was brutal, with many of the members captured, likely to be abused or enslaved.

This was the fate of losers. This was the fate of the ill-prepared, the weak, and the greedy. He saw no reason to intervene, with his relationship with the Scarlet Solaris Sect being effectively severed in his heart. In his mind, only Mei Mei and Du Ling had any form of importance to him. The rest was essentially strangers, or even possible enemies of the future.

Since Mei Yang had abandoned them and the two peak-Mortal Gods were obliterated, their fates were a matter of course. In fact, if he hadn't arrived today, this sequence of events would've happened regardless. Therefore, he felt no guilt from his inaction. Even Dao Shin, an individual he had a little connection with, was left to his own devices in the counterstrike of the Yuhei Clan.

As for the gains, he obtained what he had wanted for a long time: Qi Condensation Realm's complete and thorough explanation of the Nine Phases, information about the realm beyond Qi Condensation, and Spiritual Qi Arts. Spiritual Qi Arts were the Godlord level arts that utilized Spiritual Qi as its foundation, unlike his current repertoire of Qi Arts or Spiritual Spell that merely used one or the other.

Among these arts were arts such as the Spiritual Incarnation Art, an Avatar-based art that used Spiritual Qi and Spiritual Sense to navigate and control an avatar of oneself. It was fascinating, but far, far less complex and lacked the exquisiteness of his False Mortal God Avatar Art. That being said, within it was a trove of foundational information in the appropriate means to conjure an incarnation, allowing speech and simulated physical senses via spiritual sense. It was quite enlightening, allowing Wei Wuyin to make instant corrections to his own art.

With the rest of these Spiritual Qi Arts, he could improve his own strength by several degrees, and truly embrace the boundless benefits provided by the Infused Spirituality Phase of the Qi Condensation Realm. Moreover, he didn't just obtain Spiritual Qi Arts, but Clan-exclusive Spiritual Spells and Qi Arts. While they were reluctant to accept it, Wei Wuyin was in an invincible position and his demands brokered no negotiation.

Without a hint of shame, he explored every last record they had to its fullest without holding back. He even dug into their secret trove, forcefully prying open their secrets, and snatched ancient records of the continent.

Fweet!

Wei Wuyin called for Bai Lin. He held a jet-black crystal that glinted with traces of spiritual energy. In this crystal was spiritually inscribed characters that contained the details of the cultivation realm beyond Qi Condensation—Astral Core Realm! Just like the Qi Condensation Realm, it was divided into nine phases. The first phase of which was named the World Sea Phase.

"Astral Core Realm! Such a name. Astral...Relating to the stars," Wei Wuyin paused for a moment as he gazed at the sky. In the night sky, there were numerous stars that could be seen. His older brother had always told him that the stars that lit up the night were souls of the undying Immortals of this world. Was it possible that each star was a cultivator at the Astral Core Realm?

One day, could he become a star in the night sky, beheld by countless in wonder and awe. How great would that be? His eyes became cloudy as the light of the future gleamed within his pupils, emanating boundless hope and dreams. Yet, within that light was the shadow of Hell and the Calamities that wished to collapse it into nothingness, destroying him and those dreams of his.

While he didn't choose to be an Inheritor of Sin, if it wasn't for it, his life would've already been lost and so would his future. But perhaps being dead was better than knowing that death, an inevitable death, was coming. If the Scripture of Sin was correct, then each corresponding Calamity of Hell will be greater than the last. If he failed without a Soul of True Sin, his entirety would forever be condemned to suffer in Hell, never to reincarnate for eternity.

If it wasn't for the fact the Realm of Sages seemed far, far too distant to ever reach, he would garnish his will and fight with his everything with each passing second. But, the Astral Core Realm was the next stage of cultivation, and according to the brief information described within the jade, it related to controlling a unique form of energy, not cultivating one's soul. Therefore, the Soul of True Sin was truly too far away. If he needed to ascend the Astral Core Realm and into the next realm with forty years left before the Calamity struck, he...didn't want to even think about it.

Furthermore...furthermore...furthermore...what if the realm after the Astral Core Realm wasn't the Realm of Sages? WHAT IF?! This question, if he even dwelled on it for a microsecond would cause his heart to drop into a never-ending blizzard of despair and depression.

Kree!

Just as his mind was about to descend into a never-ending chasm of utter hopelessness, Bai Lin's cry brought his mind back to reality. Those dark, despairing thoughts were shoved away by his subconscious as he reveled in the present, not the future. Right now, he was likely invincible beneath the Astral Core Realm, so his opportunities to explore were endless. After the Wu Country, he fully intended to search throughout the Myriad Yore Continent till completion; to explore this world fully.

Bai Lin and Su Mei landed. Wei Wuyin could see Su Mei's body emit faint traces of smokey darkness and glimmering light. It was chaotic and distorted. "You've made some progress in your Cultivation Method?" He was shocked to see how fast she was advancing. The cultivation method she obtained from the Warring States Pagoda or the Myriad Creation Dao Palace—Tenebrous Light of Night Method—had displayed its profoundness as it slowly nurtured Darkness and Light Qi. With her current headway, Wei Wuyin felt that she might be able to merge the two and form Shadowlight Qi.

Every single time he witnessed Su Mei's cultivation and talent, he couldn't help but marvel in awe. At times, he suspected her talent even exceeded his own.

Su Mei nodded, "I've formed the basis structure for darkness and light energy, but only the most basic forms of them." While her words didn't seem to contain any pride, they severely downplayed her



achievements over the course of a few days. Even if the Yuhei Clan's Astral Core Realm Ancestor were to witness her, they'd be absolutely shocked into disbelief by her accomplishments thus far.

"Keep working hard," was all he could and needed to say. With her swift and direct nod, he knew the emotions and belief he conveyed through those three words were understood and received.

"Let's go!"

The next stop: Wu Central Lands!

### **Chapter 93 -: Heavenly Wu City, Enlightenment!**

Heavenly Wu City.

In the Wu Central Lands, this city embodied the essence of royalty, power, and influence. The Wu Imperial Clan and the King of Wu were stationed in this city, within the Royal Palace.

It was built on flat land, with no major discernible landmarks. In fact, there were no protective walls surrounding the city with the outlines only being defined by lookout towers at the outer, inner, and central areas. These towers were of various heights. The tallest within the central areas while the shortest in the outer areas.

The Heavenly Wu City was vast, spanning nearly a hundred kilometers and housed tens of millions of citizens.

In the northwestern outer area of the Heavenly Wu City, Wei Wuyin and Su Mei were sitting within a restaurant called the Blue Jay. They served a signature Blue Jay Wine that was rumored to be delicious and bring about a floaty feeling.

Bai Lin was outside the restaurant. With her large body, she was eating her fill of food outside. However, she didn't mind. As the meat and various forms of fruit were brought to her, she devoured them all with joy.

Su Mei's expression was serious as she patiently listened to Wei Wuyin speak.

"To enter the Sixth Stage of Qi Condensation, becoming a Mortal God, requires the fusion of yin and yang energy into a single whole. You may have already known that those at this stage have wildly different viewpoints on how to ascend, and outside help was mostly useless. However, I can tell you this: 'World'." He was directing her on cultivation, giving her minor pointers on the subject of the sixth phase.

"We tap into it, to create, to interconnect vitality and form into one. A reality of our creation is made, while false, it is also true. After reading multiple viewpoints and reaching this phase, this is what I believe to be the most quintessential aspect to ascend." Wei Wuyin had thought long and hard on how to explain the way to ascend. After all, there were only a few hundred Mortal Gods in the entire Wu Country.

Even the Scarlet Solaris Sect had less than twenty. Even if you included the Wu Imperial Clan and myriad of forces outside of the Five Great Sects and Two Major Clans, they still wouldn't exceed a thousand.

Su Mei's eyes lit up with deduction and enlightenment. Wei Wuyin's words had hit the most core, crucial aspect of the sixth phase, and his words carried a unique charm. It was as if he was passing along his experiences to her.

In fact, he was incorporating a trace of Eden Qi, a Mind Qi, into his words, trying to incorporate how he felt during his realization and breakthrough. When he saw her descend into silence and contemplation, Wei Wuyin warmly smiled.

'She's quite talented.'

He could already sense her meridians galvanize itself to accommodate the world's force. After a few minutes, his mouth was agape in shock and disbelief. The world force was revolving around her faster and faster, and his heartbeat started to accelerate.

This was impossible, no?

However, at the next moment, that disbelief became awe and astonishment. She descended directly into a state of cultivation, her body started to rapidly absorb the world force via her Heart of Qi.

The surrounding patrons of the restaurant were startled by the swirling aura of vitality and form, various realistic images were birthed from nothing and given vitality. They gave off a surrealism, illusory yet real.

"Is this the False Reality Projection?" Since he had never seen someone breakthrough, he had only read about the circumstances surrounding ascending to the Mortal God level. As for himself, he would never experience it again after the first time and he had been like Su Mei, too focused to notice.

"What is the meaning of this? You dare execute spiritual spells in this eatery? Do you have no respect?!" An enraged patron shouted in anger. The surging aura had disturbed him, causing him to push his plate to the ground.

There were others as well. Many of which were misunderstandings because of the first customer's complaints.

"You dare fight here? Do you know who owns this place? Leave before you lose your lives!"

"Get the fuck out!"

"I didn't come here to be blasted by spiritual spells, I want a refund!"

The complaints started to get loud and wild, causing Wei Wuyin to grow irritated. He waved his hand, producing a ward of qi that cut off sound and other auras, hoping Su Mei remained undisturbed. This state was rare, and she might not be able to reach it again.

While the location was indeed unexpected and somewhat inconvenient, enlightenment didn't pander to convenience.

When the ward of qi was erected, the patrons started to become more angry and some even aggressive, as if they were insulted at being ignored. The insecurities of humans showed itself well.

The first patron who spoke grasped towards his table. He chucked his utensils at the ward in anger, spouting vulgarities. The silver utensils soundlessly disintegrated upon contact, but this only furthered the rage of the crowd.

At a certain point, people were already demanding refunds and free meals for this inconvenience, blaming the owner of the Blue Jay. There were even a few cultivators at the First Stage of Qi Condensation who brought their complaints unreasonably to the waiters and staff, demanding they take action and accede to their desires.

"Silence!" A powerful voice echoed, instantly silencing the crowd. A tall, burly man with a large black beard and bald head walked into the restaurant. His steps were like smashing mountains and caused the hearts of everyone to slowly follow its rhythm. He had very manly, handsome features, with a strong physique and powerful gaze filled with authority and ferocity.

When he arrived on the scene, all focus was immediately shifted onto him.

Some of the crowd whispered, "Isn't that the Third Prince of Wu?"

"That is! Oh god! I can't believe it's Prince Zhen!"

"Prince Zhen? The Bloodaxe Prince? I heard he's incredibly overbearing, arrogant, and does what he likes, when he likes. He even forced someone to be his Dao Companion."

Many similar comments were thrown around, but the more sensitive words were done via transmission crystals. After all, very rarely do people have the courage to openly gossip in the target's face.

Prince Zhen walked in dressed in his sleeveless, light bronze battle armor. There were faint runic markings etched onto its surface, giving off an aura of power and suppression.

Beside him was a woman and a male, both young-seeming, both slim, beautiful looking, and seemed to be twins. They had short red hair, crimson eyes, and pale skin. Their physiques were similar outside of the noticeable male and female differentiation, but if they wished, they could easily shift into the other.

The woman had small mounds of womanly flesh, perky ass, and decent curves. While the man had a noticeable bulge that was incredibly difficult to miss.

Wei Wuyin didn't even bother looking at them as he focused his attention on Su Mei while guarded by the ward.

Bai Lin outside had also peeked her head into one of the upper-floor windows, her lone golden eye gazing at the situation with curiosity.

"My Prince," The female twin wanted to say something, but was interrupted by Prince Zhen who nonchalantly showed her the back of his hand. She obediently stayed silent afterwards, remaining behind him.

"Who's crane is that outside?" Prince Zhen asked. He had flown over randomly and saw a golden eyed, golden beak, crane that seemed to have an interesting latent bloodline. As a prince of wu, he was well-educated, but those who stood beside him were even more so. They easily deduced that the crane had

consumed a Golden Phoenix Fruit, a legendary heavenly resource that could bring out the innate potential of avian creatures.

There were many beasts of legends, and the phoenix was heralded as the progenitor of all avian creatures. Therefore, they all had faint traces of phoenix bloodline that could be brought to bare with the fruit. If they can awaken, they even had a chance of evolving.

In the era after Divine King Han Xei, there was a beast that had become famous for awakening, reaching the Astral Core Realm of strength, otherwise known as an Astral Beast, and ascending to worlds unknown.

If Prince Zhen could obtain this bird and gift it to his future Dao Companion, her feelings may become solidified and true with this gesture. While this form of thinking was naive, it still held the inkling of possibility of being true; therefore, he desired to do so.

The silent crowd remained silent at his question. Instead, they all looked towards the ward that had been set up by Wei Wuyin.

Prince Zhen followed their gazes and his eyes lit up. In this ward was a woman who had her eyes closed but gave off a dense vitality and illusory feeling.

"My Prince, she's undergoing her ascension to the Sixth Stage of the Qi Condensation Realm," the male twin respectfully commented.

"Here?" Prince Zhen was startled, but the crowd was even more startled. In fact, they became frightened at the words of the male twin. There was a noticeable trembling of fear in the crowd. Many of them who had wildly cursed and thrown objects at the ward were terrified to the limit.

"Haha! Enlightenment truly does not care for convenience or location. You can gain one at a funeral or while pissing!" Prince Zhen laughed heartily, but then his expression turned stern.

"Everyone, leave." The moment those words were said, everyone felt like a weight had been lifted from their shoulders and feet. They bowed towards Prince Zhen and left. Before long, the entire restaurant had been cleared.

The restaurant's owner, a chubby man with a relatively decent cultivation base at the Third Stage of Qi Condensation, appeared with a humble, low-born expression. He clasped his hands and said a few words, but the Prince didn't even respond. Instead, the male twin sent a ray of light towards the owner. That ray contained a bag with two essence stones, sufficient enough to make up for the lost business and more.

With thanks, he retreated back to his office and sent the staff home for the day.

Prince Zhen waited. He knew this moment was crucial, whether she succeeded or not will depend on her own personal talent. After all, despite Mortal Gods having three to four hundred years of lifespan, there were less than a thousand in a country of hundreds of millions.

If she did, her entire future would change and she could establish a force that could easily last a century or two with her at the helm. It was a huge step forward in the cultivation world.

Prince Zhen already had faint thoughts of recruiting her into his faction if she had no prior history against the Wu Imperial Clan.

A few hours passed before Su Mei's closed eyes opened, revealing a world of her own creation, a false reality. She felt that the sequence of events were out of this world. A few months ago, she had been at the Fourth Stage of Qi Condensation, now she was at the Sixth Stage of Qi Condensation and a Mortal God level figure!

Wei Wuyin warmly smiled, congratulating her with his gaze. "You've succeeded. Now, we should come up with a title, no?" As he said this, the qi ward dissolved into nothing, revealing their figure.

Even he felt it was sudden, but that's how cultivation was. He had reached the Second Stage to the Sixth Stage in less than a year. Wei Wuyin had always had a distinct feeling that the Qi Condensation shouldn't be as difficult as it was. Now that he was a Lord Alchemist, capable of concocting sixth grade alchemical products suitable for the entire Qi Condensation Realm, he knew it truly shouldn't be.

Outside of grasping world force and the fusion of your spirit and core, it was truly just a realm of accumulation, only requiring resources already heavily prevalent in the heavens and earth.

His own thoughts were that the alchemy talent was low and the innate resources the Myriad Yore Continent provided was far too low per divided territory. No wonder those truly divine figures had combined the six countries into a single empire. It was to have more resources! Well, ambition to rule likely mattered as well.

While Su Mei and Wei Wuyin exchanged a few words, still remaining indeterminate about the title, the male twin cleared his throat to grab their attention.

Wei Wuyin now shifted his gaze towards this tall, muscular man and his two twins. He softly sighed. With a hint of impatience, he said, "Bai Lin isn't for sale, and never will be."

Prince Zhen frowned.

#### **Chapter 94 -: Unknown Undercurrents**

"Okay," Prince Zhen accepted Wei Wuyin's stance. While others considered him as an aggressive person, he was actually quite reasonable. Not to mention, he was perceptive. He could determine that Wei Wuyin was not only not ordinary, but was filled with exhaustion at this type of request, as if it was already something he'd heard a thousand times before.

Considering this, he wasn't forceful or angry. Instead, he clasped his hands respectfully, ignoring his status, as he greeted Su Mei and Wei Wuyin. "My name's Wu Zhen, Third Prince of Wu Country. I would like to extend my congratulations for your ascension."

His tone was delicate, humble, and filled with grace; completely unlike his burly, tall, and domineering appearance would suggest. He carried himself like a prince charming of legends. His words carried an eloquent air that only royalty and nobility could have birthed.

Wei Wuyin was taken aback. He had heard stories of this Third Prince, the Bloodaxe Prince. He had gotten this name by slaughtering his enemies and was often portrayed by the public as violent, arrogant, and unreasonably difficult to deal with.

When he arrived, he gave off this aura as well. However, looking at him now, Wei Wuyin felt like he was seeing two different people.

Prince Zhen noticed Wei Wuyin's peculiar gaze and knowingly smiled, "To my enemies, I am who I must be. To the public, I am who I must seem. To those I have no enmity and only respect, I am who I am." His words were profoundly thought-provoking and told many untold struggles of the requirements regarding perception.

A hint of admiration entered Wei Wuyin's eyes as he found those words very agreeable. To his enemies, he was ruthless, icy-cold and capable of slaughtering an entire force, pulling out all roots, without question. To the public, he came off as an underdog to the people, a success story of talent and hardwork. To those he was friends with, he was warm and thoughtful.

Despite all this, when he was in the Scarlet Solaris Sect, perception was very important and there were so many invisible walls to leap over or avoid that he became tired. Just tired of it all.

Now that he had strength alongside a deadline of life, he would only be himself. All else be damned.

"Wei Wuyin." He decided to introduce himself as well. Su Mei looked towards him and saw him nod slightly.

She said, "Su Mei."

Prince Zhen observed this small interaction and he knowingly smiled. He realized the relationship between the two was special, but Wei Wuyin was the dominant dynamic of the duo. In that case, Wei Wuyin was definitely a Mortal God level character.

"God Wei, God Su, greetings." As he said those words, the twins bowed respectfully and introduced themselves as well. They were Li Tian and Li Di, the female and male respectively.

"Heaven and earth?" Wei Wuyin and Su Mei both smiled, finding the name quite on-the-nose, but creative for a set of twins.

"It seems it was fate that I met you, God Wei. How about you join us? I'm participating in an auction within the Inner Area, and I've just returned from outside the city. There will be a few interesting items. If you have any items to sell, you can do that as well, make a little extra profit along the way. What do you say?" Prince Zhen offered.

Auction?

Wei Wuyin's eyes grew bright with interest. One of the things he wanted to do in the city was going to an auction. While he had gone to a few before, this was when he didn't even have an essence stone to his name. Now that he had sixth-grade alchemical products and the entire wealth of the Beast-Taming Sect in his wallet, he could definitely let loose.

He didn't bother consulting Su Mei as she would agree with him regardless. Not to mention, he found this Third Prince of Wu quite pleasing. He also didn't feel like he had any ulterior motives, at least those with ill-intent. This made him feel a little more comfortable with this prince.

"Guess it's true what they say about not judging a book by its cover, only by its contents," he laughed inwardly as he agreed to the prince's proposal.

Prince Zhen was elated. Having two Mortal God's traveling with him, and two with names he knew nothing about, meant he had a chance to establish a friendship.

When they left the restaurant, Bai Lin examined Prince Zhen, Li Tian, and Li Di with a cautious eye. It seems she heard what Prince Zhen implied when he asked for the owner of her, and she was somewhat suspicious. After all, she had been taken recently by people desiring her.

Wei Wuyin hastily assured her that Prince Zhen meant no harm, and that they were now acquainted. This caused her personality to immediately take a shift as she played around with them a little. Only after they saddled on their large eagle-like mount capable of rivaling Bai Lin in size, did she stop.

Taking to the skies, Bai Lin followed behind Prince Zhen's mount. They flew for several minutes in silence. Despite Prince Zhen's cheerful introduction, they didn't engage in further talks. In fact, Wei Wuyin felt something was off the moment they took flight.

"God Wei," Prince Zhen suddenly called out. Wei Wuyin regarded him. He was faintly smiling, but his eyes were oddly calm. A glint of killing intent that was rather well hidden emitted from his eyes.

Taken aback, Wei Wuyin focused. The killing intent wasn't directed towards him. He saw Li Tian and Li Di were staring ahead and didn't react, seemingly as if all things were normal.

Su Mei hadn't noticed the killing intent, so she only briefly glanced at the prince. As she had just entered the ranks of Mortal Gods in the Myriad Yore Continent, her attention was mostly focused on her newfound cultivation base. The miraculous mysteries of the False Reality Phase was profound.

At times, faint, translucent objects flickered around her.

Wei Wuyin didn't disturb her. Instead, he swept his spiritual sense quietly outwards. The hint that Prince Zhen had given him wasn't lost on him. When he did, his heart mused but his eyes remained calm.

This was the Wu Central Lands, Heavenly Wu City. He had never expected for people to be so brazen.

"Haaa, the complexities of royalty must be tiring," he bitterly sighed as he closed his eyes.

In the distance, a group of eight were traveling like shadows on the ground. Each of their speeds were as quick as the soaring beasts of Wei Wuyin and Prince Zhen rode.

At the lead was a figure wearing a black robe, the expression, eyes, body type, gender, and cultivation was thoroughly concealed. The others were all men, their faces covered in black oni porcelain masks with a dark-crimson horn. They were of all types, including tall, short, skinny, and dressed in black.

Despite it being day, they were nearly unnoticeable. A translucent mist shrouded their movements. It twirled around them like a snake and twisted rapidly. However, to the outside, it was as if they were invisible.

One of the men softly spoke, his voice was rough but cold like winter, "We've been noticed by the target." His words didn't cause the group to lessen their speed. Instead, another spoke.

"There are two new Mortal God level characters traveling alongside him, including a white crane with golden eyes and beak, indications that it had consumed the Golden Phoenix Fruit." This voice was more soft, nearly womanly. A thin, young man was where it originated from.

A faint white light was emitting from his glabella. It was visible even from his oni mask, like a third eye that couldn't be hidden from the world.

"We move. Nine seconds." An ambiguous voice sounded from the lead. They were obviously well-disciplined, with those words they simultaneously gave a soft yet synchronized 'En!'

Abruptly, their speed increased. With this level of speed, they'd intercept the route of the Prince in approximately seven seconds.

While this happened, Wei Wuyin opened his eyes. The Prince had turned away, but one could see his cultivation base circulate. The aura of a Seventh Phase of Qi Condensation Realm was quietly emitted from his pores.

Wei Wuyin's eyebrows flew up. This could be considered the peak of a Mortal God, reaching the sublime state of their metaphysical qi. From what he knew, the prince was in his sixties. To reach such a height in that period of time, he was without a doubt an astonishing genius.

He felt the aura of Li Tian and Li Di. They were both at the Seventh Stage as well. No wonder they were qualified to act as the guards of a prince. They only lacked the fusion of spirit and core before they became Godlords. However, much like the rest of cultivation, whether they could or not was unknown.

He quietly shook his head. The killing intent emitted was a warning and a message: "Leave!" He didn't know what was going to happen, but to target a prince at this time of day near their own city, in their own country, only meant unrest within.

He transmitted a message to Bai Lin. Her eyes shone brightly before she veered off. Quickly taking another direction away from the prince.

This wasn't his fight nor did he wish to take part in it. Not to mention, Su Mei had just entered the Sixth Phase. Her cultivation base was unstable and her combat prowess would be heavily affected. If something were to happen to Su Mei or Bai Lin because of his decision to meddle, how could he live with himself?

While it was unfortunate that he wouldn't be able to visit the auction with a prince figure at his side, he still intended to go.

Prince Zhen noticed Wei Wuyin leave and he sighed inwardly in relief. Those two didn't deserve to be caught in the dramatics of the royal clan. Then, his eyes turned determined and murderous. His mount halted in mid-air, and he turned around, his eyes flashing a sanguine light. A blood-red, double-sided battle axe that was three meters tall, with an axe as wide as two of him, and a thickness that could only allude to its heaviness.

When it was summoned, Li Tian and Li Di both retrieved their weapons. Longswords about two fingers wide and two meters long appeared. Li Tian's longsword had a golden blade and etchings of nimbus clouds along its edges. Li Di's longsword blade was grey with black mountains etched on its surface.

"Such timing!" Prince Zhen lamented. The civil unrest and shifting undercurrents in the capital had already reached such a state.



"Well, if you've come to seek death, I have a rather healthy dose. Come have some." His bodily stance was brutal as he held the large blood axe in a single hand. With the readiness to commit murderer, he brandished his axe.

Those black-clothed figures revealed themselves. They didn't speak and immediately took action. With a burst of synchronized qi, they shot forward rapidly. Prince Zhen and his twin guardians launched their attacks.

Boom!

Bam!

Bang!

While the sounds of battle echoed behind him, Wei Wuyin's expression was mild and indifferent. This situation was outside of his expectations, and quite frankly, he didn't want to be involved.

Firstly, this prince wasn't a friend. He had no reason to help in any capacity. They had literally just met, so taking action to intervene felt unnecessary.

Secondly, fighting would offend a party. He didn't know who was attacking or why, but hindering or outright slaughtering their members would likely turn their attention to him.

Lastly, but most importantly, he didn't really care.

Su Mei's eyes revealed a similar intent. Her gaze looked passively at the epic battle between the Prince, his guardians, and their attackers. This wasn't the first time she'd witnessed Mortal Gods exert their strength, but it still caused her to be in awe.

She found it surreal that her cultivation had now reached that level.

Shroom!

The immediate sky, a small patch above the sky-rending fight, turned sanguine in color. A bloody sweet smell suffused the air and caused a heavy throbbing of one's heart and pulsation of the veins. Su Mei found her lungs constrict slightly, causing her to feel shortness of breath.

Wei Wuyin wasn't affected by this force. He observed the sky above and told Bai Lin to land. His interest was piqued as he witnessed the sky change colors. A storm seemed to be brewing as the winds started to become turbulent and visibly chaotic beneath the patch of sanguine sky.

At the center of these brewing winds was Prince Zhen covered in a sanguine light. He stood upright, looking down on the earth like a God of War.

"Blood Qi!" A material qi that was similar to Scarlet and Jade Qi. Just its aura alone could adversely affect any cultivator. Su Mei was only experiencing a fraction of what those who stood before it would feel.

The fight between the prince and those masked attackers were fierce, with each clash causing violent qi to erupt and explode. Even though he was thousands of meters away, he felt the pressure from each devastating clash.

Li Di and Li Tian worked in synchronized fashion. They struck as one and retreated as one, and they weaved around Prince Zhen whilst doing so. It was beautiful to watch as their blades released powerful wind and earth qi arts. It was like watching heaven and earth move about.

The three were at the Sublime Qi Phase, and were peak Mortal Gods, but their opponents weren't slouches. Of the eight, six were at the Sublime Qi Phase, while two were at the False Reality Phase. Those two weaker opponents acted as backline support and launched long-range attacks, spiritual spells, and supported their teammates when needed.

Despite their strength being the lowest, they acted with perfect timing, interfering with attacks or disrupting attacks at the right moment with their swift actions.

Wei Wuyin noticed that amongst the eight, one of them hadn't taken action completely. That person was the only one that was completely concealed. He couldn't determine their gender or cultivation base very well, but he knew that person was the leader of the eight.

As he focused his attention on this figure, the figure turned towards him as if sensing his gaze.

"..." Wei Wuyin pondered briefly. He had the faint feeling that he was marked. Frowning, he sent his spiritual sense towards Su Mei and Bai Lin to inspect them thoroughly. When he did, he noticed a faint illusory symbol that resembled an eye on Bai Lin's left wing. It was wedged between her feathers and was the size of a fingerprint.

"It's a tracking mark? When did that...?" He realized those figures had placed a spiritual tracing mark on Bai Lin from an incredibly long distance. He didn't know why, but they did. Normally, if he was a Mortal God or even a normal Godlord, he would've missed this mark.

Fortunately, he had two Divine Spirits of Qi that amplified his spiritual sense with the inherent qualities of elemental and saber energy. His spiritual sense was several-fold greater and more piercing than normal.

"They don't intend to let us go? They let us leave so they had three less enemies to deal with..." He muttered softly as he came to this conclusion. There was no reason for such a subtle mark otherwise.

His eyes flashed with all sorts of thoughts.

The leader of the eight noticed Wei Wuyin's contemplative expression.

"Seventeen!" It called out. One of the Mortal Gods that had acted as support retreated. He turned towards the leader and without speaking, he soon nodded.

With a kick, he raced like a black predator seeking to kill towards Wei Wuyin.

## **Chapter 95 - Dealing With Assassins**

As the masked figure called Seventeen approached, Wei Wuyin and Su Mei's gaze shifted towards him. This masked man was at the Sixth Stage of the Qi Condensation Realm, one of the weaker of the eight, and he emitted a formless killing intent.

Su Mei frowned, but she didn't panic. Wei Wuyin was at the Eighth Phase, a bonafide Godlord figure, and Bai Lin could one-shot Mortal Gods with relative ease. Therefore, she remained entirely unconcerned.

"Lord Wei, it seems they've targeted us." Her words were mostly unnecessary, but it made Wei Wuyin come to a slight realization; Su Mei had just ascended and her foundation was unstable. She didn't have a powerful body like him to make up for the weakness or fragility of her Heart of Qi at the moment it was undergoing transitions.

He softly sighed, but gave her a soft nod in comfort. When he arrived in the Heavenly Wu City, he wanted to act as a tourist and avoid complicated conflicts or relations. He even decided to keep his Godlord cultivation base concealed during his trip to remain low-key. At most, he'd exert the prowess of a Mortal God or allow Bai Lin to take action.

However, an assassination group like this definitely can not be allowed to live or be given warnings. If he took action, he had to ensure he eliminated them all with extreme prejudice.

They were often trained in very elusive and strange methods, such as placing a tracking mark beneath his nose from a long distance. If he held back, even though he felt himself superior, he could still lose his life.

When he recalled the two female assassins who struck at him in his home, and how if he was at or just a little above their cultivation level, his life could've been lost, he knew what he had to do.

Kree!

Bai Lin softly cried as she eyed the masked figure approaching. Her eyes revealed a hint of disdain and battle intent. Those golden orbs of hers started to sparkle with power and emit blinding light. A single order and she would launch a devastating attack.

Wei Wuyin rubbed Bai Lin's feathers, as he did, his spiritual sense obliterated the tracking mark hidden beneath her feathers. "Calm down. Protect Su Mei, I'll handle this."

When those words were said, they instantly pacified Bai Lin's battle intent, and she released a small sound of acceptance and a bit of reluctance. To her, did Wei Wuyin even need to act against such insignificant characters? She was more than enough and even she disdained to act.

Laughing inwardly after noticing Bai Lin's thoughts, he leapt off her back and faced Seventeen.

Seventeen was a trained warrior and skilled assassin. He had a history filled with killing and survival that could make the most battle hardened men squirm in their sleep. Beneath that mask, he was calmer than the eye of the storm as he faced Wei Wuyun.

He summoned his weapon. A thin sword with a blade that seemed to be composed of crystal. It radiated a rainbow sheen and gave off a lively feeling as if it could evoke changes within the world. Wielding it, he got within thirty meters of Wei Wuyin and prepared to swing and unleash an attack.

"What?!" He abruptly halted his attack as he realized that Wei Wuyin had vanished from his sight. His spiritual sense instinctively went into action as he surveyed the surroundings. His eyes bulged as he located Wei Wuyin, his body reacting naturally as he dashed forward with his full might.

Without any hesitation, he slashed behind him with a qi wave. It gave off characteristics of a crystal and even the surrounding air suffused with rainbow-ish colors.

Wei Wuyin had appeared behind him, his eyes calm. "So, he can't even react to five percent of my speed." As he calmly assessed, he tried to get a gauge of his strength. He had moved rapidly, circled around Seventeen, and appeared directly behind him. This was without a qi art to bolster himself or a spiritual spell to hinder his opponent's senses.

This was purely physical speed from his fleshy body.

The wave of rainbow qi appeared before him, but he only casually reached out with his right hand and met it. It collided with the flesh of his palm without an ounce of qi supporting it, and he clenched his fingers fiercely. The resulting force from that action caused the rainbow qi to shatter into bits and pieces.

It was dispersed into nothing.

"My body was refined by the Sublime Energy of Elemental and Saber energies after my breakthrough. This is truly too low-level in comparison." Witnessing how casual his actions were, and how exerting a fraction of his force eliminated an attack so easily, he began to get a slight sense of his strength.

With two Divine Spirits that further reinforced his fleshy body with their inherent energies, he had no real way to gauge his power. Now that a conflict had arisen, he wanted to take this opportunity to understand. With a grasp that only contained a tenth of his strength. It was like caressing cotton.

Seventeen's bulging eyes became even more enlarged after his spiritual sense witnessed Wei Wuyin's casual and effortless actions. His heart throbbed as he came to an immediate understanding. The figure before him was a Godking!

Only those at this realm would be able to effortlessly use their mortal bodies to disperse his attack. His heart dropped several dozen degrees in temperature, as he turned towards the leading figure and relayed his message with a glance.

The leader figure trembled slightly and looked at Wei Wuyin. At this moment, it realized that they had miscalculated off of faulty intel.

If Wei Wuyin was a Godking then he took a casual watcher approach before because he had no true relations with Prince Zhen. Otherwise...

Wei Wuyin didn't know their thoughts nor did he care. "Let's see if you can defend against five percent of my strength," he kicked off and like a teleporting shadow, appeared before Seventeen with a clenched fist. Just the action of clenching his fist caused the air to gravitate towards his palm.

Seventeen felt death. Without hesitation, his mask fractured and his robes started to expand in size. He was initiating the act of self-detonation! In the face of absolute power, the most you can do is take your enemy with you. If they were too strong, then as long as you took a bite of flesh from them, you can die with a smile!

Wei Wuyin's eyes flashed as he saw this. Without pausing, he punched with more power than he originally intended. Before an explosion could occur, Seventeen's body and Heart of Qi exploded upon

contact with Wei Wuyin's fist. The accumulated energy could not find a release, but there was an explosion.

Boom!!

Seventeen's body became a mist of blood, guts, bones, and fragments of flesh.

Not a single drop of blood or flesh landed on Wei Wuyin as his black martial robe remained pristine.

"I hate assassins. They are too decisive," he helplessly sighed. These people had killed countless others, were often brainwashed by an organization, and had no qualms with throwing away their lives. After all, the profession itself likely had the highest mortality rate than any other. If one didn't steel their heart with the readiness to die, becoming a good assassin was a pipe dream.

In fact, they'll only die faster.

Su Mei saw all of this happening, and she couldn't help but marvel. The difference between the chaotic and trying fight beneath the sanguine skies and Wei Wuyin's simplistic actions drew a sharp comparison between phases.

Poof!

A black cloud of smoke emerged beneath the sanguine skies, and the black masked figures started to disappear within the smoke. They were vanishing as they launched their final attacks.

"They're retreating?!" Prince Zhen was startled. His current state was not good. There were all sorts of injuries on his body and his reserves of qi were nearly drained. He had even resorted to multiple life-saving treasures, but those figures countered each and every one, completely prepared for his various means. If it wasn't for his own high combat power, he likely would've died by now.

Li Di and Li Tian were just as shocked. Li Di even had an arm severed at the shoulder, and Li Tian was struggling as her stomach had bloody marks indicating a deep injury that could've bisected her. The enemy was well-prepared, and despite less than a minute of time having passed, they were at a severe disadvantage.

Even when one of the Mortal Gods departed, they were pressured to their limits. Perhaps if that Mortal God remained, they would've lost their lives by now.

Wei Wuyin saw the black smoke and shook his head. "If you didn't place a tracking mark or attack me, I would've let you kill the prince and escape, but now..." His eyes flashed with a cold light as he retrieved a saber from his storage ring. This saber was one that he'd stolen from Jade Circle City. I mean, was gifted.

"One, two...seven." His words were like a child counting with his fingers, casual yet focused. He had located all seven concealed and nearly invisible figures. His spiritual qi circulated as he struck out with seven swings, each carrying a piercing saber qi.

The rays of saber qi didn't enter the black smoke but scattered in different directions as they seemed like tracking missiles with eyes. They weaved through and shifted trajectories, but they were definitely following those assassins as they seemed to take every action to evade.

Prince Zhen's eyes widened as he witnessed Wei Wuyin take action. Those rays of saber qi were sharp and profoundly powerful. Even he wasn't sure if he could defend against a single one.

This was saber qi tempered by elemental origin energy, incredibly pure yin-yang energy, had reached the sublime level, and infused with spiritual strength. Even if it was to be compared with another Godlord's Saber Qi, it would be nearly a dozen times stronger. Let alone when facing Peak Mortal Gods.

Ptuu!

Six simultaneous spurts of blood gushed out from six locations as the rays of saber qi met the necks of each of the masked figures. They couldn't even defend themselves as its swiftness and power was beyond their limits.

They emerged from their stealthed states as headless corpses.

Wei Wuyin frowned as he watched the saber he wielded crumble into dust. It was too weak to handle his fierce spiritual qi.

He turned his attention to the seventh ray of saber light and sighed. The leader of those black masked figures vanished. He didn't know how he or she had evaded his attack or if they were injured or killed. The ray of qi and the aura of the leader had vanished abruptly like they had entered a storage space.

Shaking his hand, he removed the faint traces of crumbled metal from his hand.

"Well, this is why I hate assassins." Assassins had all sorts of unknown stealth, killing, and escape methods, making them far more troublesome to kill than others. They were also capable of consistently killing those above their cultivation level, even if their foundation were weaker than their opponents.

For example, they seemed to be communicating in a way that Wei Wuyin's spiritual sense couldn't discover.

He had wanted to eliminate them all in hopes to avoid becoming a future target. He regretted not using Element in his attack, but even if he did, he still wasn't sure it could kill the leader of that group if they possessed means to jump into a different space

In fact, his inclination to use a normal saber was unusual. Aware of how the Heavenly Daos functioned, was it possible the leader had used up her karmic luck to influence his decision? Was it even possible?

He deeply frowned as he recalled the True Soul of Sin. Could this relate to avoiding the Heavenly Daos subtle influence? If so, then that meant he was still vulnerable to its influence until he entered the Realm of Sages and cultivated a soul immune to its influence.

Prince Zhen's eyes lit up as he saw the corpses of six assassins. When he noticed that Wei Wuyin had bloody mist still lingering in the air, he realized that seven of those masked men were killed by him.

"A Godlord? Or...a Godking? No." As he recalled the sublime saber qi, it didn't have the trace of Qi Essence, so it was definitely a Godlord. However, the level of attack definitely exceeded any Godlord he'd ever seen before.

Wei Wuyin didn't bother inspecting the corpses. Assassins had all sorts of means and methods to prevent their identities from being revealed or their possessions from being stolen. Some didn't even wear storage rings and left spiritual spell traps on their bodies. He much rather avoid that.

As he decided on his next course of action, Prince Zhen and the twin guardians approached.

### **Chapter 96 -: Not A Secret**

Wei Wuyin silently regarded the trio. Their injuries were not light and he could already sense various medicinal energies within their bodies stirring, trying to repair damaged flesh and bones. This was the work of alchemical products. Instead of finding someplace quiet and safe to recuperate, they decided to arrive before Wei Wuyin, so he was somewhat bewildered.

Su Mei was a short distance away, and she couldn't help but be startled by the marks of battle on their bodies. Each revealed mark looked like it was very close to being fatal.

Prince Zhen had stored his bloodaxe away, and clasped his dirty and bloody hands with respect. "On behalf of myself and the royal family, thank you." The twins followed suit.

Their bent backs and heavy aura revealed a surge of true respect and appreciation. However, Wei Wuyin frowned. He wondered why those peak Mortal Gods could damage a prince so heavily. From what he believed, the Wu Country had an Astral Core Realm ancestor. With that level of cultivation base, fashioning a few offensive talismans or life-saving tools should've been easy.

Prince Zhen had an uncanny ability to read expressions and flares of light in an individual's eyes, so he realized Wei Wuyin was confused. He deduced his inquisitive look and immediately responded, "You must be unfamiliar with the current situation of the royal palace, but we princes are not as protected as rumored."

Wei Wuyin's eyebrows rose with a tinge of shock. This Prince Zhen was insanely perceptive, and he held a belief that felt likable and resonated with his own personality. If they were to grow up together, he had little doubts they could've been like brothers.

Sighing softly to himself, he calmly stated, "I didn't interfere to save you."

Prince Zhen wasn't shocked by this response. He knew that Wei Wuyin wanted to set up a line of separation. After all, if he involved himself in this matter further, he could be drawn into the country's issues. Knowingly understanding, he nodded with a smile.

"Nevertheless, I thank you Godlord Wei. I can breathe another day because of you." He was earnest in his reply, but also swift in his next action. He signaled the twin guardians and prepared to leave. Their mount had been killed, so they would have to walk from here on out. However, with the assassins killed, it's unlikely they'll encounter any trouble.

As for the auction, in their current states and the possible threat on their lives, that wasn't a destination they could travel to. The best would be to return to the Heavenly Wu's Royal Grounds.

Wei Wuyin praised his decisiveness. Rarely do people show such understanding and resolve to push onward. Others would offer goods or promises of favors in exchange for safety or further their relations, but he keenly understood Wei Wuyin's desires.

Su Mei also praised the attitude of the prince. His fiercely independent and concise words and actions left a very sweet taste in one's mouth. If she had to choose a Dao Companion, a person like this would be her desire.

Not only did he have power, but he had poise and principles. There was no haughty sense within his gaze or buried in his bones. His true self was this.

A slight smile surfaced on Wei Wuyin's expression as he softly scoffed, shaking his head, he called out to the trio.

"Prince Zhen, I'll bring you back to the royal palace." After saying so, he gestured to Bai Lin to follow him as he walked towards the trio.

Prince Zhen stopped and turned in shock, but he didn't reject. He bowed once more, "Then, I'll accept." Li Tian and Li Di also bowed in thanks. Bai Lin lowered herself and they all stepped onto her back and took to the skies.

Bai Lin was far faster and more powerful than their mount. She gave off a faint ancient pressure that caused the trio to feel reassured. Furthermore, Wei Wuyin was a Godlord. Within the entire Wu Country, there were only nineteen established Godlords. Each of them were powerful monarchs of a cardinal direction.

Even King Wu, his father, would need to give them appropriate respect.

Wei Wuyin quietly analyzed his situation. Firstly, eight Mortal Gods had showed up and attacked with coordinated and prepared effort. He tried to recall the reports of each individual Mortal God in his memory, but a few of their abilities were foreign.

"Another force in Wu that is outside of public knowledge or an external force from somewhere else?" As he realized that his knowledge was lacking, and he knew that while there were nineteen public Godlords, this didn't include all in the territory, but those who revealed themselves. This held true to Mortal Gods too.

There could be twenty or thirty Godlords, especially those amongst gangs or discrete organizations. Regardless, he didn't have much to lose if he offended anyone within the Qi Condensation Realm. He only feared that his travels would be impeded by continuous annoyances.

He turned to Prince Zhen who took this time to meditate and recover. It seemed that he trusted Wei Wuyin enough to cultivate his recovery within his presence. It wasn't just him, the guardians sealed off their senses and fully focused on recovery.

He didn't know whether to laugh or cry. They were treating him in such a fashion so quickly.

In truth, since a Mortal Godlord gave his word, they had the same belief he did: A Godlord, someone of such status, would do their best to honor their word. While he hadn't said he would protect them, the fact he offered to bring them to the royal palace meant their lives were his responsibility. Considering his combat prowess, they wholeheartedly trusted him.

Even if another Godlord arrived, it's highly likely Wei Wuyin would slay them.



Helplessly shaking his head, he found it quite funny.

Su Mei was the same as them, but her actions were more understandable. She had already started to consolidate her foundation at the Sixth Phase.

They traveled for nearly half an hour before Prince Zhen breathed out a breath of turbid air filled with dark, tainted blood mist. He inspected Li Tian and Li Di and checked their current location, seeing they were going in the right direction, he sighed in relief for some reason.

"Are they members of Wu or?" Wei Wuyin abruptly asked, catching Prince Zhen's attention.

Prince Zhen's brows perked, he frowned briefly before relaxing. "The Wu Clan is divided, weakened, and inviting wolves into our den." He didn't answer Wei Wuyin's question immediately but gave him an overall sense of the status of the Wu Country and its Imperial Clan.

Wei Wuyin frowned. Those words may seem indirect, but about twenty questions of his were answered. As for the specifics, he didn't care too much. He only wanted to know if the assassins were homebred. From those words, they were.

"Hidden Shadow Domain?" He abruptly said.

Prince Zhen's expression turned solemn, and he heavily nodded his head. He decided to be a little more clear. "Our Ancestral King has gone into life and death seclusion in hopes of ascending into the Second Stage of the Astral Core Realm. Without another of his strength, many are taking this opportunity to whittle down the competition for the throne.

"Even if it's a puppet who claims it," Prince Zhen every word contained disappointment, anger, frustration, and helplessness. Furthermore, the situation of the Yuhei Country could happen here, if the Ancestral King failed to survive.

Wei Wuyin stayed silent. While Prince Zhen hadn't said everything regarding the matter, most could be deduced based on context.

The Hidden Shadow Domain was dipping its hand in the pot to make a bid on a prince to become the next King of Wu. That prince was not Prince Zhen. Likely, it was a young, relatively unknown and disregarded prince. They were easier to coax and bait into plans.

However, Prince Zhen was a Sublime Qi Phase expert, a Mortal God, and short of becoming a Godlord. If he did ascend, he would have a certain outcome of claiming the throne on his power alone. Therefore, they intended to eliminate this possible variable to ensure the completion of their plan.

In fact, it's possible to determine from his aura that the prince's breakthrough was relatively recent. It made sense that his Twin Guardians were Peak Mortal Gods and not Godlords in that case.

However, from what he knew, Prince Zhen wasn't the crown prince. In fact, until the Ancestral King weighed in on his opinion, it's not possible to determine one. However, with the Ancestral King in life and death seclusion, this rule could be circumvented.

All it required was the Royal Council and King Wu himself to make a decision.

From his personality and way of handling matters, Wei Wuyin felt comfortable with Prince Zhen becoming King of Wu.

"Godlord Wei, if I may..." Prince Zhen revealed a hesitant tone. He clearly wanted to know Wei Wuyin's origins and stance on the matter. While he didn't bet all his chickens in one basket, there were only nineteen Godlords in the Wu Country.

As for Godkings, there were three.

Firstly, the current King of Wu, Wu Yu. His cultivation base was well-known and he had been in power for two hundred and thirty years. He was still in his prime and was called the Steel Executioner. An expert renown for his metal qi arts and spells. In fact, he had condensed his Heart of Steel Qi using Steel Metal Essence - the same high-level essence Wei Wuyin used.

Secondly, the High Commander of the Royal Military, Ba Chen. She was exceptionally powerful and the number one female expert in the entire Wu Country. She was also the Sister-In-Law to the King.

Lastly, the Hidden Shadow Domain's Domain Master, Hu Jiwei. He was known for his scheming and mysterious means. His powers and abilities were relatively unknown, but no one underestimated him. Even the Wu Country took him seriously.

Wei Wuyin calmly interrupted, "My background isn't a secret. I am Wei Wuyin, former Disciple of the Scarlet Solaris Sect, the Saber Ascendant. I have no conflict with the Imperial Rule, nor do I intend to side with the Hidden Shadow Domain."

"!" Prince Zhen was quiet at first, but then started.

Wei Wuyin!

### **Chapter 97: Godking Arrives!**

Wei Wuyin was a name that circulated for a bit eleven or so years ago. It was a name that came and went, with the name vanishing due to his reported death. Prince Zhen wouldn't have made the connection unless the Scarlet Solaris Sect was mentioned in the same breath.

Wei Wuyin, the twenty-six year old genius who comprehended Violet Lightning Qi and Steel Metal Qi, and reached the Fifth Phase of Qi Condensation with explosive speed! According to the stories, he had died after departing the sect suddenly.

Many linked it with the revealing of his cultivation treasure that had spread via the Sky Sword Sect and Aqua Echo Sect.

The main reason he had heard about it was due to its uniqueness and the Steel Metal Qi. This was the same exact qi his own father had condensed and made a name for himself with. It was versatile and more powerful than normal metal qi.

There were even rumors that Wu Xinghong, the Scarlet Warlord and Ancestral Elder of the Scarlet Solaris Sect, a member of the Wu Imperial Clan, had suggested for him to be apprenticed under his father due to this very link.

His father was considering it!

He gulped slightly as he regarded Wei Wuyin in his shock. An unearthly handsome visage, silver eyes, jet black hair, youthful aura, and wielder of a saber. It fit the profile to an exact. Even the image he now recalled perfectly matched the man before him.

By common deduction, he should be thirty-six! A thirty-six year old Godlord stronger than any Godlord he's ever seen before! A genius! No! A monster! An absolute fucking monster!

Wei Wuyin could somewhat read his thoughts and he grinned from ear to ear, "I also don't have a cultivation treasure or whatever others say." He said it with utter confidence and pride, causing Prince Zhen to grow even more shocked.

He was just about to justify Wei Wuyin's advancements using this unknown cultivation treasure, but seeing the pride in his eyes and slight mocking in his confident grin, he realized there was none! There was only pure, raw talent!

His heart sped up several paces. He couldn't calm himself for the longest time. If someone had told him pure talent could do this, he would curse in their faces, but he trusted his instincts and ability to read people.

Considering how he had a subordinate who spontaneously reached the False Reality Phase in an eatery, it meant he also had an inconceivable high understanding in cultivation and an aptitude for impartation.

In truth, it was mostly due to his Eden Qi that Wei Wuyin could perfectly attune his understanding of cultivation with his intent. It bore into Su Mei's mind clearly and fully, and with her being as talented as him, she grasped it instantly.

Even Wei Wuyin regarded her as an exceptional talent.

Just as Wei Wuyin was about to say some more bragging words, his eyes grew sharp and he looked towards the east. Prince Zhen felt the subtle shift in air tension and looked east as well.

He sensed nothing.

Wei Wuyin, however, felt a presence. It was powerful and contained a power that exceeded the sublime, the original limits of qi. No longer was this qi, but qi essence!

A Godking!

He frowned slightly.

It was trying to subtly inspect him with spiritual sense, backed by a powerful spiritual spell, but it was immediately discovered the moment it reached a hundred meters of Wei Wuyin. Before it could even approach, Wei Wuyin's own spiritual sense formed a warding barrier infused with saber intent.

Prince Zhen was unaware, but if this spiritual sense had stealthily made its way over, a spiritual spell could've put him to death, silently and without warning.

Blocked, the spiritual sense prodded Wei Wuyin's barrier, but after a brief contact, it retreated.

Wei Wuyin knew that the wielder of that sense hadn't fully withdrawn. In fact, they were swiftly approaching.

"A Godking is descending," his words were brief but Prince Zhen, Li Tian, Li Di, and Su Mei awoke from their cultivation. The conversation between Wei Wuyin and Prince Zhen hadn't disturbed them, but this caused them all to awake in a hurry.

Bai Lin let loose a cry, and battle intent filled her eyes, but within those eyes were a hint of wariness. Her intelligence was high, increasing by each passing day, so she knew what a Godking represented. She had paid attention to Wei Wuyin's monologues on flights.

He had mentioned a few times that he felt his power neared a Godking's, but he wasn't entirely sure. In fact, it depended on the Godking.

If a Godking had reached the Qi Essence Phase with dozens or a complete set of ninety-nine Qi Essences, then he had no confidence. However, how was that likely? The Eden Earth Sect's Sect Leader was someone who could create seventh-grade alchemic products, a King Alchemist! Yet, even he hadn't reached the peak of Qi Essence foundation - Ninety-Nine motes of Qi Essence.

Based on how resources seemed particularly lacking, he believed Godking's of that level would require an Astral Core Realm hegemon to provide them with everything from birth, otherwise, as a Godlord, they would spend far too long to obtain and refine resources. They would die of old-age.

Wei Wuyin rubbed Bai Lin, assuring her to remain calm. He informed her to land nearby. With a swoosh, they arrived on the ground.

Badum! Badum! Badum!

Prince Zhen, Li Di, and Li Tian's hearts could literally be heard beating from their chests. Facing a possibility of death was far different than facing certain death without a chance to struggle. They were afraid. Deathly afraid.

Prince Zhen knew whoever arrived wasn't the Royal Commander or his royal father, so that left two possibilities: Hu Jiwei or another Godking. Either way, for them to arrive, there was no good to it.

Wei Wuyin leapt off Bai Lin and quietly walked forward. Bai Lin backed off from Wei Wuyin by his orders.

Despite facing a Godlord, Wei Wuyin's expression was arrogant and domineering! His tone was aggressive as he directly called out, "Come out!"

"..."

To order a Godking to come! The balls on this guy! Their hearts nearly jumped out of their chests and into their hands from his words.

A figure shimmered into existence. He was no more than a dozen or so meters away from Wei Wuyin, and Wei Wuyin could clearly see his expression. He was a handsome young man with a loose black robe and long sleeves. His robe looked too big and didn't fit him well, and it quietly revealed his hairless chest in nearly a seductive manner.

Long, free flowing black hair, and clear eyes that resembled the myriad stars in the sky. Those stars were the manifestations of qi essences.

Wei Wuyin felt that he looked to be in his early twenties, but he knew he was much, much older. This was Hu Jiwei, the Domain Master of the Hidden Shadow Domain.

His expression was calm, no sense of anger or aggression from his eyes or body language. In fact, he looked as if he was out on a casual stroll in the meadows, barefoot and all.

"You are?" Hu Jiwei asked. His words and tone were neutral and nearly monotone.

Wei Wuyin's eyes became sharp, "Wei Wuyin. Saber Ascendant." He kept trying to get this name to circulate, so he would use it whenever he could. In fact, it was the only way for it to catch on. After all, if he had four decades to live, he wanted his legacy and name to survive at least a bit after his death.

"Saber Ascendant..." Hu Jiwei absentmindedly tried to recall such a name, but he came up empty. Unable to determine its origins, he decided to not bother. Instead, he lifted his hand.

The quad of spectators, excluding Bai Lin, heart shook at this casual movement. A single action from a Godking could claim a thousand lives.

Luckily, he had only waved his hand to retrieve something. A head.

It was of a beautiful woman, middle-aged, with black hair and beautiful eyes. Her lips were soft like peaches, but her expression was filled with horror and a hint of relief as if she had just escaped death. Her severed neck still leaked blood, and it contained faint traces of saber qi.

The moment Prince Zhen trio saw that, they exclaimed in their hearts simultaneously: "Hu Yao!"

Hu Yao was Hu Jiwei's only living relative, his little sister!

My mistake.

She was no longer alive.

Wei Wuyin saw the head and realized the woman was the leader of the assassin group. She had somehow escaped, but his saber intent and attack held true, severing her head as intended. He had faint traces of pride in his eyes.

"Your work?" Hu Jiwei was eerily calm. However, all those watching and knew of the story between this brother and sister understood that he was like a volcano ready to erupt and commit a mindless, hell-raising massacre.

Wei Wuyin calmly nodded, the pride in his eyes still hadn't faded.

"A measly Godlord. How woeful. Your death was truly unjust, Yao'er." Hu Jiwei looked at the head and said, his tone had a hint of an apology and love.

"I'll offer your head, the head of your family, lovers, and clan to my sister's burial tomb." As if stating a fact, he calmly said.

Wei Wuyin pursed his lips slightly. A light suffused with saber intent emerged in his eyes.

Hu Jiwei put away the head, and started to galvanize his internal powers. A raging storm was born in an instant.

Wei Wuyin didn't bother speaking or saying any other words. In fact, he only held out his hand and Element emerged. With his Nascent Saber Soul condensed from Elemental Origin, Saber, Yin, Yang, and Yin-Yang energies, he felt an immense amount of power within.

This wasn't normal energy, but sublime energy that was converted into the strongest stage qi could reach without transformation. It was backed by Divine Spirits!

The raging storm of qi essence was like hell on earth, as earthquakes shook the world and the clouds above were reshaped. The pure force of Hu Jiwei qi essence changed the order of the natural world. They tumbled and rumbled upon his power, even though he hadn't done so intentionally.

With a gentle push of his hand, Hu Jiwei qi essence shot forth with unprecedented speed and force, enough to eliminate ten Godlords twenty times over. Before the five spectators could see what was happening, a storm of a mile away rushed towards them, and then a single ray of blindingly white light eclipsed their vision.

They simultaneously blinked, their eyes hurting fiercely as if they were stabbed.

A single exchange!

Then, silence reigned for several seconds. Only then could the five open their eyes, but what they saw had their eyes as wide as moons! Wider than moons!!

Wei Wuyin with a leaking head in his hand.

Hu Jiwei!

Wei Wuyin looked at the head while shaking his head, "While I don't have any blood relatives or a clan left, I don't like it when my lovers are threatened. It's best you join your sister so she isn't lonely, and my women can rest easy in my bed."

## **Chapter 98 -: Sheer Difference & The Last Landmark**

"..."

The world went silent. The previous scene of turbulent winds, quaking earth, and forceful world-crushing pressure vanished along with a single exchange. The resulting silence was palpable.

Wei Wuyin casually stood while slightly waving the lone head of Hu Jiwei, a fabled Godking! The body of Hu Jiwei was still standing not too far away, sparkling blood reinforced by qi essence silently leaked from its severed neck. It was a quiet, eerily peaceful, yet silently terrifying scene.

The body still had its hand pressing forward, as if it still wished to cause the world to shift with it.

Wei Wuyin saw the head and frowned slightly. With a wave, a flame of elemental fire erupted within his palms. It shrouded the head with the intent to incinerate. After a second, Wei Wuyin looked panicked as he dispersed the flames.

His expression was as if he had nearly burned a priceless treasure, his eyes cautious and cold-sweat leaking from his forehead. It was but a short moment, but it caused the Prince trio to feel like the world had become altered.

Wei Wuyin inspected the head, after realizing minimal damage was sustained from his hasty attempt, he carefully stored it within his storage ring. With a sigh suffused with a hint of excitement, he waltzed over to the standing corpse and removed the storage ring without any qualms.

He then carefully placed the corpse into his storage ring as well.

While he was burning the head, he felt a will from the Divine Spirits call out to him. They wanted to refine the body of Hu Jiwei, likely converting the motes of qi essence into their own power. Shockingly, when he inspected the corpse, he realized the qi essence remained while the Spirit of Qi had dissipated swiftly upon his death.

He felt like he had discovered a new fact about cultivation. Realizing this head and body was a treasure trove, he hurriedly halted his attempts to destroy it and safely kept it.

As for killing this Godking with a single blow, he wasn't too shocked. He had struck with his full power, bolstered by Element, his saber intent, and powerful fleshy body reinforced by the Dragon bloodline energy. He could survive an Astral Array attack with utter ease, something that went beyond the Qi Condensation Realm, so this was a predictable outcome to him.

Furthermore, while Hu Jiwei was powerful, he underestimated Wei Wuyin and stayed in close-range, a dozen or so meters away, against a saber wielder.

Sabers were profoundly powerful and swift in close combat. If swords can be called exquisite and tricky, then sabers can be called brutish and direct. The ferocity and swiftness of its attacks should not be underestimated. If Hu Jiwei had fought from a long-distance, perhaps he could've survived for a few seconds longer.

However, his rage and confidence in his cultivation base inevitably led to this mishap. Before that storm of power, the saber was concentrated into a single ray and decapitated him. The residual energy had sliced apart his lifeforce entirely. He was killed instantly.

Wei Wuyin was pondering if he would need to use any Qi Arts or Spiritual Spells, but considering Hu Jiwei's power and position, it was wholly unnecessary. A single saber strike was enough, and it was.

He now had a good understanding of his current strength. Beneath the Astral Core Realm, unless he met an expert of the apex in the Mortal Godking level, he was invincible.

The reason he concluded this was Hu Jiwei. While he was slightly idiotic with his actions, the power he displayed was true. Wei Wuyin's aura and spiritual qi was purer, thicker, and stronger than Hu Jiwei.

A strand of his spiritual qi exceeded a strand of Hu Jiwei's spiritual qi essence by about nine times. As for his spiritual sense, with two Hearts of Qi, two Divine Spirits of Qi, Draconic Bloodline, and saber intent, in pretty much every faucet of attribute, he was far, far greater.

To put it simply: Hu Jiwei's foundation was absolutely trash.

In comparison, Wei Wuyin's was leagues above, and he had a Nascent Saber Soul and overly powerful fleshy body included.

"When my Alchemic Heart of Eden Qi becomes an Alchemic Spirit, my spiritual sense will rise to another level. The traits of alchemical energies would definitely elevate a spiritual sense to another level. As for my Draconic Heart of Blood, I don't know if it'll transform, but when it does, my fleshy body should soar in strength as well." As he thought this, he couldn't help but smile.

Only now did he realize that the Wu Country was incomparably small and insignificant before the current him. Outside of the Wu Ancestral King, he was invincible.

He even had a suspicion that he'd be able to face even him when he reached the Ninth Stage of the Qi Condensation Realm with any of his Spirits of Qi.

"Godking Wei!" Prince Zhen's shocked voice echoed behind Wei Wuyin, snapping him out of his thoughts. He turned to see Prince Zhen walk over. The prince clasped his hand and respectfully bowed.

"Once more, I thank you!" His voice was still shaking with shock and disbelief. He was faintly unable to accept that a Godking was killed so easily. Not only him, even his sister was killed just before. This meant the collapse of the Hidden Shadow Domain was imminent.

Wei Wuyin shook his head, "I'm only a Godlord. Please don't cause misunderstandings."

Prince Zhen was taken aback, recalling that he had addressed Wei Wuyin as 'Godking' earlier. However, those words caused his heart to go into further turmoil. He hastily replied, "I apologize, Godlord Wei."

Nodding his head, Wei Wuyin called Bai Lin over. Bai Lin's eyes were filled with pride and excitement as she waltzed over carrying the stunned twins and Su Mei, who had a calm smile on her face.

She now knew the level of strength her lord possessed. No wonder he was arrogant and acted as such. In the Wu Country, he was near invincible! Who did he have to fear? Who did she?

The only qualm she had was that she couldn't fight alongside her lord in battle. She swore to do everything she could to enhance her cultivation base and further serve Wei Wuyin diligently. Hidden behind her calm eyes was red-hot blazing fervor.

Wei Wuyin didn't know that he had just spurred on a frightening genius.

"The Royal Palace isn't too far from here. Let's go." Wei Wuyin leapt on Bai Lin and sat. He was pondering how to refine this corpse and draw upon its power for himself.

Prince Zhen broke out of his shock and quickly realigned his mentality. With a leap, he followed. He realized that he had been incredibly blessed to meet Wei Wuyin on this journey. If it wasn't for him, his death was certain!

If Hu Jiwei stayed alive, even if he survived Hu Yao, who knew when he'd act personally to claim his life.

Not only was the wolf in his house slayed by Wei Wuyin, but he actually had a relationship, no matter how small, with a genius of an unfathomable level.

Kree!



Bai Lin took off.

-----

Nearly an hour later, a glamorous palace suffused with royal nobility and prestigious aura entered their view. There were towers that reached the clouds surrounding the capital, indicating their location was at the centermost area of Heavenly Wu City - the Royal Palace!

It was adorned in jade, brilliant and pure. The bricks inlaid in its structure gave faint traces of essence. Just being in close proximity of those bricks could accelerate an individual's cultivation.

Wei Wuyin inspected it and couldn't help but marvel. It truly felt different than the stories he had heard as a child. The gloriously awe-inspiring design as if it was holding up the very heavens left one feeling a reverence stirring in their heart.

The air tasted purer, richer, and sweeter. He didn't know if it was his own imagination, but the Royal Palace felt like a sleeping deity, a goddess of unimaginable beauty. He couldn't claw his eyes away.

Su Mei was similarly bedazzled by the splendor and grandness of the Royal Palace. It ensnared her heart and mind, unwilling to let go, and she was unwilling to leave.

Prince Zhen and the twin guardians were off to the side and couldn't help but feel some pride in their hearts. To gain such praising expressions from those two made them feel elevated. What they didn't know was that Wei Wuyin and Su Mei were young and hadn't seen many things in their lives.

They were like country bumpkins, no, remote citizens arriving at a national monument. It wasn't a wonder why they were shocked into reverence and praise.

In fact, Wei Wuyin was similarly awed by Golden Milk City. While it wasn't due to its appearance, but due to its functionality and style, it was nevertheless the truth.

Wei Wuyin's eyes were drawn away. He saw a black tower floating in the sky above the clouds. It had no foundation, yet it lingered calmly in the air without a hint of trembling. Atop its peak was a depiction of the starry sky, glimmering with faint light.

Its height wasn't impressive, being about ten meters tall, but it stood above even the peak of the tallest tower and stayed amongst the clouds.

"Wu Astral Tower!" He exclaimed with child-like excitement, losing all his previous awe-inspiring and calm demeanor. He gawked and even pointed with glee, "Su Mei! Look! The Wu Astral Tower!!" His excitement was palpable. A heart-stirring joy effused from his eyes. This was a childhood dream come true.

Su Mei also gawked, her eyes were drawn to the lingering tower that hung in the clouds.

"..." Prince Zhen's trio fell silent.

You're an illustrious Godlord, capable of killing Godkings, you look far too excited!

Their thoughts were clear on their faces. However, Wei Wuyin didn't care.

This was a dream of his - just to see it. When he was young, his older brother would tell him stories about the tower that overlooked the world. When it became dark, it shined like the north star, allowing all to know: The Ruler of the Country was here and they were safe!

He felt that it truly lived up to the hype. He had never seen a tower fly in the air. In fact, anything that didn't have wings couldn't fly. Even he couldn't. While using elemental wind could get him to move through the air, he couldn't truly fly. That was more like controlled gliding, it wasn't very accurate like a bird or easy to sustain.

In the distance, a group of individuals riding armored aerial mounts that were eagle-like approached. They were wielding cold weapons with fierce intent radiating from them. They were ready to fight.

Bai Lin was not a recognized mount, so they considered her flying into the Royal Palace air space as a possible threat. After all, no mounts were allowed to fly within ten kilometers of the Royal Palace without permission. All those who try would be put down and executed with prejudice.

Prince Zhen's face changed from his calm, congenial expression, to one of haughty ferocity and sharpness. He pulled out a medallion. It had the Mark of Wu on it, and he instantly used a unique spiritual spell to invoke changes within it. It emitted a projection of the Mark of Wu, and the soldiers approaching swiftly placed away their fierce intent upon seeing it. In their mounts, they bowed with the utmost respect.

Wei Wuyin's gaze was drawn away from the Astral Wu Tower and looked at the soldiers. They had cultivation bases at the Fourth Stage of Qi Condensation, the Yang Growth, at the very least. They were supremely talented and many of them had youthful auras nearing fifty or sixty.

It's true that the higher the cultivation standard, the greater the strength of the guards.

As he was calmly appraising the guardians of the Royal Palace, a large, white dove-like creature rode over with a swiftness. Its speed rivaling even Mortal Gods on the ground.

When it arrived, a young looking woman that had a faint pink blush that seemed natural appeared. She looked about sixteen years of age, and had a cultivation at the Fourth Phase, Yin Form.

"Your Highness!" The little girl seemed familiar with the Prince as she arrived swiftly nearby. The guards also didn't try to hinder her.

Prince Zhen's haughty expression subconsciously softened as he regarded the young woman. Before he could look towards Wei Wuyin to ask for his opinion, Wei Wuyin calmly said: "Handle your matters. I've fulfilled my word."

Prince Zhen took a deep breath and clasped his hands. He bowed deeply, disregarding his status as a prince amongst his people, and stayed there for three whole seconds.

Wei Wuyin and Su Mei had nothing but praise for the Prince's ways. He was likeable beyond doubt. He didn't bother saying words of thanks, but expressed his feelings through actions. While he had already said thanks countless times before, each time had its own situation.

He had saved his life twice, and now he had brought him to the Royal Palace.

Rising, Prince Zhen said, "Godlord Wei, I hope you can stay as my guest. If you have no housing yet, I'll arrange it for you." While he was expressing his emotions, he still didn't let Wei Wuyin slip away without an attempt.

Wei Wuyin smiled and nodded.

The young woman and aerial guardians started.

Godlord?!

"Perfect! Yi'er, handle Godlord Wei's lodging first and then we can talk." Prince Zhen ordered.

The young girl called Yi'er swiftly nodded absentmindedly.

### **Chapter 99: Prince Zhen's Love & Changed Fate**

Prince Zhen's maid attitude towards service was beyond reproach and revealed herself to be quite diligent in her tasks. She had situated Wei Wuyin in an open-air courtyard with a crystal-clear pond that held various fishes within. It gave a rather serene feeling to one's heart as calm, serene water energies effused the air. The moist green grass and brick walkway felt incredibly natural alongside the decor.

He found himself liking it very much.

It was also spacious enough for Bai Lin to stretch her wings and walk about with those long, slim and beautiful legs of hers. With a flap of her wings, she could also take to the air with incredible ease, escaping to the sky.

As for Su Mei, she rested in her room while calmly cultivating. A fire had ignited in her heart that made her wish to improve, and her desired goal of birthing Shadowlight Qi was tenacious and unyielding. After all, now that she was a Mortal God, the only thing she needed was resources to reach the Peak Mortal God level, Sublime Qi Phase, but she still needed to find her own Path of Cultivation.

The Tenebrous Light of the Night Method was her way.

With Wei Wuyin's support, that was a matter of when, not if, to her.

Wei Wuyin didn't bother her. He sat cross-legged with his eyes closed. He was considering various aspects of his life and his future.

At the moment, he had two Divine Spirits of Qi at the Infused Spirituality Phase and two Hearts of Qi/Blood at the Yang Growth Phase. He was originally planning to obtain a Yin-Yang God Sphere from the fabled training grounds in Heavenly Wu City. However, he now had a few thanks to the storage ring of Hu Jiwei, Godking of the Hidden Shadow Domain.

It's likely eighty to ninety percent of his Hidden Shadow Domain's spendable wealth was in his storage ring, and he had already withdrawn it all into his own, throwing the ring away.

In fact, the wealth in that one ring exceeded the Beast-Taming Sect's by several times. It was likely accumulated over a long, long period of time. He didn't feel any enjoyment for his sudden gain of wealth. In fact, he was now in a conundrum.

He had considered a distinct possibility regarding his cultivation: Cost. It took him far more essence stones to reach the Sublime Qi Phase for his two hearts. Now, he had to do it once more. Not to mention, this was a Draconic Heart of Blood & Alchemic Heart of Eden Qi. He wasn't even certain how much they would require.

In fact, he had the faint suspicion that his Draconic Heart of Blood would require as many as several dozens more essence stones. If he decided to cultivate Ninety-Nine Qi Essences for each Spirit, how much would that take?!

He sighed, realizing that his wealth could be fleeting.

What he had may not be enough, yet the solutions weren't too likeable. He didn't wish to be an outright bandit. While he wasn't shy to commit thievery, his cultivation base and status as a Lord Alchemist demanded some respect. Such petty actions were beneath him.

Of course, if someone offends him, hehe. Their possessions may no longer be theirs.

"Haaa..." He thought about the cost again and signed endlessly in his heart. "Ten years. That's what I'll give myself. After ten years, if I'm not at the Qi Essence Realm, regardless of my current progression, I'll ascend!" He swore.

He had to reach the Astral Core Realm within four decades. An ultimate desire of his was to travel the stars before his death, seeing the world within the starry sky. Considering he may have less than thirty-nine years, he had to cross off everything on his list.

Taking out a Yin-Yang God Sphere, he set up a spiritual formation to block off spying and began to cultivate. With the purity within this sphere, his Alchemic Heart and Draconic Heart will have the yin-yang purity advantage his Divine Spirits enjoy.

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In the Royal Palace, Prince Zhen's Quarters.

Within the gloriously looking room, Yi'er and Prince Zhen stood together. Prince Zhen's expression was contemplative. He had faint traces of disbelief in his eyes as he looked to Yi'er who had an excited gleam in her eyes.

"She agreed?" He asked once more, still in disbelief.

Yi'er hurriedly nodded as her pink cheeks trembled cutely, "She did!"

Prince Zhen's eyes flashed a soft light that became increasingly brighter. Before long, he started to heartily laugh. He was unimaginably lucky!

His father had procured a bride for him, who he held immense love for the moment he saw her. She was a Godlord with immense potential and an intact primal yin. If he cultivated with her, his own chances of becoming a Godlord would increase several-fold!

Originally, she was unwilling. She stated that only if he could cultivate a very flawed Qi Method would she marry him and that was a requirement needed without exception. However, she had abruptly agreed to stay and marry him!

Of course, his father was also very persistent and didn't originally allow her to leave. She refused and was pretty much a prisoner initially, but with her own words, she was now his fiancée! While the beginning was a little shady, as long as she was willing, then the end justifies the means!

He was incomparably excited. While he didn't like how forceful his father was, he couldn't help but regard his methods of persuasion as effective. He had never threatened her, but showed her what they had to offer.

While the logistics and optics could be deceptive, he didn't want to marry a forced bride. He had his own pride even if he was hopelessly smitten! As a man, and a future Godking, he felt he needed some bottomline.

"I'll go see her," he was excited as he rushed away.

"Ah!" Yi'er started. "Your highness, you're unclean!" Immediately trying to call him, he paused.

With an embarrassed look, and a quick inspection, Prince Zhen quickly took a bath and placed on some new clothes. With a jovial smile, he left with haste. Yi'er was also excited and followed behind with a smile. As long as Prince Zhen was happy, so was she.

After a brief walk, they arrived at one of the more luxurious rooms in the Royal Palace. Outside the door were two female Mortal Gods, ready to take any and every request of the individual inside.

When he arrived at the door, he calmed himself down and realigned his face to become cool and collected. Prince Zhen proceeded to knock.

Several seconds later, the door was opened. He knew the mechanism on the door allowed one to open it from afar, so he immediately went in. Yi'er followed quietly.

There were two figures inside, they were playing Go and their expressions seemed to be intense and focused, as if in a grand battle of life and death. They were both beauties, one brunette and the other blonde. The former had a dense, spiritual aura while the latter had a holy aura.

If Wei Wuyin was here, he would be shocked! Then absolutely enraged! These were the two witches that essentially stole his essence and bailed on their oath!

Godlord Lin & The Seer!

Godlord Lin's full name was Lin Ziyang, and The Seer was called Ming Shufeng.

"Godlord Lin, God Ming," he respectfully addressed. Recalling that Lin Ziyang was going to become his wife in the future, his heart raced fiercely. A tinge of pink surfaced on his cheeks as his composure started to show tracks.

"What?!" An abrupt and sudden exclamation emerged. It originated from Ming Shufeng, her eyes wide and filled with disbelief. She asked with dense shock, "How are you here?! You should be..."

Prince Zhen was immediately taken aback by such a response, confusion flashed in his eyes. He had never seen Ming Shufeng act in such a way. She always had a confidently calm smile and cool demeanor when he was around, as if all things were within her grasp. He was also deeply confused as to why she would react or say such words.

However, when his gaze turned towards Lin Ziyang, even she was shocked. Her usually cold, calm expression replaced with visible disbelief, as if his very presence went against worldly laws.

As if he should be dead...

"What's wrong?" He hurriedly asked worriedly. Prince Zhen, as well as everyone in the palace, was unaware of Ming Shufeng's abilities as a Seer, capable of glimpsing at heavenly design.

"..." Ming Shufeng didn't speak. Instead, her eyes glowed with faint traces of holy and golden light. She closed her eyes and started to calculate paths and commune with the heavens. Her actions were swift, and Lin Ziyang immediately exclaimed, "Leave!"

Prince Zhen was shocked. His heart still pounding with confusion and disbelief, but seeing Lin Ziyang's stern expression, he didn't want her to change her mind, so he swiftly bid his apologies and departed.

When he left, only Lin Ziyang and Ming Shufeng remained. Only after an hour did Ming Shufeng open her eyes. Those gorgeous orbs of her flashed with a dense surge of endless confusion and uncertainty. For a moment, it seemed as if she questioned reality itself.

"..." Lin Ziyang quietly waited.

Ming Shufeng's vividly confused eyes cleared, but a hint of disbelief remained. "I'm unsure as to how he survived. The assault from the Hidden Shadow Domain's forces is a calamity the heavens deemed him incapable of avoiding or surviving. He should be dead or about to die." Her words were spoken calmly, but the contents were absolutely terrifying!

Lin Ziyang had also known Prince Zhen was going to die. Because of this prediction from Ming Shufeng's communion with the heavens, she agreed to the marriage. When he dies, she would reject his father. Of course, his father would be unwilling, but Godking Hu of the Hidden Shadow Domain should've used this opportunity to force her to marry Prince Lei.

Prince Lei was a young prince and essential tool, but he was absolutely enraptured with her. He would be unwilling to allow her to leave, his methods would be very forceful. This would spur the event she waited for.

He would arrive.

This would be a grand fortune for him, and a chance for her. For her to be with the one she truly loved!

This was what Ming Shufeng calculated by peering into fate and seeking heaven's way. However, Prince Zhen was still alive! In fact, her staying was what spurred Godking Hu to kill Prince Zhen! Prince Lei wanted to remove a love rival, as he too fell deeply in love with her at first sight. As for eliminating Prince Zhen for other reasons, that was unnecessary. After all, with the backing of two Godkings, the throne was already his.

The only reason King Wu wanted her to marry Prince Zhen was to help him reach the Godlord level. If he did, he might be able to eek out a chance to claim the throne. What the world didn't know was that the Royal Commander also backed Prince Lei! Furthermore, this entire thing was designed by King Wu to get Prince Lei to kill his brother!

That two-fold layer of schemes befitted the Royal Palace.

Yet, only this gave Prince Zhen a modicum of hope in an otherwise unfortunate situation. After all, he was by far the best candidate for the next King Wu! It was too bad that everything had been set against him, manipulated and plotted against by Three Godkings, how unfortunate.

Luckily, even though Prince Zhen dies, Prince Lei should die too so he won't be traveling the yellow springs alone. But Prince Lei's death was Ming Shufeng's machinations, then Prince Chen, a more calm, peaceful, and respected candidate with less of a bloody history among the common populace, will become the future King Wu! For a thousand years, the Wu Country will prosper!

He should also be that man's friend through an encounter!

Yet...

All of it derailed in a matter of moments.

"Could his death be delayed? Will they act in the Royal Palace?" Lin Ziyan asked. Hu Jiwei was a Godking, but he wasn't that brazen, was he? If he did, she doubted King Wu or the Royal Commander would intervene. Therefore, it'll be acceptable.

Ming Shufeng deeply furrower her neat brows, "I can't sense the fate of Hu Jiwei. He's either dead or outside of my calculations, having ascended to the Astral Core Realm!"

Her calculations had limitations, and her cultivation base heavily factored into those limitations. As long as they were in the Astral Core Realm, she could not seek their fate's path until she similarly entered that realm.

Lin Ziyan frowned. If Hu Jiwei ascended, there should've been an astronomical phenomenon—Astral Tribulation. The Astral Wu Tower should've lit the skies for tens of thousands of kilometers. There was no astronomical reaction or tower of light.

Ming Shufeng shook her head, "I'm unsure. I do know that he will not die while in the Royal Palace! However, I need to think of another plan. If he arrives and notices you agreed to marry another willingly, even if you insist otherwise, these people aren't monsters. They'll let you leave, especially that Prince Zhen, he has principles unlike Prince Lei.

"Without blood, he can't gain fortune, and without his fortune, your lives won't be bonded until death!" Ming Shufeng was solemn, her eyes revealing a dark light.

Lin Ziyan started to noticeably panic. "What will we do?"

"Let me think!" Ming Shufeng bit her lower lip.

## **Chapter 100 -: Four Spirits**

Three days had passed since Wei Wuyin had arrived at the Royal Palace Grounds, given his own courtyard. He sat quietly as essence stones were being rapidly drained by his externalized Divine Spirits. Beneath his feet, pale-grey dust gathered into a pile. From the size of this pile, an exceptional amount of essence stones were consumed.

He came to the clear realization that his Alchemic Heart and Draconic Heart were strange oddities of cultivation. One of them belonged to his mind, situated in his Sea of Consciousness, while the other was

his beating heart. And they required their pure essence to be delivered to them, unable to remain externalized for longer than a few seconds. As a result of this, his two Divine Spirits would absorb the essence stones rapidly and bring the essence to them like a mother brings worms to their chicks. Perhaps when they grew stronger, this would change.

Fortunately, his Divine Spirits had an inseparable connection with his mind and body, allowing them to enter his sea of consciousness and fleshy heart without any hindrance. The transference was also swift, and the refinement was unbelievably fast.

He had already reached the Sixth Stage of Qi/Blood Condensation Realm thanks to the Yin-Yang God Sphere's pure yin-yang energies. With that, his cultivation base had abruptly spiked once more.

Now, he was trying to refine another heap of essence stones to refine his qi to their limits. The only aspect he was curious about was whether the Eighth Phase, Infused Spirituality, would occur automatically or not with these two.

Before, his Hearts were 'Divine' which meant the spirits had thoroughly integrated with their respective cores long before. He wasn't sure if the Alchemic Heart, an ethereal existence, and the Draconic Heart, a physical existence, would remain the same.

They were unique, but he still wasn't sure.

In truth, his worries were unfounded. His Spirits and Hearts shared thoughts and comprehensions, even if he wanted to manually cultivate them to the Eighth Phase, it was unnecessary. They already knew how.

The moment they reached the Seventh Phase, the Eighth Phase would occur even if he was unconscious or lost all of his memory once more. This was because his Hearts/Spirits held a sort of independence in their actions.

He had long noticed this odd characteristic. He didn't know if all spirits formed from the soul had these traits, but they were eccentric and wondrous. They were sentient, self-aware, and conscious. They could even undergo hibernation or refuse to reveal themselves if they wanted, such as when he became another 'self'.

The only thing that left him assured was that their lives were linked, so they obeyed him obediently without question. While saying this, they also helped him with things by communicating with him.

For example, the corpse of Hu Jiwei.

He looked towards the remnant clothing of Hu Jiwei.

His eyes twitched strangely.

While his Draconic Heart couldn't externalize for long, when it did, it devoured this corpse's enriched blood completely. As for his Alchemic Heart, it entered the dead sea of consciousness of the corpse, the one refined by Qi Essence, and likely devoured that too.

The rest of it was refined and devoured by the Divine Spirits. It was a brutal sight, turning the corpse into dust. However, he came to an understanding that even the flesh and bones of a Godking was a cultivation resource. They held inherent traces of qi essence motes energy that those spirits loved.



In fact, he also came to an understanding as well. Hu Jiwei had three Qi Essence motes in his body. While his Spirit of Qi dissipated, his Qi Essence motes remained.

He realized it because the two spirits went separate ways, each took a single mote of Qi Essence, and fought fiercely over the third. He had to interfere otherwise they could've truly gone to blows. He decided to give it to the Spirit of Qi that held seniority: Divine Spirit of Elemental Qi.

With this, they peacefully refined those motes of qi essence for themselves. Unfortunately, neither formed a single qi essence.

He felt woeful.

Only then did he truly realize and determine that he needed far more resources than others. Even Hu Jiwei's two qi essences were unable to produce one for him.

Just as he was lamenting at his fate, his Alchemic Heart and Draconic Heart simultaneously reached the Seventh Phase, Sublime Qi. The phenomenon emerged, but Wei Wuyin focused his mind elsewhere.

Shruun!

Just as he expected!

No, just as he hoped!

They were currently merging spirit with core, infusing spirituality into energy, birthing spiritual energy which created spiritual qi. With this, his fleshy body, spiritual sense, and alchemic talents will rise to an entirely new level!

He had the confidence to refine seventh-grade alchemical products right now! Just as he thought about that, his eyes lit up as he pulled his perception away and searched his three-layered storage ring.

He used his spiritual sense to try to enter the third layer, but he still failed! However, he wasn't frustrated, he immediately found the various herbs in his ring stored from the Beast-Taming Sect and his dealings with Qin Feng, the Jade Lotus Sect Godlord. Pulling out a cauldron, he smiled.

He was going to stabilize his cultivation base and concoct a seventh-grade pill! In the law of alchemy, products suited for certain phases were far, far, far more effective on those weaker.

The sixth-grade products were suitable for Godkings and below, but seventh-grade products were suitable for the realm beyond—Astral Core Realm.

If he used an Astral Core Realm suited pill for his cultivation, how far would he reach?! He now felt that his memory loss was an absolute blessing in more ways than one. The talent revealed and skills gained from the Eden Earth Sect had allowed him to embrace the Dao of Alchemy. If he can become a King Alchemist, he had the hope to swiftly pulverize the early-stages of the Astral Core Realm!

As a wielder of the Alchemic Heart, no, now Alchemic Spirit of Eden Qi, he was a prodigy among prodigies!

Actually, that's an exaggeration.

He could be considered a math prodigy with a decked-out calculator thanks to his Alchemic Qi, while others were just math prodigies forced to think. In some ways, he was a cheater.

Thankfully, he already had a high-level of alchemic talent to begin with. The pill he was going to make was one of the few seventh-grade recipes of the Eden Earth Sect: Astral Dipper Fountain Pill!

The materials weren't rare, but when seven of these ingredients are perfectly mixed and merged, the resulting reaction could help those at the Ninth Phase of Qi Condensation to ascend with an increased chance of seventy percent!

Fortunately, it was highly effective in condensing qi essence as well!! According to what the Eden Earth Sect Master informed him, it could create seven motes of qi essence per pill!

Perhaps this would only give him one or two, but he didn't care. He could easily attempt to make hundreds because the ingredients weren't that rare, and he had enough for tens of thousands thanks to the Beast-Taming Sect and Hu Jiwei.

"The heavens don't like disproportionate gains! With seven slightly uncommon herbs, one could receive far too high of an increase! No wonder the Heavenly Daos don't like it, but because of its effectiveness in using what it births, I wonder if the Heavenly Daos secretly praises the creativity, therefore doesn't outlaw it." As he pondered this absolutely profound yet seemingly absurd question, he didn't realize he had touched upon the truth very few knew.

While it was more complex than that, it was also a very simplistic explanation of the truth.

He waited for his Alchemic Spirit and Draconic Spirit to settle. He could feel his physical energies and bloodline become richer, purer, and more powerful. His flesh and bones, all things influenced by his blood, were jumping in quality as a result.

He also felt that his mind was clearer. Eden Qi was miraculously profound and a part of the Mind Dao. It governed self-awareness and various other profound intricacies he still had yet to understand, but his sea of consciousness was expanded and strengthened.

He could tell that his Alchemic Spirit benefitted absorbing a dead man's sea of consciousness. It had grown sturdier and purer, but he still didn't know how that was the case.

He was wildly ignorant of the intricacies and qualities of a Mind Qi. They weren't like Material Qi, like Scarlet, Jade, or Wind. They also weren't like Ethereal Qi that relied on intent and belief, such as Saber, Holy, or Battle. It interacted with the world differently as well.

He sighed. Regardless, it still was a form of Metaphysical Qi, and can become energy that can interact with the world. It can hold elemental qualities, so he still felt somewhat lost whenever he tried to figure out its profundities.

Shaking his head of those thoughts, he started to use essence stones to replace his non-spiritually sublime qi & blood. Unlike before, he wasn't going for a full overhaul, that'll take time, but just enough to concoct pills.

An hour later, he smiled. "Let's begin!"

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In the central area, at a well-known restaurant frequented by many, two individuals were quietly eating. Next to them, three gentlemen were speaking with a spiritual spell warding their words. Unbeknownst to them that the two could hear their every word, they spoke without restraint.

"Did you hear? Prince Lei will be crowned Crown Prince! How wild. I always thought it would be Prince Zhen."

"Yeah! Me too! While he was a little vicious and gave off a fierce aura, he always felt stable and his cultivation base was strong!" One of them said.

"Yeah, but now I feel bad for him." One of them lamented.

"Why?"

"Well, King Wu is going to have Prince Zhen's woman, Godlord Lin, the one he's been after since day one, marry Prince Lei. It is a straight slap in the face."

"What?!"

"Yes! Not only that, I heard the Royal Commander is backing Prince Lei's ascension and even forcing Godlord Lin to marry him. While it is disgusting, that's the perks of being royalty! Hehe, the crown and a beauty! Truly enviable!"

The men continued their conversation on a variety of topics, unbeknownst that a man nearby had his killing intent provoked, barely containing his ferocious rage.

He abruptly stood up, paid the bill, and left. The woman beside him, who wore a veil concealing her features, followed calmly. When they arrived outside, the young man's eyes were fixated on the Royal Palace, his fists clenched enough to induce popping sounds.

The young woman reached out with her jade-like hand but halted. In the end, she just let him feel the emotions he should feel.

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While this event happened, Prince Zhen was calmly reading in his study, unbeknownst that a calamity had been drawn to the Imperial Clan by forces beyond his comprehension.