

## Protect OCL VL3 51

Chapter 51 Wang Shouzhe! This is my family's Old Ancestor!\_1

...

Thousands of miles away from Changning Guard City.

The middle stream of Peace River.

In this section of the Peace River, the terrain was rugged, filled with twists and turns. The river often wound through high mountains, forming steep cliffs and precipices.

Among the winding riverbeds, there was an island in the middle of the river. Its surroundings were cut sharply as if by an axe, with only a waterway on the leeward side leading into the bay, forming a semi-natural river port within.

After hundreds of years of development and expansion, the river port had grown to a considerable scale, capable of mooring dozens of ships at the same time. The bustling riverboats all hoisted the awe-inspiring flags of Jiaolong.

The vessels boasting such flags were never bothered on the upstream or downstream of the Peace River, as they all hailed from the overlord of the Peace River--the Jiaolong Gang.

The island, known as "Jiaolong Island", was the headquarters of the Jiaolong Gang, the overlord that controlled the Peace River.

In the middle of Jiaolong Island, there was a prominent main peak that suppressed a high-grade Water Spirit Vein, transplanted from God knows where, covering the whole peak with misty clouds.

The top of the peak had long been flattened to accommodate numerous buildings. Formation Eyes and Formation Nodes had also been built at critical positions, constituting a mountain-protecting formation.

With such an easily defendable base, the Jiaolong Gang had been able to grow stronger over the centuries.

At this time.

In the most heavily guarded main hall on top of the peak, the atmosphere was tense and solemn.

Compared with the stately mansions of the average prominent families, this hall's style was exceptionally rough, with neither meticulous carvings nor rigorous arrangements. The entrance led directly to the main hall.

Nevertheless, this did nothing to diminish the majesty of the main hall itself.

Especially those huge beast heads nailed on the walls of the left and right sides of the hall as decorations, which were extremely fierce, filled with an unspeakable dominance and ostentation.

In the hall's main seat, a middle-aged man in a white short jacket and cropped trousers reclined casually.

This middle-aged man had stubble on his chin and sat in a half-leaning, half-reclining, utterly casual posture. He seemed quite unkempt, but his exposed muscles were bulging and taut, showing an indomitable and powerful aura from the inside out.

This middle-aged man was none other than the famous leader of the Jiaolong Gang, Long Wuji.

Listening to his subordinates reporting on Zhao Wuqing's defeat and him being held in the prison of Changning Guard City, his slightly squinted eyes concealed an inner light, as though he was listening to some irrelevant matter.

"Chief..." Lu Jinyi knelt down on the ground, his body soaked in sweat, "It's said that the Changning City Defense Office has officially accepted this case and started the official legal procedure. If the charges are proven, Commander Zhao and his brothers will be deemed as water bandits and punished for robbery.

Under Daqian Law, Commander Zhao and other core gang members would be publicly executed, their bodies hung on Donggang to dry and caution the public for three years... the rest of the gang members would be banished to the borderlands for hard labor..."

"Bastards." Several Heavenly Human Realm Great Commanders in Long Wuji's command burst into fury, "The Changning Wang Clan has some nerve, daring to treat Commander Zhao in such a way."

"Chief, this matter cannot be tolerated. We need to put pressure on the Changning Defense Office, and attack the Wang family and the In-laws Alliance."

All the Great Commanders chimed in, indignant.

At this time.

Long Wuji finally opened his half-closed eyes, and a glint flashed across his eyes, "Great Commander Jiang, what do you think of this?"

As soon as these words came out, all eyes fell on a Great Commander who had not yet spoken.

Unlike most of the rough and unkempt Jiaolong Gang members, he dressed in wide-sleeved robes, presenting an elegant and scholarly grace. Standing among the members of the Jiaolong Gang, he stood out like a crane among chickens.

For those unfamiliar, they might mistake him for an elder from some prominent family.

He was a strategic advisor, known as "Jiang Yusong", whom Long Wuji had recruited from somewhere. He was thoughtful and full of strategies. Over the years, many of the strategic operations and tactical arrangements of the Jiaolong Gang were planned by him behind the scenes.

"Chief." Jiang Yusong respectfully saluted, and said eloquently, "From this matter, one can see the complexity of the In-laws Alliance led by the Changning Wang Clan. This plan must have been devised by Wang Shouzhe of the Wang Clan."

"I have studied many of the deeds that led to Wang Shouzhe's rise. He seemed to be conservative and prudent, yet his thinking was unconventional and elusive, making it hard to predict his next move."

"However, every person must have their strategic and tactical drivers. If I were Wang Shouzhe, who finds the Wang family and its allies in a period of rapid development, I would not want to be

involved in a fight that will surely be at a disadvantage. Avoiding conflict and seeking time to grow would be the core elements of his layout."

"Great Commander Jiang." Another Heavenly Human Realm Great Commander with a rough appearance spoke in a resonating voice, "If the Wang family hopes to avoid conflict and delay, why would they audaciously have the government office intervene in this matter? You should know, once Commander Zhao's guilt is established, even immortals wouldn't be able to save him.

Could it be, do they want to make mortal enemies with us?"

"That's exactly where the cunningness of Wang Shouzhe lies. The government office's handling of the case will follow a fixed process, and it will take time to convict. I think, Wang Shouzhe's intention should be, if our Jiaolong Gang wants to save Great Commander Zhao, we must start a conversation with the Wang family about this matter before the government office finalizes the case."

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"If we miss the opportune moment, or refuse to concede during the negotiations, causing Great Commander Zhao to be sentenced... It would indeed be of our own making, even if it results in deep-seated hatred between both sides, they could easily shift the blame onto us. In that case, they could use their status as victims to easily win the sympathy from public opinion...

along with the favor of neutral forces."

"Moreover, considering Wang Shouzhe's character, he must have already investigated our information. He should well know that Master Dragon values loyalty and sentiment and would not abandon Great Commander Zhao lightly. All in all, the Wang family and their In-laws Alliance have now taken the initiative, putting us in a relatively passive position."

Jiang Yusong's series of analysis made the objectives of the Wang family crystal clear.

Long Wuji's brow slightly furrowed: "So, the Wang family intends to seek peace, but wouldn't want to share a piece of the pie with us? Great Commander Jiang, is there a way out?"

"There's naturally a way out." Jiang Yusong straightened his sleeve, smiling confidently, "While Wang Shouzhe can plot cunning schemes, he has forgotten one thing. In the end, the world still respects power above all else. The strength of all elites in his in-law alliance, at most, equals a somewhat powerful Rank Six Prominent Family.

As for us, the Jiaolong Gang, our overall combat strength is comparable to Fifth Grade Prominent Families."

"As long as you, the head of our household, personally lead us to Changning Weicheng and exert pressure on them as a master from the Purple Abode, it will naturally stir unease among their In-laws Alliance. Then with my eloquent persuasion, combining a mix of soft and hard tactics, I can dissolve their will from within.

At that time, not only rescuing Great Commander Zhao would not be a problem, but we also wouldn't miss out on our share of profits."

"Once we gain a firm foothold in Changning Weicheng, even if we only manage a slight foothold, we can then take our time to expand the interests of our Jiaolong Gang."

This suggestion was met with frequent nods from the several Great Commanders present. Even Long Wuji, with narrowed eyes, seemed to greatly agree.

"Wait!"

Suddenly, a female voice echoed.

At the same time, a graceful figure veiled in figure appeared from a corner, saying: "Master Dragon, this plan might not be appropriate."

Despite being veiled and her face unseen, the figure emanated an ethereal charm. It was none other than Cao Youqing, who was grievously injured during their previous encounter with the Wang family.

The gaze of Long Wuji narrowed slightly as he indifferently replied: "Miss Cao, are there more directions to point?"

Cao Youqing seemed to be oblivious to Long Wuji's ambivalence as she continued: "Wang Shouzhe is extremely deceitful, adept at setting traps. The negotiation you have with him probably already falls into his plan. Why not we put everything out, launch a surprise attack on the Wang family's main residence, and catch them off guard."

Upon hearing this, Long Wuji's face turned slightly cold.

He eyed Cao Youqing without changing the rhythm of his tone: "Miss Cao, do you really think that our Jiaolong Trade Association is a group of desperate bandits? Killing at a drop of the hat. If I were to do that, don't you think it wouldn't be long before the joint forces of the Academic Palace and the Government Office would flatten Jiaolong Island?"

"But..." Cao Youqing saw the situation slipping out of her control and quickly became anxious with her tone becoming more rigid, "Master Dragon, don't forget what the young master instructed us..."

However, she only managed to get half her words out.

Long Wuji impatiently waved her off.

An overwhelming surge of Qi vigour ruthlessly hit her chest.

The devastating power, like a juggernaut, penetrated straight into her heart meridian, causing her entire person to fly backwards and violently collide into the stone pillars outside the door, causing the entire hall to shudder along with it.

Only after this did the echoing sound of the Qi explosion finally ring out.

Cao Youqing felt as though the world was turning upside down as she vomited a mouthful of blood.

The intense pain made her face turn deathly pale, but it couldn't hide the shock and anger in her eyes.

She couldn't have imagined that Long Wuji, a figure from the Purple Abode, would attack without warning, not giving her, a Sky Pride from the Sacred Land, any face at all!

However, before she could react, a killing intent so palpable it seemed physical descended upon her.

It was bone chilling, like it was from the nine hells, accompanied by a terror-inducing Evil Qi.

At that instant, she had no doubt that if she dared move a single muscle, the next strike waiting for her would most likely be the killing blow!

"How can my decisions ever require your guidance?"

Long Wuji didn't even glance at her, maintaining his lazy and casual demeanour, with half-closed eyes as if he could never fully awaken, his voice, however, became chilling: "Not to mention you are nothing more than an oblivious dog under the young master, even if the young master himself stood before me, he still wouldn't be qualified to preach to me, Long Wuji."

The corner of Cao Youqing's mouth dripped with fresh blood. She lowered her head, but the hatred in her eyes was not quelled.

...

Half a month later.

A precious spring rain fell upon the land of Changning Weicheng.

All the tenant farmers were brimming with joy. This timely spring rain provided abundant water for the winter wheat, promoting its robust growth.

If everything continued smoothly, this coming May would again be a harvest season.

However, beneath the seeming tranquility and harmony of Changning Weicheng, there was a turbulent undercurrent brewing. The first to bear the brunt was none other than Lord Wei Wenxun, the Changning city defender.

Wei Wenxun was regretful at this moment.

When he was newly promoted to the Heavenly Human Realm, how proud and enthusiastic was he back then when the Prefectural Governor personally offered him three guard cities to choose from for defending and governing. He, not knowing the good fortune that he had stumbled upon, chose Changning Weicheng.

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The reason being that this place is near the outskirts, and it had been developed less than five hundred years ago.

There were still no Rank Six Prominent Families settled here, and the base of the Prominent Families as a whole is still rather weak, giving him a space to exert his ambition and ideals in.

However, when he arrived, he realized this place was just a pitfall.

From his initial zeal, to his struggles and defiance, finally accepting his fate like a salted fish, getting by until his term was over. The local overlord of Changning Defense, the "Wang Clan", could do whatever they pleased to stir trouble.

Yet, unbelievably, he had already given up, but Wang Shouzhe continued to not let him off, constantly placing all the blame onto him.

The previous time was the violent assault case of Cao Youqing, the Sky pride of Lingyun Holy Ground, which had already pushed him onto a burning stake. He had to tread careful, acting meticulously without giving any loopholes.

This time was even worse, stirring up a case of river bandits attacking, the prime culprit being Zhao Wu Qing, the adopted son of Long Wuji, the Overlord of Peace River!

When they delivered the culprit to the Changning City Defense Office, they had already almost solidified all of the evidence, restoring the sequence of events as they were.

As the City Lord, he merely needed to follow the evidence provided by the Wang Clan, and go through the procedures of the Daqian Law. Unless there was an accident, Zhao Wu Qing and his group would be convicted of organizing the river banditries and looting, both the crime and the punishment were extremely severe.

City Lord Wei Wenxun wasn't a fool, of course he knew he was tangled once again in a vortex of the struggle of the powerful. Hence, on the first night, he immediately sent out some core and trusted followers to urgently ask for instructions from the Prefectural Governor in the County Town.



The next day, he only received an eight-word reply from the Prefectural Governor, "Handle according to law, administer impartially."

Wasn't this just nonsense?

Due to Wang Shouzhe's secret propaganda, the case of Zhao Wu Qing organizing river banditries and looting the merchant ships in our Prominent Family records had already been heard around mostly half of Longzuo County. The focus of many Prominent Families were on Changning City Defense Office, on him, Wei Wenxun.

During this, if he made even the slightest misstep, Wei Wenxun's official career for the rest of his life would come to an end.

In this situation, only by putting on the face of an impartial Law Preserver would there be a slim chance of survival. As such, his backing would be Daqian Law, causing the emperor issues until he would be able to stand tall and speak.

Yet if an immortal gave another chance to him, Wei Wenxun, even if he were beaten to death, he wouldn't choose to rule over Changning Defense! He would rather go to a city indirectly controlled by a Rank Six Prominent Family, it's still a physical being with no actual power, and wouldn't be used as the scapegoat~

Besides the miserable Wei Wenxun, all of Changning Defense's Prominent Families have shown a loose exterior but a tight interior, every household ransacked their 'abundant household' and sent family members to purchase useful Spiritual Artifacts and Jade Talismans or various offensive treasures.

Meanwhile, within their respective households, they starts to organize the training of their family people and servants, preparing for a possible war.

On the contrary, the leader of the In-Laws Alliance, the Changning Wang Clan, was still following routine.

Doing the reclamation work, farming, those who were Artifact Refiners continued refining.

The young and successful Wang Zongyao, was one of the family-designated Artifact Refiner successors. From the time he started coming in contact with Artifact Refining until today, the time was less than a year, but his life was filled to the brim.

Every single day, besides following a regular Artifact Refiner to learn about the general knowledge of Artifact Refining, he also had to study on his own the various Artifact Refining documents left by the Heavenly Craftsman, cultivate the Fire Order Method "Ye Tian Jue", leaving quite a bit of time for smelting metals and crafting artifacts.

That's right, every artifact refiner starts from being a blacksmith.

"Ding dong! The hundred fine iron hoes that you, Fourth Young Master Zongyao, crafted have been appraised: twenty-five are rough grade, thirty-six are common grade, and forty-nine are good grade. After deducting the costs of materials, you'll get fifty-one Family Contribution Points."

"Ding dong! Congratulations to Fourth Young Master Zongyao for receiving the mission 'Craft a Hundred Fine Iron Shovels', with a time limit of one month, among which not less than sixty shovels of good grade and ten shovels of excellent grade.

Please Fourth Young Master continue to study the Art of Artifact Refining, hopefully becoming an Artifact Refining Master soon, and struggle for the rise of the Wang Clan!"

No matter how many times he saw the appearance of the family Artifact Spirit, or heard the "ding dong" from the Artifact Spirit, Wang Zongyao's eyelids will still twitch. What kind of disgusting soul was hidden beneath his Fourth Uncle's dignified exterior?

"Ding dong! A new series of family tasks have appeared, 'Propagate the Clan'. Please Fourth Young Master..."

Wang Zongyao ran away wildly before the Artifact Spirit finished. Propagating the Clan and the like, where can it be as interesting as accepting an Artifact Refining task? Even if every propagation of a clan member had extremely high Family Contribution rewards...

The reward is so high, that he began to fear that if he stayed any longer, he wouldn't be able to resist the temptation...

Behind him, the Artifact Spirit's sigh could be heard: "Alas, this family task is really too hard to promote. I should suggest to the owner that the "Propagate the Clan" task be changed to a mandatory family task."

Hearing this sound, Wang Zongyao ran even faster.

Until he used a movement technique, and arrived at the Main Residence's entrance. However, he heard a crane cry, and a flying carriage skimmed down from the clouds.

As the flying carriage's litter opened, five lovely figures fell from the sky. They were all wearing the battle skirts of the female disciples of the Purple Abode Academic Palace, heroic and beautiful.

In a short span of ten breaths, they had all fallen at the entrance of the Main Residence.

Wang Zongyao quickly went over to greet them, saluting them with a bow: "Zongyao pays his respect to Elder Aunt Xuan, Aunt Ruolei. Pays his respect to Fifth Aunt, Sixth Aunt. Pays his respect to Sister Li Yao~"

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These five beautiful women turned out to be the elites of the Wang and Liu families from the Academic Palace.

Particularly the leading Old Ancestor suspended in mid-air, the intense aura in her beautiful eyes enveloped the surrounding area, making Wang Zongyao feel his hair stand on end as if he had encountered an insurmountable fierce beast.

He was extremely sharp and quickly realized what was happening, immediately changing his countenance to excitement and bowing again: "Zongyao congratulates Old Ancestor Xuanfu on Profound Achievement in cultivation, becoming a Celestial being."

"So it's Zongyao." Liu Xuanfu wore a veil, her beautiful eyes contained a hint of smiles, "In the blink of an eye, this little kid has grown into a handsome young man. Have you found an apple of your eye yet? Why not consider a Miss from our Liu Family?"

Wang Zongyao twitched the corner of his mouth, pretending to be all smiles and said: "Thank you for your kindness, Old Ancestor Xuanfu. But I need to learn the art of Artifact Refining now, so I won't be considering that yet."

"I've heard in the Academic Palace that Zongyao is refining artifacts." Wang Luoqiu looked up and down at her fourth nephew, in a somewhat interested manner, "How's your learning coming along? Can you craft Top Graded Spiritual Artifacts yet? Your sixth aunt just happens to be missing a pair of Punching Gloves."

Top... Top Graded Spiritual Artifact?

Wang Zongyao almost fainted, with an embarrassed smile on his face: "Sixth Aunt, I have only been learning for less than a year..."

"Sixth Aunt, stop teasing Brother Zongyao." Wang Li Yao diffused the situation, "Artifact Refining is inherently difficult, let alone Top Graded Spiritual Artifacts. I guess Brother Zongyao should be at the stage of crafting weapons for the household servants..."

"Um..." Wang Zongyao was so embarrassed he wanted to find a hole to crawl into. Can he explain he's still at the stage of crafting farming implements? Thanks for the help, Sister Li Yao~

This topic was just too embarrassing, so he hurriedly changed the topic: "Sister Li Yao, how come you are all back?"

"Zongyao, don't you know?" 'Fifth Aunt' slightly surprised, "Our Wang family and the In-laws Alliance are in high likelihood to conflict with Jiaolong Gang. We rushed back to reinforce. Zong'an, Zongsheng, and the men from a few other families came back on another flying carriage."

Now the families of the In-laws Alliance have gradually become strong, with the amount of resources available to young members far exceeding that of twenty years ago, a lot of excellent youngsters have emerged under this more generous provision.

They, too, copied the Wang family and sent some of their excellent young members to the Academic Palace. Although they are all just ordinary disciples for now, at least they have a start, and a Spirit Platform Realm future isn't out of reach.

This time, since the In-laws Alliance encountered a crisis, naturally everyone thought of ways to use the holiday to return to the family, wishing to weather the hardship together with the family.

Of course, they all returned quietly under the guise of taking a leave. At most, they have one more month before they have to return to the palace for roll call. Regular disciples of the Academic Palace cannot stay with their families for a long period.

Also, in the formal confrontation, they have to find a way to hide their identities to avoid unnecessary controversies.

Meanwhile, everyone in the Wang family was returning.

In the small courtyard of Wang Shouzhe.

Lady Bilian, dressed as a fine lady, sat opposite Wang Shouzhe, her expression seemed rather unkind: "Master Shouzhe, at this critical moment, you invited my family's Firefox Old Ancestor as a guest, which is somewhat excessive. Unless you are trying to involve the Yuwen Clan in the grievances between you and Jiaolong Gang?"

Jiaolong Gang is a large-scale force that has existed for several hundred years.

Many families have had more or less dealings with Jiaolong Gang, and the Yuwen Clan is no exception. Therefore, even though Yuwen Clan has a deep-rooted project cooperation with the Wang family, they will not join the Wang family in waging a war against the Jiaolong Gang.

"My Lady, you misunderstood." Wang Shouzhe held a little fox in his arms the size of a puppy, saying with a grin, "Our conflict with Jiaolong Gang is only a minor fractious incident. We can solve it through a bit of negotiation. It's not a big deal. I just haven't seen Firefox missy for quite a while and miss her dearly..."

"Chirp chirp~~ Big Brother Shouzhe, I miss you too." The Seven-tailed Firefox was quite happy upon hearing these words and started playfully rolling around in Wang Shouzhe's arms, saying gleefully, "L-girl has long wanted to come and see Big Brother Shouzhe."

Watching a man and a firefox getting so close, Lady Bilian was filled with jealousy as if a tidal wave was churning inside her and she was just about to roar, "Wang Shouzhe, this is our family ancestor!"

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Changning Guard, Ping'an Town, Dingpu Ferry Terminal.

The ferry terminal road constructed with cement, appeared exceptionally clean after the spring rain.

All the buildings in the port had gradually been replaced with cement brick and tile structures. Block after block, they were arranged tidily, as if one were in a small port town on modern Earth.

After repeated expansion and renovation, the Dingpu Ferry Terminal is now more akin to an inland river port than a "ferry terminal".

Various cargo ships docked at the terminal, transporting all sorts of middle to high-end living supplies that the Wang family needed, such as salt, crude iron, fine copper, porcelain, cooking oil, and some special materials, etc.

Nowadays, Ping'an Town's permanent population has reached 110,000, with a floating population of no less than 20,000. The degree of land development and population density are both extremely high.

Moreover, the residents of Ping'an town are quite wealthy with extremely high purchasing power. This attracts businesses big and small, as well as frequent visits from peddlers.

Compared to over twenty years ago, when Wang Shouzhe first took over the Ping'an Wang Family, the situation has indeed changed dramatically.

In addition, there are a considerable number of Independent Cultivators who visit Ping'an town daily in hope of trying their luck, either taking on some tasks contracted out by the Wang family, or grouping in threes or fives to venture into the foreign domain.

The Zhou Xuanguan area, hundreds of miles around, has been repeatedly cleared by the Wang family and some of their prominent in-law families. Fierce Beasts have become "rare resources". Thus, the risk to Independent Cultivators has become very low.

They gather all sorts of things in the foreign domain that are slightly valuable, such as ores, herbs, or beast bones, Spirit Bee honey, bee hives, or some weird bugs and exotic plants. In any case,

given a sufficient number of people and explorations, someone will always stumble upon some things of value.

All items obtained from outside Zhou Xuanguan are subject to a round of screening upon entry. The Wang family has first purchase rights for items of use to them, buying them at a high price. What the Wang family finds useless is then released into Ping'an town.

This is a rule set by the Changning Wang Clan.

All Independent Cultivators who wish to venture into the foreign domain through Zhou Xuanguan must first sign a contract with the Wang family to obtain a pass.

This is not about the Wang family forcing purchase or sale, but a privilege written expressly in Da Qian's law, rightfully belonging to the Wang family. This is one of the benefits granted by the state to the Pioneer Prominent Family.

Unless the foreign domain is reclaimed by some family again one day, and Zhou Xuanguan no longer serves as the gate to the foreign domain, this preferential right to buy will always belong to the Wang family.

Back in the day, when the Wang family fell into decline and lacked the strength to control Zhou Xuanguan, the gate was forcefully converted into a public gate. Now that the Wang family has re-grown in strength, the honor that should have belonged to them naturally returned to their hands.

Of course, the Wang family only has the right to purchase preferentially. The price should still be determined based on the market.

Thanks to the unremitting efforts of the Independent Cultivators, the Wang family has actually obtained quite a few good items over the years.

On this occasion, Dongfang Cangqiong and Ximen Buqun, this duo of Independent Cultivators, made a fortune.

They took advantage of the fewer people before the New Year and ventured out of Zhou Xuanguan together.

In only two months, they returned fully loaded. Their spoils of war included a wild Spirit Ginseng and many valuable herbs. Even more incredible is that they picked up a Fierce Beast claw of unknown history. The claw is more than a foot long and can easily pierce rocks.

Adding up all the odds and ends, the Wang family actually offered several hundred Qian Gold.

The two brothers divided the Qian Gold, purchased some specialties of Ping'an Town, and are now preparing to go back home to settle. They are currently waiting in line at the Dingpu Ferry Terminal, waiting to board the ferry.

Dongfang Cangqiong is a middle-aged man in his forties with a full face of stubble.

Halfway through the line, he glanced around and found something strange, "Brother Ximen, why is the ferry terminal different from when we came? Look at those two rows, are those things covered with red cloth statues?"

"Brother Dongfang." Ximen Buqun, a man in his fifties or sixties with twinkling eyes, said, "When I was buying White Jade Spiritual Rice at the Wang family's rice shop earlier, I heard some people discussing that it's called the 'Divine Might Cannon.' It's said to be used by the Wang family to welcome VIPs."

"Divine Might Cannon? I've never heard of it. Is it something like a firecracker or salute?" Dongfang Cangqiong frowned and expressed his admiration, "Brother Ximen, I've traveled east and west in Longzuo County for many years and I always thought I was well-informed. But when I came to Ping'an Town, I realized how shallow my knowledge was. This place is truly full of wonders and miracles.

If not for my family waiting for me back home, I really would want to stay in Ping'an Town for the rest of my life."

"Unfortunately, the housing and land prices in Ping'an Town are too expensive. Some ordinary people are even richer than us Independent Cultivators," Ximen Buqun lamented, "Furthermore, Ping'an Town manages its household registration strictly. It's quite difficult for Independent Cultivators to settle here..."

"Brothers, you don't know?" A peddler in his thirties or forties from the peddler team nearby said, "News has been released from the Wang family that they are preparing to reclaim the foreign



domain and build a city. Independent Cultivators can also sign up. At that time, you can buy farmland and houses based on your merit points."

Reclaiming the foreign domain?

Both Ximen Buqun and older brother Dongfang Cangqiong felt intrigued.

They have rich adventuring experience and strong survival skills in the wilderness. If they join the Wang family's reclamation team, there may be many merits to be gained.

They looked at each other and secretly made up their minds. After this return trip, they would bring the whole family to Ping'an Town and join the Wang family's reclamation team.

Chapter 52: Competition! The conflict between the Wang family and the Jiaolong Gang\_2

The Wang family is very powerful. Although there are all kinds of rules on their turf, they have a good reputation, and those under their command always act according to the rules. Over time, the prestige of the Wang family naturally increases day by day.

After a hustle and bustle, the ferry was fully loaded, finally lifting the anchor, slowly heading to the center of the river.

On the boat, many independent cultivators and peddlers were excitedly discussing Wang's plans for developing overseas projects.

Many of them showed a great interest. After all, the Wang family is well-known, trustworthy, and very generous. It's not easy for independent cultivators to join the Wang family under normal circumstances. This was an opportunity to join the Wang family.

As for the risk...What doesn't involve risk? Even if there are unfortunate problems, it is said that the Wang family's compensation is very high...

Just as everyone was in heated discussion,

Suddenly,

someone by the side of the ferry shouted: "Look quickly! What a huge fleet."

The crowd immediately became silent, everyone instinctively turned their heads to look.

On the river not far away, a huge fleet appeared. Dozens of large and small battleships were lined up in an imposing manner, looking dark and majestic from afar.

At the front of this fleet was a gigantic, especially dark-looking ship.

This ship was daunting, and there were still remnants of knife and sword marks on its body, exuding an overwhelming aura of evil. It was like some kind of prehistoric fierce beast, bringing a palpable sense of terror and pressure.

Such a large and awe-inspiring fleet is extremely rare.

"This...this is the Jiaolong Gang's fleet!" Some of the older rivers and lakes, who were knowledgeable, expressed great surprise.

The Jiaolong Gang?

On the ferry, exclamations of surprise rose continuously.

"Brother Ximen, something seems to be wrong." Dongfang Cangqiong, who had decided to join the Wang family, naturally regarded them as his own and looked solemn, "The huge fleet of the Jiaolong Gang seems to be heading towards Wang's Dingpu Ferry Terminal."

"This..."

Although Ximen was not particularly skilled and only had Qi refinement to the sixth layer, he had gained much knowledge in his travels and adventures.

He felt a sudden chill in his heart: "The flag language of the fleet has changed, it seems to be steering towards us."

Before they could think more,

A dominating shout came from the Jiaolong Gang's fleet: "I am Du TianGang, the third rank of the Jiaolong Gang, and I have come to visit the Changning Wang Clan as promised."

As the words fell, an imposing and chilling Heavenly Human Realm pressure suddenly rose from the Jiaolong Gang's fleet, shocking and soul-stirring.

It spread out suddenly like a blast, the sky was full of surging clouds, the waves on the surface of the river were stimulated and became more intense, even the wave sounds became louder.

Several people standing near the side of the ship were directly splashed with water from the river.

"Du TianGang?" Dongfang Cangqiong's body trembled, and he exclaimed, "It's actually Du TianGang, known as The Slaughter Spirit Hand. It seems the visitor doesn't mean well."

The Jiaolong Gang has been rampant on the Peace River for hundreds of years. Their reputation far surpasses the Changning Wang Clan's.

The current third rank, "Slaughter Spirit Hand" Du TianGang, is extremely famous. It is said that he's reached the advanced stage of the Heavenly Human Realm, with his unique "Slaughter Spirit Hand" technique, he has killed several Tianren Realm Cultivators.

What is most terrifying is that Du TianGang is extremely tough and ruthless. Even a 7th-rank Aristocratic Family would be terrified and lose sleep if they offended him.

Has the Wang family offended the Jiaolong Gang? With the Jiaolong Gang's army pressuring their territory, have they come to show off and demand an explanation?

For a while, many people on the ferry who were inclined to the Wang family couldn't help worrying for them. Although the Wang family has risen quickly and is quite strong, it is simply not in the same league as the Jiaolong Gang.

Some of those who harbored dissatisfaction with the Wang family secretly revealed their gleeful expressions. They wanted to see if the Wang family, with their numerous rules and lack of leniency, would be as tough as before under the Jiaolong Gang's blame?

"Whooo~~~~"

Suddenly, a deep horn sounded, making people tremble.

At the same time,

A slightly old but extremely deep voice came from Dingpu Ferry Terminal: "Welcoming our honorable guests from the Jiaolong Gang, let the salute cannons fire."

"Greetings? Firing salute cannons?"

Upon hearing this sound, many of the Jiaolong Gang members aboard the leading ship unabashedly revealed their disdain.

The commander of the battleship, Ma JunXiong, a Spiritual Platform Realm Mid Stage Cultivator, contemptuously sneered: "What Changning Wang Clan? Seventh-Rank Aristocratic Family? Just one word, pathetic!"

"Hehe, in front of our Jiaolong Gang, what does a mere Seventh-Rank amount to?"

"Not to mention our army pressing their territory. Even if Commander Ma just brought one of our battleships to demand an explanation, see how arrogant that Wang family would be!"

"Hahaha!"

Laughter could be heard from the battleship.

The laughter, carried by the river breeze, traveled to the ferry.

Many people on the ferry had deep ties with the Wang family. Hearing these words, they showed expressions of indignation. However, the gap in strength between the two sides was too large. No matter how dissatisfied they were, they had to swallow it.

Suddenly,

The red cloth covering the Divine Might Cannons on both sides of Dingpu Ferry Terminal was pulled away, revealing the rough, domineering, and dark cannon barrels.

"Ignite, fire together, fire the salute cannons!"

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Each Divine Might Cannon made a thunderous roar.

Solid cannonballs were shot out, drawing invisible arcs in the air and fiercely crashing towards the Jiaolong Gang's fleet.

Chapter 52: Competition! The conflict between the Wang family and the Jiaolong Gang\_3

Because the cannonballs were too fast, the gang members of Jiaolong Gang had no idea of what just happened. They only saw flames spouting in the distance from the ferry terminal.

It was not until a few moments later that the thunderous explosion reached their ears.

Meanwhile, at the forefront of their fleet, huge splashes of water were erupting in the river!

The speed of the cannonballs was equal to that of the sound!

One of the cannonballs, due to an improper angle and firearm input, directly pierced through the hull of Ma JunXiong's Anger Gang warship with a loud "boom".

A massive shockwave sent fragments of wood flying, and the ship was shaking.

"Whoosh!"

The gang members on the Anger Gang warship instantly turned pale with terror.

Was this some kind of thunder attack array? If any of them were standing a bit closer to that hole just now, wouldn't they have been blasted to pieces?

In a flash.

The mocking laughter emanating from the Anger Gang members abruptly halted.

An eerie silence descended upon the entire fleet. The rustling sound of the river wind still continued, sounding especially harsh to the ears.

The independent cultivators and peddlers on the ferry were also startled, but the next moment, they returned to their senses and started cheering enthusiastically.

This is indeed the Changning Wang Clan! Where is the salute to the guest? This is clearly a powerful show of force!

The Changning Wang Clan is too domineering! They even dared to retaliate against Jiaolong Gang! Is this the preface to a war between the two sides?

Meanwhile.

In the large ship, Long Wuji's eyes slightly opened.

He was leaning back in his luxurious chair, still looking relaxed and casual, but he naturally emitted a certain heroic recklessness with a strong intimidating aura.

But at this moment, there was a look of surprise on his face.

Obviously, the sound and power of the Divine Might Cannon had exceeded his expectations.

"Looks like this is the Divine Might Cannon that appeared in the Donggang sea battle," said Jiang Yusong, dressed as a scholar, with a slight frown. "It seems quite powerful. If this cannon is mass-produced, it will be a force to be reckoned with."

"It's nothing but a downgraded replica of the Spiritual Array Cannon popular in Tianshu State," Long Wuji narrowed his eyes once again, seeming as if he couldn't care less. "This thing is clumsy, hard to move, and reloading takes too long. Any Tianren Realm Cultivator can easily obliterate it."

"Boss, the Wang family's actions are nothing more than a desperate struggle," Jiang Yusong advised with a bow. "I suggest having one of the top three masters provoke them again, to give the Wang family a challenge."

"Approved," Long Wuji agreed with a cheerful laugh. "Third, why don't you go and meet the Wang family and see what tricks they've got up their sleeves?"

Du TianGang, the third rank of Jiaolong Gang, was a burly man of about eight feet tall with good physique. But his hands were as white and delicate as jade, a stark contrast to the rest of his body. This was the result of his cultivation of a special technique known as "Slaughter Spirit Hand".

Du TianGang grunted and gave a cold smirk, then bellowed: "I am Du TianGang, the third commander of Jiaolong Gang. Since the Wang family has already launched a salute, why is Wang Shouzhe not here to welcome me?"

His booming voice echoed through the air, spreading far and wide in an instant.

Hearing his words, there was a show of indignation among the spectators on the ferry and at the terminal who were sympathetic to the Wang family.

However great Du TianGang may be, he's nothing more than the third commander of Jiaolong Gang.

When it comes to dealing between powerhouses, equivalent reception is the norm.

For Du TianGang to scold Wang Shouzhe for not receiving him properly, isn't this declaring his superiority and belittling the Wang family? His words were highly provocative indeed.

After Du TianGang had finished speaking, he laughed carelessly. "The Wang family is nothing but a newly promoted 7th-rank Aristocratic Family. All they have is a Wang Longyan who, I hear, has some skills. Hehe, I'd like to see just how powerful she is."

"Hehe, with our third commander in action, the Wang family can only barely compete with us if they bring their old ancestor here," the commanders laughed. "A 7th-rank Aristocratic Family is, after all, a 7th-rank. They can't even put together a pair of Tianren Realm Cultivators."

Just when they thought the one from the Wang family who would fight in response to this insult would definitely be Wang Longyan.

The dull voice of the previous old man sounded again. "What kind of figure is the head of my Wang family? Is it his turn for the 'Slaughter Spirit Hand' to speak here? Du TianGang, if you are itching for a fight, let this old servant meet you!"

As soon as the words fell, an old man suddenly jumped from the Dingpu Ferry Terminal and walked leisurely on the Peace River.

The old man was dressed in plain clothes and seemed just like a common old servant, but his aura was as surging as the sea. Even standing there doing nothing, he gave people a sense of unfathomable depth.

This old man turned out to be Shang Jiping, a member of the Purple Abode Academic Palace, who was appointed by Tianhe Enlightened One as a servant to Wang Liyao!

Chapter 53 "Old Servant" Makes a Move\* Li Yao Arrives\_1

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Since being punished by Tianhe last year, Shang Jiping has been following Wang Liyao as an old servant, almost a full year has passed since then.

Thanks to the abundant Water Aura on the "Nameless Broken Island", Jiping, who had been stuck at the peak of Heavenly Human Realm Level Six for many years, finally managed to break through to Level Seven within a year.

At present, he has also become a late-stage cultivator in the Heavenly Human Realm, his strength far surpassing what it was just a year ago.

In that moment, he stood firmly in the air with an oppressive aura that stimulated the waters under him, causing waves to ripple across the entire river segment.

The intimidation exerted by Du TianGang was also suppressed by him.



"Such a strong aura!"

On the dock, on the ferry, more and more spectators were shocked as they witnessed Shang Jiping. Such a formidable figure was just a servant?

"Slaughter Spirit Hand" Du TianGang was also astounded. The aura of the old man, surprisingly, was not the least inferior to his own.

When did the Changning Wang Clan acquire such a formidable expert?

Immediately after his surprise, a rage rose in his chest: "A servant? Good, good, I'll see how much of a genius you are, just a servant of the Wang family!"

As his words fell, he too leaped into the air, his demeanor becoming increasingly fierce.

His hands, as white as jade, took on a jade-like luster at some point, making them appear more like statues carved from white jade than human hands.

With a roar of fury, he flipped his palms forward and slammed them abruptly in the direction of Shang Jiping.

"Boom!"

A sudden blast sound echoed in the sky.

Du TianGang's Mysterious Energy surged, and the powerful Energy suddenly transformed into a giant hand that overshadowed the sky, driven by an overwhelming force.

As a third-ranked master among the many talents of the Jiaolong Gang, how could he be an ordinary figure?

His strength and status have fostered his pride. It may be fine for the Wang clan to seek the help of experts, but to deliberately insult him with the guise of a 'servant' was something he could not tolerate.

Now, filled with rage, he put almost all his strength into his opening move.

"Slaughter Spirit Hand" is a unique Mysterious Technique that can dismantle the structure of Mysterious Energy, weakening the power of an opponent's Mysterious Technique. It is particularly effective against defensive techniques.

Once perfected, it can even be used to fight a powerful opponent of the next minor realm.

Of course, Du TianGang's "Slaughter Spirit Hand" is still far from perfection, but with this technique, he often gains advantages against opponents of the same realm. This is how he has managed to stand out among the numerous members of the Jiaolong Gang and climb to his current position.

Accompanied by the booming sound, the giant hand that covered the sky pressed down on Shang Jiping fiercely, with an unstoppable and strong force, as if it could shatter the heavens and the earth.

Even the clouds in the sky were ripped apart.

Under this terrifying power, Shang Jiping's hair was slightly lifted, but his eyes remained as calm as an ancient well, revealing no fear.

With a stretch of his right hand, a water-blue Magical long saber appeared in his hand. Under the sunlight, subtle mysterious inscriptions on the saber's surface shimmered, giving it a mysterious aura.

This Magical long saber is his well-known weapon, the Medium Grade Magical Weapon "Primordial Water Sword".

With a tight grip on his saber, he immediately moved towards the enormous palm and swung his sword.

As an Elder of the Academic Palace, Shang Jiping naturally came from a core disciple background, his strength beyond doubt.

During his previous skirmishes with Wang Liyao, he tasted defeat mostly not because he underestimated her strength but because he hesitated to directly confront her due to her identity. His hesitation cost him.

Now, facing Du Tiangang, he had no reservations.

His sword swept across horizontally, with a ferocious Blade Intent unleashing like a massive, heavenly river with an unstoppable momentum; it was formidable and ruthless.

Unlike Wang Liyao's flexible Sword Intent, Shang Jiping's focus since his sword cultivation days was broad and aggressive. Naturally, his Blade Intent was extreme in its dominance and ruthlessness.

Upon the release of the Blade Intent, even the air seemed to be torn apart.

Under this terrifying power, even the surface of the river was disturbed, creating a massive wave.

The ordinary spectators near the ferry terminal, intimidated by this power, had to back off by more than ten feet, for fear of getting caught in the crossfire.

Faster than one could react, the confrontational Blade Intent and the giant hand have already collided intensely before anyone knew what was happening.

"Boom Boom Boom~~!"

A thunderous roar instantly echoed across the sky.

Both Mysterious Techniques were ferocious and overbearing. This collision was like ice meeting ice; they shattered almost simultaneously.

The shattered Blade Intent mixed with jade-like energy from the Slaughter Spirit Hand burst out, creating a frightening shock wave that swept across the river, causing thousands of waves to surge. Even the ferry in the middle of the river was pushed away a considerable distance by the rough waves.

The people in the ferry and the spectators at Dingpu Ferry Terminal were all dazzled, astonished at the spectacle before their eyes.

Most of them were people at the bottom of this world, extremely respectful even when dealing with cultivators of the Spirit Platform Realm. As for cultivators in the Heavenly Human Realm, they were like elusive dragons. A glimpse of these high-rank cultivators excited them for a long time, enough to be a topic of discussion during leisure time.

#### Chapter 53 "Old Servant" Makes a Move\* Li Yao Arrives\_2

Having the opportunity to witness a duel between two cultivators in the advanced stage of the Tianren realm is a spectacle that rarely comes once in a lifetime.

It's absolutely worth it! This would become a perfect topic for bragging in the future, certainly attracting endless envy from others.

Meanwhile.

After crossing one move with Du TianGang, Shang Jiping was floating above the Peace River. Any previous disdain was completely wiped from his eyes, replaced by a solemn demeanor.

Whether they liked it or not, they had to admit that the one in front of them was indeed a tough opponent!

"Quite a 'Slaughter Spirit Hand', Du TianGang," Shang Jiping's voice was slightly hoarse, "You certainly lived up to your stature as the third rank of Jiaolong Gang, truly an eye-opener for me."

"Primordial Water True Verses!" Du TianGang squinted, "This is the mysterious technique of the Primordial Water lineage from Longzuo Academy. I suspect your background might not be that simple. The academy always refrains from interfering in local power disputes. Could it be that you're intending to break this rule?"

Regardless of his rough and bold appearance, Du TianGang was actually a thoughtful person at heart. It was not surprising that he was noticed by Long Wuji among the talented members of the Jiaolong Gang and was gradually promoted to the position of the Third Master.

"I am indeed an Elder from the Academy," Shang Jiping did not deny this, his gaze remained tranquil, "However, I am also the old servant of Miss Wang Liyao."

Miss Wang Liyao's old servant?

With a solemn look on his face, Du TianGang spoke with a deep voice, "Is Miss Liyao affiliated to the Wang family? What kind of virtue or talent does she possess to have Elder Shang as her servant?"

Shang Jiping raised his head slightly, seemingly wearing a genuine smile of satisfaction, "Our Miss Liyao is a Tianhe's Legitimate Successor blessed with Great Heavenly Proud talent rarely seen in the world. It is the greatest honor of my life to serve her."

Great Heavenly Proud!

Tianhe's Legitimate Successor?

One shocking revelation came after another made Du TianGang, suspended in the air, falter and almost fall.

Is this a joke? Great Heavenly Proud, the Wang family actually has a Great Heavenly Proud?

And this Heavenly Proud is even Tianhe's Legitimate Successor?

Everyone should know that the status of a Legitimate Successor is different from a Direct Disciple. Even though the honorable and enlightened masters usually have few direct disciples.

But Legitimate Successor is different.

In the academic palace, the status of a Legitimate Successor is as same as that of a Young Clan Leader in a prominent family, who can inherit everything from their mentor, including Cultivation Techniques, Mystical Techniques, identity, spirit artifacts, and even all the property and connections.

From this, it can be seen that Miss Liyao's status in Tianhe's eyes is extraordinary.

The onlookers at the ferry crossing, due to limitations in their knowledge, might not fully comprehend the underlying implications of the situation.

Yet even in their eyes, a person in the Tianren realm was heavenly, and one in the Purple Abode realm was a legendary figure. Still, they could vaguely sense that this Miss Liyao from the Wang family had an unusually high status, as she even had a Tianren realm cultivator as her servant.

However, on the ship of the Jiaolong Gang.

Jiang Yusong and Long Wuji looked at each other and perceived shock and serious implications in each other's eyes.

Tianhe!

That was a great figure in the Divine Power Territory, the Principal of the Longzuo Academy. Even in the whole of Da Qian, He was a top-notch figure.

In the initial investigation, they only found out that the Wang family had higher status individuals. However, who would have imagined they had hidden yet another Great Heavenly Proud?

Great Heavenly Prouds have high potential and are treasures of the human race.

Usually, they hold unique statuses and are taught by mentors who are highly respected figures, usually beyond the reach of any average Purple Abode realm cultivator unless they stumble upon them by accident.

While Long Wuji might not think much of the Sky Pride Cao Youqing from the sacred land, he had to take into consideration Wang Liyao, Tianhe's Legitimate Successor.

For someone of Wang Liyao's status, even if they went to the national capital to meet the Emperor, they had a chance of getting an audience. The Emperor would most likely treat them kindly and enquire about their welfare.

After all, such talent, provided they don't rebel against their country, is guaranteed to become a cornerstone for their nation.

"Great Commander," Jiang Yusong apologized with a bow, "All this is my mistake. I failed to investigate such crucial information."

"Never mind."

Long Wuji regained his usual demeanor instantly, a smirk playing on his lips.

"Interesting, the Wang family of Changning is indeed interesting~~~ Their potential and depth are deep enough, even I almost didn't notice. However, while Great Heavenly Prouds are important, they are just that—important. And no matter how powerful Tianhe is, there are limits to his biased support for the Wang family."

"Besides, it's not like Tianhe is the only Enlightened One in the world."

Long Wuji seemed calm and confident, twirling a finger, "I have begun to take an interest in the well-known Family Head of the Wang family, Wang Shouzhe. Send an invitation to him, I hope to have a chat with him on this ship."

Sitting on his Taishi Chair was a strong man with a full face of a beard. After hearing Long Wuji's words, he stood up and laughed, "Great Commander, I am also curious about this Wang Shouzhe~ Why don't I invite him on your behalf in this trip."

He was Gao Tian, the fourteenth rank in the Jiaolong Gang, also known as "Desolate Blade". He was originally one of the Great Commanders of the Jiaolong Gang, just recently entered the Tianren realm not long ago, and is currently eager to prove his worth. Seeing the rare opportunity before him, he naturally wanted to seize the chance to make a good impression.

Long Wuji was well aware of his little scheme.

However, the rule in the Jiaolong Gang had always been "survival of the fittest", as long as Gao Tian could handle the matter well, he wouldn't mind such small schemes.

Chapter 53 "Old Servant" Makes a Move\* Li Yao Arrives\_3

He gave a slight nod, "Alright, I'll leave it to the fourteenth master."

"Thank you, Big Master. Rest assured, I will take care of the matter splendidly~" Gao Tian laughed heartily. He immediately stood up and strode towards the outside of the cabin.

Reaching the bow of the ship, he stood with nonchalance, his tiger-like eyes scanning the area, "Where is Wang Shouzhe, the head of the Wang family? My master wishes to invite him on board."

His voice exploded like a thunderclap in the sky, reverberating with great momentum.

The onlookers at the ferry crossing couldn't help but exclaim in awe.

The Jiaolong Gang was indeed a dominating force. Even just a random member demonstrated such formidable power. Moreover, their leader Long Wuji was rumored to be a top cultivator at the Purple Abode Realm.

For a while, many who leaned towards the Wang family were filled with worry. How could they resolve this situation now that they had provoked such a formidable enemy?

Suddenly.

At this moment.

A clear and pleasant female voice rang out, "This is the territory of the Changning Wang Clan. Who do you think you are, daring to speak my father's name directly?!"

As her voice fell.

A slim silhouette appeared on the river's surface, walking on the waves.

The figure was dressed in a billowing green chiffon skirt. Her eyes and brows were as beautiful as spring flowers, and her figure as graceful as rippling water. Although she looked no older than twenty, with traces of naivety still lingering between her brows, she had already displayed extraordinary beauty.

A rich aura of water energy surrounded her, creating the illusion of a rotating water mist, adding an air of mystery to her figure.



With the raging river's contrast, she exuded an aura of strictness, appearing almost like a celestial maiden from a divine painting, inspiring awe in anyone who saw her.

Gao Tian was initially startled by her aura, but upon seeing that she was only in the early stages of the Spirit Platform Realm, his heart sank again.

"A mere cultivator from the Spirit Platform Realm, dares to speak out boldly." He scoffed, "Has Wang Shouzhe run out of people to send, that he had to let a little girl do his bidding?"

"Hmph~"

Wang Liyao's eyes grew cold.

She could not tolerate anyone looking down on her father, Wang Shouzhe. This man had repeatedly insulted Wang Shouzhe, fully inciting her anger.

Without uttering a word, she raised her hand and the top-grade spiritual artifact, the "Autumn Water Sword" at her waist, instantly unsheathed.

A sword light, like water, fiercely assaulted the surroundings.

The ethereal sword light was as thin as a glowing trace of water on the surface of the river, lacking any signs of fire, but its speed was extraordinarily fast.

In the blink of an eye, the sword light had already traversed the raging river and arrived at Gao Tian's face.

Despite seeing this, Gao Tian's expression remained unchanged.

He himself had just freshly advanced from the Spirit Platform Realm to the Heavenly Human Realm, and he knew very well the power gap between the two. He did not believe that a mere Spirit Platform Realm cultivator could pose any threat to him.

He casually struck out with his palm, intending to disperse the sword light.

However, when his powerful, Heavenly Human Realm palm force made contact with the sword light, it didn't disperse as he had anticipated. Instead, the dispersed sword light directly shattered his palm force into fragments.

Within the dispersed sword light, an indescribable aura flowed out, like waves of autumn water or the mighty flow of a river, embodying an indescribable, formidable power.

"Sword Intent?!"

Gao Tian's face changed as he realized something was wrong.

However, by the time he reacted, it was already too late.

He hurriedly triggered his cultivation technique in defense, but the sword intent was already before him, and its formidable force suddenly erupted.

"Boom~!"

A loud rumbling sound arose, and Gao Tian was sent flying, crashing severely into another ship nearby, breaking the mast in two.

The middle-grade spirit armor he wore was also torn open a great slit, with flesh rolling at his chest area and blood soaking through his entire front.

It was fortunate that he was accustomed to wearing spirit armor daily, otherwise, just this sword intent could have taken half his life. Unlike body cultivators, he didn't have a strong physique to resist the sword intent with just his body.

This scene was beyond everyone's expectations, not only startling the members of the Jiaolong Gang, but also shocking all the onlookers on the ferry and at the crossing.

A Heavenly Human Realm powerhouse from the Jiaolong Gang was sent flying by a girl in the early stages of the Spirit Platform Realm?

Although it seemed that Gao Tian had been careless and did not defend himself properly, nobody expected it would lead to such a result.

What... what just happened?

"A Water Spirit Body?! Water Sword Intent?!" Gao Tian's face paled, having barely struggled to his feet, "Could it be, you are the 'Miss Liyao', the Great Heavenly Pride?"

As the fourteenth master of the Jiaolong Gang, he had sufficient experience to recognize instantly that the sword intent just now was unmistakably Water Sword Intent.

This woman was merely at the initial stages of the Spirit Platform Realm, but she already wielded sword intent, and used Water Sword Intent at that... Considering what he had heard from the Academic Palace elder about 'Miss Liyao', how could he not figure out her identity?

Only the rumored Academic Palace's Great Heavenly Pride, the legitimate successor to Enlightened One Tianhe, could fit all these conditions. Not just him, but everyone else also started to react, their faces showing horror.

"Miss Liyao, you've arrived," Shang Jiping greeted Wang Liyao from afar, demonstrating extraordinary respect. Pride twinkled in his eyes.

This is Miss Liyao, the Great Heavenly Pride he served.

Miss, this old servant wishes to live to see the day when you will rule the world."

In the cabin of the ship.

Long Wuji's eyes revealed an unusual look.

Chapter 54 The Heavenly River! Li Yao's Style\_1

...

Long Wuji was naturally aware of the Great Heavenly Proud's strength.

In the past, he had seen numerous Great Heavenly Prouds, and he initially assumed that even if the Wang family managed to nurture one, they would be just a big fish in a small pond. But now, it appeared that was not the case.

This Wang family was indeed interesting.

"Hahaha! Miss Liyao, fitting for the title of the Great Heavenly Proud, is the legitimate successor of Master Tianhe!" He suddenly stood up from his chair and spoke out loud.

As he spoke, his figure disappeared from the cabin, and reappeared in the sky.

He was less than three zhang away from Wang Liyao.

This was the strength of a Purple Abode Realm powerhouse.

Even without using any other means, just his movement technique alone was enough to kill a Tianren Realm powerhouse in seconds. Moreover, when he changed his form, there was no trace left. Anyone not at the Purple Abode Realm might not even understand how he did it.

But Long Wuji, as if he had done something insignificant, retained his calm demeanor while saying, "I'm fortunate to meet Miss Liyao today."

He was still casually dressed in his usual attire—short jacket and shorts—with a nonchalant aura. His manner was bold yet deadly, akin to a fearsome beast that ruled the mountain. The danger he emanated could be felt from every pore of his body.

Despite not releasing any intimidating aura on purpose, Wang Liyao still felt her breath hitch and her aura erratic.

She was secretly astonished.

Long Wuji was indeed an Enlightened One of the Purple Abode Realm, unparalleled in aura and demeanor.

However, her time at the Academic Palace was not in vain.

The rich Primordial Water Aura on the "Nameless Ruin Island" benefited her far more than Shang Jiping.

Over a year, her cultivation base grew rapidly, and her understanding of Sword Intent became more proficient. After all, the Academic Palace was flooded with other disciples practicing the Primordial Water Swordsmanship. She would spar with them when she was idle and consult with Master Yuan Shui and Master Tianhe for guidance, resulting in her quick progress in Swordsmanship.

Just like that, she gained a deeper understanding of her father's longstanding aspiration to send her to the Academic Palace. In just a year, she felt like a brand-new person. Not to mention her Swordsmanship skills, which she was confident could overpower her former self.

Being the legitimate successor of Master Tianhe, she often dealt with Purple Abode Realm cultivators, and over time, her fear towards Long Wuji had diminished.

In a mere instant, she put her feelings in check and curtsied, "I, Wang Liyao of the younger generation, greet Master Dragon. Thank you for the compliment."

"Good, you are indeed composed and calm. With Miss Liyao's demeanor, you're destined for greatness in the future." Long Wuji commended, his hands behind his back. "Please convey my regards to Master Tianhe when you see him."

Despite the tension between the Jiaolong Gang and the Wang family, he retained his confidence and grace in dealing with them.

"I will definitely pass on Master Dragon's message." Wang Liyao nodded dutifully, "Master Dragon's visit has brought honor to our Changning Wang Clan. My father has mandated that we treat you with the utmost respect and hospitality per our family tradition. He has already prepared the Guest Welcoming Pavilion at the peak of Broken Dragon Gorge and has been waiting there since early this morning.

We hope you could spare some time for him."

Upon hearing this, there was a noticeable shift in the atmosphere.

All the commanders under Long Wuji simultaneously looked astonished: "How audacious! The Changning Wang family is nothing more than a 7th-rank Aristocratic Family, what makes them think they can..."

But before they could finish, Long Wuji slowly raised his hand.

All the commanders immediately fell silent.

The atmosphere by the river became incredibly tense again.

"Broken Dragon Gorge, what an interesting name. Master Shouzhe truly is an amusing person." Long Wuji chuckled with a glint of coldness in his eyes as he wistfully said, "Miss Liyao, your father indeed has enough confidence. Does he truly think that by using Master Tianhe to pressurize me, I will give him face?"

"My father has always said that our Changning Wang Clan always serves the nation faithfully. We abide by the laws and rules; we keep to the Heavenly Dao with the leaders, and toward the common people, we harbor no guilt." Wang Liyao lifted her chin slightly, reflecting her confidence, "You ask why my father is so confident? Because the Wang Clan is upright and unbiased, rigid in principle.

Master Dragon, your Jiaolong Gang is much more powerful than our Wang Clan. But if you want to use power to oppress us, we will not submit nor butter up to others for a mere livelihood. Even if our clan has to spill the last drop of blood, we will not falter or fear!"

"This is my father's confidence, and the confidence of our Changning Wang lineage."

As her words faded...

The bystanders at the ferry docks and on the ferry all cheered in agreement.

Miss Liyao is absolutely right!

The Wang Clan is different from other prominent families. They respect and uphold the law. Their regulations may be strict, but they always stick to their word. They never bully the weak or fool the public with deceptive tactics.

That's why, even though Ping'an Town's rules are strict, it has attracted more and more people to settle down. It's also why many people were itching to follow the Wang Clan for their pioneering venture outside their own territory.

Upon seeing this, a chill flashed in Long Wuji's eyes, hinting at a feeling of foreboding.

He never expected the Wang Clan to be so popular in Changning.

Chapter 54 The Heavenly River! Li Yao's Style\_2

Shortly thereafter, he laughed heartily: "Interesting, interesting~ I can't wait to meet Master Shouzhe. Miss Li Yao, I was merely jesting with you, don't take it to heart."

"I just spoke out of passion for a moment, Elder Long should not take it to heart either." Wang Liyao raised an eyebrow, responding neither arrogantly nor humbly.

Without further ado.

She took a water-blue seal from her storage ring.

This is the protective treasure called the "Celestial River Divine Seal," bestowed to her by the Enlightened One of Tianhe.

It holds a complete divine skill of the Enlightened One of Tianhe. It took nearly a hundred years for him to refine this treasure, it was specially prepared for his legitimate successor.

Of course, this is not comparable to treasures like the Purple Abode Sword Symbol.

The Enlightened One of Tianhe did not weaken his cultivation base when he refined the "Celestial River Divine Seal", it only consumed a lot of Divine Power. It needs to recover for a while before it will be restored.

Moreover, the "Celestial River Divine Seal" isn't one-time-use, but it's more like a container that holds Divine Power.

The Divine Power sealed within it acts as an initiator, Wang Liyao can use the "Celestial River Divine Seal" to stimulate the Divine Power within it, unleashing power almost as strong as Small Divine Power.

Of course, with Wang Liyao's current strength, she can only stimulate a small portion of the Divine Power. The consumption of the Celestial River Divine Seal is not significant. Also, even if she consumes all the Divine Power within it, she can still go to the Enlightened One of Tianhe to recharge it.

Given how much the Enlightened One of Tianhe dotes on her, he would certainly not refuse.

Now, she needs to borrow the Divine Power from the "Celestial River Divine Seal" to show up for her father.

As she infused her Mysterious Energy into the "Celestial River Divine Seal".

In an instant, waves of profound golden halos flowed out from the palm of her hand and spilled over the Peace River.

"Rumble~~"

In the muffled sounds like a thunderclap, the river seemed to be drawn in and rolled up, gushing into the sky.

The water level of Peace River dropped rapidly.

In just a short while, a "Heavenly River" appeared in the sky.

This Heavenly River was several feet wide, with one end connected to Peace River and the other stretching far away, appearing to reach the clouds in the sky, its end not in sight.

Vast and magnificent, traversing the long sky.

The sunlight poured down, causing the entire Heavenly River to shimmer with fine waves of light.



Water waves rolled and fell within it, but they were restrained by an unseen force, regardless of how they raged, not a drop could escape.

Looking up from below, the scene was indescribably majestic.

"This..."

In the Jiaolong Gang, including Jiang Yusong, all the Great Commanders were dumbstruck.

Is this the might of a Great Divine Power?

Such an earth-shaking ability is truly breathtaking!

It is well known that Divine Power is divided into "Small Divine Power" and "Great Divine Power".

When Profound Martial cultivators reach the Purple Abode Realm, their understanding of the power of Heaven and Earth Laws will enter a deeper level. At this time, they will begin to comprehend their own Divine Skills. The Divine Skills at this stage only take a rough form and are referred to as "Small Divine Powers".

Only in the Divine Power Territory, when the Divine Power is fully developed, is it considered true Divine Power. The power at this time is referred to as "Great Divine Powers".

The Great Commanders of the Jiaolong Gang, who follow Long Wuji, occasionally witness the power of "Small Divine Powers", but this is the first time they have seen the true "Great Divine Powers".

Even if this "Great Divine Power" is a stripped-down version, it still leaves them, utterly shocked.

As for the onlookers, they were even more awestruck, filled with indescribable shock, as if they were witnessing the descent of a deity.

Those with insufficient experience or fragile souls even fell to their knees spontaneously, unable to resist kneeling in worship.

This Great Divine Power, even though it was not deployed by the Enlightened One of Tianhe himself, had already far exceeded the imagination of ordinary people.

If it were indeed the Enlightened One of Tianhe's own hand, he could probably turn the river on its head and completely flood Changning City without any difficulty.

Even Long Wuji lost his composure for a moment, his eyes narrowed more.

A moment later, he laughed loudly: "As expected of the Great Divine Power sealed by the Elder Tianhe himself, indeed grand and masterful. And Miss Liyao, you at such a young age, capable of controlling it, you are indeed worthy of being the Great Heavenly Proud."

"Elder Long, follow this Heavenly River and you will reach Broken Dragon Gorge."

At this time, Wang Liyao was already slightly sweaty, obviously, commanding the Celestial River Divine Seal was a demanding task for her.

No wonder, although her bloodline has reached Innate Spirit Body Level, her cultivation base is only just at the early Spirit Platform Realm. Even borrowing from her Master, the Enlightened One of Tianhe's Divine Power, controlling it is not easy.

If she hadn't reached Spirit-level, she probably wouldn't even be able to activate the Celestial River Divine Seal.

"Thank you Miss Liyao for guiding me."

Long Wuji laughed carelessly.

Having said that, he made a gesture towards the ground, and with a flash, he stepped onto the vast Heavenly River.

Down on the ship, both Jiang Yusong and Third Master Du TianGang received his signal and immediately took off and followed behind Jiaolong's Great Commander, Long Wuji, stepping onto the Heavenly River.

The Heavenly River surged, like a jade belt across the sky.

With each step Long Wuji took, his feet firmly stepped on the water's surface.

Ripples spread from under his feet, as if stepping on solid ground.

#### Chapter 54 The Heavenly River! Li Yao's Style\_3

From the surface, he seemed relaxed and composed, strolling leisurely as if taking a leisurely walk in the courtyard. However, after he and Jiang Yusong passed by, the Tianhe behind them crumbled like a broken dyke.

The waters of the river were poured down, instantly turning into a heavy rainfall on the surface of the river.

The suddenly falling water level began to slowly recover.

Upon seeing this, the crowd, who had just been awestruck by the 'Great Divine Power', again revealed looks of shock.

Indeed, the Purple Abode Realm was worthy of its reputation, their strength was not to be underestimated!

Long Wuji's power and dominance were so intense that it made Wang Liyao look serious.

She had only dealt with Long Wuji for a brief moment, yet she already noticed that this man was different from the other masters of the Purple Abode in the Academic Palace.

The masters of the Academic Palace valued rules and image, and their actions, for the most part, would stay within the rules. But Long Wuji seemed to do as he pleased, with a proud and cocky temperament which made it hard to predict his final decision.

If he ultimately decides to make an enemy of the Wang family, he might not be easily dealt with.

"Elder Long, Elder Long, I hope you can act sensibly and don't hurt my father." Wang Liyao's clear and bright eyes, displayed a trace of harshness within them as she murmured, "Otherwise, Liyao won't hesitate... to obliterate your Jiaolong Gang."

Meanwhile,

Broken Dragon Gorge.

High and towering, perilous peaks stood on the riverbank, their stones jagged and fierce-looking like a menacing stone sculpture looking down day-in-day-out, year in year out at the flowing waters of Peace River beneath it.

Here, the width of Peace River's waters suddenly narrowed. Using Broken Dragon Gorge as a border, the already quite turbulent water flow became even more violent, with the sound of waves reverberating all year round.

However, today, on this typically desolate and rugged peak, there was a stone pavilion.

The entire pavilion was made of gray-white cement, its shape regular, and its size much larger than the usual pavilion.

If it wasn't for the fact that it was entirely open on all four sides, you would say it was a hall.

Inside the pavilion was a stone table, already set with dishes and bowls of fruits, and warmed spiritual wine. A red copper incense burner was placed at the center of the table, giving off a wisp of smoke.

Everything was obviously prepared meticulously; from the containers to the spirit fruits and snacks in the bowls, everything was exquisite.

Wang Shouzhe sat at this stone table.

He was dressed very formally today; his attire, crown, jade belt, waistband, and accessories were all intact, even the material of his clothes were made from spirit silkworm silk, which he rarely wore.

You need to understand that he usually dressed quite casually, he would not even bother with the jade belt and waistband, let alone the crown.

However, the careful dressing did yield significant results.

He was naturally attractive, exuding an exceptional temperament. Now that he was meticulously dressed, as he sat there, he truly was dignified and elegant, fluttering his broad sleeves, fully displaying the demeanor of a scion from a prominent family.

At his feet, a small fox was lying.

The fox's fluffy tail curled around Wang Shouzhe's ankle in an arc. With its belly rising and falling, it was sound asleep.

Behind Wang Shouzhe, two men were standing.

The man on the left had a large build, thick limbs, and wore heavy armor, standing like an iron tower. His whole body exuded a profound sense of evil Qi.

Upon a closer look, you will find that the "man" had a faint metallic shine on his face. He was not a real human, but rather almost deceptive humanoid puppet.

This is the mysterious Celestial puppet, the same one that was discovered in the ruins left by Gongye Zhi in Qinglian Fire Valley.

For the past year, Wang Shouzhe had particularly hired an artifact refiner from the Tiangong Workshop and spent a fortune to repair it.

However, the money was well invested.

With this Puppet, the Wang Family felt like they had obtained a second Tianren Realm powerhouse. Not only did it guard Wang Shouzhe, but it also greatly enhanced his personal combat capability.

And next to this Tianren puppet, stood a young, gentle, and elegant scholar.

This young scholar was of course Wang Shouzhe's eldest son, Wang Zong'an.

Not long ago, Wang Shouzhe sent a letter to the Academic Palace, calling back both Wang Liyao and him for today's event.

A year's life in the Academic palace brought great changes to Zong'an.

The most significant change was that he, who was once somewhat silent and solitary, had now become much more cheerful, his manner and temperament softer and more harmonious, leaning more towards his father, Wang Shouzhe.

Obviously, his mindset had significantly changed over the year.

The two of them, along with one puppet, silently waited inside the pavilion.

Wang Shouzhe was calm and composed, as if he was just there for an outing.

This sight made Wang Zong'an admire his father even more. True to form, his father always stayed calm during a crisis.

Chapter 55: The General Trend! Where Will the Wang Family Go\_1

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Outside the pavilion, the vast Sky River extended into the distance.

Under the sunlight, waves of the Sky River surged, spraying droplets shimmering like crystal fragments. From a distance, it resembled a satin ribbon decked in diamond shards hanging in the sky. Romantic and captivating, it possessed a tremendous power that made one's heart tremble.

No one knew how long Wang Shouzhe had waited.

Suddenly.

"Boom!"

Long Wuji stepped on the Sky River outside the pavilion, causing it to shatter into a violent rain that fell into the Peace River.

The very next moment.

Long Wuji alighted outside the pavilion as if it was the easiest thing in the world.

His demeanor was relaxed, his expression carefree, as if he had done something insignificant.

Behind him, Jiang Yusong and Third Master Du TianGang, his two confidants, landed as well, flanking Long Wuji, one literate, one martial.

Long Wuji's long, narrow eyes swept across the scene, then focused on Wang Shouzhe.

He immediately laughed heartily: "I presume this is the renowned Master Shouzhe. I am Long Wuji, invited here by the Family Head himself for some catch-up."

Wang Shouzhe rose to his feet, smiling as warmly as a spring breeze, and saluted: "Master Dragon and other honorable guests have traveled so far, gracing Changning City with your glorious presence. My gratitude is beyond words, so I can only offer a few cups of spiritual wine to cleanse the dust from all the travel."

"This is my son, Zong'an. Zong'an, quickly pay respects to Master Dragon."

After saying that, he gave Wang Zong'an a glance.

Wang Zong'an immediately stepped forward calmly and saluted: "Junior Wang Zong'an sends respects to Master Dragon."

His posture clearly indicated extensive training. His every move was refined and graceful, showing the extraordinary elegance of an aristocratic son.

"Good, good." Long Wuji was full of praise, "Master Shouzhe truly is fortunate to have such talented children, like a phoenix son and a phoenix daughter."

Then, following protocol, Long Wuji introduced Jiang Yusong and Third Master Du TianGang.

After pleasantries and formalities, Wang Shouzhe invited Long Wuji to sit down. As for Wang Zong'an and Jiang Yusong, they couldn't sit on equal ground with Wang Shouzhe and Long Wuji, so they stood behind them.

When they sat down, a puppet stepped forward, picked up the Spiritual Gourd, and started to pour wine for them. The wine was as clear as jade, sweet as honey, and the intoxicating aroma filled their noses the moment it touched the cup.

But Long Wuji's attention was mainly on the puppet.

Although the puppet was incredibly well-crafted, mimicking human movements perfectly and appearing incredibly lifelike, he could tell at a glance that it was not a real person, but a puppet with the power level of a celestial being.

"The Changning Wang Clan truly is profound and mysterious." Long Wuji narrowed his eyes and smiled, speculating, "This celestial realm puppet has quite a bit of refining style of the Tianshu State."

"Master Dragon does indeed deserve his reputation for being well-traveled and discerning." Wang Shouzhe smiled and raised his cup in a toast, "This is a damaged puppet I acquired by chance and had the Tiangong Workshop restore."

"Ha, the Tiangong Workshop's refining techniques are indeed strong, but their prices are exorbitant." Long Wuji sipped the exquisite wine and said with a hint of teasing, "I'm afraid Master Shouzhe must have bled a lot for it."

"Who can deny it?" Wang Shouzhe also looked pained, "It cost me eight hundred thousand Qian-gold, and that doesn't even include the maintenance costs. But after all, celestial realm puppets are rare and the Wang Clan lacks high-end combat power, so I had to grit my teeth and let the Tiangong Workshop take a cut. Could it be that Master Dragon also has connections in the Tiangong Workshop?"

Can you get a discount?"

"I wish I could." Long Wuji shook his head helplessly while sipping his wine, "Those people in the Tiangong Workshop are very old-fashioned and are immune to persuasion. Their slogan is, 'fix it or



not, buy it or not'. In the past few centuries, I have given them 'offerings' without getting even a tiny discount."

Now that they had a common "enemy", the two men seemed to have a sense of shared animosity. Amid their toasts, they took turns lamenting about the Tiangong Workshop's "faults".

After a few more rounds of drinks, the two seemed to have become much closer.

"Brother Shouzhe, this Spiritual Gourd of yours is not bad. I've only seen it twice in my life." Long Wuji seemed slightly tipsy, and his tone became more casual. "I see you're not much of a wine lover either. Why not name your price and sell it to an old man like me at a discount?"

"Brother Dragon indeed knows quality when he sees it. This treasure automatically brews high-grade wine. Our Wang Clan reaps thirty thousand Qian-gold from it every year. Over a thousand years, that would be thirty million Qian-gold! I'm willing to offer you a 50% discount, at fifteen million Qian-gold, and sell it to you." Wang Shouzhe poured another cup of wine for him and stated his price.

Upon reflection, Wang Shouzhe also felt a deep sense of wonder.

In the Celestial trial of the Divine Martial Dynasty, he initially disregarded this Spiritual Gourd that could only brew wine. Only after using it did he realize how pleasant it was! As long as it was properly managed, it could endlessly provide steady profits for the family. If calculated over five hundred or a thousand years, its value far surpassed other treasures.

Sure enough, Long Wuji rolled his eyes: "The price is too high, can't afford it. Master Shouzhe, you better keep it and save your money."

Let alone asking Long Wuji to pay fifteen million Qian-gold all at once, it would also be a challenge for the Qian Family, who carry their wealth in their surname, to come up with that kind of liquid fund.

However, after this exchange, the two seemed to have grown even "closer".

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When the timing seemed just right.

Long Wuji drained his cup of wine, a look of helpless regret on his face. "I truly regret not meeting my younger brother Wang Shouzhe sooner. Had we known each other half a year earlier, we could have avoided such misunderstandings."

"Fortunate for us, there hasn't been any irreconcilable disagreements." Wang Shouzhe, cognizant that the opportunity was ripe, offered him a figurative "ladder", "There's still room for negotiation between us."

Previously, the two have jostled subtly and openly, trying to seize the initiative for the forthcoming negotiations, leading the other by the nose.

This process was also a way for both sides to flex their respective "muscles".

If Wang Shouzhe faltered even once and was overwhelmed by Long Wuji's forceful demeanor, the Wang family's standing in Long Wuji's eyes would drop drastically.

Fortunately, with careful preparation at the ready, it was Wang Shouzhe who ultimately maintained the upper hand and the initiative until the end.

Seeing that he could no longer seize the initiative, Long Wuji gracefully conceded, "Precisely. As a company that started in business, we, Jiaolong Trade Association, naturally value peace and prosperity. It was only right that my reckless son, Zhao Wu Qing, received some discipline. I'll have him compensate the Wang family with one million Qian Gold and personally apologize.

What do you think, Brother Shouzhe?"

Wang Shouzhe played with the wine cup in his hand, smiling knowingly, "Compensation of one million Qian Gold? It seems, Brother Long, there is more you have to say... Why not divulge everything, so I can come to an overall judgment."

"Brother Shouzhe, you are indeed astute." Long Wuji grinned, "I'll speak frankly then. The shares of Donggang Port, as well as those two small families in Donggang, have already sold everything to us. What belongs to our Jiaolong Trade Association, naturally remains ours. Besides, the Jiaolong Gang hopes to replicate the Qian family's partnership with your alliance.

We'll handle all merchandise sales along Peace River's coastline, including your Changning guards, and only take ten percent of the value of the goods."

"It doesn't seem like a terrible proposition." Wang Shouzhe gave a nonchalant smile, "Only, I wonder what other costs our In-laws Alliance must bear?"

"We need some shares of Keep Achieving Commercial Firm, and to establish a joint alliance with your Wang family." Long Wuji laughed heartily, "I seldom admire a person as much as I do you or value a 7th Rank family this much. From now on, where there is food for me, there will be some for you, younger brother."

Wang Shouzhe lifted an eyebrow, without responding directly, and momentarily pondered before saying, "Brother Long, I too have a proposition."

"Oh? Let's hear it." Long Wuji leaned slightly, smiling amiably, looking approachably friendly.

"I can spare Zhao Wuqing, but your Jiaolong Gang must promise me, Wang of Changning, not to set foot in Changning's waters for a hundred years." Wang Shouzhe said calmly.

The smile on Long Wuji's face froze as a sharp fierceness flickered in his eyes. "Brother Shouzhe, do you understand what you're saying? You are rejecting my goodwill."

Clearly, Wang Shouzhe's words had touched his bottom line. His once low voice now carried a trace of anger, with a certain oppressive force as he spoke.

"My Wang family has a small business and shallow foundation." Wang Shouzhe seemed oblivious, his voice still unwaveringly calm, "I'm afraid we couldn't limb as high as the Jiaolong Gang. Therefore, I can only regretfully decline your kindness, Elder Brother Long."

Long Wuji leaned forward slightly, a cold smile hooked on his lips as his eyes fixed lividly on Wang Shouzhe.

"And what if I refuse?"

Wang Shouzhe met Long Wuji's gaze without fear, his voice unwavering, "Then it will be a matter of 'a fish breaking the net in its death throes'."

"Well, well, well." Long Wuji laughed out of anger, "I don't know how many years it's been since someone has threatened me so. Indeed, I meant to romantically admire the moon, yet the moonlight only illuminates the gutter. Wang Shouzhe, you've deeply disappointed me."

As he spoke, he finally stopped concealing his power and menacingly unleashed the intimidating aura unique to a Purple Abode Realm powerhouse.

A faint humming sound seemed to reverberate in the air.

The overwhelming aura swept across like a raging hurricane, causing the atmosphere above the Broken Dragon Gorge to stagnate.

Even the turbulent river beneath the Broken Dragon Gorge seemed stimulated and began to surge.

If the intimidating aura of a Tianren Realm powerhouse was like a grand river, then the aura of a Purple Abode Realm powerhouse was like a boundless ocean. Its terror might not have been apparent during calm times, but when swept by violent gales, it was akin to a natural disaster, incomparable to the strength of a Tianren Realm powerhouse.

Wang Shouzhe only felt a suffocating feeling in his chest, making it harder to breath.

Master Changchun had previously used the intimidating aura of the Purple Abode Realm to test him. However, compared to Long Wuji, Master Changchun had obviously held back and exerted much less pressure.

Nonetheless, having lived two lives, Wang Shouzhe's Divine Sense was far superior to ordinary cultivators, hence, his ability to withstand pressure was naturally stronger. Despite feeling suffocated, his face remained unchanged, betraying no signs of discomfort.

In contrast, Wang Zong'an standing behind him didn't have the same level of composure.

The moment the Purple Abode intimidating aura erupted, his body trembled, and his face instantly paled.

Fortunately, the Tianren Realm puppet beside him stepped forward in time, blocking a substantial part of the pressure for him. With that, he managed to regain his footing and stability.

## Chapter 55: The General Trend! Where Will the Wang Family Go\_3

Fortunately, thanks to his early awakening as a Great Heavenly Proud and his possession of an Unseen Wood Spiritual Body, his capacity to withstand pressure far exceeds that of a typical Spirit Platform Realm cultivator. If not, he might have embarrassed himself on the spot.

At that moment.

The little fox that had been curled up at Wang Shouzhe's feet felt the pressure of the Purple Abode Realm powerhouse and woke with a start, "Which lowlife dares to disturb my slumber..."

She cut herself off mid-sentence, sensing that something was off. Her gaze instantly focused on Long Wuji, with the narrowed eyes of the fox filled with intense lights, "How dare you bully my brother Shouzhe?!"

While she spoke, her body had already begun to expand wildly.

In the blink of an eye, a massive crimson monster-fox appeared in the pavilion, shielding Wang Shouzhe and Wang Zong'an from any harm.

This is the Fire Fox Old Ancestor in all its glory.

Seven crimson fox tails flared and danced behind her, resembling a chaotic dance of demons. The overwhelming Purple Abode Realm pressure spread out, ferocious and domineering, effectively dispelling Long Wuji's pressure.

Wang Shouzhe and Wang Zong'an both heaved a sigh of relief.

"The Seven-tailed Fire Fox?" There was a momentary pause in Long Wuji's expression, his eyes flashed with a hint of wariness, "The Fire Fox Old Ancestor of the Yuwen Clan from Longzuo? What are you doing here? Don't tell me, your Yuwen Clan is planning to oppose my Jiaolong Gang as well?"

However, Wang Shouzhe spoke up jovially, "The boss must not misunderstand. My relationship with the Fire Fox Old Ancestor is a personal one. The Yuwen Clan will not intervene in the friction between the Jiaolong Gang and my Wang family. They will remain neutral in the future, you can rest assured."

In this world, there are countless families with lineages dating back hundreds, even thousands of years.

Therefore, to such a family, continuity is paramount, even more so than development.

It's for this reason that most of these families tend to be cautious and conservative in their approach.

Without necessity, no family would be willing to wage war casually against others.

Therefore, Wang Shouzhe found it comprehensible and didn't blame the Yuwen Clan for their decision to remain neutral. After all, if he were in their shoes, he might very well have made the same choice.

"The Yuwen Clan might choose to stay neutral, but I, as the Old Ancestor, do not need to listen to them." The Seven-tailed Fire Fox spoke with a haughty air, "In short, anyone who dares to bully my brother Shouzhe, I will fight them."

The constant reference to "brother Shouzhe" unnerved Long Wuji and made his skin crawl. He thought to himself, when you, the Fire Fox Old Ancestor, had made a name, I, Long Wuji was still a child... what's with the pretense of being timid here?

However, the combat strength of any Spirit Beast Fierce Beast is typically stronger than a Profound Martial Cultivator of the same level. Even a veteran of the Purple Abode Realm like Long Wuji, who had honed his skills for hundreds of years, could not predict the outcome if he were to compete against the Fire Fox Old Ancestor.

As a result, his plan to suppress the Wang family through the use of the Purple Abode Realm Cultivator's strength had been thwarted.

"Haha~~ Shouzhe, my younger brother, I was just teasing you before." Long Wuji, being a domineering figure, immediately withdrew his Purple Abode Realm powerhouse aura and laughed heartily as if nothing had happened, "I would like to ask you, why are you willing to cooperate with the Qian Family, yet you refuse to accept my proposal?"

How quickly he had changed his address! In the blink of an eye, he had switched back to "younger brother Shouzhe!"

Seeing Long Wuji wisely back off, the Seven-tailed Fire Fox finally stopped acting aggressive and ready for a fight. She reduced her size, turned back into a tiny, exquisite fox, and obediently squatted down next to Wang Shouzhe's feet.

"Sigh~" Wang Shouzhe sighed, adding, "Long, my older brother, with your extravagant and unrestrained personality, I really do want to connect with you. But, as I've said before, my Wang family is small and peaceful, and we just desire to live in tranquility. Some whirlpools are just too deep, and our tiny Wang family ship couldn't handle such turmoil."

Long Wuji first paused at Wang's words, then quickly reacted with his eyes narrowing, saying with interest, "I never expected younger brother Shouzhe to be so sharp. It makes me see you in a different light. Tell me, how did you find out?"

Wang Shouzhe smiled bitterly, "I didn't expect to hit the nail on the head."

"You tested me?"

Long Wuji's eyes immediately narrowed, revealing a dangerous light.

Wang Shouzhe instantly stood up and said with neither haste nor sluggishness, "Long, my older brother, please forgive me. I previously had suspicions, but only held about seventy percent confidence. However, considering the gravity of the situation, I did not dare to conclude lightly and therefore tested you. I did not intend to offend."

"Oh?"

This intrigued Long Wuji even more.

He thought Wang Shouzhe was merely bluffing, only to find he actually held a seventy percent assurance. Now, Long Wuji was genuinely curious~

He thought he had kept this matter well concealed, and was surprised at how Wang Shouzhe had discovered it.

He tapped the table once: "Younger brother, tell the truth, where did I give myself away?"

Wang Shouzhe understood that given Long Wuji's focus on this matter, he surely wouldn't allow him to gloss over it.

After sitting back down, he explained in detail, "Actually, it's not that you gave yourself away. It's just that the situation has reached a point where anyone can see it. I just happened to notice it a little earlier than most."

"Explain in detail."

Long Wuji didn't believe it to be that simple.

"Since the older brother wants to know, I dare not conceal it." Wang Shouzhe casually sat back down and organized his words, "Longzuo County is a frontier region, and since it has only been exploited for a mere one thousand years, the friction between the prominent families isn't severe. Thus, its development over the years has been relatively smooth, with few major structural shifts.

However, in recent years, I've noticed that the situation in Longzuo has started to change."

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"First, Xiahou Hongde, the head of Changning Weicheng, was transferred away.

Within less than two years, the Dingnan City Defender, who served for 20 years, was also transferred away." Wang Shouzhe picked up the wine glass and took a sip, soothing his throat before he continued, "This wouldn't be a big deal on its own, but within only three years, the City Lord of Zhenze was dismissed for dereliction of duty...

Similar things have happened more than once in the past decade."

"Add to this the increasingly intense conflicts between the Dan Tai Clan and the Tuoba Family of Donghaei in recent years, and it's hard for me not to suspect that there's a hand pushing all these events behind the scenes." Wang Shouzhe sighed, "Considering the unpredictable situation in the capital, I naturally have some speculation."



On hearing these words, Du TianGang didn't react much, but the face of Jiang Yusong couldn't help but change slightly.

Even though Wang Shouzhe's words were brief, they gave the impression that he had a thorough understanding of the situation in Longzuo County. Without a powerful intelligence network and keen insight, this would be impossible.

Furthermore, while these incidents Wang Shouzhe mentioned might seem ordinary if examined separately, possibly even overlooked by the local prominent families, it was Wang Shouzhe in Changning who perceived the problem.

Such chilling foresight and insight were indeed terrifying.

Even Long Wuji pondered, "But you still haven't said how this is related to my Jiaolong Gang?"

"The Jiaolong Trade Association is a business in name, but in reality, it has a monopoly on water routes and an exclusive trade operation, with influence extending across several counties along Peace River. To be honest, accomplishing all this solo would be tough even for Brother Long. So, I suspect you have someone supporting you from behind."

Wang Shouzhe glanced at Long Wuji and, seeing no reaction, continued, "In the past years, the Jiaolong Gang didn't expand overseas because there were also powerful gangs holding power at sea, with a tacit understanding between both parties. Now, however, the Jiaolong Gang has set its sights on Donggang and even plans to bring the In-law Alliance of my Wang family under its banner.

To say it's just for the tiny profit of the Wang family might be underestimating. Therefore, I boldly guess that the real goal of the Jiaolong Gang is to take control over the sea. And this might also be related to the schemes of the person behind the scenes."

Reaching this point, Wang Shouzhe let out a sigh, giving Long Wuji a bow with a bitter smile. "My humble Wang family is a 7th rank Aristocratic Family ... please spare us."

"Spare you? Haha ~~~ That's funny. Brother Shouzhe, you are indeed exceptionally intelligent and loaded with wit." Long Wuji laughed heartily. "However, you are undervaluing the importance of Changning Weicheng.

Although the place might appear remote, it enables the expansion of sea power to the east, restricts the Peace River route to the west, and infinitely promotes the territorial expansion to the south. It's a rare treasure land for making achievements. I must secure this place."

"But you, Wang Shouzhe, are also an extraordinary genius. At the tender age of less than fifty, you managed to wield the power of the world, resulting in a near-extinct family rising to a 7th rank, no, I believe most rank Six prominent families couldn't match you. Not just anyone possesses such ability."

"Brother Shouzhe, if you're willing to place a bet early..." Long Wuji looked at Wang Shouzhe with a visibly admiring look, his tone notably sincere, "The future of your Wang family is limitless; don't miss this excellent opportunity."

"I understand what Brother Long's is saying. However, I am afraid I have to decline the kindness of Brother Long. My Wang family still prefers steady development." Wang Shouzhe bowed again, "Our Changning Weicheng is but a grain of sand in the grand scheme of things, and it's not a critical battleground. Please give Brother Long a convenience~"

"Good!" Long Wuji cheerfully responded, "Since you have requested this three times, then I'll let Changning Weicheng off for now. However, I cannot agree to a hundred years."

"Brother Long's meaning is..." Wang Shouzhe raised an eyebrow.

"Fifty years. I give you only fifty years. I'm sure that with your ability, Brother Shouzhe, you can develop Changning Weicheng well in fifty years, whether it's the expansion of sea power or development of foreign territories, you will see some results." Long Wuji confidently stated, "These fifty years will be enough for you to fully understand the changes in the grand scheme of things."

By then, the situation in the capital will also become clear. At that time, every chess piece will be precious to that person, and Brother, you won't have the luxury of refusing."

Fifty years? That person?

Wang Shouzhe secretly sighed a breath of relief.

The former hundred years was nothing more than an initial high asking price, with room negotiated. Being able to win fifty years now is already a gain.

Immediately, Wang Shouzhe agreed, "So be it. Fifty years later, let's continue our discussion."

"This time, you won, Brother Shouzhe. You grabbed the handle of Zhao Wu Qing and dismantled my pressure-by-might scheme, thus winning fifty years." Long Wuji looked at Wang Shouzhe, a trace of seriousness in his gaze, "However, next time might not go so smoothly. Brother, don't count on luck."

"Thank you, Brother Long for your reminder." Wang Shouzhe expressed his gratitude with a bow.

After a pause, he suddenly raised his head and added, "However, should I address you as Brother Long or Brother Wu?"

Long Wuji was taken aback.

A few moments later, he burst into hearty laughter, "Interesting, very interesting. Brother Shouzhe, I see you more favorably than ever. I must leave now. Let's revisit today's pact in fifty years. Brother Shouzhe, don't let me down!"

As he finished speaking, he waved his hand. A surging green glow whistled out, instantly enveloping him and those behind him - Jiang Yusong and Du TianGang.

"Boom, boom, boom~"

The glow rose, soaring high into the sky. Its vastness and grandeur were comparable to the majestic river waves. The dazzling light almost colored half the sky green.

However, the dazzling green light quickly faded away, disappearing into the skyline.

Looking out from the pavilion, there was no sign of the glow in the sky, only faint white clouds floating, as if everything had never happened.

Only at this point did Wang Zong'an, who had been observing and learning at the side, express concern, "Father, do we really have to get involved in that struggle fifty years from now?"

"If the timing and target are right, it's not impossible." Wang Shouzhe responded nonchalantly, "Zong'an, what have you learned from today's event?"

"Father, I understand." Wang Zong'an soberly replied, "Only when we are strong can we control our own destiny. Otherwise, we will be pawns in another's hands, with life and death at their discretion."

"No, what I mean is, you should get married earlier to contribute more to our family~" Wang Shouzhe looked at him with a smile, "I also want to hold my grandchild sooner~"

"..."

Wang Zong'an shook, wanting to cry. So in the end, he, the Young Clan Leader, was just a tool for procreating~~~

Chapter 56 To the Guardian of Wisdom! The Disappearing Youth\_1

...

In the blink of an eye, it was now early May.

The weather gradually heated up, and it was time for the wheat to fill with grain. Whether or not this season's wheat could result in a good harvest now depended on this month.

At the Dingpu Ferry Terminal, the standoff between the Wang family and the Jiaolong Gang had been going on for three months. Thanks to the establishment of the flying carriage system, the heated discussion of this matter had spread outwardly from Changning prefecture, significantly increasing the Wang family's reputation throughout Longzuo County.

In Wang Shouzhe's words from his time on Earth, the Changning Wang Clan had made it to the 'hot searches' of Longzuo County.

However, the heat eventually dissipates gradually.

Several months later, normality had returned to the Wang family's life, and they continued to be absorbed in their rapid development.

"System Artifact Spirit."

In the side hall of Wang Shouzhe's courtyard.

With the weather heating up, the room's drapes had been replaced with a gauze canopy. A sky-blue canopy swayed with the wind, adding a touch of coolness to the room.

After all these years, Wang Shouzhe's courtyard had barely changed, although he had added some pricier decorations upon strong insistence from Old Ancestor Longyan, yet it was still primarily geared toward comfort.

Wang Shouzhe was sitting comfortably in a recliner made of Spirit Wood, his eyes half-closed as he drummed his fingers on the armrest, seemingly deep in thought.

"Ding dong~ Artifact Spirit Lil Snow, greeting Master."

A projection of a two-dimensional beauty appeared in front of Wang Shouzhe. She had long elegant legs, an exaggerated figure, large eyes, snow-white long hair and cat ears...

Why was her name Lil Snow? Because she was originally the Blood Nest Artifact Spirit commonly known as 'Little Blood,' but that didn't sound pleasant, so she was simply renamed 'Lil Snow'.

Wang Shouzhe was quite pleased with her appearance and voice. It took him quite some time to tweak this through the system's modeling panel.

Every time he saw Artifact Spirit Lil Snow, Wang Shouzhe felt like he was reclaiming his lost youth.

"What's the sum of liquid cash we can mobilize?" asked Wang Shouzhe casually.

"Ding dong, Master, we can allocate five million Qian Gold," replied Artifact Spirit Lil Snow, her voice sounding exceptionally sweet and pleasant to Wang Shouzhe.

"Only five million Qian Gold?" Wang Shouzhe was slightly concerned. "As I recall, last year's net annual income was already over three million."

"Ding dong~~ Master, the family's expenses are just too high. Just the cost of all family members, the head of household, house servants and so on for their daily living, cultivation resources, Spirit Food, etc., amounts to one million two hundred thousand. We invested six hundred thousand Qian Gold in the Keep Achieving Commercial Firm which we have yet to capitalize.

The land development, water conservancy projects, road planning, and other public facilities in Ping'an Town also amount to more than two hundred thousand, plus the expenses of the intelligence group, employments, socialization..." explained Artifact Spirit Lil Snow.

"Enough, I understand the high cost," Wang Shouzhe waved his hand to stop her from saying more, "Open the system main interface." Now, the Wang family could indeed make a lot of money, but because many clansmen were being groomed to their full potential, the expenditures were massive.

That was particularly true for Old Ancestor Longyan. In order to cultivate a cultivator of Purple Abode Realm for the family as quickly as possible, the resources she consumed each year were extremely luxurious. Level three and four Spirit Meat were supplied generously, and occasionally they would splurge on Level Five Spirit Beast meat to supplement her Qi and blood.

One big Gathering Spirit Pill, worth three to four thousand Qian Gold, was consumed by the Old Ancestor Longyan every ten days! Just this alone accounted for over one hundred thousand Qian Gold. Every day she also consumed one to two Spirit Stones, which amounted to an expenditure of fifty to sixty thousand Qian Gold.

And that's not counting some other expenses.

In short, Old Ancestor Longyan alone, who is only in the early stages of the Heavenly Human Realm, spent around two hundred thousand annually in cultivation. This was far more than the average cultivator of the Heavenly Human Realm and even exceeded the standards for the Sky Prides of the Academic Palace. It was such a luxurious expense that Fang Youan would cry if he saw it....

The advantage, however, was that the cultivation base of Old Ancestor Longyan soared upwards at a staggering rate. It was estimated that within around fifteen years, she would be able to reach the mid-stage of the Heavenly Human Realm.

Of course, Wang Shouzhe wanted to accelerate the promotion of Old Ancestor Longyan, but the current consumption had already reached the limit of diminishing marginal returns, and more resources couldn't make her improve any faster.

Let's set the chatter aside for now.

As Wang Shouzhe finished speaking,

The system's main interface was cleanly projected in front of him.

[Clan Name]: Longzuo County, Changning Wang Clan

[Clan Level]: 7th Rank

[Clan Reputation]: [Township Reputation (100) Covering the sky with a single hand][County Reputation (100) Covering the sky with a single hand][Prefectural Reputation (51) Gaining Fame]  
[National Reputation (03) Unknown]

[Clan Industries]: 38 (click for details)

[Clan Members]: [Inside the clan (59)][Married off (13)] (click for details)

[Clan Relatives]: 7 (click for details)

[Clan Generals]: [Adults (98)][Minors (238)](click for details)

[Family Servants]: [Adults (1027)][Minors (827)](click for details)

[Growth Facilities]:[Scripture Pavilion][Treasure Pavilion][Spirit Material Pavilion][Spirit Pill Pavilion][Clan School][Combat Arena][Spirit Testing Platform]

[Treasure Lands]:[Outside Trial Field][Marrow Washing Cave][Fire Cloud Cave (Middle Grade Fire Spirit Field) (Average)][Spirit Medicine Cave]

(Middle Grade Spirit Medicine Field) (Small))[[Qinglian Fire Valley (Top Grade Fire Elemental Spiritual Field, Artifact Refining, Fire Lotus)]]Pasture Volcano Secret Realm (High Grade Fire Elemental Spiritual Field)](click for details)

Chapter 56 To the Guardian of Wisdom! The Disappearing Youth\_2

[Income and Expenditure List]: (click for details)

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Compared to the previous statistical list, the prestige of the Changning Wang clan in the county has now reached a level where they are almost unparalleled within the jurisdiction of Changning Guards.

Even throughout Longzuo County, Wang Clan's reputation continues to surge, reaching the stage of rapid rise. Moreover, the "system has also opened" a project named "national prestige", although the data looks quite bleak.

If you look at the whole of Great Qian Land, the Changning Wang Clan is still relatively unknown.

The increase in industrial projects is not substantial, but the various sectors that were long regarded as the foundation of the Wang Clan's industries, such as cement, foreign glass, and paper, have been gradually overtaken by farming.

As the strength of the Wang clan grows, the once covert grain production scheme has now become more transparent.

The Wang No.19 Rice Variety and the Wang No.23 Wheat Variety have been fully planted in Ping'an Town. Thanks to the land reclamation and the intensive development of terraced fields, the amount of fertile land in Ping'an Town under the Wang Clan's control has grown tremendously to 110,000 acres.

The profit from this area alone, after deducting thirty percent in city, county and national taxes, a ten percent Qian family channel fee, and other expenses, leads to an annual net profit of 340,000 Qian Gold.

The total number of high-quality lands under the jurisdiction of the common people has gradually increased to 120,000 acres. They also assisted the Wang Clan in planting grain, with a total output



amounting to 670,000-700,000 Qian Gold. The Wang Clan could reap a commoners' tax of 70,000-80,000 Qian Gold and approximately 170,000-180,000 Qian Gold from grain exploits.

This yields a net profit of an additional couple of hundred thousand Qian Gold.

The commoners under the Wang's jurisdiction also benefitted from helping Wang Clan plant high-quality grain crops, multiplying their income several times. Because of this, the commoners inside the Wang Clan's jurisdiction are all quite affluent, which leads to the envy of the outsiders.

The only regret is that, after years of extensive development, Ping'an Town has already reached a state of development saturation. It is now difficult to dramatically increase the total volume of fertile lands.

Therefore, as the Wang Clan gradually strengthened, they set their sights on the farmland of the In-laws Alliance and other Rank 8 or 9 prominent families. They have planted Wang Clan's high-yielding grain on their fertile lands, and unified the purchase and sale.

This source of revenue is relatively minor. Every 10,000 acres of grain planted brings about 8,000 Qian Gold in profits for the Wang Clan. Although it seems like an average profit, the sheer volume more than makes up for it.

The total number of acres planted under the proxy farming agreements with Changning Guards and its surrounding areas has now surpassed 500,000 acres! This enables the Wang Clan to reap substantial profits every year.

Furthermore, the cultivation and proxy cultivation of White Jade Spiritual Rice and Red Crystal Rice also have brought enough revenue for the Wang Clan.

As of now, the Wang Family's grain is popular enough that the total yield from only 700,000-800,000 acres of grain is nowhere near sufficient to meet the demands of the whole Longzuo County. Therefore, there is still quite a distance from market saturation.

For this reason, Wang Shouzhe has now turned his eyes abroad.

Pioneering abroad has always been a grand plan that the Wang Clan has long coveted. There are vast fertile lands waiting for reclamation. Once those lands come under their jurisdiction, the Wang Clan's wealth accumulation speed will escalate significantly.

Pioneering abroad is a massive systematic project, and the required amount of funds is by no means small.

Five million Qian Gold! For the initial stages, this should be enough.

However, what lies before Wang Shouzhe is a huge expenditure waiting for him. That is a pill called the "Limitless Treasure Pill", which is a Rank 6 Treasure Pill, a level higher than the Rank 5 Bone Marrow Cleansing Pill!

This pill is extremely rare and precious, even the prominent families regard it as a prize. The greatest effect it has is to transform a Little Sky Pride with a middle-grade talent, still in the Vital Energy Refining Realm and a two-fold bloodline into a Sky Pride with a double bloodline.

According to Wang Shouzhe's mastery and deduction of information, its effectiveness far surpasses the Bone Marrow Cleansing Pill, and is even more powerful than the "Primary Bloodline Enhancement Liquid", but definitely cannot match the Bridal Clothes Blood Gu.

Theoretically speaking, Wang Shouzhe is already at the third-tier bloodline, even if he takes the Limitless Treasure Pill, the bloodline enhancement effect would be relatively minor.

However, don't forget that after undergoing the bloodline enhancement from a Bridal Clothes Blood Gu, and having the chance to wash the marrow after helping the Firefox survive the Heavenly Tribulation, various factors have pushed his bloodline to the peak of the third tier, just a bit short from breaking through to the fourth level.

If Wang Shouzhe hadn't used the Primary Bloodline Enhancement Liquid before, using it once might give him a slight chance to rush to the fourth tier spiritual body. Unfortunately, first, his body has developed a resistance to the Primary Bloodline Enhancement Liquid. Second, he can't monopolize the opportunity for younger clansmen to promote to sky pride.

Therefore, Wang Shouzhe has always been looking for suitable Heaven and Earth treasures or Dan medicine, which can help him break this slight shackles and promote to become the Great Sky Pride.

He has no choice.

The pressure on Wang Shouzhe is too great.

His wife and elder daughter and son are already Great Sky Prides...

If he can't awaken the fourth bloodline before stepping into the Heavenly Human Realm, it will become even more difficult to become the Great Sky Pride later on.

This time, an opportunity has come.

According to the information given by the Hundred Treasures Pavilion, the Southern Desert County's branch of the Hundred Treasures Pavilion managed to procure a Rank 6 Limitless Treasure Pill, which would be auctioned in Southern Desert County Town in three months.

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According to the rules, auctions featuring items of the level of the Limitless Treasure Pill are categorized as high-level auctions. Ordinary 7th rank, or even standard 6th rank families do not qualify to participate.

Fortunately, the Wang family's spending ability at the Hundred Treasures Pavilion in the Southern Six Guards is beyond top-notch. They have spent quite a lot of money in the past and have long enjoyed VIP treatment.

Therefore, the Hundred Treasures Pavilion in Southern Six Guards is willing to recommend Wang Shouzhe to participate in the high-level auction in the Southern Desert County, on the condition that the total bid is no less than 2 million Qian Gold!

And a single "Limitless Treasure Pill" at a normal auction price ranges from two hundred to three hundred thousand Qian Gold. Usually, only extremely powerful rank six prominent families or rank five prominent families can afford it.

Two to three million Qian Gold, is a feasible amount for the Wang family.

However, Wang Shouzhe, who has always been cautious, isn't certain if there'll be another chance to obtain the Limitless Treasure Pill before his advancement to the Heavenly Human Realm.

Therefore, he was determined to secure this Limitless Treasure Pill.

His biggest concern was whether 500,000 Qian Gold would be enough, in the event a family with a similar need for the Pill competes with him.

"Ah, after all, we're just too poor." Wang Shouzhe sighed sentimentally in his heart. "Saving money is never easy."

The Keep Achieving Commercial Firm does have a large sum of idle capital. However, that capital is reserved for the firm's expansion, even Wang Shouzhe has no right to use it for his personal needs.

"Oh well, initially we needed to arrange for two million in spare gold from the in-law families." Wang Shouzhe furrowed his brows slightly. "Just to be safe, I'll raise another three million Qian Gold from the Qian Family. If I can't secure it even with ten million....then I'll just have to wait."

...

Several days later.

Within the Purple Abode Palace Hotel in Longzuo County Town, Wang Shouzhe secretly met with Qian Xuehan, the newly appointed head of the Qian family.

"Huh?"

Upon seeing Qian Xuehan, Wang Shouzhe immediately noticed a significant change in his character and demeanor. He seemed to be filled with confidence, and his entire aura had changed. A sharp Qi was emanating from him; it was difficult to conceal.

"I have the honor of meeting Master Shouzhe." Qian Xuehan first made a deep bow, expressing his respect and gratitude for Wang Shouzhe, then he laughed and said, "It seems you noticed. Thanks to the care and guidance of Master Shouzhe, I have achieved great things. Out of happiness, my Old Ancestor granted me the opportunity to enter the family's hereditary ruins.

I didn't fail the expectations and successfully became a Purple Abode Seed."

Purple Abode Seed?

That's a Sky Pride! Does the Qian family also have a way to promote someone to Sky Pride?

"Congratulations, Master Xuehan, please don't refer to yourself as junior anymore." Wang Shouzhe said, sweating, his heart secretly thought, the Qian family indeed lives up to its name. A prominent family that has lasted for thousands of years indeed has a strong foundation.

However, Wang Shouzhe guessed in secret. The secret foundation that the Qian family holds is probably far less than that of the Divine Martial Dynasty trials. Otherwise, the Qian family would not be what it is now.

An opportunity to become a Sky Pride Token is very rare and precious to the Qian family.

"Master Shouzhe has given me a new life. " Qian Xuehan insisted, "The reason the Old Ancestor was able to give me the Purple Abode Seed opportunity was because of my good relations with the Wang family."

"Right, does Master Shouzhe want to discuss business matters about the Keep Achieving Commercial Firm? I've already dispatched various elders to expedite the purchase or leasing of Spirit Bird Flying Carriages, guaranteeing that at least 120 carriages can be assembled within the deadline~"

"That's not the case." Wang Shouzhe shook his head, then explained his intentions.

"Pff!"

Qian Xuehan, who was drinking Spiritual Tea, spat out a mouthful of tea in surprise, and looked at Wang Shouzhe in horror: "Master Shouzhe, you plan to spend ten million Qian Gold on the Limitless Treasure Pill? Although this item is precious and rare, there are seldom transactions records exceeding three million Qian Gold."

"I have a pressing need for it." Wang Shouzhe told the blunt truth, "If I miss out this time, when will such an opportunity come again?"

Qian Xuehan almost cried, the Qian family also wanted to participate in the auction this time and buy the Limitless Treasure Pill to store as the foundation for the family. However, the budget allocated by the Elder Council of their family is only two hundred and fifty thousand. After all, the Qian family is now betting on the Keep Achieving Commercial Firm, and its funds are already very scarce.

Master Shouzhe, your move is too aggressive. Are you leaving any hope for other families?

Indeed, money makes things happen.

Sigh, they are both family heads. Qian Xuehan found that his power didn't even amount to one-tenth of that of Master Shouzhe. As a family head, he is not only restrained by the Elder Council, but there's also an elder from the Purple Abode Realm handling family affairs above him.

The two were clearly not on the same level.

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Qian Xuehan only briefly evaluated the proposal and then heartily declared, "This is simple, our Qian Family Elder Council will undoubtedly approve it unanimously. However, our Qian Family is currently short on cash. We can support you to request an interest-free loan from the Keep Achieving Commercial Firm in the form of Qian Gold."

Although the Qian Family is the wealthiest Purple Abode Prominent Family in Longzuo County, even they do not have an unlimited flow of cash. They had previously made a one-time investment of five million Qian Gold in the Keep Achieving Commercial Firm, and in addition, also provided a ten million Qian Gold interest-free loan.

The expenditure of fifteen million Qian Gold directly consumed most of the wealth that the Qian Family had accumulated for a long time. Even if they were to squeeze out more, it would only amount to a few million Qian Gold.

However, their investment was worth it.

The potential of the Keep Achieving Commercial Firm is enormous. With this move, the Qian family firmly tied the Wang family and the Qian family together. Presently, the Qian family's annual

revenue from this series of collaborations with the Keep Achieving Commercial Firm is no less than a million.

You should know that even before the Qian family settled in, the Keep Achieving Commercial Firm, with only thirty Spirit Bird Flying Carriages, had already achieved significant profits. At that time, the firm's last monthly revenue had reached eighty thousand Qian Gold, with a monthly expense of just over thirty-five thousand Qian Gold, grossing nearly forty thousand Qian Gold.

At that time, the total investment in the entire firm was merely two and a half million Qian Gold. Most of the Qian Gold had not even been touched; it was set aside for subsequent expansions and development.

One can imagine the potential profit that will come once the Keep Achieving Commercial Firm grows into a larger scale in the future.

If not for this, why would such a large family as the Qian Family be willing to invest five million Qian Gold just for a meager twenty percent of the company shares?

As for the additional ten million Qian Gold interest-free loan, it was to accelerate the development and growth of the Keep Achieving Commercial Firm so that it can quickly dominate the market and establish industry thresholds.

Less than a year has passed now.

The Spirit Bird Flying Carriage fleet of the Keep Achieving Commercial Firm has expanded fourfold, reaching a size of around one hundred and twenty. The monthly turnover has exploded to over three hundred thousand Qian Gold.

Although the time for dividend isn't here yet, the potential future growth of the Keep Achieving Commercial Firm and its terrifying ability to attract money are already evident.

"From the Keep Achieving Commercial Firm's account?" Wang Shouzhe nodded, "That works too. After all, this money is just a reserve fund—it may not necessarily be spent. Even if it is truly spent, the Wang family can make up for it in just one or two years."

Without counting the Keep Achieving Commercial Firm, the Wang family's estimated income this year will also reach around four million Qian Gold.

After deducting the fixed costs of over a million for the whole family per year, the remaining aspects only require temporary savings, and the gap can quickly be closed.

He is already in the mid-stage of the Spirit Platform Realm, and he is preparing to break through to the Heavenly Human Realm within ten years. Should he miss this important opportunity to become the Great Heavenly Proud, he would inevitably have to pay a greater price in the future.

Furthermore, he might not even be able to make up for it, allowing his potential to only remain in the Purple Abode Realm, with a lifespan of only eight hundred to a thousand years.

Also, once he becomes the Great Heavenly Proud, his cultivation speed will increase. In the long process of cultivation, this equates to indirectly saving a large amount of money.

No matter what, he must obtain this "Infinite Treasure Pill".

Now, the Qian family owns twenty percent of the shares in the Keep Achieving Commercial Firm, while the Wang family owns thirty percent. As long as the Qian family does not object, the other in-law families will certainly not oppose Wang Shouzhe borrowing from the public fund.

This matter is settled.

A few days later, Wang Shouzhe discreetly set out from Longzuo County City. Apart from Wang Shouzhe, his Heavenly Human Realm puppet, Wang Shuzhu, also joined the journey.

Wang Shuzhu now serves as Wang Shouzhe's personal bodyguard.

However, even though Wang Shuzhu is a Heavenly Human Realm puppet with substantial fighting power, it is inferior to the Spirit Platform Realm guardian puppet, Wang Shouwei, obtained from the Divine Martial Dynasty Ruins in terms of intelligence and human imitateness.

There's nothing one can do about it. The Divine Martial Dynasty was a highly developed civilization with many advanced technologies that are now mostly lost due to various reasons. Although Tianji State has many unique achievements in the field of puppet refinement, they are far from the standards of the Divine Martial Dynasty Era.



Besides, Elder Longyan also joined the journey.

Now, Wang Shouzhe is too important to the Wang Family. With Elder Longyan's protection, the safety level is much higher. Generally speaking, unless a cultivator of the Purple Abode Realm strikes personally, Elder Longyan's strength can barely cope.

Fortunately, the old monsters of the Purple Abode Realm in this world are all famed Masters. They are eminent figures who usually remain in their lairs and seldom wander around outside.

Besides the Wang family's flying carriage, the Qian family also prepared to participate in this auction. In addition to the current head of the Qian family, Qian Xuehan, two Heavenly Human Realm elders also accompanied in their self-driven flying carriage.

The two parties traveled together, providing mutual support along the way.

Departing from Longzuo County City and traveling west for half a day, the flying carriage reached the Tianlong Mountain Range.

The Tianlong Mountain Range is located in the southeast of the Great Qian Land map. The mountains stretch majestically over an extensive area, filled with numerous peaks and barriers. It is one of the large mountain ranges in the Great Qian Empire.

Longzuo County is so named because it is located to the east of this mountain range.

However, although the plains on both sides of Tianlong Mountain have been occupied and developed by humans, the interior of the mountain range remains full of dangers. This is because its internal environment is excessively complex.

Not only are there many Spirit Veins, but the minor Spirit Veins are intricately intertwined with complex mountain terrains, forming an extremely complicated network of Spirit Veins. As a result, a number of Natural Array Formations exist within the mountain range.

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For this reason, there are not a few strange fierce beasts and exotic spirit plants within the Tianlong Mountain Range. It's said that deep within Tianlong Mountain, there are even remnants of level-seven fierce beasts lurking.

Even a cultivator of the Purple Abode Realm would not dare to arbitrarily tread deep into Tianlong Mountain.

However, humans have the Tianlong Mountain surrounded, and high-level fierce beasts would not dare to casually leave the barrier of Tianlong Mountain, or else they would be gifting humans with Heaven and Earth treasures.

Of course, in the same vein, it is not easy for humans to traverse the Tianlong Mountain either.

Currently, there are only three paths to traverse the Tianlong Mountain.

The first is to follow the flow of Peace River upstream, overcoming countless dangerous ravines to cross the Tianlong Mountain Range.

Second is to leave from the Northwest Guard, the northernmost point of Longzuo County, traverse the vast Da Huang Prairie and reach Southern Desert County. However, the Da Huang Prairie is boundless, most of it still consists of desolate lands that humans have not reclaimed. Not only do uncivilized barbarian tribes live there, but many fierce beasts inhabit too.

Taking this path is extremely dangerous.

The third is to traverse through the narrowest part of Tianlong Mountain, the Qing Long Corridor. After traveling just several hundred miles, you can reach the famous "Qing An Basin".

This is a vast basin abundant with lakes and water sources, fertile land, and a pleasant climate. It's an ideal place for human habitation. This basin is also one of the earliest areas reclaimed by humans in Great Qian Land.

Inside the Qing An Basin, there is a prefecture named "Qing An Prefecture".

Qing An Prefecture is one of the prefectures within Great Qian Land that has the least disaster and is one of the wealthiest. The conditions of the prominent families here are generally much better than those in Longzuo County, with even more luxurious clothing and food. There are also more 7th and 6th rank prominent families compared to Longzuo County.

Wang Shouzhe and Qian Xuerui took this route through the Qing An Basin this time.

However, "Qing An Prefecture" was not the destination of Wang Shouzhe's journey this time.

Therefore, he only briefly rested in a few convenient guard cities along the way and casually appreciated the wealth and style of Qing An Prefecture.

The flying carriage traveled northwards, after five or six days of travel, it arrived at "Zhen Bei Pass", located in the northernmost part of Qing An Prefecture.

Zhen Bei Pass was formerly the first stronghold of Great Qian Land, with daunting terrain that was described as being "where one man guards the pass, ten thousand are unable to open".

Once they exited "Zhen Bei Pass", they reached the destination of Wang Shouzhe's journey - Southern Desert County.

Southern Desert County earned its name for its location south of the Great Desert.

But Southern Desert County is not a desert region, but instead a boundless prairie. Its terrain, prominent family structure, industrial chain and so on, bear some resemblance to the Five Guards of the Northwest in Longzuo County.

However, compared to the scale of the grasslands in Southern Desert County, the grasslands in the Northwest Five Guards are insignificant, not even reaching one-tenth.

The current developmental strategy for both counties is for Longzuo Northwest Five Guards to reclaim land towards the southern desert, while Southern Desert County extends towards the Northwest Five Guards.

Coming like this hundreds or thousands of years later, Southern Desert County and Longzuo County will be connected by the prairie.

Since Southern Desert County has such a vast area of grassland, its industrial structure naturally focuses on animal husbandry, with farming and trade as supplements.

Although the soil on the prairie tends to be sandy and not fertile, and there are not many water sources from extensive river networks, it's hard to become the granary of Great Qian like Longzuo County and Qing'an County. But Southern Desert County is the largest meat producer and supplier of the finest horses in Great Qian, famed as the "nation's meat warehouse", "nation's horse warehouse".

At the same time, Southern Desert is rich in wool and leather, along with a variety of dairy products, making it the largest producer of leather and dairy products in Great Qian.

Through these related industries, both large and small prominent families in Southern Desert are living quite prolifically. In terms of wealth, Southern Desert is only slightly inferior to Qing'an County.

As one of the first several counties developed in the early days of Great Qian, Southern Desert has a rather long history and is generally safe. Along the way, both spirit bird flying carriages had a smooth journey heading north.

Looking down from the sky, the vast grasslands lush and verdant, like an emerald-green sea. From time to time, groups of livestock, such as cattle, sheep, and horses, can be seen slowly moving on the grassland, grazing or running, a vision of tranquility and comfort.

The "Wang's Large Pasture" that the Changning Wang Clan originally acquired from the Huangfu Clan can only be described as a drop in the ocean compared to the vast prairie of Southern Desert County.

Most prominent families own pastureland that is extremely expansive, even more than several times the land size owned by Longzuo County's prominent families. Although they do have main residences, they spend most of their time living on the pastureland.

However, such a scene is interesting at first, but after half a day, it feels monotonous and boring. Wang Shouzhe quickly lost interest and turned his attention back to the journey.

Two days later, the spirit bird flying carriages had crossed numerous large pastures in the sky, and finally arrived at the county town of Southern Desert County.

The county town is built by the lake.

This is a gigantic prairie lake with a diameter of approximately one thousand miles.

The lake is not deep and freezes over completely in winter. During this time, the entire lake's surface glows under the sunlight, strikingly transparent like a bright pearl embedded in the prairie, hence its name - "Dong Cha Cha Lake".

It is said that the lake was named based on the pronunciation of the tribal language of the barbarian tribes who initially lived here.

Southern Desert County town already has a history of over two thousand years.

The city walls are made with traditionally fired red giant bricks, towering over twenty meters high and several meters wide. The city is set up with a huge defensive array. Alongside the city's army and advanced Purple Abode cultivators, it has even held off a level-eight beast tide before.

#### Chapter 57: The Wang Family of Southern Desert?\_3

The Changning Wang family of Longzuo and the Qian family of Longzuo are both outsiders. However, one of them holds the invitation card of Duobao Pavilion, and the other is a famed 5th-rank Purple Abode Aristocratic family, after a slight verification, they were respectfully led into the Southern Desert City.

At this time, the heritage and foundations of the Purple Abode Aristocratic Families were revealed. As soon as Wang Shouzhe's and Qian Xuehan's groups entered the County Town, local powers came to receive them due to the news.

Among them was the Mo family of Southern Desert.

This was a new Rank Six Aristocratic Family which, in just a few hundred years, was promoted from 7th Rank to Rank Six and, like a newly rich family, moved its main residence to the County Town.

This family now has four Heavenly Human Realm Ancestors, stronger than the usual Rank Six Aristocratic Families.

No one knows what kind of relationship the Mo family has with the Qian family, but their relationship seems quite close. The Family Head of the Mo family and an Ancestor in the advanced stage of the Heavenly Human Realm warmly entertained Qian Xuehan and Wang Shouzhe's group.

Of course.

The Wang family is just a 7th-rank Aristocratic Family, and the only reason they were warmly hosted was because of their connection to the Qian family.

Both families were arranged by the Mo family to stay in the "Guan Tian Pavilion", one of the high-end inns of Southern Desert County. It is constructed using advanced architectural techniques, standing over fifty feet tall, and is the tallest building in the Southern Desert County Town.

Therefore, the guests residing in this high-end inn are not ordinary people.

It is also only two streets away from the Duobao Pavilion branch, which is very convenient for visitors.

With the welcome must come the dust-off.

Inside Guan Tian Pavilion, there is a high-end self-operated restaurant similar to the Hundred Taste Residence.

The Mo family, like a wealthy landowner, booked the entire floor of the restaurant to entertain the Qian and Wang families. A large table was set up by the stained glass window, from which you can have a panoramic view of the beautiful "Dong Cha Cha Lake".

Such extravagance and "heroism" made Wang Shouzhe secretly marvel. He whispered to Qian Xuehan, "Master Xuehan, what kind of business are the Mo family in? The display is so grand."

Qian Xuehan immediately whispered in reply, "They were originally an ordinary 7th-ranked aristocratic family. They struck rich because they accidentally discovered deep, rich iron ore in their family's remote land. They rose to a Rank Six Aristocratic Family in a short period of time due to their wealth. More than a hundred years ago, they had contact with our Qian family.

Two of their daughters married into our Qian family's direct vessel ... making them almost an in-law family. And we helped them sell the high-quality iron ore in Longzuo County!"

It's only half an in-law family because only the direct vessel of the Mo family married into the direct vessel of the Qian family, while the daughters of the Qian family who married back were both concubines. At this point, Qian Xuehan naturally won't speak more.

"Lord Shouzhe, doesn't your Wang family always demand a large number of crude iron bars? Most of the ones your family uses come from the Mo family's rich mines. They're high quality and low-priced."

"Uh..." Wang Shouzhe was speechless. He didn't expect the Wang family to have connections with the "Mo family". Indeed, there are many intertwining connections in everything in this world.

What Wang Shouzhe didn't know was that in the Purple Abode Academic Palace in Longzuo, there was a young prodigy girl from the Southern Desert Mo family. She once wanted to follow Wang Liyao and curry favor with her, but she was driven away by the "old servant" Shang Jiping.

After everyone sat down, the Wang family, being only "7th-ranked", wasn't given much attention. Both him and his ancestor were arranged to sit at the end of the table. This scared Qian Xuehan into sweating, he was just about to object and "carefully" introduce the Wang family when he was secretly stopped by Wang Shouzhe.

He didn't want to have too much interaction with the Mo family, which had a strong nouveau riche aura. Similarly, he didn't want to expose the Wang family's heritage for the sake of face, and cause unnecessary side issues.

The only goal is to eat the Wuji Treasure Pill as soon as he buys it, to feel at ease once it's in his mouth.

Therefore, at this welcome feast. Wang Shouzhe and the Ancestor Longyan, only tasted the delicacies of Southern Desert lightly, they were quite low-key and silent.

As for the Mo family, they surrounded Qian Xuehan with flattery like a tide.

It made Qian Xuehan sweat, and from time to time he would steal a glance at Wang Shouzhe and the Ancestor Longyan. He couldn't help but wonder, who the hell was Family Head Shouzhe? That's a big shot who dared to confront the famous Long Wuji.

Although he is the "honorable" head of the Qian family, he still can't be compared with Family Head Shouzhe. As for Ancestor Longyan, she had saved his life back then, even the Sacred Land's Sky Pride Cao Youqing was chased away by her.

According to old Ancestor's speculation, Ancestor Longyan is likely to be in the top tier of the Sky Prides in terms of bloodline. Otherwise, Master Binglan wouldn't have valued her so much.

The only thing that made Qian Xuehan feel a little at ease was that Family Head Shouzhe and Ancestor Longyan didn't mind.

Just as Wang Shouzhe and Ancestor Longyan were about to make another excuse to leave quietly after a while, several young boys suddenly rushed into the restaurant.

Those boys, each dressed in style, with quite a bit of a flattering dandy vibe. The one in the lead was only twenty-three or four years old. He was a Level Two of Spiritual Platform Realm, and his gaze was cold, his mouth seemed to hang with a touch of anger and cold smile.

As soon as they came in, they shouted, "How dare the Mo family compete for dining seats with the 39th Young Master!"

The head of the Mo family was just about to blow his top when he suddenly caught sight of the head boy and heard their words. His face instantly changed, "It's that rascal Wang Shihai!"

"Correct, you actually recognize Young Master Shihai."

His few followers became even more arrogant, "Since you recognize our Master Shihai, why don't you roll out of the way?"

Wang Shihai?

Wang Shouzhe and the Ancestor Longyan looked at each other, both with a hint of embarrassment and speechlessness.

The Southern Desert Wang family...

Chapter 58 I am your Grandfather\_1



...

Actually, in the very beginning,

Wang Shouzhe only knew that there was a Wang family in the capital of Daqian, in Return to Dragon City. As he interacted more with the Wang family of Longzuo, he gradually understood the world's political situation. It wasn't until later that he discovered that there was another Wang family in the Southern Desert.

This was a branch of the Wang family that had separated from the main lineage in Daqian a thousand years ago and was a lineage of the Celestials. Despite this, the development of this branch has been quite good, and they were more closely associated with the main lineage in Daqian. More than seven hundred years ago, they became a Purple Abode prominent family.

Nowadays, the Southern Desert Wang family has completed its second transition of the Purple Abode unit and is undergoing the third transition. They can be considered a stable Grade Five Prominent Family.

Years ago, when the Longzuo Wang family were a Purple Abode prominent family, they also had interactions with the Southern Desert Wang family.

However, after the Longzuo Wang family failed to complete the transition of the Purple Abode, the family fell into decline gradually. As time passed, the exchanges between the two sides became less and less, and their relationships gradually faded.

Especially in the recent hundred years or so, the Southern Desert Wang family and the Longzuo Wang family have very limited interactions. Mostly, it was the people of the Southern Desert Wang family who would pay a visit to Longzuo County while passing by.

As the Longzuo Wang family's strength was severely dwindling and their area of activity was shrinking, naturally, their intersection with the Southern Desert Wang family lessened, and the two sides grew more estranged.

With such estrangement between the Southern Desert Wang and the Longzuo Wang families, it, needless to say, was even worse between them and the Changning Wang Clan. Anyway, since he took power, Wang Shouzhe has never dealt with the Southern Desert Wang family.

Therefore, his plan for this trip to the Southern Desert was to come quietly and leave quietly. He didn't expect to meet someone from the Southern Desert Wang family, especially not seeming to be from the younger generation of the "Shi" generation...

While Wang Shouzhe and the old ancestor were keeping a low profile and saying nothing.

The face of the head of the Mo family turned cold, and he reprimanded: "Wang Shihai, considering your young age, you are usually spared even when you fool around. But this time when I'm receiving an honorable guest from Longzuo, you're messing around, do you really think that my Mo family is weak and easily bullied?"

"An honorable guest from Longzuo? He's nothing more than a country bumpkin from a remote and poor region~" a prodigal son next to Wang Shihai yelled, "Open your eyes wide and look around, whose territory is this! Brothers~ overturn their table!"

In a few words, a verbal conflict between the two sides began to escalate. Wang Shihai and his bunch of young prodigal companions, all full of vim and vigor, rushed forward, and overturned the table, scattering the food on the ground.

"Arrogant! Truly arrogant!" The head of the Mo family trembled with rage, turned to Qian Xuehan and said apologetically, "Master Xuehan, I apologize for the trouble. I simply cannot believe that this little devil of the Wang family dares to defy etiquette to such an extent..."

To his surprise,

Before he could finish speaking, Qian Xuehan stood up and stopped him.

He squinted his eyes and swept a glance over Wang Shihai and the young group, then loudly said: "Young people, stop being impulsive, and listen to what I have to say."

"Who do you think you are, what right do you have to speak?" A haughty prodigal son disdainfully glared at him, "In our Southern Desert County, in front of Lord Shihai, even if you are a dragon, you need to coil up; if you are a tiger, you have to lie down."

Hearing this, the faces of the two celestial elders accompanying Qian Xuehan changed, and they stood up ready to take action.

As the new family head, Qian Xuehan is distinguished and noble.

Although the Elder Council can check and balance the family head, the overall status and power of the family head are still quite significant. Let alone that outside, the family head represents the face of the Qian family. Would he allow himself to be so insulted?

"Hold on."

Qian Xuehan raised his hand to stop the elder, then looked at Wang Shihai and said lightly: "I am Qian Xuehan, the head of the fifth-grade prominent Qian family of Longzuo. Young friend of the Wang family, are you planning to provoke a conflict between the Southern Desert Wang family and the Qian family of Longzuo?"

Despite his humble and courteous demeanor, with his statement, a presence typical of high-ranking figures emerged, and an aura of majesty was added to his expression.

The Qian family of Longzuo is a fifth-grade Purple Abode Prominent Family. As the newly appointed family head, he naturally has his societal status.

"A fifth-grade prominent family? Head of the family?"

The young master Shihai's face changed, he gave an annoyed glance to his "companion", seemingly questioning why the intelligence they gathered was wrong.

Shihai is after all a youngster who hasn't taken up any position in the family, whereas the other party is the head of a fifth-grade prominent family, which is equivalent to his father Wang Zonghao's position within the Wang family in Southern Desert.

Even though he has the title of "Little Devil", he's certainly not stupid. Even though the other party was just passing by, to rashly provoke the powerful enemy of the Qian family for no reason would be a liability he couldn't handle.

However, he was still young and impulsive, and he found it hard to swallow his pride for a moment, his facial expressions were uncertain.

"Nevermind." Qian Xuehan generously waved his hand and said, "This clearly is a misunderstanding. It's a trivial matter, let's not dwell on it."

"Haha~~ Since a guest of the Qian family of Longzuo has come, I, Wang Shihai, would naturally give face to the Qian family."

Wang Shihai had long intended to back out of the situation. Seeing an opportunity to save face, he immediately said some pleasantries and then gave a fierce glare at the head of the Mo family.

"We can settle this matter later."

To his surprise,

Qian Xuehan laughed and said, "Young friend, please wait. Looking at you, handsome and extraordinary, you must be a young prodigy of the Southern Desert Wang family."

Chapter 58: I am your Grandfather\_2

"Qian most enjoys making friends with young elites, and if you don't mind, Qian would like to start a new banquet to entertain all the young talents here," said Qian.

Ever since Qian Xuehan ascended to the position of Family Head, he gradually revealed a mature and stable charm, maintaining composure at all times, a stark contrast from the overly cautious figure who would often cry out for "Shouzhe to save his life."

After all, Wang Shihai was just a man in his twenties, brimming with celestial pride—how could he be a match for Qian Xuehan?

Within just a few words, he was coaxed by Qian Xuehan into a joyful mood and, with a little bit of reservation, agreed to his invitation.

Of course, this was also because Qian Xuehan was the Noble Family Head of a Grade Five Prominent Family. If he had only been the head of a 7th-rank Aristocratic Family, trying to befriend Wang Shihai, he would have likely been looked down upon with noses turned up in the air.

At the scene, only the Mo family head and the two Celestial Beings who were Old Ancestors had unnatural expressions on their faces, as if they were somewhat gloomy and displeased. But even with resentment and anger in their hearts, they dared not express it in front of Qian Xuehan.

Wang Shouzhe silently watched this scene with a mind as clear as a polished mirror.

Was he someone easy to contend with, having led the destitute Wang family from Rank 9 to the strong brink of Rank 7 and 6?

The knowledge and vision from his past life were merely the foundation for this one. He had grown up through hardships to reach this point, already far from the person he was at eighteen.

The Mo family's banquet invitation this time, with Wang Shihai and the dandies barging in to cause trouble, seemed on the surface to be like the brainless conflict and hatred typical of third-rate fantasy novels.

But various details indicated that this was mostly likely a trap laid by the Mo family.

They deliberately booked the spot reserved by Wang Shihai, to infuriate the young and impetuous Wang Shihai, so he would bring a crowd to stir up trouble. And the dandy who began by provoking them might very well be a pawn arranged by the Mo family ahead of time.

And that seemingly casual mention of "the Wang family's Little Devil" by the Mo family head could also lead Qian Xuehan to unconsciously think that the other party was causing trouble without reason.

They probably reckoned that since Qian Xuehan had risen to the position of Family Head in his forties, he would be in his most vigorous and proud state. Should a conflict arise, they would just need to fan the flames a bit to worsen the relationship between the Qian and Wang families, thereby firmly tying the Qian Family to the Mo family's warship.

It was just too bad.

The Mo family underestimated Qian Xuehan too much—he was best at enduring and scheming.

He had long known that his stepmother meant no good, so he usually pretended to be meek and harmless, while in secret, he had already cozied up with his father's first wife's maids. With sweet talk, he won their hearts, secretly promising them all sorts of benefits and a bright future.

Leveraging that girl, he received intelligence at the right time, and using various conditions, he orchestrated a mighty counterattack.

As for how Wang Shouzhe knew about these things, it was because of Qian Xuehan's previous actions that had the suspicion of exploiting the Wang family, leading Wang Shouzhe to feel there was more to him and hence, he conducted a secret investigation. The results confirmed Wang Shouzhe's expectations; it was all true.

That wasn't even the most impressive part.

The most impressive thing was that Qian Xuehan, despite not yet having an official wife and disregarding others' objections, actually took that maid as a favorite concubine. The concubine's maternal family, a Rank 9 family affiliated with the Qian family, also rose in status due to their connection, much like "chickens and dogs ascending to heaven."

All the promises and benefits he had offered to the girl were fulfilled one by one.

This move even made Wang Shouzhe silently praise his clear-headedness.

After all, his previous calculations were just going with the flow, but ultimately they couldn't hide from deliberate investigation. With such a move, while slightly damaging his reputation and potentially making it challenging to marry in the future, it also set up a reputation for keeping promises, indirectly showing that his manipulation was merely out of necessity, for self-preservation.

By this point, even Wang Shouzhe found it difficult to fully understand Qian Xuehan and had to proceed with caution.

How could such a person be led by the nose by the Mo family's little scheme?

He took the opportunity to invite and make friends with Wang Shihai, not only resolving the conflict but also delivering a blow to the Mo family as a warning to mind their own business.

Soon after, someone cleaned up the scene and set a new table.

This time, Qian Xuehan was no longer listening to the Mo family's arrangements; like a host, he took the initiative.

As for the Mo family group, now having been upstaged, they were indeed hard-pressed to voice their pains, as they had pre-calculated and were thus in the wrong.

Besides, even if they were not at fault, facing the "ruckus" of the Qian Family Head, they could only let him have his way.

Qian Xuehan first reassuringly put Wang Shihai's party at ease with a spring-like manner, then he proceeded to the front of Wang Shouzhe and Taoist Master Longyan, bowing deeply: "Master Shouzhe, Taoist Master Longyan. Earlier, it was not I who invited the guests, and as the guests follow the host's lead, it wouldn't have been appropriate for me to take charge."

"This new large table is at my personal expense, and even if you two do not mind, I wouldn't have the audacity to let you two, with your esteemed status, be put in a less honored position."

"What?"

Both the Mo family group and Wang Shihai's party were shocked at this scene.

Especially the Mo family line, who were completely at a loss. Wasn't he introduced as someone from a 7th-rank Aristocratic Family before? Why is the head of the Fifth Grade Purple Abode so respectful and courteous to them?

"Master Xuehan, these two... what exactly..." hurriedly, the Mo family head moved closer and asked in a faltering whisper, "Could it be... I was disrespectful earlier?"

Chapter 58 I am your Grandfather\_3

"Old Mo, oh Old Mo~" Qian Xuehan changed his address to him, seizing the chance to gently tease, "You better polish up those eyes. Our Master Shouzhe, so profound and towering, extraordinarily distinguished, is he really not up to your taste?"

Then, ignoring the surprise of the Mo family head, he respectfully invited the Old Ancestor Longyan to take the chief seat while also pulling Wang Shouzhe to sit in the guest seats.

After re-arranging, everyone took their seats around the large round table.

However, he adhered to Wang Shouzhe's principle of not being too conspicuous, and merely reintroduced him as the family head of the Changning Wang Clan from Longzuo and the family's Old Ancestor Longyan.

Between his words, he subtly hinted at certain aspects that set the Wang family apart from a regular 7th-rank aristocratic family.

Upon hearing that it is the Changning Wang Clan from Longzuo, Wang Shihai couldn't help his eyebrows twitching. "May I ask, Master, I heard the Qian family's master refer to you as... Master Shouzhe? Your name is Wang Shouzhe? Which 'Shou'? Which 'Zhe'?"

Wang Shouzhe well knew what he was thinking, yet at this moment there was nothing worth hiding. Before coming, he indeed hadn't thought about bonding with the Wang family from the Southern Desert.

However, on this unexpected meeting, he didn't feign modesty to intentionally hide it. Immediately, Wang Shouzhe smilingly said, "Shou" as in 'keeping to one's heart,' and 'Zhe' as in 'knowing people.'"

"Bang!"

Wang Shihai felt as if he had been hit by thunder, leaving him stunned and his face alternately turning green and white, seeming to be consumed by his thoughts.

His friends around him exclaimed, "The 39th lord... The man has the same name as your grandpa, just the 'Zhe' symbol is different!"

"Shut up!" Wang Shihai's face flushed crimson. He glared back and said, "No one would take you as a mute if you keep your mouth shut!" Then he looked at Wang Shouzhe with some hostility. "Are you making fun of me?"

"Oh, I wish it were a coincidence too." Wang Shouzhe smiled, "But we can't help it. We can't mess with the name sequence that our ancestors have passed down, can we?"



Our Changning Wang Clan of Longzuo is a branch of the Longzuo Wang Clan, and the Longzuo Wang Clan is a branch of the Great Qian Wang Clan...According to your 'Shi' (Room) generation sequence, following the tradition, based on my rank in my own clan, you will need to address me as, 'Great-grandfather'."

"Great-grandfather? I... Uh..." Wang Shihai's face turned beet red, and he was angry and annoyed at the same time. When he was about to swear, he seemed to remember something and quickly swallowed his foul language.

Each prominent family has its own rules, and the older the family, the stricter the rules tend to be. Families with millennia of origin have various branches, and the generation ranking is based on the name sequence.

The relationship between the Changning Wang and the Southern Desert Wang, is called same-clan-different-lineage. They are not the same family, but they are from the same clan. And everyone can trace their lineage back to the Great Qian Wang Clan, and these relationships are called Clan Relatives.

Every individual in the lineage of an aristocratic family has a distinct origin and order that cannot be meddled with.

Like the Changning Wang and the Southern Desert Wang, if they normally do not interact, that's one thing. But if they meet and talk about the name sequence, they should rank their seniority according to it.

As long as the other party is not impersonating a family, even if they are destitute, you have to meticulously address them according to their generation.

Even if Wang Shihai is normally capricious, he wouldn't dare to break the rules in this matter, or else he would probably be punished by his family.

"Hehe, my young friend Shihai, I can vouch for Master Shouzhe's identity." Qian Xuehan, as if he expected it, said with a smile, "The Longzuo Wang Clan and Changning Wang Clan, are not unknown clans in my Longzuo County. Who would dare to impersonate in such important matters?"

"I'll send someone back to ask if there is a Longzuo Wang Clan." Even though Wang Shihai already believed it 90%, he still sent a household servant outside to run back to the main residence and ask about the situation.

The atmosphere that followed was a bit heavy, Wang Shouzhe and Qian Xuehan were enjoying their meal though.

Less than an hour later.

A solemn-looking man with a formidable presence came in with a group of people. As soon as he entered, he bowed and said loudly, "We were negligent in not receiving our Longzuo clan relatives who came to our Southern Desert, we are sorry for any perceived disrespect."

"Father ..." Wang Shihai's face turned awkward in an instant.

Usually, when an aristocratic family visits another's territory for business, they also make a visit and are hosted with the appropriate courtesy in return.

It doesn't matter if they didn't know, but if they knew the guest arrived and didn't extend their hospitality, the Southern Desert Wang would inevitably bear the reputation of disdain for the poor and loving the rich, being without ancestors — a humiliating name that would be ridiculed if spread.

Wang Shouzhe also stood up ceremoniously, returning the gesture, and jovially laughed, "Master Zonghao, don't blame yourself. I originally didn't want to trouble fellow clan members on this trip, which is why I hid my identity. We can't blame Master Zonghao."

Wang Shihai quickly stood up, his face flushing red as he bowed, "Great-Grandfather, I apologize for my previous disrespect."

Chapter 59 Tragedy! Wang Shihai\_1

...

Although Wang Shihai is the type to court trouble, when it comes to ancestral rules and family honor, he dared not overstep the line.

However, he begrudgingly adhered to the rules of addressing the "Fourth Grandpa", feeling helpless and wronged.

"Shihai," Wang Shouzhe looked at him with a seemingly "loving" gaze, patting his shoulder and said, "You're still young, but your cultivation base is solid. Your future is boundless~~~ But, no matter how talented you are, you have to calm down and diligently cultivate."

Wang Shouzhe was forty years old, his cultivation had already reached the 6th level of the Spirit Platform Realm, gradually advancing to the advanced stage. Especially after the recent surge in his bloodline, his Bloodline Power had awakened to the Threefold Peak, just a step away from the Spiritual Body.

Therefore, apart from his more mature temperament, his appearance did not differ much from that of twenty-year-olds, looking like someone around Wang Shihai's age.

This uncanny situation made Wang Shihai feel an upsurge of fury, an intense urge to punch Wang Shouzhe.

However, despite the shared ancestry, an elder is still an elder.

I'll bear it!

Wang Shihai grimaced, barely squeezing out a forced smile: "Thank you for Fourth Grandpa's praise and guidance, Shihai will, remember it."

"For our first meeting, your Fourth Grandpa didn't bring anything good." Wang Shouzhe said with a smile, thought for a moment, took out a red envelope from his Storage Ring, and stuffed it into Wang Shihai's hand, "Just go with the cliché. Buy whatever you like to eat."

Boom!

Wang Shihai, was stunned. He yelled inwardly: Does this young master look like he needs money? Does this young master look like someone short of cash?

However, his own father was watching him. Even if he were bolder, he would not dare to make a scene. With a red face, he could only accept the red envelope while feigning delight, "Thanks for Fourth Grandpa's kind gift."

He already knew beforehand that the Changning Wang Clan was a newcomer to a 7th-rank Aristocratic Family that had risen not many years ago. It was a small and impoverished clan, and its annual income was at most one hundred thousand or so Qian Gold at most. How much could be left after deducting family expenses?

This thin piece of paper at most had a hundred Qian Gold. The young master of his majestic Southern Desert Wang Clan, the promising young prodigy in the family who was the center of attention, the pampered son loved by his old ancestor, did he lack this hundred or so Qian Gold?

Master Wang Zonghao, standing nearby seeing his son with a pitiful and wronged expression, felt not only happy but also reassured.

This lad had always been lawless, it was a surprise that he was able to control his temper today... He's improving~~~

Wang Shouzhe was merely teasing the Clan's Sky Pride, not deliberately looking for trouble, he then gradually turned to discuss things properly with Wang Zonghao, the Family Head of the Southern Desert Wang Clan.

At the same time, he introduced the Old Ancestor Longyan and Qian Xuehan, as well as the two Elders of the Qian Family.

After a series of enthusiastic welcome rituals.

Wang Zonghao with a serious face said: "Master Shouzhe and Old Ancestor Longyan are our relatives from the Southern Desert Wang Clan. As you are visiting the Southern Desert County, you should stay at home. I have instructed people to tidy up a top-notch residence for you. Fourth Uncle, please don't refuse."

What he said made sense.

This is the regular courtesy among relatives, otherwise, it would be easy to cause gossip.

For this, Wang Shouzhe had no reason to refuse: "In that case, thank you, Master Zonghao."

Wang Zonghao was initially afraid that Wang Shihai might cause chaos which was why he had rushed over. Once the necessary chores were done, after exchanging a few pleasantries, he excused himself, leaving Wang Shouzhe in Wang Shihai's care. After the banquet, Wang Shihai was to ensure Wang Shouzhe and other guests were comfortably settled in the main residence of the Southern Desert Wang Clan.

Tomorrow, they would arrange for a welcoming banquet.

Poor Wang Shihai, he was then left with Wang Shouzhe.

Barely finishing this torturous meal, he hastily made arrangements, respectfully welcoming Wang Shouzhe and his group back to the main residence.

The next day.

At noon, the Southern Desert Wang Clan hosted a welcoming feast. However, only Family Head Wang Zonghao, an Elder of the "Shou" generation in the Heavenly Human Realm, an Elder of the "Ding" generation in the Heavenly Human Realm, and the Young Master of the Family Head lineage, Wang Shihai, attended the banquet.

Only after meeting that "Shou" generation Elder, did Wang Shouzhe understand why the Southern Desert Wang Clan's generations were so low. The "Shou" generation of the Southern Desert Wang Clan were generally between one hundred to three hundred years old.

Even the "Zong" generation was no longer young, the "Shi" generation had elders over two hundred years old, then there were the "An" generation, "Ning" generation, "Fu" generation, "Bao" generation, and so on... All those generation names that the Changning Wang Clan had not yet used, the Southern Desert Wang Clan already had them.

Even the people from the youngest generation had already reached the "Yi" generation!

Under such circumstances, any person from the Changning Wang Clan visiting the Southern Desert Wang Clan would be considered of the elder generation.

However, this situation was quite normal. The Southern Desert Wang Clan's inheritance had lasted for a long time, and the gap between generations would only grow larger. From this point of view, Wang Shihai's generation status within the Southern Desert Wang Clan wasn't low!

After going through the customary welcoming rituals, Wang Zonghao invited Wang Shouzhe to stay in the Southern Desert for a while to appreciate the local scenery and left the task of entertaining him to his son, Wang Shihai.

## Chapter 59 Tragedy! Wang Shihai\_2

Then, he found an excuse to leave with the elders.

Throughout the entire process, he was neither too cold nor overly friendly, but remained courteous. He merely fulfilled the expected social etiquette.

In Wang Shouzhe's view, naturally he wouldn't blame Southern Desert's Wang family. Even the current Longzuo Wang family has very little interaction with the Southern Desert Wang family, not to mention the smaller branch of the Changning Wang family.

They were very estranged from each other, and there was a large gap in their status, so naturally, they could not become overly friendly.

If it hadn't been for Southern Desert Wang family's previous negligence in welcoming them, perhaps this feast would have only been treated as a formality by Wang Zonghao. The maximum he would consider it as, would be an obligation carried out by a Celestial Elder.

As the Clan Leader, all Wang Zonghao needed to do was present when Wang Shouzhe and the others were leaving, prepare a gift to give to the Changning Wang clan, and that would be considered as fulfilling the necessary etiquette between fellow clans.

This was why Wang Shouzhe didn't want to alert the Southern Desert Wang family on this occasion.

Given the relationship, feelings and status of the families, it would be enough to go through the motions. Wang Shouzhe wouldn't even be able to meet the Purple Abode Old Ancestor of the Southern Desert Wang family, so notifying them would be meaningless.

...

The only unfortunate one was Wang Shihai, who was grabbed by his father to perform the duties of escort and guide for the Changning Wang family during their stay in Southern Desert.

Early the next morning,

He reluctantly ran to the courtyard where Wang Shouzhe was temporarily staying and cordially invited him to visit the city, silently praying that Wang Shouzhe would reject his offer so he could be freed from such a chore.

The two thousand Qian Gold that his father had left for him to use for hospitality could also be pocketed if managed wisely. Two thousand Qian Gold was a considerable sum for him.

"Shihai, thank you for getting up so early to accommodate us." Wang Shouzhe said with a smile, "I initially intended to rest for a few days due to the fatigue from the journey. But considering your sincere efforts, it would be heartless to let them go to waste. Let's go and take a stroll with you."

Wang Shihai almost choked on his breath. In his heart, he rolled his eyes. Who would blame you for letting them down? You're free to let me down. Please, don't be soft-hearted.

Unfortunately, Wang Shouzhe seemed to be in a good mood and headed towards the main gate with Wang Shihai. Behind him and a yard away, a Puppet named "Wang Shuzhu" followed him like a shadow. He was covered in a black robe, his face was not visible and his footsteps were silent, quite low-key.

"Is this a puppet guard?" Wang Shihai curiously said, "A puppet guard at the level of the Spirit Platform Realm is worth a magical treasure. You really were willing to buy this useless thing." He muttered quietly to himself, "Show off!"

A puppet guard of the Spiritual Platform Realm can play a major role in a 9th rank family. But in the eyes of a Purple Abode Family, this item is as useless as chicken ribs, nowhere near as practical as a low-grade magical treasure.

After all, once a family reaches the 5th grade Purple Abode, cultivators at the level of the Spiritual Platform Realm are almost a standard configuration. Unless they are genuinely untalented or born to a concubine and not hard-working. Most Wang family members with normal bloodlines would have a Spiritual Platform Realm cultivator.

It was only Long Wuji who could guess the true nature of the puppet "Wang Shuzhu". How could Wang Shihai have the ability to understand its true intent?

"I just picked it up. After a few repairs, it was usable so I just kept using it." Wang Shouzhe casually laughed and said, "Our Changning Wang Family is only 7th rank, so I'm quite satisfied with this puppet guard."

Wang Shihai made a face but didn't say anything more.

However, as the two continued to walk outside, they encountered some youngsters on their way to the clan school or to the training grounds for cultivation. Their faces changed greatly at the sight of Wang Shihai and they scattered as if they had encountered a great demon.

Even a frail, delicate little girl, who did not have the time to run away, fell to her knees on the ground because of fear and began to cry loudly: "Demonic Grandpa, don't eat Peach Peach, Peach Peach is very scared."

Wang Shouzhe's mouth twitched and he looked at Wang Shihai in an odd way. What kind of existence was this boy that he could scare a bunch of children like this?

Unfair!

So unfair~

Wang Shihai almost spat out blood from anger. Normally, he just had a short temper and had beaten a few young kids before. But eating people and such was just a rumor! Moreover, he didn't even recognize this girl who looked like a bean sprout.

The Southern Desert Wang family was large, with many people, so it was impossible for Wang Shihai to recognize all the children. The sobbing of the little girl annoyed him, and as usual, he would have just left.

But out of fear of causing a bad reputation for the Southern Desert Wang family due to the presence of an "elder" from the same clan, Wang Shihai stiffly went to comfort the little girl. As expected, the little girl cried even more loudly.

Left with no other option, he took out a red packet from his pocket and slipped it to her: "Alright, alright, your uncle Shihai apologizes. Consider this red packet as compensation."



The red packet was the one Wang Shouzhe had given him the other day.

He had forgotten about it after keeping it in his pocket, he didn't open it to check. Figuring it was probably around one hundred Qian Gold, he thought of giving it to the young child to ward off misfortune.

Seeing this, Wang Shouzhe's mouth twitched, and he gave Wang Shihai a sympathetic look.

The little girl, however, was very peculiar. As soon as she received the red packet, she clung to it, and stopped crying, wiping away her tears and said earnestly: "Thank you, Demon Grandpa. Demon Grandpa is a good person."

"What's your name?" Wang Shihai forced a smile, put on a gentle facade, and patted her head.

"My name is Wang Mei Tao, but Demon Grandpa can call me Peach Peach." Wang Mei Tao could not help herself and started to untie the red packet. As she untied one corner, a hint of purple came into sight.

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She abruptly pulled out the gold ticket within, her bright eyes were completely stunned: "Great Demon King, why, why is the color of this gold ticket purple? Great Demon King, you wouldn't be thieving me, would you?"

"What?" Wang Shihai glanced over. It wouldn't have mattered if he didn't, but when he did, he almost fainted.

This this this...

Isn't this the famous Purple Gold Note?

As a Sky Pride of the Direct Line of a Grade Five Prominent Family, he had some discerning eyes. He could tell at a glance that it was the extremely precious Purple Gold Note, made from Purple Blood Spirit Wood through special techniques.

It was very durable, could resist fire and water, and could be stored for thousands of years without decay.

And it typically represented immense wealth, one Purple Gold Note was worth - one hundred thousand Qian Gold.

"Fo, Four....." Wang Shihai swallowed, turning back and helplessly looking at Wang Shouzhe, "Is, is this real?"

"Shihai, your words are misguided." Wang Shouzhe said seriously, "I am the dignified Family Head of the Changning Wang family, would I use fake notes for red envelopes? Shihai, is this how you look down upon your Great Demon King?"

"No no no...ah~" Wang Shihai was both surprised and heartbroken, he sat down on the ground, his eyes filled with endless regret, "One hundred thousand Qian Gold, this is one hundred thousand Qian Gold. I, I actually gave it to a silly girl?"

The Wang Clan of the Southern Desert were a rich and powerful extended family, and Wang Shihai was a young Sky Pride of the direct line, nurturing him was a priority in the family. The family spent two or three tens of thousands of Qian Gold resources on him every year.

But that was the family's resources for cultivating him... With Wang Shihai's status, it was quite good if he could get two or three thousand Qian Gold as pocket money every year. Only with some clandestine aid from his mother could he afford his prodigality.

One hundred thousand Qian Gold...

That was tens of years' worth of his spending money.

In a flash, Wang Shihai earnestly looked at the little girl: "Mei Tao, can't you re-give this Purple Gold Note..."

"Wahh!"

Wang Mei Tao jumped into Wang Shihai's arms, "Thirty nine Grandpa, Wahh~ Everyone says you are the Great Demon King, the big bad guy. Peach has always misunderstood you. Wah~~ it turns out that Thirty nine Grandpa is the best grandpa in the world~~ Peach will definitely work hard and live up to Thirty nine Grandpa's expectations."

"Wah~"

Wang Shihai couldn't control himself anymore, tears surging out uncontrollably. God gave him a chance to make a fortune, and he just gave it away.

"Great Demon King, you gave such a big red envelope... wu wu, why..." Wang Shihai's heart was shattered.

"Erm, haha..." Wang Shouzhe twitched his mouth. Who asked this brat to show off?... When he, Wang Shouzhe, gave away red envelopes to clan relatives' young Sky Prides, how could he skimp?

Besides, these kinds of red envelopes could turn a profit, when it came to Sky Prides, the younger generation of the Wang family had more...

Not a few people surreptitiously observed the scene around. This matter spread like the wind telling everyone how the visiting elder from Changning gave the thirty-ninth Young Master a Purple Gold Note as a red envelope.

The thirty-nine Young Master casually gifted it to the younger Wang Mei Tao!!

As this gust of wind blew, no matter how thick-skinned Wang Shihai was, he couldn't get it back.

"Shihai, it's getting late, we should go shopping." Wang Shouzhe said with a smile, patting his shoulder, "Let's go, let's go. Let your Great Demon King have a look at the charm of the Southern Desert County."

"Yes... Great Demon King."

After all, Wang Shihai was the one who received his Purple Gold Note as a red envelope. Even though he passed it on, he couldn't reject the favor, could he? Otherwise, he would definitely seem ungrateful.

Even though his heart was shattered, his attitude towards Wang Shouzhe was significantly more respectful.

For the rest of the day.

He hung out with Wang Shouzhe in Southern Desert County Town, gradually feeling better. After all, he was a Sky Pride of the direct line, the vital resources of his family in the future wouldn't be without him.

As for the hundred thousand Qian Gold, it didn't go to outsiders and ended up in his own pot.

"Great Demon King." Wang Shihai rolled his eyes and said with a wicked laugh, "It's almost dusk, and the attractions in Southern Desert County Town are not all that impressive. How about when the night falls, I take you to 'Dong Cha Cha Lake's Tian Yan Boat?"

"Tian Yan Boat?" Wang Shouzhe frowned slightly. "It doesn't sound like a reputable place."

"Of course, it wouldn't be reputable. Reputable places are boring." Wang Shihai's eyes gleamed, "There are eighty-one Tian Yan Boats on Dong Cha Cha Lake. The most prestigious of them is the Tian Yan Boat of 'Tian Yan Immortal'. Great Demon King, do you know that Tian Yan Immortal was a Sky Pride, and she achieved the Heavenly Human Realm when she was over eighty."

Wang Shouzhe furrowed his brows, finding it hard to believe: "Shihai, you shouldn't be talking nonsense. Sky Prides are exceptionally dignified, how could they end up in that kind of trade? Even if she went to the Academic Palace, she would be a personal disciple."

"It's true, otherwise why would she be called an Immortal? I don't know why she ended up here." Wang Shihai said excitedly, "Great Demon King, do you know how many young and promising gentlemen from our Southern Desert County want to catch a glimpse of the Immortal, but fail to do so?"

Seeing his excitement.

Wang Shouzhe "kindly" reminded: "Seeing you are not sad anymore, I can rest assured. Shihai, your attitude is good. You lost a Purple Gold Note in the morning, and now you have already let it go. This kind of open-minded attitude is truly a model for cultivators."

Pff!

Wang Shihai almost spat out a mouthful of blood, thanks for the reminder, Great Demon King. Just as I was starting to feel a little better, you drop this bombshell. Every time I think of that Purple Gold Note, it makes me want to cry...

"If Tian Yan Boat is so popular, the price must not be cheap. Shihai, do you have enough entertainment budget?" Wang Shouzhe added another blow to his heart, "I didn't expect you to respect me so much, you're even ready to pay out of your own pocket to entertain me?."

"Great Demon King, why do you have to be so realistic... I just wanted to see... I've never been there before." Wang Shihai's heart was bleeding, it's okay if we can't go.

"Never mind, I was just teasing you." Wang Shouzhe said with a laugh, "Since you want to have a look, Great Demon King will accompany you."

"Thank you, Great Demon King." Wang Shihai was overjoyed and repeatedly thanked him, "I've wanted to meet Tian Yan Immortal for a long time, but I couldn't due to lack of money and fear that my father will have my legs broken apart. Now that Great Demon King is here, I feel relieved."

Unbeknownst to him, Wang Shihai now came to terms with calling him 'Great Demon King' and was gradually losing his resistance.

Suddenly.

At this moment.

A domineering and lovely female voice rang out: "Wang Shihai, enemies often cross each other's path. Today, I will avenge my good friend and beat you to death."

"Damn it, it's Huangfu Feifei!"

Huangfu? Wang Shouzhe also slightly stunned, the Huangfu Clan of the Southern Desert..... I haven't heard that name in a long time.

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...

Just as Wang Shouzhe was startled, a ball of fiery energy suddenly exploded from the second floor of an inn along the street. Following that, a figure leaped down from the second floor, landing swiftly in front of the pair.

She was a strikingly charismatic woman, dressed in red, her aura as fiery as her outfit.

She had her black hair neatly tied in a ponytail, dangling down to her chest, giving her a clean and smart appearance. The long spear she held in her hand, which seemed a bit too large for her, was radiating a fierce aura.

Unmistakably, this woman was none other than "Huangfu Feifei," whom Wang Shihai had mentioned.

Wang Shouzhe raised an eyebrow, lightly tapping his foot on the ground without leaving a trace, his body drifted backward like a breeze, creating some distance from Wang Shihai.

As the saying goes, "He who comes harbors ill-will, he who is kind does not come," there was definitely something going on between this girl and Wang Shihai.

Indeed, as Wang Shouzhe shifted his position, Huangfu Feifei moved into action.

With a gush of fiery red mysterious energy wrapping around her spear, and as she swept it, it transformed into a fiery red dragon swooping straight towards Wang Shihai's chest!

The Red Dragon True Verses!

The Red Dragon True Verses were an inherited cultivation technique of the Huangfu Clan in the Southern Desert. It was fiery and domineering. Back then, the old ancestor Hua Ye had demonstrated such combat prowess with this technique alone that he dominated Changning.

Although Huangfu Feifei's rendition of it could not compare to the intense, domineering prowess of the old ancestor Hua Ye, she was nevertheless considered quite powerful among practitioners in the Spirit Platform Realm.

The dragon roared and the oppressive heat made the tables, chairs, and dishes at the roadside stalls tremble.

Wang Shihai's face changed as he swiftly retreated backwards.

At the same time, he summoned a brilliantly lit spirit sword into his palm. Clearly, this was a spirit-level longsword.

As he formed the sword techniques, sword lights whizzed out, instantly forming a dense shield in front of him.

One could clearly see that Wang Shihai's mysterious energy flowed steadily and measured, an obvious characteristic of the Wang family's "Xuanyuan True Verses".

With this energy as his foundation, his sword energy had a few notches more solidity than that of the others.

The circulating sword light formed a metallic shield that completely protected him.

"Boom!"

With a tremendous bang, the red dragon collided with the shield, setting off an eruption of fiery light and shattered sword energy, which engulfed half the street in the blink of an eye.

The force from the blow caused the wind to howl and scatter the stalls lining the street, clattering pots and dishes. Wang Shouzhe had thankfully distanced himself in time, or he would also have been caught in the aftermath.

The startled pedestrians scattered, each one taking shelter.

Wang Shihai was forced back a few steps, greatly taken aback.

Taking a deep breath to suppress the churning energy and blood within him, he retorted indignantly, "Huangfu Feifei, have you gone mad? Dare to fight in the street?!"

"Deal with it! Who asked you to bully Wan Qiu? "

Huangfu Feifei held her head high, her beautiful and penetrating phoenix eyes staring at Wang Shihai fiercely.

The fiery red mysterious energy knotting around the long spear in her hand made her appear like a war goddess stepping out from the flames, radiating a domineering aura.

"When have I bullied her?" Wang Shihai protested in a tone of being wrongly accused, "I only ran into her on her visit home from the academy and kindly inquired of her well-being. As it turns out, her temper flared up for no reason and she attacked me. When she lost the fight and cried, is it my fault?"

"Fine, then! I will make you cry too! Don't blame me when you lose because of your lack of skills."

Huangfu Feifei laughed coldly, raising her long spear, and with a trail of fire, launched a fierce attack on Wang Shihai. The imposing might of the firelight was truly astonishing.

"Huangfu Feifei, do you really think I'm easy to bully?!"

Wang Shihai's heart skipped a beat. He hurriedly mobilized the Xuanyuan True Verses, showing off his Spiritual Artifact Level longsword, endeavouring to block Huangfu Feifei's relentless attack.

Without a word, the two actually started to brawl right on the main street.

The passerby, avoiding the fight at all costs, ran to safer distances to watch the commotion.

The local peacekeeping patrol team rushed over from a distance, preparing to verbally rebuke them, only to find that the two involved in the fight were young prodigies from prominent Purple Abode families.

The soldiers of the patrol team swallowed back their words, instead choosing to maintain order and prevent the crowd from approaching.



Wang Shouzhe too moved back a bit, pulling a pack of local specialty "wind-dried beef" and a pack of milk sugar from his storage bag, and started eating with relish.

As for the puppet guard of the Heavenly Human Realm, "Wang Shuzhu," it kept itself right behind its master as his shadow, standing tall and motionless. Unless there's a threat to life, or to a target in the protection sequence, it would not act.

Speaking of which, Wang Shouzhe was well aware of the prominent Purple Abode Huangfu Clan from the Southern Desert.

Over a decade ago, the Huangfu Clan of Changning that contended with the Wang family and was ultimately exterminated by him, was a branch of the same family as the Huangfu Clan of the Southern Desert.

At that time, in a crisis, the Changning Huangfu Clan had traveled thousands of miles to seek help from the Huangfu Clan of the Southern Desert. However, they no longer shared any cordial ties, and Longzuo County was not within the jurisdiction of the Southern Desert Huangfu Clan, hence it was not worthwhile for them to send their experts across such a distance to meddle in the matter.

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As such, the Huangfu Clan of the Southern Desert provided only an amount of money for emergency relief and sent some Red Fire Dragon Scales as support, before quickly dismissing the people.

Even the Huangfu Clan of the Southern Desert probably did not foresee just how weak the Huangfu Clan of Changning was, being wiped out in an instant before they knew it.

Afterwards, the incident was naturally left unresolved.

The two clans had been separate for a long time, and the old acquaintances of the past were gone. Even though the Huangfu Clan of the Southern Desert was a Grade Five Prominent Family, they would not be willing to travel all the way to Changning in Longzuo to avenge a clan that had already been extinguished. The cost of such a venture was no small thing.

It was only because of this "relationship" that Wang Shouzhe always paid more attention to the Huangfu Clan of the Southern Desert and collected any relevant information.

Without a doubt, the Huangfu Clan of the Southern Desert is a deeply rooted, established Purple Abode Prominent Family. Their overall power in the Southern Desert County surpasses even that of the Wang family.

Aside from having a senior in the Purple Abode Realm, the clan also maintains a mature, Level Seven "Li Fire Red Dragon" as their guardian spirit beast.

In terms of strength, the Red Dragon is far superior to Master Binglan's "Mysterious Ice Serpent" at the Longzuo Academy. Even a newly promoted Level Seven Seven-tailed Fire Fox would most likely not be its match.

It is precisely due to the existence of this Level Seven Li Fire Red Dragon that the Huangfu Clan of the Southern Desert has an incredibly strong foundation and sits clearly at the top in Southern Desert County.

The only problem is, the cost of maintaining a Level Seven Li Fire Red Dragon is incredibly high.

This leads to the Huangfu Clan of the Southern Desert always scraping for resources, struggling to advance from the Fifth Grade to the Fourth Grade.

"This young girl is quite powerful, and has a very solid foundation," Wang Shouzhe praised as he watched.

He didn't expect both the younger generation of the Huangfu and Wang families to produce individuals of Heavenly Proud Level.

From the looks of it, aside from nurturing the Purple Abode Seeds for the Purple Abode realm, both of them were kept at home, existing as reserves for the second or third Purple Abode realm.

After all, only if the family could reach three Purple Abodes would they be eligible to be conferred as a "Grade Four Prominent Family" by Da Qian. This is the goal pursued by the majority of Grade Five Prominent Families.

"Hmm, Shihai, even though he's somewhat arrogant and wilful, his foundation is very solid," Wang Shouzhe sighed contentedly, chewing on his dried beef. "Grade Five Prominent Families are truly deserving of their grade, sparing no effort in training their clansmen."

No wonder then, a prominent family wishing to continue for hundreds and thousands of years, and grow stronger, naturally can't slack off in the cultivation of its clansmen. The always prosperous family must rely on outstanding generations of clansmen to support it.

The skirmish between Wang Shihai and Huangfu Feifei was heated and exciting, making it hard to determine a winner. The number of spectators grew, and cheers after cheers rang out.

Huangfu Feifei's temper was fiery, and seeing that the battle was dragging on, she became visibly impatient.

Suddenly.

She fiercely repelled Wang Shihai, then looked up and whistled.

The next moment.

A clear, resonating bird call echoed in the sky.

Followed by that, a bright red bird which looked like an eagle, yet not an eagle, like a vulture, yet not a vulture appeared in the sky, swooping down under the howling wind.

While still in mid-air, it spread its wings, extended its sharp claws towards Wang Shihai, and his claws were filled with surging strength, presenting a formidable threat.

A Spirit Blood Harrier?

Wang Shihai's face changed rapidly, and he hurriedly employed his Willow Catkin Movement technique to move, barely dodging the claw of the Spirit Blood Harrier.

However, although he managed to dodge, he forcibly moved his Mysterious Energy in a hurry, which resulted in a ripple effect and his face involuntarily turned somewhat pale.

He could not help but curse: "Huangfu Feifei, do you have no shame?! You're even using a bird in a friendly match?!"

"Who said I was having a friendly match with you? I'm intending to make you cry," Huangfu Feifei snorted and mocked, then along with the soaring Spirit Blood Harrier, began to attack Wang Shihai again.

Dealing with Huangfu Feifei was already difficult enough for Wang Shihai, adding a Spirit Blood Harrier who could also threaten him, Wang Shihai immediately became unable to bear it, rapidly retreating in a pathetic manner.

Seeing that if the fight continued like this he would really be "made to cry", Wang Shihai couldn't help it anymore, crying out loudly: "Grandfather Wang Jie, save me~~ Save me~~"

Wang Jie was the head of household for the Wang family of the Southern Desert. He was cultivated into a household head of the Heavenly Human Realm since he was gifted since young and held the current position of secretly protecting the family's young prodigy, Wang Shihai.

Wang Shihai was truly desperate to cry out for help.

However.

As soon as Wang Shihai's voice fell, an ancient voice emerged from the darkness.

"Young Master Shihai, please forgive this old man for not being able to intervene. The Old Ancestor explained that the Young Master is too impulsive and needs to be tempered. In the future, in fair matches with peers, unless your opponent attempts to kill you, you must not intervene."

Wang Shihai almost fainted from indignation, while dodging and retreating, he said: "Where is the fairness in this battle? Huangfu Feifei had a bird, I didn't..."

Suddenly.

A light appeared before him, and he looked towards Wang Shouzhe, who was standing to the side: "Great Uncle! Great Uncle, save me~~~"

Although he couldn't make out Wang Shouzhe's genuine power, he instinctively felt that this Great Uncle was definitely stronger than him.

Wang Shouzhe's mouth twitched.

This boy indeed needed tempering, he actually has the nerve to ask for help after being beat up by a girl like this? Even if he can't beat her, wouldn't it be fine to just take the beating and practice hard afterwards to regain his status?

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"Wang Shihai, crying will get you out of this~~ As long as you cry, I will stop hitting you."  
Huangfu Feifei laughed triumphantly, "Otherwise, I will smack you every time I see you."

A jolt ran through Wang Shihai's heart.

Of course, crying was not an option. Getting beaten here might mean a few wounds, but crying would mean death by the hands of the Old Ancestor once he got home.

Fortunately, he was quick-witted. While dodging her attacks using the Willow Catkin Body Method, he also made his way to Wang Shouzhe.

"Great Uncle, you can't just stand by and watch me get slaughtered~~" he called while running.  
"Huangfu Feifei that wicked girl is crazy, she will actually beat me to death!"

"Who's the wicked one, who's the crazy one?"

Upon hearing this, Huangfu Feifei was immediately enraged. Her eyes glowed fiercely, her spear whirling in her hands. Fire dragons surged towards Wang Shihai, filling the sky.

Wang Shouzhe was also affected by the collateral damage.

Wang Shouzhe rolled his eyes in annoyance.

You could say that Wang Shihai was clever, but he was also stupid at times, capable of giving away a Purple Gold Note... But then again, he wasn't dumb either, he was crafty enough to provoke her and turn her against others.

Couldn't one peacefully snack on jerky and watch the show in peace?

He saw the intense fire dragon roaring towards him.

Wang Shouzhe had no choice but to wave his hand. A surge of formidable Mysterious Energy rippled out, blocking all the fire dragons.

"Boom, boom, boom!"

Fire dragons exploded one after another, fading away into nothingness and leaving trails of smoke.

"Great Uncle, you were indeed as I suspected, hiding your true powers~~" Wang Shihai's face lit up with joy as he shamelessly hid behind Wang Shouzhe.

Huangfu Feifei had not expected that her tactics would be so easily dismissed. Her gaze was filled with caution as she fixed her glare on Wang Shouzhe. "Who are you, whoever dares to interfere in my affairs?"

Wang Shouzhe offered a slight smile and courteously bowed with his hands in front of him, "I am Wang Shouzhe, a relative of the Southern Desert's Wang family. Since Shihai has admitted defeat, let's just let this incident pass, shall we?"

The good-looking Wang Shouzhe, who had become even more attractive with the passing years, with his upgrade of strength, cultivation base, and confidence, was more appealing than before.

Huangfu Feifei was momentarily stunned, but she quickly regained her composure and replied coldly, "Wang Shouzhe, is it? Don't think you can meddle in my affairs because of your good looks."

"If you want to interfere, then you have to pass my test first."

With that, her eyes hardened and her figure blurred as she shot towards Wang Shouzhe like a shooting star.

Simultaneously, her spear, enveloped in layers of flames, tore through the sky with a wailing sound.

Seeing this, Wang Shouzhe felt as if Huangfu Hua Ye, who he had once defeated, was before him again. Of course, although this girl was a Sky Pride, she was still considered far inferior compared to Hua Ye back in his prime.

"Ah~ Girl, what's the point of all this?"

Wang Shouzhe shook his head helplessly.

He hadn't fought anyone directly besides sparing with his lover, Liu Ruolan, in a long time.

With a casual wave of his hand, he scattered a bunch of Witch Series seeds.

The seeds sprouted green shoots before they even touched the ground, quickly growing into a vine net in the blink of an eye.

The "Witch's Long Hair" vines he used were not the common type that could be obtained in the family treasury, but a superior grade that had been refined over generations, making them far superior.

Put it this way, his bloodline was also extraordinary. The Mysterious Energy he could produce was both incredible and wondrous, with effects that were out of the ordinary.

"Boom!"

The spear sliced through the sky, colliding with the giant vine net. A blast of fire split open the net, burning off about thirty percent of it.

However, the remaining vines began to grow at a visible rate, quickly entrapping Huangfu Feifei like a spider's web.

"Not good!"

Huangfu Feifei reacted swiftly, using her strength to fly backwards.

Unfortunately, her foot barely moved a yard when a bloody vine wound around her ankle. The eerie vine was covered in hollow needles. When it wound around her ankle, dense hollow needles pierced her flesh, injecting a potent paralyzing toxin into her bloodstream.

"Ah!"

After Huangfu Feifei's scream, she used her Xuan strength to break free from the vine. However, a moment later, she felt dizzy and weak. Immediately after, the vine web made by the Witch's Long Hair tightened around her.

The vines wrapped around her and formed into a statue of a human body.

Honestly, even though Wang Shouzhe was the one who had developed and executed this move, the result shocked him, making his heart pound with excitement.

"Chirp~"

Seeing the master being captured, the Spirit Blood Harrier squawked and flew towards Wang Shouzhe. But before it got close, Wang Shouzhe used the same method and easily transformed it into a wrapped dumpling.

In just a few breaths, both the human and the bird were captured.

The scene fell silent.

"Great Uncle, you didn't..." The Pale-faced Wang Shihai, hiding behind Wang Shouzhe, was nervously swallowing. This... Was his great uncle too fierce? Simply defeated that formidable Huangfu Feifei?

"Impudence!"



Suddenly, a potent presence, as tangible as solid matter, surged from the shadows of the adjacent street. The voice of an elder bellowed, "Young man from the Wang family, how dare you bully our young lady?"

Along with the furious shout, a tall old man descended from the sky. A ferocious palm imprint, resembling a horrifying wave, swept across to slap Wang Shouzhe.

"Great Uncle, watch out."

"Mr. Wang, be careful."

Both Wang Shihai and Huangfu Feifei cried out in anxiety.

However, Wang Shouzhe was still as relaxed as before, with no trace of nerves. The "Wang Shuzhu," who had been faithfully protecting him all along, acted. Its form blurred as it floated in mid-air, standing between Wang Shouzhe and the incoming attack, and punched out to meet it.

"Boom!"

The intersecting fist and palm generated a ripple of force that spread in all directions, causing the surrounding buildings to crack and crumble.

The tall old man was bounced back several yards in the air, his face a picture of astonishment: "It's a Heavenly Human Realm Puppet!"

"What? A Heavenly Human Realm Puppet?"

Wang Shihai's face turned pale with shock. He had presumed that the puppet was of the Spiritual Platform Realm and had even babbled on and on about it. Unexpectedly, it was an extremely rare and expensive Heavenly Human Realm Puppet.

The main point was, it was "expensive"!