

Slaughter 41

Chapter 41 The Third Sky of Nascent Level

It was silent outside the valley.

The demon beasts had left a long time ago.

It was already daytime, as the sunlight filtered into the cave through thick bushes like fire.

The three were training cross-legged on the ground with steady breaths.

Not knowing how much time had passed, Shi Yan woke up from the serenity. He stood up, stretched his neck and tried to move his body.

The Third Sky of Nascent Level!

With a deep breath, Shi Yan felt refreshed and his fatigue disappeared at once, while his senses became much more accurate.

With the help of the magical power, Shi Yan's training speed advanced as fast as a shooting arrow, and he increased to the Third Sky of Nascent Level at once!

Standing at the entrance of the cave, he was dimly able to perceive the spiritual scent between the sky and the earth.

He couldn't smell the spiritual scent in the air before. But now, it was all so clear to him that he could sense it easily.

To perceive the spiritual scent in the air was something only Third Sky of Nascent Level warriors could manage. Once he perceived the spiritual scent, he could train his martial skills faster with its help.

As soon as he willed it, his body turned as hard as iron immediately, while his skin turned dark brown and was covered with a vague black light which was similar to the state when he operated his Black Light Shield.

"Er?"

Shi Yan was a little surprised. After a careful examination, he was certain that he wasn't even utilizing his Black Light Shield with Profound Qi.

This was to say, the dark light covering the skin was merely the reaction to reaching the second stage of Petrification Martial Spirit.

He smiled after further examination, knowing that the magical change to his skin must have something to do with his Martial Spirit.

It was rather bright in the cave now. Shi Yan's black eyes blinked and began to wander to Mu Yu Die and Di Yalan's bodies.

Mu Yu Die and Di Yalan were still sitting on the ground cross-legged with tightly closed eyes. There was a vague light moving around their bodies, as their Profound Qi operated in their bodies along specific paths.

He had injected part of the magical power into Mu Yu Die's body, because he wanted to know if this magical power could be passed on to others without sexual intercourse.

And also, he wanted more help. He was not sure how many foes he would meet during the upcoming journey. It would affect their travel if Mu Yu Die still needed protection.

As Di Yalan had said, Mu Yu Die was also a warrior before her tendons broke. If Mu Yu Die recovered, it would be very beneficial for their journey ahead.

Because of those thoughts, he gave that small part of the magical power to her.

Holding his breath, Shi Yan focused his attention on Mu Yu Die. Suddenly, he felt a strong Profound Qi circulating in her body.

A little surprised, he couldn't help but take several glances at her. After a further thought, he got even more confused...

To his amazement, Mu Yu Die's Profound Qi was more refined than Di Yalan's, which meant... Mu Yu Die was a higher level than Di Yalan!

Shi Yan was really shocked. He knew Mu Yu Die was a warrior too, but he thought she was no more than Nascent Level.

After all, Mu Yu Die was much younger than Di Yalan, thus there was no way she could be a higher-leveled warrior than Di Yalan.

But it turned out to be quite the opposite. Shi Yan finally realized that Mu Yu Die was already a Human-Level warrior at such young age. It was an entire level higher than Di Yalan!

As he was standing there stunned, he acutely felt that Mu Yu Die's Profound Qi was calming down gradually.

He knew that Mu Yu Die was about to wake up...

As expected, before long, Mu Yu Die's eyelashes shook and she opened her eyes slowly.

Two clean and bright eyes suddenly observed the cave, and Mu Yu Die's delicate little face lit up. She looked like an extremely beautiful and attractive angel in the wood.

Shi Yan was dumbstruck as he gazed at such a beautiful creature. He couldn't even think straight.

"Done staring?" Mu Yu Die looked indifferent as she stood up slowly. After stretching herself, she chuckled, "From now on, I'm not your burden anymore."

Streams of thin white light flew out from her arms as she was stretching her body. The light soon disappeared in the air...

As Mu Yu Die moved her fingers slowly in the air, the light showed up again little by little, and began to shuttle between her smooth fingers.

"I haven't played my zither for so long. Need a practice now." Mu Yu Die smiled. That smile was like a clean brook in a valley, serene, empty and intoxicating.

“You are much prettier than before.” Gazing at her for a long while, Shi Yan uttered.

With her veins connected and the Profound Qi of the top of Human Level flowing in the body, her skin became extremely translucent, while her face turned rosy and her eyes brightened. Mu Yu Die looked so confident that nothing in the world could terrify her.

With her strength regained, Mu Yu Die seemed to have turned into another person that she was much more attractive than before.

At this moment, in Shi Yan eyes, Mu Yu Die was literally far prettier than Di Yalan and Mo Yanyu. Both her level and temperament transcended those two girls.

“Thanks.” Mu Yu Die smiled casually, “How long has it been?”

“Two days, I guess.” Shi Yan hesitated, “I’m not sure either. I just feel that we have stayed in the cave for more than one day. You recovered?”

“Yes.” Mu Yu Die nodded confidently, “Let’s leave this cave and set off after Sister Lan wake up.”

“Ok.” Shi Yan replied casually, and felt a little bitter.

Before, though Mu Yu Die was too naive and too kind, she was quite adorable, just like a lovely little sister.

Though Mu Yu Die became more attractive after regaining her energy, her cuteness disappeared, and on the contrary, she made Shi Yan feel some holiness from her, which made Shi Yan a little disappointed.

Disappointed, Shi Yan didn’t bother to say anything. Instead, he walked out of the cave and began to wander in the valley.

Taking out the book “Gravitational Field” on Spirit Level Martial Skills out of his bag, he turned the pages randomly. Without reading it carefully, he put the book into the bag scrupulously, he was now sure that there were letters in the book.

Spirit Level Martial Skills could only be trained by warriors of at least Earth Level. But he was just a Nascent Level warrior now, which was a long way from Earth Level. Without advancing, to train with the Spirit Level Martial at a low warrior level would only disturb one’s mind.

Because of that reason, Shi Yan put the book away after he was assured it was authentic.

A half day later, Di Yalan and Mu Yu Die walked out of the cave together. They were clean, dressed and high spirited, ready to set off.

“Kid, thank you. I’ve stabilised my level now.” Di Yalan said loudly after she got out.

It was rather dangerous a short time after one reached a new level. The warrior needed strengthen his Profound Qi as soon as possible, or he would be hurt in fights and training while his level was still unstable.

The essence from Shi Yan took effect again in Mu Yu Die’s body, which stabilised her level, and enabled her to fight without any fear of backlash.

“Well then, let’s set off.” Not intending to boast, Shi Yan smiled naturally, and guided them out of the valley.

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Seven days later.

The three of them finally stepped out of the enormous Dark Forest.

Looking at the huge ancient trees behind them, they all felt themselves lucky survivors of a disaster.

In those seven days, they never got into any danger.

The warriors and mercenaries in the Dark Forest had either died or were wounded, not daring to stay in that dangerous area. The demon beasts led by the Silver Thunder Wolf had also calmed down and didn’t show up again.

Since the demon beasts and mercenaries were quiet, their journey became magically smooth. Without meeting any obstacles, they went through the most dangerous area and stepped out of the Dark Forest.

They need to pass Silent Town if they were going to the Merchant Union, and they must cross the wide Stone Woods to get to the Silent Woods.

The stones in the Stone Woods were all grotesque in shape, which were either as big as a mountain, or as small as a human. In addition, there were also many stone caves, which were natural shelters.

There were always brutal warriors lurking in the Stone Woods, killing and trading.

Those walking out of the Dark Forest were trade caravans, or warriors and mercenaries who were seeking adventure.

Merchants from foreign countries must have goods with them, while those adventurous warriors and mercenaries, who could get out of the Dark Forest alive, must have medicines and materials from demon beasts.

These people all had something valuable with them...

Therefore, there were people hiding in the Stone Woods for years, who would show up if they found their prey was weak and harvest their goods after a nasty slaughter.

Thus, sometimes the Stone Woods were more dangerous than the Dark Forest. A single man who stepped into it, unless he was a Disaster Level warrior, would always get into trouble.

“The Stone woods is very dangerous. Maybe the people from the Dark World are lurking there...” Di Yalan thought for a while and reminded Mu Yu Die.

“Someone will come to our aid in the Stone Woods, no worries.” Mu Yu Die smiled and looked back at Shi Yan, “You are going into the Stone Woods?”

“Yup. I’m from the Merchant Union, of course I will go back there.” Shi Yan replied.

“Good. Then let’s go there together. You will be safe with us in the Stone Woods.” Mu Yu Die looked confident, and before Shi Yan replied, she added, “let’s go into the Stone Woods. Don’t worry, we are safe now.”

“Ok.” Shi Yan replied. Though he didn’t relax. Once they stepped into the Stone Woods, he was always on alert.

From the memories of the other Shi Yan, he knew it was chaos in the Stone Woods. All the powerful parties were involved in it, including the big families from the Merchant Union.

He didn’t know what Mu Yu Die had that made her so confident. But he knew they would be killed in an instant if they weren’t cautious.

Shi Yan kept calm as he looked around in the woods. Every five steps, he would turn back and examine carefully.

Chapter 42 Departure

In the Stone Woods. Beside a giant rock.

Mo Chaoge, Bernard, and the Crescent Emissary were standing indifferently, seeming to wait for some news.

Before long, a Star Emissary appeared on the stone path far away, who was heading in their direction hurriedly.

That Star Emissary came near and bowed to the Crescent Emissary, “Sir, still no trace of them.”

The Crescent Emissary nodded, and waved his hand, “Keep watching those passes! Be on alert!”

“Yes Sir!”

The Star Emissary who was in charge of collecting information stepped back silently and disappeared into the piles of stones.

One hour later.

Big Johnson, who had lost his arm, showed up from another stone path. He walked up to Mo Chaoge and gave a salute, “No news of them.”

“Well.” Mo Chaoge nodded, “Keep watching. I just don’t believe that they won’t come out.”

“Third master, is it possible that they were already killed by the demon beasts in the Dark Forest?” Johnson asked after a hesitation, “It is said that the demon beasts in that area went crazy after we left. Many warriors died because of them. They disappeared for so long, maybe they were killed by those demon beasts.”

“Could be.”

Surprisingly, Mo Chaoge didn't oppose, but nodded and said, "But if they were not killed by demon beasts and slipped through to the Merchant Union, we can do nothing anymore. You know what I mean?"

"Got it! I will go and watch right now!" Johnson was enlightened and left immediately.

Frowning, Mo Chaoge said to the Crescent Emissary next to him, "Let's wait for another month, if they still don't show up, I guess they must have been killed in there. What do you think?"

"Well, I agree with you." The Crescent Emissary agreed. He thought for a moment and said, "I got the information that the Medicine King Gan Xiao and the Silver Thunder Wolf are still fighting in the Dark Forest. But since there are too many demon beasts, Gan Xiao seemed to begin to withdraw. The demon beasts in the Dark Forest have now all gathered around the Silver Thunder Wolf, chasing the Medicine King Gan Xiao and his escorts. That battle area is relatively safe now."

"You mean they may still be alive?" Mo Chaoge asked.

"Very likely." The Crescent Emissary said, "Many warriors were killed in that region, and those not being killed had been scared out of the forest a long time ago. Therefore they can easily get out of the forest alive if they are not unlucky."

"They'd better be alive!" Bernard from the Tush Mercenary Union was filled with hatred as he said coldly, "They will regret being in this world."

A cold light flashed in the Crescent Emissary's eyes, as he said indifferently, "I will take Mu Yu Die away."

"Then that skinny boy is mine. He stole something from my Mo Family, so I need to get it first. Then you can do whatever you want to him." Mo Chaoge took a glimpse at Bernard, and said in despise.

Bernard kept silent, pondering on something that no one knew.

...

Shi Yan was walking on the jagged stones cautiously, not daring to relax his vigilance.

Mu Yu Die and Di Yalan were discussing something ahead of him. He couldn't hear them clearly.

"Ding Yan." Mu Yu Die paused abruptly and turned around to look at him.

"Yeah?" Shi Yan was surprised and relaxed his vigilance a little, "What's the matter?"

"You are from the Merchant Union?" Mu Yu Die hesitated and then asked casually.

"Yup."

"You trained all by yourself?"

"Yup."

"You helped me a lot all along the way, so I want to introduce you to someone. If he thinks highly of you, it will be very beneficial for your training. What do you think?" Mu Yu Die was serious, as her beautiful eyes shone and gazed at him.

Shi Yan was shocked at first, and after a long while, he shook his head and replied indifferently, "Miss Mu, thank you for your kindness, but I don't like to be restrained."

He understood, Mu Yu Die wanted to introduce him to an influential person or to a certain power.

In this world there were many single warriors who were at a very high level and could do whatever they wanted without any help.

But most warriors would choose to attach themselves to a certain power or a big family.

Those powers and families possessed lots of resources, immense Martial Skills and training materials, and most importantly, reputed warrior trainers, which could speed up one's training process and step into a higher level.

However, those influential powers and families hardly admitted unknown warriors. It was very hard for a warrior to enter a big power without anyone's introduction.

Apparently Mu Yu Die knew someone influential and she wanted to thank Shi Yan in that way.

"It is very hard to train all by yourself." Mu Yu Die was a little shocked, as she couldn't understand Shi Yan. "One could gain rapid advancement only when he joins a strong power, and could get help at difficult times. A single warrior tends to be attacked in foreign areas. You understand that?"

"Yes, to train alone has many disadvantages. Die is very considerate. You still have the chance to reject after meeting that person." Di Yalan persuaded too.

"Nope. I'll mind my own business, and I don't want to be anyone's domestic servant." Shi Yan shook his head firmly.

"Then whatever." Mu Yu Die frowned and felt that Shi Yan was being ungrateful, though she didn't insist.

Di Yalan sighed, with a little bit of bitterness.

She would go with Mu Yu Die, and since Shi Yan rejected Mu Yu Die's invitation, they would depart forever, for there was little chance they would meet again.

In the past few days, Shi Yan had already walked into her heart. She was filled with sorrow at the thought of their departure.

"Ding Yan, I must go with Die. You..."

After a long thought, Di Yalan couldn't help but plead, as she looked at Shi Yan with regret.

"You can go with me." Shi Yan was stunned, then added, "If you are willing to."

"I..."

Di Yalan looked gloomy as she murmured, "The power behind Die can not only protect Die, but also help me increase my ability. Furthermore, Die has promised me that I will get exorbitant training materials, as well as a weapon of the Soul Level, and will even have the opportunity to train with Spirit Level Martial Skills. I..."

“Then fine!”

Shi Yan replied decidedly, “You have your own pursuits, so do I. And I can’t give you what you want... Let’s depart as soon as we get to Silent Town.”

Obviously Di Yalan chose Mu Yu Die because she thought the power at Mu’s back was more beneficial for her. And Mu Yu Die really gave her a high price, so she found it hard to refuse.

“Ding Yan...” Di Yalan was heartbroken, “I’m sorry.”

“You don’t need to apologize.” Shi Yan shook his head and replied indifferently, “We did everything at our own will. We don’t owe each other.”

“You!” Di Yalan was a little angry as she stared at Shi Yan with discontent. Her chest trembled, but then she uttered with a bitter sigh, “However you think about it, I have my own plans. You are too young to understand that...”

Shi Yan curled his lips and looked at them coldly, not saying a word.

“You just don’t appreciate it.” Mu Yu Die grunted.

“If there isn’t a common ground, a single word is a waste of breath.” Shi Yan shook his head and walked onto another crossroad without taking a look at the two girls. His back to them, he said coldly, “Goodbye forever.”

“Ding Yan!” Di Yalan shouted, “Didn’t you say we wouldn’t depart till we get to Silent Town?”

“Miss Mu is at the Third Sky of Human Level, and there will be skillful warriors supporting you in the Woods. You don’t need to worry anymore. I won’t take advantage of that.” Shi Yan’s sound faded away gradually, and so did his figure.

“This arrogant guy will get into trouble someday.” Mu Yu Die shook her head, “One has to learn to yield sometimes in this world. Or it will be hard to survive, especially for us warriors.”

Di Yalan was so disappointed, “I’m so worried about him. Why not just go with us? Why did he refuse?”

“Never mind. Stop worrying. We all will be in the Merchant Union, and will get the chance to meet again.” Mu Yu Die comforted her, “Sister Lan, though we are women, we have a mission to make our family prosper and avenge Uncle Luo and our friends. We have to depend on a big power and complete our mission.”

After a short pause, some mixed emotions crossed her eyes. Mu Yu Die recalled the days when they were travelling with Shi Yan and that mind-blowing kiss with him in that cave...

But eventually, she shook her head firmly, seeming to get rid of Shi Yan’s shadow in her mind. “And him, just let him be a beautiful memory in our lives.”

She seemed to say that to herself.

“He is not that bad... almost Human Level... and he is so young...” Di Yalan mumbled.

"It will take at least ten years for him to advance to Disaster or Earth Level, and even longer to get to Nirvana and Sky. We don't have that much time. Furthermore, he is on his own, without any strong support..."

"Well, fine. I hope we made the right choice."

"I've never made a mistake!"

Chapter 43 Beiming Family

In the Stone Woods.

Mo Yanyu was leaning her plump behind against an oval rock under the hot sun. Frowning slightly, she seemed to be deep in thought.

A Mo Family escort with a plain and pimply face was standing next to her and was also deep in thought while narrowing his eyes.

The sound of inconsistent heavy steps gradually came from afar.

Mo Yanyu opened her eyes and fluttered her eyelashes. She glanced at Johnson, who was rapidly running towards her, and coldly reproached, "Why are you in such a hurry?"

"We've spotted them!" Johnson answered with a twisted face, "Two girls! According to the Star Emissary, that's who we want!"

Mo Yanyu's adorable eyes suddenly lit up while her expression calmed down, "Is the boy with them too?"

"Seems not..." after a short pause, Johnson said calmly, "We will know where the boy is once we catch the girls."

"Had Third Uncle got this message?"

"One of our Star Emissaries had been sent for him."

"In which direction?" Mo Yanyu stood her beautiful body upright and stretched her limbs slowly, "Are they further away from us or Third Uncle?"

"Further away from us. If everything goes well the Third Master and his people should arrive here soon." Johnson replied.

"Well then, let's not worry about it right now." Mo Yanyu frowned, as she talked to the pimply Mo Family escort next to her, "Uncle Li, do we need to go up there and meet them?"

"No hurry, our target hasn't shown up yet." Li Han smiled and shook his head, "Third Master and the people from the Dark World are all there, so it will be fine. This pass is very crucial as well. We'd better stay on high alert. Our goal is that boy. All our previous efforts will go to waste if that boy slips away."

“That makes sense.” Mo Yanyu nodded, without saying anything else.

...

“Woowoowoo! Woowoowoo!”

While stopping beside a snake-shaped rock, Mu Yu Die took out a silver horn and began to blow it.

The sound of the horn rippled away like waves to far away places.

Figures hiding in every corner of the Stone Woods came out one after another after they heard the horn, quickly rushing in the direction of Mu Yu Die.

“Sister Lan, don’t worry, some people will come to our rescue.” Mu Yu Die smiled lightly, “We are really safe here. No need to worry about the Dark World.”

“Hopefully...” Di Yalan barely smiled. She couldn’t settle down as she was worried about Shi Yan. She sighed, “I hope he is fine...”

Shortly after, shadows appeared one after the other from far away. The man in the lead turned out to be the Crescent Emissary from the Dark World, and beside him were Mo Chaoge and Bernard, as well as several other Mo Family warriors and Star Emissaries.

“Miss Mu, nice to meet you again.” The Crescent Emissary’s vicious eyes were wandering over Mu Yu Die’s body like a cunning snake. His voice was like ice, “You nearly managed a perfect escape! But too bad. Unfortunately for you, you didn’t quite make it to the Merchant Union. You will instead be taken away by me.”

“Really?” Mu Yu Die smiled calmly, showing no fear.

The Crescent Emissary frowned and was confused. Mu Yu Die was too calm at this time. This was too abnormal.

“Where is that young guy who was hanging around with you?”

Mo Chaoge came over, glanced at the girls, and said coldly, “Tell me where the boy is! Or I will kill her first!”

Mo Chaoge pointed at Di Yalan.

“She is mine!” Bernard angrily stared at Mo Chaoge, then flashed over to Di Yalan like lightning and stretched his hand towards her.

“Triing!”

Noise from a zither rang out suddenly. The sound was like a sharp weapon, lightly cutting into one’s nerves.

Bernard quivered and his face suddenly twisted in pain. He stepped back quickly and stared at Mu Yu Die in astonishment.

Holding her zither, Mu Yu Die had already sat down. She looked at Bernard with a cold expression on her face, “You wanna try again?”

Bernard's brain felt like it was being stabbed by a steel needle and he felt like his head was splitting. Hearing that, his face became even more distorted, but he didn't dare step up again.

"That's impossible!"

The Crescent Emissary's face twisted and showed panic for the first time, "It has only been a few weeks, your Music Martial Spirit shouldn't have recovered so soon!"

After a pause, he seemed to remember something and sneered, "I know, you forced yourself to operate your broken veins! You are seeking death!"

"Oh?" Mu Yu Die replied indifferently, "Maybe you can give it a try? I know you have reached the Disaster Level. But if you could remember, you should know that I killed a Crescent Emissary at the same level as you with my Music Martial Spirit before we entered the Dark Forest."

This not only made the Crescent Emissary hesitate, but also made both Bernard and Mo Chaoge also panick. They stared at her with an unbelievable look in their eyes.

"Emissary? This... is it true?" Mo Chaoge felt his mouth go dry and he took several steps back. He made a gesture to tell the Mo Family warriors not to take action.

"She could do that if she is in a good condition... but now, I don't buy it." The Crescent Emissary grunted.

"Haha, Emissary, it's up to you." Mo Chaoge retracted further, and stood amongst the Mo Family warriors, showing that they were not going to take the initiative.

"Whoever comes up first, dies first." Mu Yu Die said coldly, and then turned her head away, not bothering to say anything more.

Di Yalan was standing beside her on alert with a stoney face.

Suddenly all was silent.

Though suspicious, the Crescent Emissary didn't take action blindly.

At the same time Bernard and Mo Chaoge quieted down after they heard that Mu Yu Die was capable of killing a Disaster Level Warrior. They made eye-contact with the Crescent Emissary to urge him to test Mu Yu Die.

At that moment, shadows appeared from all directions from the surrounding rocks.

A tall man suddenly stood beside Mu Yu Die and said softly, "Miss Mu, how are you?"

Everyone in the area, including the Crescent Emissary, Mo Chaoge and Bernard, who were all Disaster Level warriors, couldn't figure out how he appeared.

That man just appeared next to Mu Yu Die like a ghost.

"Martial Spirit of Teleportation! Beiming Family!"

Mo Chaoge screamed in shock.

“Look who we have here... the Mo Family!” The handsome young man beside Mu Yu Die looked around in arrogance and said coldly, “Huh? You wanna fight with my Beiming Family?”

“We dare not.”

Mo Chaoge took a deep breath and calmed down. He said to the young man politely, “It’s the Third Young Master, no wonder Miss Mu was so confident. Third Young Master, I didn’t know that Miss Mu was protected by the Beiming Family. If I knew that earlier, I wouldn’t have bothered coming here. Please forgive me, Third Young Master...”

Beiming Ce waved his hand and said impatiently, “If it’s none of the Mo Family’s business, just leave with your people. Don’t get involved. I’m gonna clean up the Dark World.”

As he was talking, warriors wearing Beiming uniforms arrived one by one.

Two old men, one thin and the other fat, stood next to him silently and fixed their cold eyes on Mo Chaoge and the Crescent Emissary separately.

“Well then, I will take my leave.” Mo Chaoge smiled respectfully and left at once.

The Mo Family warriors turned quiet after they saw Beiming Ce, and left immediately with Mo Chaoge.

As for Bernard, he stepped back and was about to run away into the Stone Woods.

Mu Yu Die touched her zither softly and said, “Third Young Master, please kill that guy.”

“Triing!”

The sound of the zither rang out.

Bernard’s body quivered heavily and he almost fell down. He jumped behind a rock immediately and ran as fast as hell.

“Old Yin, please.” Beiming Ce ordered softly.

The thin old man behind him suddenly rushed out like a ghost and, after a moment, disappeared.

Three seconds later, Bernard’s miserable horrifying scream came from within the Stone Woods.

Five minutes later the thin old man, Old Yin, flew back like a ghost and stood still beside Beiming Ce, all without saying a word.

Note from the TL: Hey guys, thank you for reading this excellent novel! And yeah, I know, though it’s perfect, there’s something funny...such as the author sometime has bad memory that he forgets to make Di Yalan and Mu Yu Die call Shi Yan “Ding Yan”, and the Pinyin “Die” is like the English word “die”...haha, anyway, it IS an intriguing novel, isn’t it?

Chapter 44 Silent Town

“Thank you, Third Young Master.”

Mu Yu Die stood up and put her zither away slowly. Seeing confusion in the Crescent Emissary's eyes, she said, "You never thought you would encounter misfortune after such a long chase, did you?"

"Beiming Ce! This is a matter between the Dark World and the Mu Family. Your Beiming Family better not get involved!" The Crescent Emissary didn't look at Mu Yu Die, but instead stared at Beiming Ce. "As long as you allow me to take Miss Mu away, the Lord of the Dark World will reward your Beiming Family with anything you want."

"No need." Beiming Ce shook his head and said calmly, "Since you're already here, there is no reason for you to return."

The two old men behind him quickly flew out again.

These two old men flew towards the emissaries like hideous devils. After a few seconds, all the emissaries from the Dark World, including the Crescent Emissary, had their chests sliced open and died instantly.

Once all the emissaries were killed, the two frightening old men silently flew back to Beiming Ce's side like two ghostly shadows.

Standing beside Mu Yu Die, Di Yalan was astonished when she saw the miserable deaths of the emissaries.

She knew that the Beiming Family was very influential within the Merchant Union, but she never thought they were this powerful!

The Beiming Family didn't care about retaliation from the Dark World. Therefore, they ruthlessly killed the emissaries.

"Sister Lan, do you still think we made the wrong decision?" Mu Yu Die smiled.

Di Yalan had a complicated expression on her face. She lightly sighed, "No, it's just that..."

"Stop worrying. For our future's sake, it's best to forget about him as soon as possible." Mu Yu Die persuaded her softly.

"Ok." Di Yalan nodded helplessly.

"Shall we go now?" Beiming Ce's black eyes wandered over Di Yalan and Mu Yu Die for a while as he asked politely.

"Sure."

...

In another region of the Stone Woods.

As Shi Yan stepped around a corner, he suddenly drew back while on alert.

"Shoo!"

A sharp arrow landed in front of him. At the same time, a Blue Smoke Bomb of the Mo Family shot up into the sky.

“Hum! It’s you again! Reckless!” Shi Yan grunted with a stony face.

Mo Yanyu appeared from within a stone cave with arrows in her hand. She looked at Shi Yan and said coldly, “You’ve finally shown up!”

Johnson, with his broken arm, and Li Han also appeared from behind her and blocked Shi Yan from both sides, while watching him cautiously.

“You are seeking death!”

Shi Yan shouted and suddenly shot towards Mo Yanyu like a sharp sword.

While shooting forward, his body was covered with white smoke and the smell of death. He looked like a terrifying devil!

“Miss! Watch out!” Li Han cried out in fear and flew towards Mo Yanyu like lightning.

Li Han was at the Second Sky of Human Level, thus he could see Shi Yan’s amazing explosiveness! How could Mo Yanyu bear such violent force!

“Cheechee!”

Shi Yan slammed his foot down and cut a long gouge in the ground. Suddenly, his body changed direction and rushed towards Johnson, moving faster than before.

“Bang!”

Before Johnson could even think, he saw a white shadow rushing towards him and an overwhelming power slammed into his body.

“Kakaka!”

All of Johnson’s bones broke instantly and blood poured from his mouth and eyes. He fell to the ground and moaned miserably.

“You are Johnson, right? You certainly enjoyed it when you whipped me hard a few days ago!” Standing beside Johnson, Shi Yan kicked on Johnson’s chest again and again. He smirked, “Are you enjoying this now? Huh?”

Shi Yan continued to kick Johnson until a broken bone in his chest was forced into his heart and he finally ceased to breathe.

“Brutal!” Li Han was shocked. Though he wanted to go and kill Shi Yan, he worried about Mo Yanyu, so he could only hesitate and shout, unable to stop him.

Mo Yanyu was horrified. She was dumbstruck after she saw how brutally Johnson was killed.

Johnson’s Profound Qi was then quickly absorbed into Shi Yan’s meridians in a few seconds.

Shi Yan turned around and fixed his bright eyes on Mo Yanyu; then he smiled coldly, “Pretty, we will meet again. And believe me, you will regret what you have done to me.”

As he finished his sentence, he slipped around a nearby stone and disappeared into the Stone Woods.

“Old Li, why didn’t you kill him!” Mo Yanyu said angrily after Shi Yan disappeared.

“That guy is at least at the Second Sky of Nascent Level. Also, he used such brutal martial arts that could kill in a single move. He moved so fast that I could hardly follow him. If I had moved, he would have come and attacked you, so I was afraid...” Li Han said apologetically.

“Second Sky of Nascent Level!”

Mo Yanyu held her breath as fear could be seen in her eyes. She mumbled, “It’s impossible! There was only a little Profound Qi in his body two months ago! He was merely at the First Sky of Elementary Level!”

“What?” Li Han’s whole body shook as he looked at her unbelievably. After a long time, he continued, “If that’s true, Miss, in my humble opinion, you have caused a huge problem for the Mo Family.”

...

Shi Yan moved quickly through the Stone Woods, not spending one more second than necessary in any area.

He knew that Li Han was a Human Level warrior, and since the Blue Smoke Bomb of the Mo Family was already in the sky, more people would gather there shortly. He had to escape as soon as possible to avoid any further trouble.

Because of his cautiousness, he managed to escape from that dangerous region before Mo Chaoge and his people arrived.

There didn’t seem to be many warriors hiding in the Stone Woods. He didn’t see anyone while he was fleeing, which confused him a little. He guessed this abnormality had something to do with those influential people Mu Yu Die mentioned.

...

At nightfall.

Shi Yan finally got out of the Stone Woods and was walking towards Silent Town, which was only a very short distance away.

He slowed down a little and began to sort through the memories of the previous owner of his body to recall everything he could about the Shi Family.

He needed the identity of the former master of this body.

As one of the five biggest families in the Merchant Union, the Shi Family was rich in all types of resources such as Martial Skills, a Gravity Field training room, rare Chinese medicines and skillful warrior trainers...

He needed to use these advantages to strengthen himself.

He had decided when he was at the blood pool that he would go to the Shi Family, and that’s why he refused Mu Yu Die’s offer.

The identity of his body was too special that it would cause a lot of trouble if he attached himself to another power.

In addition, a new power wouldn't give him access to the best resources.

But it would be totally different if he went to the Shi Family...

The previous master of his body was the young master of the Shi Family. As long as he showed talent, the Shi Family would cultivate him at any cost.

It would be a total waste if he didn't take advantage of their special resources.

...

Once he reached Silent Town, he walked directly into a shop which was collecting all sort of stones without a second thought and shouted naturally, "Anyone here?"

An attendant came up with a wide smile, and flattered, "Young Master Yan, you've finally returned! The Master sent Minister Han to pick you up long ago since you disappeared in the Dark Forest. Young Master Yan, Minister Han is in the backyard, for he has waited for you for many days. But now, it is a little inconvenient for him to meet. Could you wait for a moment...?"

The attendant looked towards the backyard with ambiguous eyes.

"Never mind. I know what he is doing." Shi Yan walked directly into the backyard of the shop.

Several Shi Family warriors were gambling in the backyard. At the sight of Shi Yan, they panicked and put the dices away embarrassingly, then greeted loudly, "Young Master Yan!"

"Please go on." Shi Yan waved his hands and strode past them to the back room.

These warriors were quite surprised since Shi Yan left without scolding them.

"What? He didn't reproach us this time. Too strange!"

"Yes. He used to scold us every time he saw us gambling. Do some actual work! Stop goofing around! How strange that he didn't say anything this time!"

"Young Master Yan looked totally different. It seems... that he has developed some manliness. Don't you think so?"

"Well, yeah, you have a point."

"..."

Shi Yan opened the door as he reached the back room and walked in directly, "Uncle Han, when did you arrive here?"

Han Zhong was quite shocked. After dressing himself in a hurry, he smiled in embarrassment, "... Young Master Yan, when did you come in?"

"I've been here for quite a while." Shi Yan smiled, sipped his tea, and waved his hand, "It's ok. If you are not satisfied enough you can keep going. Besides, I have the chance to learn something from you."

“Kekeke!” Han Zhong coughed strongly for a while, “Satisfied, satisfied. Well, Xiao Feng Xian, you should go back to your business.”

“Ok, I will take my leave.” That young woman dressed herself in bed and then stepped down with a red face. As she walked to the doorway, she suddenly turned back and glared at Shi Yan, “Everybody said Young Master Yan from the Shi Family is a righteous man, I guess they are all blind! I’ve never seen such a ‘righteous’ man before! Humph!”

She giggled and leered at Shi Yan, before moving her hot body out of the room.

Chapter 45 The Change

As soon as Xiao Feng Xian left, Han Zhong became more relaxed right away.

After briefly dressing himself, Han Zhong sat down at the table in front of Shi Yan, made a cup of tea and sipped it, “Young Master Yan, where are your escorts?”

“All dead.” Shi Yan looked calm as he explained casually, “The demon beasts in the Dark Forest went insane when hunting the warriors. In order to protect me, they all sacrificed themselves.”

Han Zhong was rather shocked as he looked at Shi Yan in confusion, “I was more or less aware of the situation. It’s so lucky of you to have escaped from it.”

He had heard the news long ago that the Silver Thunder Wolf had gone on a rampage, so he planned to go back to Shi Family in half a month since he assumed that he wouldn’t be able to find Shi Yan alive. He couldn’t believe that Shi Yan walked out of the Dark Forest unscathed.

It was so intense in the Dark Forest that even experienced warriors had been killed. But Shi Yan, who was a nerd, had somehow managed to survive. This completely surprised Han Zhong.

Han Zhong didn’t really like the former master of Shi Yan’s body.

That guy didn’t train in martial arts and was very old-fashioned; he loved to look into things that no one else in the Shi Family liked. Han Zhong couldn’t understand that.

Now, if it weren’t for Shi Jian’s order and the fact that he happened to be in Silent Town, he wouldn’t have been here waiting for Shi Yan.

“Yes, you certainly did have good luck.”

Shi Yan nodded as he smiled naturally, then he asked indifferently, “Uncle Han, when are we returning home?”

“It’s up to you, Young Master Yan. Actually I’m desperate to leave, for I have something to report to the family head. I would have returned days ago if it weren’t for you.” Han Zhong paused and answered boldly.

While he was talking, Han Zhong couldn't help but begin to examine Shi Yan. He didn't notice it at first, but after a careful examination, he realized something was different about him...

Shi Yan was much skinnier than before, and his round face had become angular and more masculine.

Sitting there naturally, Shi Yan's kept his back upright and his body was like a sharp sword which made him seem quite hard-edged.

That wasn't the only change in his appearance.

The former Shi Yan only lit up when he was researching historic relics. He was often listless on an average day.

But now, the guy before Han Zhong had deep bright eyes and seemed to be deep in thought all the time, sending out the impression that he knew everything.

"Uncle Han, may I ask you something?" Under Han Zhong's gaze, Shi Yan continued easily, "It is surprisingly quiet in the Stone Woods these days, do you know what's happening?"

"Well, the Beiming Family sent people there. It is said that they were meeting someone in the Stone Woods, therefore the warriors who were wandering in the Stone Woods all left upon hearing that."

"The Beiming Family! Who was in the lead?" Shi Yan realized something.

"Beiming Ce."

Han Zhong began to curse after he answered Shi Yan, "That guy is said to have reached Disaster Level half a year ago. Damn! He is only twenty seven years old! And he has twin Martial Spirits! Madness! I'm already forty five and still at The Second Sky of Disaster Level! It's unfair!"

Twenty five years old, First Sky of Disaster Level, twin Martial Spirits...

Shi Yan stiffened as he suddenly realized that Beiming Ce was the person Mu Yu Die had planned to introduce him to.

That man has a rare talent and reached that level at such a young age. In addition, he came from the number one family in the Merchant Union - the Beiming Family. No wonder Mu Yu Die and Di Yalan chose him.

Silently, Shi Yan smirked to himself and an icy glint could be seen in his eyes: twenty five years old, Disaster Level, twin Martial Spirits, that's very unbelievable?

Not exactly!

He was someone who had reached The Third Sky of Nascent Level from the First Sky of Elementary Level in mere two months!

Despite the Petrification and Immortal Martial Spirits, he also possessed another vicious and mysterious Martial Spirit. In comparison, he had much more potential than Beiming Ce!

"Time! I only need some time to surpass Beiming Ce!" Shi Yan thought to himself.

"Young Master Yan, you, you've got Profound Qi in your body?"

Han Zhong's eyes lit up and he gazed at Shi Yan seriously, "I can feel that there is Profound Qi flowing in your body, and it is incredibly dense! Young Master Yan, what on earth happened to you?"

Shi Yan took a deep breath, trying to suppress his indignation, "Yes, I've got Profound Qi, so I'm a warrior now."

"Which Level?" Han Zhong couldn't wait.

"Nascent Level."

"What!"

...

The Merchant Union. Tianyun City. The Shi Family. The training field.

The training field of Shi Family extended tens of miles and was covered with ancient trees and odd rocks...

There were also water pools, sand fields, earth fields and wooden rooms within the training field...

With complicated refuges and barriers everywhere, the members of Shi Family were able to conduct live combat exercises.

And they could also learn to adjust and fight in all sorts of topographies.

At the time being, in the center of the training field, stood a huge, diamond shaped testing jade. The third generation of Shi Family were in a queue, walking towards the jade. They put their hand on the testing jade and sent out Profound Qi to test their level.

"Shi Tianluo, twenty-one, the Second Sky of Nascent Level!"

"Shi Tianxiao, twenty-five, the First Sky of Nascent Level!"

"Shi Tianling, twenty-seven, the Third Sky of Elementary Level!"

"Shi Tianke, twenty, the Second Sky of Nascent Level!"

"Shi Tianyun, nineteen, the Third Sky of Nascent Level!"

"..."

Han Feng, who was standing beside the testing jade with his eyes narrowed, yelled out after every young member finished his test.

Everytime Han Feng announced the result, the members of the first and second generations changed their expression accordingly; either happy or disappointed.

"Second Brother, your Tianyun is really something! He managed to advance to a higher stage!" Shi Kuo was a little angry as he grunted, "Tianke has been too lazy recently! I have to do something!"

"Third Brother, Tianke trains really hard. I saw him training in the Gravitational Room at midnight. Don't pressure him too much, or it could go the opposite way." Shi Gang comforted him.

“Tianyun, work harder. Advance to Human Level as soon as possible.” Shi Tie’s sound was like a great bell as he said proudly.

Shi Tie was Shi Jian’s brother, and Shi Gang and Shi Kuo were his sons. Shi Tianyun was Shi Gang’s son and thus Shi Tie’s grandson. Shi Tie was delighted as he saw that Shi Tianyun had advanced.

The position of family head was decided by one’s Martial level. Many years ago Shi Tie lost to his brother, so he was rather unhappy and hoped that his grandson, Shi Tianyun, could transcend Shi Jian’s grandson, Shi Tianxiao.

The Petrification Martial Spirit was very special and only went to the first two children of a couple.

The third child would rarely have the chance to inherit it.

That’s why every small family of Shi would generally only have two children.

Even the head of the Shi Family, Shi Jian, only had two children: Shi Yang and Shi Qing.

Shi Yang had a daughter - Shi Tianling, and a son - Shi Tianxiao.

Shi Qing and Yang Hai only had one son and that was Shi Yan.

Thus, Shi Tianling, Shi Tianxiao and Shi Yan were Shi Jian’s grandchildren, while Shi Tianyun, Shi Tianluo and Shi Tianke were Shi Tie’s grandchildren.

The members of Shi Family all got along well with each other. They stuck together and worked hard to increase the influence of their family.

But no matter how close they were, they still competed with each other. Such as Shi Tie, he always wanted to surpass Shi Jian through his grandson.

As his sons, Shi Gang and Shi Kuo, were not comparable to Shi Jian’s son, Shi Yang, he had given up passing his dream onto them.

Luckily, his grandsons, Shi Tianyun and Shi Tianke, were more talented than Shi Tianxiao. He was rather proud every time they did the test, although it was without any bad intentions.

Yang Hai was standing next to Shi Yang, as he was explaining the state of their quarry to the latter. Hearing Shi Tie’s yell, Shi Yang got serious, “Well, second uncle is about to show off again.” After a pause, he glanced at Shi Tianxiao who was standing beside him and scolded, “You little bastard! You only cause me to lose face!”

“Er...I’m not that bad...” Shi Tianxiao drew his head back and looked miserable.

Yang Hai’s face became bitter as he sighed, “You should be satisfied. Think about my Shi Yan. At least Tianxiao is a warrior. But that bastard fools around all day and hasn’t come back yet. Who knows how much trouble he will bring back this time.”

“Ha, that’s true.” Shi Yang laughed.

...

The descendants of Shi Family were all gathered together on the training field and were discussing lively.

Just then, an eagle appeared in the sky and settled down on Shi Jian's shoulder.

Shi Jian picked up a little gray bag from the eagle's claw and took out a letter. Opening the letter casually, he began to read and he frowned.

They were all his relatives, so he didn't intend to hide anything.

"Huh?"

After merely one glance, Shi Jian couldn't help but cry out with an amazed look on his face.

The people on the field were surprised and became quiet. They looked at Shi Jian and wondered why he was acting so weird.

"Big Brother, what's up?" Shi Tie frowned and asked loudly, "Is the Mo Family making a fuss again? Damn! They won't quiet down if we don't give them a good kick!"

"Nope." Shi Jian put down the letter excitedly as he said in surprise, "Han Zhong found Shi Yan!"

"How is that bastard?" Upon hearing that, Yang Hai finally settled down. He asked with an annoyed face, seemingly planning on giving Shi Yan a lesson when he returned.

"That kid, is a warrior now..." Shi Jian looked shocked as his mouth trembled. He was trying to hide his excitement.

"What?" Shi Tie couldn't help but cry out, "He is seventeen! Why did he begin to train at such an old age!"

After thinking, he sighed lightly as he really felt sorry for Shi Yan, "It's too late, starting at seventeen. I guess he won't achieve anything in his life. What was that little bastard doing before now! If he had been training since he was born, he could have reached the Second or Third Sky of Nascent Level, even if he doesn't possess the Martial Spirit of Shi Family."

"That kid, is now at the Third Sky of Nascent Level!" Shi Jian answered firmly with sharp eyes.

Chapter 46 - A Glance

Half a month later, in Tianyun City.

Shi Yan and Han Zhong, as well as a troop of warriors from the Shi Family, were entering the city at a leisurely pace. A ground dragon was carrying the goods they had purchased from Silent Town.

Shi Yan and Han Zhong were at the head of the troop and had talked all the way.

"Old Han, it's getting late. Let's continue for home tomorrow. We should rest somewhere in the city today, okay?" Shi Yan said leisurely.

“Well, where does Brother Yan want to stay?” Han Zhong smiled with an ambiguous look on his face, “Tianyun City is the biggest city in the Merchant Union, with a large population of several millions. The recreation centers in this city are much better quality than those in the small cities we passed.”

“Well Old Han, since you are familiar with this area, you lead the way.”

“I’m afraid my remaining crystal coins are not enough. Hmm, we will spend cost a lot at some places.”

“Old Han, you want to take advantage of me again? Last time in the Scent Pavilion you pretended to be drunk and made me pay for everything. Now you want to do that again?”

“Hehe...I was truly drunk that time. You are treating me unjustly!”

“I don’t care. You have to pay this time! Or I will tell Uncle Han Feng everything you did on the way.”

“No! Brother Yan, it’s my treat! My treat, okay?” Han Zhong faked a miserable face and sighed, “You know my brother’s temper too well! If he knows what I did, he will kick me to death. Oh My! I’m so miserable! I work so hard for the family and earn so little money that I can barely even afford my recreation time...”

“Deal! It’s your treat tonight.” Shi Yan looked back and shouted to the warriors behind him, “Fellows, you all heard that right?”

“Yes, we heard it!”

All seven warriors of Shi Family yelled excitedly at the same time.

“Let’s go!”

...

Shi Yan mingled well with Han Zhong and those warriors in that half a month.

Shi Yan was not pretentious at all as he ate and interacted happily with the warriors. And he was very open when it came to women, for he never chickened out in brothels, sometimes being even more audacious and horny than Han Zhong once he met a lovely girl.

The two of them went to a lot of brothels together along the way. They paid in turns and never let the warriors use any money.

In a very short time, Shi Yan won the trust of Han Zhong and his escorts.

Han Zhong thought they shared the same interests and complimented Shi Yan on the fact that he had grown up. As his level increased, Shi Yan had become a totally different person.

Shi Yan concealed most of what had happened to him in the Dark Forest. He told Han Zhong that he found a certain type of red fruit in the ancient cave he was studying. After eating three such fruits, he got Profound Qi and awoke the Petrification Martial Spirit of Shi Family.

He didn’t mention a word about the blood pool, the Immortal Martial Spirit or the mysterious Martial Spirit, nor the story between him and Mo Yanyu and Mu Yu Die.

Though Han Zhong was very surprised by Shi Yan's magical story, he didn't keep asking, but thought that Shi Yan was incredibly lucky to find that fruit which made him stronger.

And during these days, Shi Yan learnt all he could about the Shi Family through Han Zhong.

The former master of his body had left him many memories, though it was mostly about the historic relics and ancient language that he had studied.

But Shi Yan couldn't recall many memories about the Shi Family. Luckily Han Zhong was not on guard against him. During their together time in brothels, Han Zhong had already told him all he wanted to know.

After hanging out together several times, Han Zhong began to like this young master; so he told Shi Yan not only about the business and power distribution of Shi Family, but also common sense about martial training, which Shi Yan wasn't aware of before.

For example, when a warrior reached Nirvana Level, the Conception Sea would form in their mind, which could connect and combine the Martial Spirit magically with their Profound Qi to activate a secret skill and release an amazing power.

Also, he told Shi Yan a lot about the features and weakness of all sorts of Martial Spirits; about the most powerful Martial Spirit in the Merchant Union, the Fire Empire and the God-blessed Empire, and their weaknesses and disadvantages.

Although Han Zhong was very lustful, he was quite diligent in training Martial Arts.

Han Zhong possessed a lot information about warriors, therefore, through him, Shi Yan gained a thorough and comprehensive understanding about warriors, as well as the differences among the Levels below Disaster Level.

Han Zhong was a Disaster Level warrior, so he couldn't tell Shi Yan much about the levels above it, but he told Shi Yan everything he knew about the lower levels.

This information was exactly what Shi Yan needed most right now.

...

The Dream Pavilion.

Shi Yan and Han Zhong, along with four Shi family warriors, were drinking and having fun in a large room on the third floor.

In the center of the simple and unsophisticated room, on some soft carpet, stood a one-meter high square table, which was loaded with delicate food and drinks.

Shi Yan and Han Zhong were sitting on the carpet with hot young girls in their arms, yelling and playing dice happily.

"Old Han, drink!" Shi Yan yelled.

Han Zhong was downcast as he had lost numerous times. He drank up the wine in his cup at once and rubbed the girl's in his arms breasts. Then he raised the dice and grunted, "This hand's got some luck, this time I will definitely win!"

"Aww, if that is luck, both of my hands have it!" Shi Yan's grin widened and he put both of his hands underneath the girl's coat, "Qiu Xiang, you really got big things here, say, I will always be bigger than him!"

Qiu Xiang had delicate white skin and plump breasts. Her watery eyes were filled with shyness, "Young Master Yan, you are so bad! Why do you tease me all the time?"

"You can tease me too." Shi Yan smiled, drank his strong drink, and urged, "Old Han, what are you waiting for? Cast the dice!"

"Yin Kui and Jiu Shan are nearby. Too much Yin Qi is coming forth. I can feel it clearly." Han Zhong frowned, released the girl in his arms, and quietly walked to the window.

He opened the window and looked out of it with the help of the light of a big red lantern, "Sure enough, there is Beiming Ce. Yin Kui and Jiu Shan never leave his side. Wherever Yin Kui and Jiu Shan are, you will find Beiming Ce."

As Han Zhong mentioned Beiming Ce, Shi Yan suddenly remembered Mu Yu Die and Di Yalan.

After a little hesitation, he too walked to the window and opened it a little wider, coldly gazing at the troop on the street.

This troop consisted of around thirty people. Beiming Ce was riding on his snow white Ling Xiao Horse at the head of the troop. Smiling lightly, he was talking to someone in the sedan on a ground dragon beside him.

As the curtain on the sedan fluttered in the wind, Mu Yu Die's fairy-like face could be seen.

Di Yalan was riding a war horse with black armor on it, her hot body moving up and down with the pace of the war horse. She looked in low-spirits and a slight, sorrowful frown could be seen between her eyebrows.

She barely smiled when Beiming Ce talked to her, not showing too much interest.

The two old men, who were sending out heavy Yin Qi, were both riding black-armored war horses behind Beiming Ce silently.

Shi Yan opened the window a little more. When he looked at the troop who were still dozens of meters away, the two old men seemed to notice as they looked in his direction immediately.

Shi Yan felt two streams of cold Yin Qi gush out of their eyes from so far away, making him shudder with fear.

The two old men seemed to know Han Zhong, as when they came near the window and saw him, their cold air decreased.

Under the two men's gaze, Han Zhong became a totally different person. Instead of behaving in a noisy, flamboyant and boisterous manner, he looked rigid, as he gave a salute to them, holding his fists in front of his chest.

The two old men nodded and didn't look at Han Zhong anymore. They turned back and narrowed their eyes, focusing again towards Beiming Ce's back.

The troop from the Beiming Family didn't stop, but continued their leisurely steps along the street.

There were several warriors who were out seeking fun on the narrow street. They stepped to the side of the road in respect when they saw the Beiming troop.

A small path was thus suddenly formed in the middle of the crowded street for the Beiming troops to move by smoothly.

Chapter 47 - Tianyun City

In that simple room, Shi Yan looked lost. He stood stunned at the window for quite a while before closing the window.

Going back to his seat, he was in rather low-spirits. He merely focused on drinking and didn't put his hands on the girls anymore.

"Young Master Yan, was that the Beiming Family troop?" Karl, a Shi Family warrior, asked him casually.

"Yes." Shi Yan answered bluntly and kept drinking.

Standing by the window, Shi Zhong looked at Shi Yan, frowning with an odd look in his eyes. After some hesitation, he asked, "Brother Yan, the woman on the war horse, you... do you know her?"

Shi Yan nodded and finished the wine in his cup, "Yes, we walked out of the Dark Forest together. As you heard, the demon beasts were everywhere. It was better to be accompanied than be alone."

Han Zhong was an experienced man. Seeing Shi Yan's apathetic response, he blinked his eyes and assumed that something must have happened between Shi Yan and Di Yalan.

Moving near Shi Yan, Han Zhong waved his hand to the girl next to him, "Leave us alone. We need to talk."

The foxy girls stood up smiling and quickly left the room.

When there were only the warriors left in the room, Han Zhong said, "Brother Yan, I don't know who that woman is. But it seems that Beiming Ce is quite into her. If she accepts Beiming Ce as well, you should forget her."

"Han Zhong is right. There are so many women in the world. It's unwise to offend Beiming Ce for a woman. The Beiming Family is the number one family in the Merchant Union, and they are too

influential. Beiming Ce is Beiming Shang's beloved son. It's unwise to offend him." Karl reminded Shi Yan earnestly.

Karl, who was at the Second Sky of Nascent Level, was the leader of the warriors. He tried to comfort Shi Yan as the latter had left a very good impression.

"Old Han, who were those two old men?" Shi Yan didn't reply to Karl's statement, but looked to Han Zhong.

"Yin Kui and Jiu Shan have the same teacher, and they are at the First Sky of Nirvana Level now, but no one knows where they came from. They used to serve the family head of Beiming Family, Beiming Shang. After Beiming Ce was born, and considering how he possesses twin Martial Spirits and agile movements, Beiming Shang assigned them to protect Beiming Ce."

The First Sky of Nirvana Level! Shi Yan was astounded.

Shi Jian, the family head of the Shi Family, was only at the Third Sky of Nirvana Level.

There were millions of residents in the Merchant Union, among which were numerous warriors who trained Martial Arts. But only a small part of them, barely more than ten people, could step into the Nirvana Level.

The two Nirvana-Level warriors stayed by Beiming Ce's side without doing anything else. The world was his oyster.

"In the Merchant Union, the Beiming Family is much more powerful than the other two biggest families combined. There are many skillful warriors among the Ministers, and talented descents pop up now and then. Plus, Beiming Shang himself is at the Sky Level. It is really unwise to offend the Beiming Family."

Seeing that Shi Yan wasn't responding, Han Zhong hastily explained in case Shi Yan acted abruptly.

"Ok, got it." After being silent for a while, Shi Yan nodded. His expression turned back to normal as he smiled to Han Zhong, "Don't worry about me, Old Han. I know what to do and when to endure."

"That's good for you." Han Zhong said feeling relieved, "Let the girls in again?"

"No. Not interested. Let's drink."

"Great! Let's drink! Come on!"

...

The Merchant Union was a very special country which was co-governed by the big families, warriors, mercenaries, merchants and all sorts of NGOs.

There were no formal army, no officers, and no governmental structure.

Instead, there were many big families, hundreds of mercenary unions, tens of thousands of merchants, vagrants and civilians who hated wars...

The Merchant Union never got involved in the wars between the Fire Empire and the God-blessed Empire, therefore it was a peaceful country.

However, once it was invaded, all the forces in the Merchant Union would unite to fight against the enemy.

Over the history of the Merchant Union, the Fire Empire and the God-blessed Empire had both attempted to invade it for its wealth, but they were smashed every time by the united army of the big families and mercenary unions in the Merchant Union.

On average days, there were no governors in the Merchant Union, but once it was in danger, its people would fight together to drive back their mutual enemy.

Those big families, hundreds of mercenary unions and wealthy merchants could form an extremely powerful force which could defeat the God-blessed Empire and the Fire Empire easily.

It's lucky that the forces in the Merchant Union only came together when the country was in danger, or it could swallow any other country at any time!

The Merchant Union was in a crucial position. The Dark Forest was to its south, the Dead Swamp to its north, continuous Cloud Mountain to its west and the enormous Endless Sea to its east.

No matter if it was the Dead Swamp, the Cloud Mountain, or the islands in the Endless Sea, there hid all kinds of abundant resources, such as minerals and magical medicines. As a big trading nation, the Merchant Union took advantage of its geographical location.

However, despite the exuberant resources in the Dead Swamp, the Cloud Mountain and the Endless Sea, there was also incredible danger.

Demon beasts, poisonous fog, miasma, hideous tribes, and disasters...

That's why one needed to be very capable to travel in these areas. Luckily, the Merchant Union never lacked skillful mercenary unions and warriors.

There were seventeen cities in the Merchant Union, and the Tianyun City was the biggest among them.

Tianyun City was located in the center of the Merchant Union, with eight small cities around it. It covered a large area which almost equaled the eight small cities combined, as did its population.

Therefore, Tianyun City was like the capital city of the Merchant Union, which was the main territory of those biggest families.

The Shi Family was amongst them. Though they had properties and gardens in every main city, the Shi Family was rooted in Tianyun City.

The Shi Family was located in the northern part of Tianyun City. It covered one hundred miles and had thousands of buildings in it. Artificial lakes, rockeries, gardens and brooks were everywhere. The Shi Family descendants lived in the serene back garden, where there was an artificial lake in the middle, with beautiful pavilions surrounding it. Behind the pavilions were the training fields, gravitational rooms, and suffering palaces...

There were not many direct Shi descendants, but its branches and ministers could easily reach one hundred. Considering those servants and escorts, there were almost one thousand people in Shi Family.

Early every morning, the Shi Family members, ministers and warriors would train hard in within the training grounds.

On that day, just as the rooster crowed and the sky began to turn bright, many warriors had already gotten up and started to train.

Shi Jian walked out of the Rock Room and shouted below into Yang Hai's pavilion. Then they walked toward the gate together.

During their walk to the gate, the warriors bowed to them. Shi Jian nodded indifferently without slowing his steps.

A short time after they reached the gate, Han Feng appeared behind them. He began to observe the corridor out the gate as he stood next to Shi Jian silently.

"According to Han Zhong's message, they should have arrived home last night. Since they didn't, they must arrive today." Shi Jian frowned and mumbled, "I waited till dawn to see if that boy has really reached the Third Sky of Nascent Level. But that bastard didn't come home..."

"Maybe they were held up by something on the road." Though Yang Hai was cursing in his mind that Shi Yan was too impolite, he still explained for him.

"Dammit. Is it possible that Han Zhong sent the wrong message?"

Shi Jian looked back to Han Feng in confusion, "I have met someone whose Martial Spirit awoke as a teenager, so I'm not skeptical about that. However, that kid has never trained in martial arts before turning seventeen, but now he is suddenly at the Third Sky of Nascent level, that is just unbelievable! I have been pondering upon it for several nights but I still can't figure it out. What do you think?"

Han Feng pouted, narrowed his eyes and said, "Though Han Zhong is not a serious man most of the time, he is quite cautious on major things, so I don't think he would dare to lie about this. I can't explain it either, but I think it might be true."

"Well, I can only hope so. That bastard has let me down these past seventeen years, I hope this time he will be different."

Many warriors came out after them in curiosity after they had breakfast, as they heard that the family head was waiting at the gate. They gathered together and were discussing boisterously.

No one knew who was coming. The most likely people were those of the Beiming Family or Zuo Family, or Shi Jian wouldn't be there.

Yet, after a long long time, no one showed up. The warriors turned impatient and began to curse amongst themselves at the arrogant person who had made Shi Jian wait for so long.

As the sun rose higher and higher, they still saw nothing. Shi Jian was becoming worried as well, as he said to Yang Hai next to him, "It's been so long. What happened?"

Yang Hai shook his head with a bitter smile implying he didn't know either, while he sighed secretly to himself.

Though Shi Jian mentioned Shi Yan now and then, he never really cared for him.

He remembered Shi Yan only after Yang Hai's reminder that Shi Yan had disappeared in the Dark Forest.

Upon hearing Shi Yan had reached the Third Sky of Nascent Level, Shi Jian asked about him every day, and even came out early and waited for him...

Shi Jian's attitude switched too much, which made Yang Hai a little uncomfortable.

Hours later, it was approaching noon as the sun was directly above them in the sky., a fat ground dragon slowly appeared from the corridor.

Two persons were leisurely leading while chatting happily. They were Shi Yan and Han Zhong.

Chapter 48 - The Test

At the gate of Shi Family.

Shi Jian, Han Feng and Yang Hai all saw Shi Yan in front of the ground dragon at the same time.

Yang Hai took a quick glance at Shi Yan and frowned, thinking to himself that the boy must have suffered a lot, as he had become much skinnier.

However, Shi Jian and Han Feng's eyes brightened soon after they saw Shi Yan. They were totally surprised.

Yang Hai didn't train martial arts, so he didn't know that one getting skinnier didn't necessarily imply weakness.

Sometimes there was much more explosiveness hidden in a skinny body, than in a robust one.

However, Shi Jian and Han Feng were both experts, therefore they realized just from a glance that Shi Yan had become much stronger, and was even stronger than those third generation descents who had trained hard for more than ten years.

They looked at each other and were amazed.

They couldn't understand what had happened to Shi Yan in the past half a year that could have changed his bone structure.

A few minutes later, the troop, including Shi Yan and Han Zhong, arrived at the gate.

"Hi Big Grandpa, Uncle Han, Father." Shi Yan walked up to the gate with steady steps and greeted them.

Han Zhong came over as well, greeting Shi Jian and Han Feng, and nodded at Yang Hai, then he stood silently beside Shi Yan.

Shi Jian and Han Feng's bright eyes moved over Shi Yan's body.

After a long time, Shi Jian's eyes trembled. He took a deep breath, and said to Shi Yan, "Follow me." Then Shi Jian turned and headed to the back yard light-footedly.

Everyone who knew Shi Jian understood that he was in high spirits.

"Kid, put on a good show!" Han Zhong made a face at Shi Yan, implying that he was going to see better days.

Shi Yan gracefully acknowledged him and nodded softly. He turned to Yan Hai, "Father, are you especially waiting for me?"

Though Yang Hai had a rigid face, a light smile appeared around the corners of his mouth, "No one is waiting for you specifically. I just wanted to see what happened to your body and whether you really reached the Nascent Level or not."

"Han Zhong, come over here. I have a question for you." Han Feng threw a look at Han Zhong and left in the opposite direction to Shi Yan.

Han Zhong hung his head, with a worried look on his face, and followed after his brother reluctantly.

"Well, go. Don't keep your Big Grandpa waiting for too long." Yang Hai mumbled as he pulled Shi Yan's jacket and asked in a low voice, "What the hell happened to you?"

"Big Grandpa will also ask about it later. So, I guess I will explain then." Shi Yan smiled, not showing much respect for his father.

Yang Hai was a little surprised. He gazed at Shi Yan and asked in confusion, "Kid you are different now. You never beat around the bush, and always answered my questions straightforwardly. But now... you do not seem to be afraid of me. Kid, seems like you've grown up and don't take my concerns into account anymore."

"You are my father, why would I be afraid of you?" Shi Yan was astounded as he asked, "What is there to be afraid of?"

"This isn't like you. You never talked to me like this." Yang Hai frowned. After a careful examination, he shook his head and said to himself, "Little bastard! You became really audacious after becoming a warrior!"

"I'm gonna go. I can't keep Big Grandpa waiting for too long." Shi Yan smiled.

Those Shi Family warriors who had crowded the gate all got confused and started another boisterous discussion.

"Was the family head waiting for Young Master Yan? Is it true?"

"I don't know. I'm confused too. The family head has never appeared with Young Master Yan before, nor was he interested in his matters. What happened now?"

"Who knows? Has Young Master Yan created trouble again? Not likely, because master Yang Hai was the one who always cleaned up his mess. Although Young Master Yan makes trouble in the Merchant Union now and then, it was not to the extent that the family head had to solve it."

“Maybe Young Master Yan got into huge trouble this time. Who knows.”

“Stop your idle talk. You’d better be respectful to Young Master Yan from now on. He is not the book nerd you knew any more. Don’t blame me once you offend him and kick up a breeze.” Karl was making arrangements for the ground dragon and couldn’t help but yell when he saw that people were still gossiping.

“Karl, what’s up? You came back with Young Master Yan, do you know the details?” asked a warrior who was familiar with Karl.

“You will know it in no time.” Karl smiled proudly, “Young Master Yan will definitely surprise you guys!”

“What is it?”

“What on earth happened?”

Their curiosity was even stronger as they circled Karl and couldn’t stop asking.

“Not now. But I guess that you will know soon enough.” Without giving them an exact answer, Karl squeezed his way out of the crowd and left with the troop of warriors.

...

In the backyard of Shi Family.

At the center of the huge training field, the diamond-shaped test jade was glinting in the sunshine as if it was a small sun.

Shi Jian was standing beside the testing jade. As Shi Yan and Yang Hai came over, he patted the jade and suddenly, a ball of light flew into the jade from his hand.

The dazzling testing jade dimmed at once and returned to its original color.

“Inject your Profound Qi into the testing jade.” Shi Jian announced with firm eyes.

Shi Yan confidently walked up to the testing jade, stretched out his hand, and pressed on the jade. He operated his Profound Qi and injected it into the testing jade.

Complex patterns showed up on the silver testing jade and a vague orange light shone from it. Gradually the light got brighter and the color deeper.

“Ok now.” Shi Jian’s mouth trembled as he focused his eyes on Shi Yan, “I heard that the Martial Spirit of Shi Family also awakened in your body, did it?”

“Yes.”

“Show me.”

“OK.”

Shi Yan stretched out the other hand and rolled up his sleeve.

As he operated the Martial Spirit according to his will, his arm gradually petrified and became dark brown.

“Dark brown!”

Shi Jian and Yang Hai cried out at the same time with great amazement on their faces, while gazing at Shi Yan’s brown arm in astonishment.

“Is it because of the light?” Yang Hai blinked his eyes and rubbed them, then looked directly into the sun, and mumbled, “Am I dazzled?”

Upon hearing that, Shi Jian also got confused . He grabbed Shi Yan’s arm and demanded, “Come up here! Go into the shadow of that rock so the color can be seen clearly .”

Shi Yan didn’t attempt to refuse and peacefully walked after him to the back side of the rock.

“It is dark brown!”

Shi Jian shouted loudly and his breathing got heavier. His bright eyes stared at Shi Yan as he asked in a dignified tone, “Little bastard, what the hell has happened to you? Why? Why is your Martial Spirit dark brown? Is it at the second stage of Petrification?”

“Absolutely. It is at the second stage. Though I’m a mere Nascent Level warrior, my Martial Spirit reached the second stage!”

“Give us a reasonable explanation! We Shi Family, from the far ancestors to my generation, had never come across this situation! Our Martial Spirit never reaches the second stage before we reach Human Level. You are the first one! What happened? What on earth happened to you?!” Shi Jian was almost mad.

“Well, the thing is...” Shi Yan repeated what he had told Han Zhong for a second time.

After he finished his story, Shi Jian kept his position and stared at him with a weird expression.

”Big Grandpa, what do you mean by that look? I explained it.“

“You mean three magical red fruits awoke your Martial Spirit? And made your Martial Spirit so odd? And gave you Profound Qi and helped to advance to the Third Sky of Nascent Level?” Shi Jian’s face got more and more twisted as he yelled, “Just because of three fruits?”

“Yes, that’s it.”

“Where is this fruit? I will send people to see if we can plant more of it.”

“Don’t bother, there were only three. I searched for a very long time but never saw it again.”

“Little bastard! You are not fooling me, are you?” Shi Jian showed obvious suspicion.

“Of course I’m fooling you.”

Shi Yan thought to himself but looked serious as he reassured, “I really have no idea. Anyway, I ate the fruits, and that’s it. Nothing else. Even I don’t know the reason why my Martial Spirit is different from others’.”

He insisted without any reluctance.

Shi Jian kept asking a few more times and tried to test him, but the only response he got was “I don’t know either.”

Finally Shi Jian gave up. After another thought, he said, “Since your Martial Spirit turned dark brown, hmm, well, has the feature of the Martial Spirit changed? I mean, Did it merely change its color but still kept the intensity of the first stage?”

“If my sense is accurate, it is the second stage.”

“I will try.” Shi Jian hurried to press his hand on Shi Yan’s chest, “Kid, cover your body with petrification! Don’t worry, I will increase my power little by little so it won’t hurt you.”

“Ok.”

Gradually, a ball of dark light appeared in Shi Jian’s palm and the energy in it grew stronger and stronger, striking on his chest.

Suddenly, Shi Jian withdrew all the dark light like a sponge by the other hand.

Shi Jian was so excited that he couldn’t help but nod and say joyfully, “Amazing! It really is the second stage! Bastard, I don’t know how you managed this, but from this day on, you can’t be lazy! Whether you like it or not, I will push you to be a warrior!”

Chapter 49 - The Sky Gate and the God Area

In the Gravity Room.

Beside a huge mace at the center of the room, Shi Yan was striking it heavily as his body operated Petrification and sweated all over.

That mace was seven meters tall and three meters wide, which was deep rooted at the center of the stone ground in the Gravity Room. The sharp tips on it were like short rods shining with a dark light.

Shi Yan’s body had already turned dark brown and he was breathing heavily. Moving around the mace, he kept slamming into it with his shoulders, arms, waist and thighs in turns.

Endless blunt thunderous sounds came out from the Gravity Room.

To trigger the potential of the Petrification Martial Spirit of the Shi Family, one must train themselves in a ruthless way. Only by slamming against hard objects, could the power of Petrification be used to the fullest.

And only by ruthlessly tormenting one’s body, could his Petrification Martial Spirit adapt to any kind of attacks from his opponents.

There were seven dark Gravity pillars erected in the Gravity Room, which increased the gravity in the room to seven times normal gravity.

“Bang! Bang! Bang!”

With his upper body naked, Shi Yan wore a serious face, while he was training his body to the limit in order to activate the potential of his Petrification Martial Spirit.

Everytime he slammed into the mace with his body, it would send out a thin layer of brown light.

The light flashed for a short moment. It would explode the moment Shi Yan's body touched the mace, and would disappear soon after the touch.

After about five thousand repetitions with different parts of his body, Shi Yan collapsed, unable to use his energy anymore. With his limbs spread out, he laid down in the center of the room letting his sweat flow like a stream over his skin which wet the green stone ground.

It had been half a month.

In the past half a month, Shi Yan ate and slept in the Gravity Room. He never left the room even to go to the restroom.

That was Shi Jian's plan.

As soon as Shi Jian found out that Shi Yan's Martial Spirit had reached the second stage, he made Shi Yan stop his other training and focus on refining his body.

Shi Jian meant to trigger the entire potential of Shi Yan's second stage Petrification Martial Spirit at the fastest speed, and to strengthen his body structure to the extent that it could bear the attacks from a Human Level warrior.

During the past half month, Shi Jian, Han Feng, Yang Hai, and other elders came to watch him now and then.

Shi Jian, for example, would come to see him every three days. He would examine the changes on Shi Yan's body carefully and give him some advice on the training intensity for the next stage.

Lying on the ground with fatigue, Shi Yan began to adjust his breathing slowly. After feeling more strength in his arms and legs, he managed to sit up and began to operate his Profound Qi.

Though he was exhausted, his Profound Qi circulated even faster than before. During this process Shi Yan closed his eyes, and tried to calm his heart clear his mind.

Everytime he went to this state, he found that his blood, flesh, cells and bones were all nourishing his body in a way he couldn't understand.

His broken body would soon recover from his extreme fatigue and gain strength.

This was the self-recovery of the Immortal Martial Spirit!

Shi Yan knew it well.

Not knowing how much time had passed, he woke up gradually with his eyes as bright as the stars. After meditating, the fatigue in his body disappeared and his Profound Qi became active. There seemed to be a strong explosiveness in it which was about to break out.

At this moment, the stone door of the Gravity Room opened a little.

Han Zhong walked in with a big smile and seven bamboo baskets in his hands.

He put down the bamboo baskets and took out the delicate dishes one by one, "Today's dishes: bird's nest, sea cucumber, turtle, bear's palm, glossy ganoderma. Brother Yan, you are too gluttonous! One meal for you is even more than five meals of what the other young masters of Shi Family eat. If you were in a small family, everything would be eaten by you."

Han Zhong laughed as he put down the plates and secretly took out a jar of wine, "This jar of wine called 'Flame' is part of my collection. Drink it up quickly and I will dispose of it."

Shi Yan didn't try to refuse as he walked over to Han Zhong quickly and began to swallow the food. After wolfing down the rich dishes which only wealthy families could afford, he took up the jar of 'Flame', raised his head, and drank.

Wiping his mouth and putting the empty jar down, he chuckled, "Old Han, you should bring me two jars of it next time. One jar is not enough!"

"Brother Yan, the wine 'Flame' is from the Spring Pavilion, costing five hundred purple crystal coins!" Han Zhong squeezed out a bitter smile, "I saved this one last time I went there. I will bring you 'Knife' tomorrow, which only costs one hundred blue crystal coins. I can even bring you four jars of it!"

"They are only crystal coins!" Shi Yan didn't care at all, "Bring me 'Flame', I will give you the crystal coins next time!"

"Then it's ok with me." Han Zhong smirked, "Brother Yan, the family head kept it confidential about you being a warrior. Most warriors and escorts in the family don't know about it. Do you know why?"

"Why?" Shi Yan asked lazily.

"The Martial Competition that occurs every five years is going to happen in three months. You know, in the last competition, we were surpassed by the Mo and Ling Families, so the family head roared for days after that. This time..."

"He wants me to attend the Martial Competition?" Shi Yan responded in surprise before Han Zhong finished his speech.

The Martial Competition was a big event co-held by the five biggest families in the Merchant Union which every warrior could attend.

The competitions happened according to five levels: Elementary Level, Nascent Level, Human Level, Disaster Level and Earth Level. Warriors of every level could compete for the first three places of their respective levels.

The five big families would offer a lot of training materials as rewards; such as medicine pills, treasures, Martial skills and so forth for the winners.

The five big families co-held the Martial Competition for two reasons. On one hand, they needed to pick expert warriors to strengthen their power. On the other hand, the competition would be motivation for warriors in this country to train hard to enhance the power of the country.

Those individual warriors who weren't attached to any big family longed for the medicine pills, treasures and Martial Skills. Some of them were also looking for an opportunity to attach themselves to a big family.

Therefore, every Martial Competition would attract thousands of warriors and would be very energetic.

Apart from those individual warriors, the five big families would send out their descendants to compete in the competition.

That way, they were able to show their strength and attract outstanding warriors to choose them.

Therefore, the Martial Competition was not only an opportunity for the big families to attract warriors, but also a stage for them to secretly fight.

Thus, both the warriors and mercenaries in this country and the five big families attached great importance to the Martial Competition.

Sometimes, the ownership of controversial properties among the five families will be decided through the competition.

For example, in the last competition, the Shi Family and the Mo Family staked the ownership of three mines.

Unfortunately, in the battles among the third descendants, except Shi Tianyun, the other Shi Family descendants, Shi Tianluo and Shi Tianke, were beaten by the Mo Family descendants. So in the end, the Mo Family won two mines and the Shi Family only won one.

"You may not know, but we fought a lot with the Mo Family over disputes on some properties recently. So the same thing may happen again in the Martial Competition this year. They may stake the ownership of some properties."

"Which means, I'm going to have a chance to perform?"

"Sure! The family head must be hopeful that you will win for our family. That's why he is so strict with you and comes to watch you every three days. You don't know how busy he is recently, but he still makes time to check on you, which shows how much he cares about you."

"Ok, I got it."

...

In the Rock Room.

Sitting upright on a huge rock, Shi Yan's bright eyes had a serious look in them, seeming to be in deep thought.

"On the auction in the Misty Pavilion, there was a fragment picture of The Sky Gate..." Han Feng was reporting the latest news to Shi Jian who was standing next to him.

The Sky Gate was a magical portal leading to the God Area, a mysterious space. The God Area may exist in the Grace Mailand, or may not. It was an independent space.

No one knew how the God Area was formed, or its structure, or where would it appear.

Only through the Sky Gate, could one enter the God Area.

There were various versions of the legends about the God Area.

It was said that there were all sorts of mysterious things in different God Areas. Martial Skills of Spirit Level and even God Level, bizarre drugs, rare treasures...

“Four months ago, the Medicine King Mu Xun’s disciple Karu stole a fragment picture from his teacher. Maybe the two fragments come from the same picture. And are they two separate fragments or just the same one? Maybe the one in the Misty Pavilion is the one Karu had stolen.” Shi Jian had a quick thought when he recalled the news from four months ago.

Han Feng shook his head, “That Karu had disappeared a long time ago. But the fragment in the Misty Pavilion was provided by a woman. Seeing it is a serious matter, the Misty Pavilion didn’t sell it directly but kept it in the name of ‘authenticating’.”

“That broken picture is still at the Misty Pavilion?” Shi Jian asked firmly.

“Yep.” Han Feng nodded, “The Beiming Family, the Mo Family, the Ling Family and the Zuo Family had all contacted the Misty Pavilion to purchase that fragment after they got the news. But the Misty Pavilion won’t put it up for auction before they authenticate it, so the four families merely showed their strong interest without taking any secret actions.”

“It is only a mere fragment. If it was a complete picture, the Beiming Family would have stolen it.” Shi Jian sneered.

“Do we need to take action?”

“Keep an eye on it but don’t get involved for the time being. Remember to exchange information with the Zuo Family. We can’t act bluntly before the second fragment appears.”

“Ok.”

Chapter 50 A Cut

In the Gravity Room.

Shi Yan was leaning against a gravity pillar while feeling pain all over his body.

His naked body was so strong that the lines of his muscles could be clearly seen. They looked like they were moulded from metal and looked full of explosiveness.

While being provided with abundant food, Shi Yan spent another month intensely training his body. During this time he had not only gotten stronger, but he had also become taller.

Abruptly, the door was pushed open.

Shi Jian, Han Feng and Yang Hai showed up at the door.

Shi Jian's torch-like eyes glanced at Shi Yan from afar before nodding, "It seems you haven't been idle."

"Of course." Shi Yan answered whilst exhausted, and didn't change his position, "I guess I have refined my body enough. I need to choose a Martial Skill to train with."

"Well, you are not the one to decide that." Shi Jian swaggered up to him and said with a rigid face, "Give me one of your hands."

Shi Yan stretched out his left hand in response and focused. Immediately, his left arm petrified into a dark brown colour.

Under scrutiny, wisps of shining dark light could be seen on the surface of his arm, forming what looked like a thin transparent layer covering his arms.

"Wow!"

Shi Jian exclaimed with excitement and observed happily, "Ha! You really are something! There turns out to be dark light! You trained really hard! So great! Great!"

Yang Hai was delighted as he walked up as well, "Step-father, is this state equivalent to the Human Level? Years ago when Qing reached the Third Sky of Human Level, her skin also sent out dark light after Petrification. Is this the same thing?"

"Yes." Shi Jian nodded calmly with a little muscular spasm in the corner of his mouth, "The kid is really promising! He improved so much in a mere half a month. This is amazing!"

Although Shi Jian didn't want to make Shi Yan overly prideful, he couldn't help but praise him with a surprised face, "Kid, how on earth did you manage that?"

"I trained how you told me to. I kept at it, and this is the result." Shi Yan shrugged indifferently.

"How long do you train for each day?" Even Han Feng, who was rarely talkative, couldn't help but ask.

"About fifteen hours."

"Fifteen hours?!"

Han Feng and Shi Jian cried out at the same time. They looked at each other and found astonishment in each other's eyes.

"It's impossible! You bastard! You must be fooling us!" Shi Jian yelled and said firmly, "Your body needs at least eighteen hours to be fully recovered before the next intensive slam training. And you need time for meals. It's more than enough for you to train for five hours a day! Where did fifteen hours come from?"

Han Feng was skeptical as well, as he shook his head softly.

"Little bastard, tell us the truth. Don't be naughty in front of your big grandpa." Yang Hai grunted and reproached.

"Who says I need eighteen hours to recover?" Shi Yan said light-heartedly, "I just need four hours."

“That’s impossible!”

Shi Jian and Han Feng yelled in surprise at the same time.

“Your body won’t recover so soon after such intensive training! I have managed the Shi Family for so many years and have never seen anyone who could recover in such short time! Shi Yang was the most talented kid I’ve seen and even he needed about fifteen hours to recover when he did slam training at the Human Level!” Shi Jian shook his head and grunted, “You mean to say that you recover four times faster than him? Do you even think that is possible?”

“Nothing is impossible.” Shi Yan smiled and stood up immediately. He walked to the corner of the room and took out a dagger from the bag on the ground. “Big Grandpa, something has confused me for a long time. Now that my father is here, I want to ask for your permission to do a test.”

“What test?” Shi Jian frowned.

“Uncle Han, I want to cut your arm.”

“Bastard!” Shi Jian shouted, “Kid, what are you talking about!”

“Just a slight cut.” Shi Yan kept calm, “And for an accurate comparison, I will also cut my father’s and my own arms as well.”

“Family head, Maybe Young Master Yan had some plan. Why not have a try.”

“What the hell do you want to do?” Shi Jian was confused.

“You will know.” Shi Yan walked to Han Feng in an easy manner, “Uncle Han, please don’t operate your Profound Qi, even if it bleeds, ok?”

“Got it.”

“So I will do it now?”

“Ok.”

Shi Yan walked up and made a cut on Han Feng’s left arm. Crimson blood gushed out at once.

“Father, it’s your turn.” Shi Yan walked toward Yang Hai.

“Little bastard! What are you going to do? Your father is not a warrior! Be gentle!”

“Ok. I know it.” Shi Yan stepped up and made a cut as fast as lightning on Yang Hai’s arm.

Seeing his bleeding arm, Yan Hai screamed and yelled, “Little bastard! You are so cruel! I wasn’t ready!”

Under Han Feng and Shi Jian’s gaze, Shi Yan then casually cut on his own arm and watched as it started to bleed.

“Bastard, what do you want to show us? What do you mean by this? I can’t see anything!” Yang Hai clamored.

“Wait, wait for a moment.” Shi Yan was quite serious now and his expression became more rigid.

Han Feng and Shi Jian were full of suspicion as they couldn't figure out what was going on and moved their eyes over to Shi Yan.

Shi Yan smiled but didn't give them an explanation. He covered his bleeding arm with his jacket, not letting them see it.

Ten minutes later.

"What?"

Han Feng noticed something strange first as he gazed at Yang Hai's arm in astonishment, "Family head, look!"

Shi Jian was focusing on Shi Yan, and upon hearing Han Feng, turned to Yang Hai.

He also noticed the strange thing, "Hai, why did the blood on your arm freeze and turn into a blood cocoon?"

"Ahh!" Yang Hai cried out as soon as he noticed the cocoon, "I don't know!"

"But my arm is still bleeding..." Han Feng stretched out his arm and showed it to Yang Hai.

"What's up?" Yang Hai asked in surprise, "You trained with Martial Skills for so many years and your body quality is higher than mine. You should have stopped bleeding earlier than me! What happened!"

"Look at my arm."

Shi Yan smiled and unbuttoned his jacket to show them his arm, and wiped the frozen blood away.

The cut on his arm turned to be as thin as a needle and the flesh on the both sides seemed to be moving toward each other and recovering quickly.

Shi Jian and Han Feng were aghast and quivered.

"Bastard, wha..what on earth is going on?" Shi Jian asked after a long astonishment.

"This is a type of Martial Spirit! My father possesses it as well. But he doesn't train in Martial Arts and hasn't been severely hurt before, so he never noticed it." Shi Yan spilled out this secret calmly.

Shi Jian kept silent with his eyes shining brightly and hands clenching. After a long while he burst into wild laughter, "Haha! Martial Spirit! Self-recovery Martial Spirit!"

"I call it the Immortal Martial Spirit." Shi Yan explained, "I assume that this Martial Spirit could recover lost limbs and heal internal organs at its highest stage. Which means, one would be immortal."

Han Feng and Shi Jian were stunned, but after some careful thought, they both realized the power of this Martial Spirit. They couldn't suppress their excitement anymore as their breathing became faster.

"Bastard, so you possess twin Martial Spirits now?" Yang Hai wasn't able to contain his joy either as he realized this and couldn't help but cry out.

“Of course it’s twin Martial Spirits! Absolutely!” Shi Jian laughed wildly. He patted Yang Hai’s back so hard that the latter fell to the ground. “Hai, I can’t believe you possess a Martial Spirit as well! Haha! I’ve never thought of that! I should have cut your body when you were still a kid! Haha!”

“Now do all of you believe I can recover in four hours?” Shi Yan smiled.

“Definitely! Completely! Haha!” Shi Jian couldn’t be happier. Ignoring Yang Hai who was still sitting on the ground, he declared, “Kid, come with me! Let’s go to the Martial Spirit Palace! All the secret Martial Skills are kept there. You can choose any you want!”

“Great.”