

SOVEREIGN 1961

## Chapter 1961: The First Mine

There was only one reason for Li An to head to the White Tiger Sanctum, and it was to look for Duan Ling Tian's companion, Zhu Lu Qi!

He still remembered Duan Ling Tian had two companions when he first came to the Fire Worship Sect. After further investigation, he learned that Duan Ling Tian's companions' names were Gu Li and Zhu Lu Qi respectively. The former was in the Vermilion Bird Sanctum while the latter was in the White Tiger Sanctum.

'Hurmph! I refuse to believe that Zhu Lu Qi and Gu Li would be in closed-door cultivation all the time like Duan Ling Tian,' Li An thought to himself with a snort. His expression was solemn.

Since three months ago, after Duan Ling Tian had killed Yuan Hong, Li An's grand disciple in the Vermilion Bird Sanctum, Li An had always been lurking in the vicinity of the residence of the Black Turtle Sanctum's disciples' residence, waiting for Duan Ling Tian to be alone so he could cast the Soul Searching Secret Tactic on him! He did not dare to kill Duan Ling Tian in the Fire Worship Sect even if Duan Ling Tian was alone.

The punishment from the Saint Land Enforcement Hall was far beyond what one could imagine. Moreover, they might even make him swear on the lightning penalty oath that he did not kill Duan Ling Tian if they suspected him. He did not dare to take this risk!

However, if he performed the Soul Searching Secret Tactic on Duan Ling Tian without anyone around and did not affect Duan Ling Tian much, with his position as a Silver Flame Elder, the Saint Land Enforcement Hall usually would not take action even if they found out about it.

Unfortunately, during these three months, Duan Ling Tian had been in closed-door cultivation so he could not find a chance to cast the Soul Searching Secret Tactic on Duan Ling Tian.

Today, Duan Ling Tian would be going to the First Mine of the Four Symbols Sanctums to serve his time. The Black Turtle Sanctum's Enforcement Elder Guo Xiong would be escorting him there. Li An knew he would not be able to cast the Soul Searching Secret Tactic on Duan Ling Tian for the time being.

Since Li An could not cast it on Duan Ling Tian, he decided he would look for a chance from Gu Li and Zhu Lu Qi.

The White Tiger Sanctum that Zhu Lu Qi was in was nearer to the Black Turtle Sanctum so he decided to head to the White Tiger Sanctum first.

Perhaps, it was it luck. As soon as he arrived in the White Tiger Sanctum, he immediately discovered a familiar White Tiger Sanctum's disciple who was just leaving the White Tiger Sanctum's altar and was returning to the residence of the White Tiger Sanctum's disciples. Moreover, there was no one around him at all. That disciple was none other than Zhu Lu Qi.

Whoosh!

Li An instantly charged toward Zhu Lu Qi. His speed was so fast it was as though he had transformed into a gust of wind.

“Who is it?!” The sound of wind whistling rang in Zhu Lu Qi’s ears, causing horror to dawn on him since he could tell the sound was headed for him.

However, before Zhu Lu Qi could even react, a vast and terrifying energy from Li An had already shrouded him. It caused him to lose all mobility. He was completely under Li An’s control at this moment!

Zhu Lu Qi discovered the scenery before his eyes kept changing as someone carried him and flew swiftly to who knew where. After a while, the person who carried him finally slowed down before coming to halt.

“Li An?” Although he could not see the other person’s appearance from the beginning until the end, it was not difficult for him to guess who it was.

It was obvious Li An had intentionally brought Zhu Lu Qi away. Zhu Lu Qi suddenly recalled Duan Ling Tian’s warning from three months ago. He remembered the Secret Tactic that had been passed to him that could combat the Soul Searching Secret Tactic.

In just a flash, an old man appeared before him. Zhu Lu Qi had seen this man once when he first entered the Fire Worship Sect. He was none other than the Black Turtle Sanctum’s First Silver Flame Elder Li An!

He had guessed correctly.

When Li An performed the Soul Searching Secret Tactic on Zhu Lu Qi, before Zhu Lu Qi lost consciousness, a thought appeared in his mind. ‘Lucky I’ve been using the Secret Tactic Duan Ling Tian had passed to me.’

Li An stood in front of Zhu Lu Qi as he stared at Zhu Lu Qi’s eyes that had turned dim before he asked indifferently, “Who are you?”

“Zhu Lu Qi.” Zhu Lu Qi whose eyes had lost their light seemed like the walking dead. As soon as he heard Li An’s question, he instantly answered him without any hesitation.

“Who’s Duan Ling Tian?” Li An asked again.

“My friend,” Zhu Lu Qi replied.

“What’s his background? Where did he come from?” Li An asked again. This time a hint of excitement appeared in his eyes. This was what he wanted to know the most.

As long as he could find information about Duan Ling Tian’s background, he could pass the information to Yang Chong, the fifth elder of the Northern Plethora Sect. Naturally, Yang Chong would deal with all the people who had connections to Duan Ling Tian.

Perhaps, if they capture Duan Ling Tian’s close friends and families, he might be able to force Duan Ling Tian to leave the Fire Worship Sect!

Once Duan Ling Tian left the Fire Worship Sect, he would become like meat on their chopping boards. They would be able to kill him however they liked!

"I don't know." Zhu Lu Qi's answer made the smile on Li An's face freeze immediately. He continued to ask in a grim voice, "Aren't you friends? Why don't you know his background?"

"I only met him a few days before I came to the Fire Worship Sect. I don't know his background. He has never mentioned it before, and I didn't ask as well," Zhu Lu Qi answered Li An lifelessly.

"Damn it!" Upon hearing Zhu Lu Qi's words, Li An's expression turned grave immediately. He knew he had felt happy too soon.

Zhu Lu Qi did not know anything about Duan Ling Tian's background at all!

"Hurmph!" Since he could not get an answer from Zhu Lu Qi, he no longer wasted his time on him and left immediately.

As soon as Li An left, Zhu Lu Qi's eyes regained its liveliness. When he regained his senses, he discovered he was in a secluded forest in the White Tiger Sanctum now.

As soon as he regained his senses, he remembered what had just occurred as he muttered under his breath, "Li An must have cast the Soul Searching Secret Tactic on me. I hope the technique to combat the Soul Searching Secret Tactic that Duan Ling Tian passed to me worked. Otherwise, I'm afraid I've already unknowingly betrayed him!"

Meanwhile, Li An had already left the White Tiger Sanctum when he realized Zhu Lu Qi did not have the answer he wanted. He was currently making his way to the Vermilion Bird Sanctum!

He was prepared to sit and wait for a chance to catch Gu Li so that he could perform the Soul Searching Secret Tactic on him. Li An was obviously unaware that Gu Li had already left the Vermilion Bird Sanctum and the Fire Worship Sect three months ago.

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Duan Ling Tian was, naturally, unaware of Li An's sneaky actions.

Currently, he was being escorted by the Black Turtle Sanctum's Enforcement Elder Guo Xiong as they drew closer to the Four Symbols Sanctum's First Mine.

"Elder Guo Xiong, I heard there are many first-grade Saint Stone reserves in our Fire Worship Sect. Moreover, we even have a quasi Celestial-grade Saint Stone reserve! Is the quasi Celestial-grade Saint Stone reserve located in the First Mine?" Duan Ling Tian asked as he looked at Guo Xiong.

"Of course not!" Guo Xiong shook his head before continuing to say, "To our Fire Worship Sect, the quasi Celestial-grade Saint Stone reserve is very important. Naturally, it's not in the Four Symbols Sanctums. Even if the location of the quasi Celestial-grade doesn't have any Spirit Gathering Formations, the cultivation environment is still very good. It's hidden underground in the Saint Land's central district and is usually mined by the slaves of Saint Land elders and disciples who are banished to the mine as punishment. Due to its presence, our Fire Worship Sect's Saint Land has one of the best cultivation

environments in the Upper Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land! Coupled with the help of the Spirit Gathering Formation, the cultivation environment is even better!”

Duan Ling Tian finally understood what a quasi Celestial-grade Saint Stone reserve was.

Just like the Secundus house in the residence of the Black Turtle Sanctum’s disciples, each of the five Spirit Gathering Formation had a few quasi Celestial-grade Saint Stones as their foundations. Due to this reason, it was very efficient for one to cultivate in a Secundus house.

The other forces in the Upper Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land could not compare to it. Only the other two great sects in the Upper Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land like the Fire Worship Sect would be able to use quasi Celestial-grade Saint Stones on their outer disciples.

Because of the Spirit Gathering Formations, there was no need for one to cultivate by holding the Saint Stone in one’s hand anymore since the Spirit Gathering Formation would extract the Heaven and Earth Spirit Energy from the Saint Stone for the cultivators to absorb.

“Other than that quasi Celestial-grade Saint Stone reserve, the remaining first-grade Saint Stone reserves are in our Four Symbols Sanctums... The First Mine of the Four Symbols Sanctums you’ll be serving at is the largest first-grade Saint Stone reserve in the sect!” Guo Xiong said.

Duan Ling Tian learned a lot about the Four Symbols Sanctums’ First Mine from Guo Xiong.

Apart from learning that it was the biggest first-grade Saint Stone reserve in the Fire Worship Sect, he also learned it was divided into two zones. One zone was big and the other small.

The big zone was called the Slave Zone since it housed many slaves from all over the place in the Upper Province. Their destiny was set in stone the moment they arrived in the sect. If they did not want to die, they had to obediently remain in the sect and spend their whole lives mining Saint Stones for the sect.

The small zone was also known as the Punishment Zone. The people mining here were disciples from the Fire Worship Sect’s Four Symbols Sanctums who had committed crimes.

Among the Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples who were serving there, there were some who were sentenced with a short term ranging from three to five years, and there were those who were sentenced with a long term that could go up to hundreds of years.

“Only the First Mine has a punishment zone. The remaining mines are mined by slaves,” Guo Xiong explained.

Duan Ling Tian nodded. He also learned that the Four Symbols Sanctums’ First Mine was monitored by two Golden Flame Elders. The remaining mines were also being put under the care of a Golden Flame Elder.

As for the two Golden Flame Elders in the Four Symbols Sanctums’ First Mine, one of them was in charge of the Slave Zone while the one was in charge of the Punishment Zone.

“Our Four Symbols Sanctums’ First Mine is just right in front.” Guo Xiong’s voice rang in the air, causing Duan Ling Tian to regain his senses.

**Chapter 1962: The Extra Large Wicker Basket**

As Duan Ling Tian looked over to the where Guo Xiong was staring at, he saw a vast and boundless valley.

Numerous islands were suspended in the sky above this valley. It housed buildings that were shrouded in clouds and mist and could not be seen clearly.

When Duan Ling Tian looked down, he could see groups of people coming in and out of the valley. When these people came out, they were all headed to the same place.

“The zone before us is the Punishment Zone in the First Mine. These people are all Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples who have been sentenced to serve here,” Guo Xiong said, “In the Punishment Zone, each of the Four Symbols Sanctum’s disciple has a specific task to accomplish. Only after they’ve finished their tasks, they’re allowed to return to their residence and rest.”

“Why are they entering and leaving so frequently? Are those people who left people who have finished their tasks?” Duan Ling Tian asked curiously.

“How’s that possible?!” Guo Xiong shook his head. “Those people who are coming out are handing over Saint Stones they mined. Since they don’t have Spatial Rings, they have to frequently send Saint Stones they have mined to the appointed location. Only when they have mined the set number of Saints Stone they’re allowed to rest. Look at the wicker baskets on their backs. All the Saint Stones they mined will be placed in the basket. This is also the rule in the Punishment Zone.”

Upon hearing that, Duan Ling Tian began to watch these people intently. True enough, he discovered the people coming in and out of the caves carried a huge basket on their backs. Upon closer inspection, he saw that those who came out had their baskets filled with Saint Stones, and those who were going back in had empty baskets.

As for why these Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples who were serving in the penalty zone did not have any Spatial Ring, Duan Ling Tian could roughly guess the reason as well. Their Spatial Rings must have been taken away when they came to the Punishment Zone.

If they had their Spatial Rings, would it not be easy for them to steal the Saint Stones?

Although they could be asked to remove their ownerships of the Spatial Ring to check if they had stolen Saint Stones, it was not a practical move. Taking away their Spatial Rings and substituting them with a wicker basket was the best solution.

Whoosh!

As Duan Ling Tian and Guo Xiong continued to move forward, a figure flew close to them. It was a middle-aged man who was wearing the exclusive uniform of a Fire Worship Sect’s Bronze Flame Elder.

Based on the pattern on his long robe, one could see that he was a Black Turtle Sanctum’s Bronze Flame Elder.

Duan Ling Tian was not surprised by this.

On their way here, Guo Xiong had also mentioned the constitution of each mine in the Four Symbols Sanctums.

Apart from the Golden Flame Elders and Silver Flame Elders from the Saint Land, the Bronze Flame Elders were from the Four Symbols Sanctums.

“Elder Guo Xiong!” This Bronze Flame Elder just so happened to be in charge of patrolling the southern zone of the First Mine’s Punishment Zone. As a Black Turtle Sanctum’s elder, it was only natural he knew Guo Xiong.

This Black Turtle Sanctum’s Bronze Flame Elder was very respectful to Guo Xiong. He had to be respectful to all Silver Flame Elders in the Black Turtle Sanctum, let alone the Black Turtle Sanctum’s Enforcement Elder!

“I remember you. Your name’s Peng Hua, right?” Guo Xiong asked with uncertainty as he nodded at the Black Turtle Sanctum’s Bronze Flame Elder.

“Yes, I’m Peng Hua. I can’t believe you remember me, Elder Guo Xiong.” Upon hearing Guo Xiong’s words, Peng Hua was slightly overwhelmed by the honor.

As the Enforcement Elder, Guo Xiong could enter the numerous mines in the Four Symbols Sanctums. For this reason, when Peng Hua saw Guo Xiong, he did not block Guo Xiong and Duan Ling Tian’s way.

“That young man... Could he be that rebel, Duan Ling Tian, who recently rose in our Black Turtle Sanctum?” Peng Hua’s eyes widened in shock as he stared at the two disappearing figures.

It was only natural that he was shocked. Although he was usually stationed in the Punishment Zone of the Four Symbols Sanctums’ First Mine, he was very informed about what was going on outside due to disciples being frequently sent here.

Naturally, he had heard about Duan Ling Tian as well. Three months ago, Duan Ling Tian’s deeds had spread to every nook and cranny in the Four Symbols Sanctums.

He was a new Black Turtle Sanctum’s disciple who was bold enough to oppose the Black Turtle Sanctum’s First Silver Flame Elder Li An after all. For this reason, it was impossible for people from the Four Symbols Sanctums to not pay attention to him.

The incident that cemented his fame was the incident that happened three months ago whereby Duan Ling Tian had killed two Vermilion Bird Sanctum’s disciples. However, he was not sentenced to death but was sentenced to serve in the Four Symbols Sanctum’s First Mine for ten years instead.

This incident had taken the entire Four Symbols Sanctums by storm.

“Based on the date, today is indeed the day for Duan Ling Tian to start his sentence in the First Mine. That young man next to Elder Guo Xiong has to be Duan Ling Tian!” Peng Hua was certain of this.

“However, he’s merely an ordinary disciple with a yellow Innate Spiritual Root. So why are Elder Guo Xiong and the Saint Land Enforcement Hall protecting him?” Peng Hua was puzzled.

The news of the Saint Land Bronze Flame Elder Wei He going to the Saint Land Enforcement Hall to file a complaint against the Black Turtle Sanctum’s Enforcement Elder Guo Xiong for malpractice had also

spread to the First Mine. Moreover, the First Mine had also received news about the result of the Saint Land Enforcement Hall's investigation and that Wei He had been sentenced to death three days ago.

For this reason, many people discovered it was not only Guo Xiong who was protecting Duan Ling Tian, but even the Saint Land Enforcement Hall was protecting him as well!

Very few people knew about the truth of the incident that had taken place at the Vermilion Bird Sanctum three months ago.

All they knew was Duan Ling Tian would have died if they followed proper procedure. However, Duan Ling Tian did not die and was protected by the Saint Land Enforcement Hall instead!

This caused many people to come up with their own speculations. However, not one of them thought he received protection because of his Innate Spiritual Root. This was because news of him possessing a yellow Innate Spiritual Root had long spread out. It was not difficult to figure out the reason he was being protected if they did not believe the news about his Innate Spiritual Root and remove their bias.

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Meanwhile, Guo Xiong led Duan Ling Tian to the place where newcomers had to register themselves in the First Mine's Punishment Zone. After that, Guo Xiong bade farewell to Duan Ling Tian before he left. He had accomplished his task of sending Duan Ling Tian here.

The person in charge of newcomers' registration was a Vermilion Bird Sanctum's Bronze Flame Elder. When he learned this newcomer was Duan Ling Tian, a hint of dread appeared in his eyes. When he spoke, he was particularly polite. It seemed like he did not hate Duan Ling Tian for killing two disciples from the Vermilion Bird Sanctum three months ago.

In his eyes, Duan Ling Tian was very mysterious and seemed to have a strong background. Otherwise, the Saint Land Enforcement Hall would not have protected him because he possessed a yellow Innate Spiritual Root.

"Duan Ling Tian, in accordance to the rules of the Punishment Zone, you must hand over your Spatial Ring. However, there's no need for you to remove your ownership over the ring! When your sentence is over, we'll return you your Spatial Ring," the Vermilion Bird Sanctum's Bronze Flame Elder said to Duan Ling Tian in a friendly manner.

At the same time, he took out a huge wicker basket and a few uniforms before he handed them to Duan Ling Tian.

"This wicker basket is used to store the Saint Stones you mine. According to the rules in the Punishment Zone, all the Saint Stones you mine have to be placed in the wicker basket. Saint Stones that are not placed in the basket won't be counted in the daily number of Saint Stones you have to mine," the Vermilion Bird Sanctum's Bronze Flame Elder patiently explained this to Duan Ling Tian.

Duan Ling Tian nodded. He did not find this surprising since he had already heard about this from Guo Xiong.

'This wicker basket seems a lot bigger than everyone else's baskets. When I was making my way here, I don't think I saw any Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples with such a large wicker basket!' Duan Ling Tian thought to himself when he saw the basket.

Duan Ling Tian was unaware that in the Punishment Zone, there were two kinds of wicker baskets. One was the ordinary wicker baskets that he saw most Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples carried earlier. The other was an extra-large wicker basket like the one in his hands. There were not more than 100 people in the Punishment Zone that was given this big wicker basket. The size was almost two times bigger than the ordinary wicker basket.

In other words, Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples who were given such a large wicker basket could save half of their time when they handed the Saint Stones over.

The number of Saint Stones one could carry in a round trip in the extra-large wicker basket was equivalent to two trips if one were to use the normal wicker basket.

For this reason, the large wicker basket was very sought after in Punishment Zone of the Four Symbols Sanctums' First Mine. If one was not strong enough, one would not be able to hold on to the large wicker basket for long.

This was also part of the training the Fire Worship Sect's Four Symbols Sanctums had created for the disciples in the Punishment Zone. Only those who were strong were qualified to own a large wicker basket.

When an ordinary Four Symbols Sanctums' disciple came to register, it would depend on luck if they could obtain the extra-large wicker basket.

There were only about 80 to 90 extra-large wicker baskets in the First Mine of the Four Symbols Sanctums. However, there were thousands of Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples in the Punishment Zone. Based on this, one could see how valuable the extra-large wicker baskets were.

### **Chapter 1963: Marked!**

Naturally, it was not due to luck Duan Ling Tian had obtained the extra-large wicker basket. It was due to the special treatment given by the Vermilion Bird Sanctum's Bronze Flame Elder. However, the Vermilion Bird Sanctum's Bronze Flame Elder did not explain any of this to Duan Ling Tian, so he was unaware of it as well. Moreover, he did not even know what the extra-large wicker basket represented in the First Mine's Punishment Zone.

"These are uniforms exclusive to the Four Symbols Sanctum's disciples serving their sentence in the Punishment Zone. Unlike the uniforms of ordinary Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples, the uniforms here doesn't distinguish between which Sanctum you are from," the Vermilion Bird Sanctum's Bronze Flame Elder explained, "For this reason, unless you mention that you're a disciple from the Black Turtle Sanctum, unless they know you, most disciples in the Punishment Zone won't know you're from the Black Turtle Sanctum."



Duan Ling Tian nodded. He had already noticed this when he was making his way here. Those Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples here wore a standardized uniform that did not distinguish between which Sanctums they were from.

"The Punishment Zone has a rule that disciples who arrive before noon will have to go to the mining cave on the day itself to mine. There's still an hour before noon so..." the Bronze Flame Elder said hesitantly before he finally said, "Or maybe you can stay here for an hour before you leave. It just so happens that I've only written down your name, I've not written down the time you arrived. As long as I write down the time an hour later, you won't have to go to the mine today. You can just find a residence to rest in."

It was very obvious the Vermilion Bird Sanctum's Bronze Flame Elder was abusing his power for Duan Ling Tian. It naturally made Duan Ling Tian feel warm inside. He thought to himself, 'There are indeed a lot of kind-hearted people in this world!'

If Duan Ling Tian's thought was heard by those other Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples who came to register at the Punishment Zone fifteen minutes before noon but still had to go mining, they would definitely throw up blood. After all, they did not receive such special treatment.

Duan Ling Tian was unaware that he was given special treatment because the Vermilion Bird Sanctum's Bronze Flame Elder was cautious about his supposed strong background.

After all, in the eyes of the Vermilion Bird Sanctum's Bronze Flame Elder, Duan Ling Tian was merely a commoner with a yellow Innate Spiritual Root. The fact that he received protection from the Saint Land Enforcement Hall must have meant that he had an extraordinary background.

It was due to this reason the Vermilion Bird Sanctum's Bronze Flame Elder was so easygoing and polite.

If some other person came to register and it was a second before noon, he would still make the other person go to the mine with a cold face.

"Thank you for your concern, Elder. However, since it's still early, I'd like to go to the mine to familiarize myself with the surroundings first." Duan Ling Tian expressed his gratitude and gently rejected the Vermilion Bird Sanctum's Bronze Flame Elder's kind intention.

Since Duan Ling Tian had rejected his offer, the Vermilion Bird Sanctum's Bronze Flame Elder no longer said anything.

However, he added one last thing, "You can ask the others exactly how many Saint Stones you need to mine since the number of Saint Stones you have to mine changes from day to day! Apart from that, you can also follow them to the place where you have to hand in the Saint Stones."

"Alright." Duan Ling Tian nodded before bidding goodbye to the Vermilion Bird Sanctum's Bronze Flame Elder and left.

After he left the registration place, he changed into the uniform for the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples serving their sentence in the Punishment Zone and carried the extra-large wicker basket and joined the throng of people who were also carrying a wicker basket on their backs. Duan Ling Tian appeared particularly eye-catching due to the extra-large wicker basket on his back.

Soon after, Duan Ling Tian noticed many people were looking at him. “Is it very obvious that I’m new here?” Duan Ling Tian was confused. He was still unaware that it was because of the extra-large wicker basket on his back.

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“I don’t think I’ve seen this person who’s carrying the extra-large wicker basket before.”

“He might be new!”

“That’s possible, but I’m not 100% certain!”

“However, if he’s new, why would he possess the extra-large wicker basket? Judging by the time the last time an extra-large basket was issued, there are still another three months at least before an extra-large wicker basket will be issued.”

“I’m not sure as well.”

...

Duan Ling Tian was unaware that at this moment many of the Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples who were staring at him were communicating with each other through Voice Transmission.

The Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples were not certain that Duan Ling Tian was new. This was because the timing for when an extra-large wicker basket would be issued was not right!

Perhaps, this fellow who was carrying the extra-large wicker basket was an inconspicuous person who used to carry an ordinary wicker basket, and he finally showed his hand and snatched an extra-large wicker basket?

After all, there were thousands of Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples in the Punishment Zone, it was impossible for one to remember the appearance of everyone here.

They could only roughly remember the faces of the people who owned extra-large wicker baskets that did not exceed more than 100.

They were certain that among the 89 people carrying the extra-large wicker basket, there was no one so eye-catching.

If that was the case, there were two possibilities.

One, the young man in front was new and was lucky enough to receive an extra-large wicker basket.

Two, the young man used to carry an ordinary wicker basket and had recently snatched an extra-large wicker basket from another person.

Between these two possibilities, the group of Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples staring at Duan Ling Tian were more inclined to the latter.

This was because the appearance of an extra-large wicker basket was usually timed. They had even figured out the timing. Due to this reason, they were certain Duan Ling Tian was not issued the extra-large wicker basket.

However, it did not cross their minds that Duan Ling Tian was indeed a newcomer who had just stepped foot on the Punishment Zone a while ago. As for the extra-large wicker basket, it was all due to the special treatment given to him by the Vermilion Bird Sanctum's Bronze Flame Elder at the registration area.

"I really hope he's just a newcomer and merely obtained the extra-large wicker through luck!" Many of the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples stared at the extra-large wicker basket on Duan Ling Tian's back with bright eyes. It seemed as though they were going to drool as well as they looked at the extra-large wicker basket!

Once they obtained the extra-large wicker basket, it would reduce the time they had to travel to hand in the Saint Stones since it could hold two times more Saint Stones compared to the ordinary wicker basket.

For the time being, none of the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples who coveted Duan Ling Tian's extra-large wicker basket made a move because they were uncertain of his background.

Due to this reason, Duan Ling Tian peacefully entered one of the mining caves in the Punishment Zone.

A magnificent view entered Duan Ling Tian's sight as soon as he went into the mining cave.

The mining cave seemed to be the main cave in the Punishment Zone. The number of Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples entering this mining cave was more than three times compared to other mining caves!

"Why are there so many people here?" With so many people coming in from behind him, it was only natural for Duan Ling Tian to notice this.

When he turned around, he happened to see numerous burning eyes that were trained on the extra-large wicker basket on his back. He was instantly baffled. "Why are these people staring at my wicker basket? Don't tell me they plan to snatch my wicker basket away?"

Subconsciously, Duan Ling Tian felt that the wicker basket was not that great. No matter how big it was, these Fire Worship Sect's disciples from the Four Symbols Sanctums should not covet it.

The truth was Duan Ling Tian had forgotten something important.

Perhaps, the wicker basket was nothing outside, but in the Punishment Zone of the First Mine, the extra-large wicker basket would cut half of their traveling time. This meant they could finish their tasks earlier every day.

For this reason, would there be anyone who did not want an extra-large wicker basket in the Punishment Zone?

Duan Ling Tian randomly looked at a few people and discovered they had the ordinary wicker basket.

“This extra-large wicker basket should not be enough for them to fight with me over it, right? It seems like I’m thinking too much.” Duan Ling Tian shook his head and no longer thought about it as he walked deeper into the cave by following the throng of people.

The deeper part of the mining cave was situated underground.

The place Duan Ling Tian was currently at was a tunnel that had been dug to lead underground.

The deeper he went, the wider the tunnel became. Apart from that, there were many bumps and holes. ‘It seems like something had been dug out before this. Don’t tell me there was a Saint Stone ore here last time?’

As he continued to walk forward, Duan Ling Tian began to hear the noise resonating from the deeper part of the underground tunnel.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

...

Clang! Clang! Clang!

...

Smash! Smash! Smash!

...

There all sorts of noises as though an orchestra piece was being played.

As Duan Ling Tian went in deeper, he finally arrived at the place where the noises originated. He discovered many of the Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples had already begun to mine Saint Stones.

Each of them used different Divine Abilities while they mined for Saint Stones. It was an eye-opener for Duan Ling Tian.

Some forcefully threw their punches.

Some used swords or sabers.

Some used their palms as though they were blades.

Some used spears or rods.

All sorts of inconceivable methods were being used here.

“There seems to be a lot of Saint Stones here...” At the same time, Duan Ling Tian saw all four sides of the tunnel were filled with Saint Stones.

The aura released by the Saint Stones belonged to first-grade Saint Stones.

## **Chapter 1964: Get Out Of My Sight!**

Chapter 1964 Get Out Of My Sight!

'During the journey here, I don't see any elders in the Punishment Zone monitoring us. However, there's no way they're not monitoring us!' The moment Duan Ling Tian thought of this, he glanced right and left before he looked to the front. He thought to himself, 'They must be lurking in the dark, hiding where we can't see them!'

Despite being only being a Bronze Flame Elder, the Punishment Zone's elders were all at the Saint Celestial Stage and above.

It was easy for such a powerhouse to conceal their presence from the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples who were below the Mastery Quintessential Saint Stage.

Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples who were at the Mastery Quintessential Saint Stage or above could pass the Saint Land assessment and enter the Saint Land to become a disciple there. For this reason, Duan Ling Tian was certain the strongest Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples serving in the Punishment Zone was only at the Mastery Quintessential Saint Stage.

"Nobody is there!" Duan Ling Tian suddenly discovered a Saint Stone ore nearby without people around. His eyes brightened immediately as he made his way there.

As soon as he arrived at the Saint Stone ore, he raised his hand and pointed his index and middle finger at it.

Swoosh!

At this moment, a sword ray that was formed from Sun Saint Energy shot out from his fingers before it hit the Saint Stone ore.

However, as he shot the energy out, he discovered the Saint Stone ore he was aiming at that was only very small crumbled completely the moment the energy hit it. There was no Saint Stone at all.

"What the —?" Duan Ling Tian was puzzled when he looked at the stone that crumbled to the ground.

Initially, he thought he could get eight to ten first-grade Saint Stones from this Saint Stone ore. He did not expect that this Saint Stone ore looked promising on the outside but had nothing inside.

Damn it!

As Duan Ling Tian cursed, the eyes of many people following behind him brightened up immediately.

"It's so obvious there's nothing there, but he didn't realize it?"

"As long as he extends his Divine Consciousness, he would sense that the small Saint Stone ore has nothing inside. He doesn't even know such an easy way to search for Saint Stones?"

"Newcomer! He must be a newcomer!"

"Looks like it's really due to luck he got his hands on the extra-large wicker basket. Although I have no idea why the basket isn't issued according to time, I'm certain he's a newcomer!"

"Hurmph! A newcomer shouldn't have this extra-large wicker basket!"

...

At the same time, the group of Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples following Duan Ling Tian all these while transmitted their voices among themselves. Based on their words, it was obvious they did not think Duan Ling Tian was qualified to have the extra-large wicker basket.

A greedy light shone in their eyes immediately.

Whoosh!

Just as a few Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples decided to make their moves, a gust of wind suddenly blew past them. Someone else had beaten them to it and made a move first. He arrived next to Duan Ling Tian in just a flash.

Duan Ling Tian had already noticed this person when he was making way over.

When he appeared near Duan Ling Tian, Duan Ling Tian took a few steps back in a neither hurried nor slow manner and calmly looked at the middle-aged man standing in front of him. He asked indifferently, "Is there anything I can help you with?"

The middle-aged man standing in front of Duan Ling Tian had a huge build. He was stout and looked imposing like a tower.

Despite being more than 1.8 meters tall, Duan Ling Tian still appeared weak and tiny in front of this man who was 2 meters tall. Naturally, he only looked weak on the surface.

"You're new, right?" The middle-aged man asked. His voice was as loud a church bell, causing the eardrums of many people whose cultivation base was lower to rattle.

More and more people came to watch when the middle-aged man spoke. Even the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples who were originally mining the Saint Stone ores had also stopped working and came to join in the fun.

All the disciples from the four Sanctums who were sent to the First Mine's Punishment Zone were obviously bored after being here for so long. For this reason, they were always excited whenever a fight was about to break out. It could be considered as a rare entertainment in the Punishment Zone. Moreover, it did not cost them anything to enjoy this show.

"What's going on?"

"Isn't it Niu Kong? Did someone pick a fight with Niu Kong?"

"Huh? This young man who dares to oppose Niu Kong has an extra-large wicker basket on his back? I don't remember seeing him before!"

"Don't tell me he's new! Wait a minute! Even if he's new, it's impossible for him to get an extra-large wicker basket, the timing isn't right! In that case, did he snatch the extra-large wicker basket from someone else?"

"If he's strong enough to snatch an extra-large wicker basket from one of the 89 people, then Niu Kong can't compare to his strength. What's Niu Kong trying to do? Seeking trouble for himself?"

The group of uninformed people gathered and whispered among themselves.

Soon after, they learned about what happened from some of the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples who were in the know.

"He doesn't even know how to use his Divine Consciousness to probe the Saint Stone ore? He actually picked a Saint Stone ore bed that was merely as thick as a nail to mine?"

"This is a newcomer's mistake, right?"

"He's a newcomer?"

"If he's a newcomer, then the extra-large wicker basket is given to him in vain. However, the timing seems wrong."

"Leave the timing aside. Based on his actions, it's obvious he's a newcomer. No wonder Niu Kong dares to go forward. He already has his eyes on the newcomer's extra-large wicker basket!"

"This newcomer is going to be doomed. It's said that Niu Kong's cultivation base has already entered the peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage some time ago!"

The group of Four Symbols Sanctum's disciples discussed among themselves. They thought Duan Ling Tian was doomed and the extra-large wicker basket on his back would be taken away soon.

'The peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage?' Duan Ling Tian burst out laughing as soon as he heard the discussion in his surroundings about the cultivation base of the middle-aged man with a huge build.

A Four Symbols Sanctums' disciple at the peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage actually wanted to snatch something that belonged to him? Did he look weak?

However, Duan Ling Tian was also slightly shocked. It really did not cross his mind that someone would covet the extra-large wicker basket on his back.

Was it not just a lousy wicker basket?

Until now, Duan Ling Tian still did not know how rare and valuable the extra-large wicker basket on his back was in the Punishment Zone.

He thought that everyone got to pick their own wicker basket. It did not occur to him that not everyone was lucky enough to be given an extra-large wicker basket. Naturally, Duan Ling Tian did not remain ignorant for long.

As the discussions in the surroundings turned even more heated, he learned that there were only 89 extra-large wicker baskets before he came to the Punishment Zone in the First Mine.

There was no exception, all 89 extra-large wicker baskets were in the possession of Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples who were at the peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage or the Quintessential Saint Stage.

Apart from that, although newcomers might be given an extra-large wicker basket, there was a timing to it.

Based on the last time someone had been given an extra-large wicker basket, Duan Ling Tian should not have been given an extra-large wicker basket.

‘Did the Vermilion Bird Sanctum’s Bronze Flame Elder give me special treatment when he gave me this extra-large wicker basket?’ Duan Ling Tian smiled wryly when he realized what had happened.

Did the Vermilion Bird Sanctum’s Bronze Flame Elder look down on him? Did he not think Duan Ling Tian would be able to snatch an extra-large wicker basket with his own strength?

Although he complained a little in his heart, he knew he owed a favor to that Vermilion Bird Sanctum’s Bronze Flame Elder. If he was given a chance in the future, he would definitely return this favor.

“Are you deaf? I’m asking you if you’re new?” A thunderous voice sounded, causing Duan Ling Tian to regain his senses. He saw Niu Kong looking at him with ill intent.

“Does it matter if I’m new or not?” Duan Ling Tian asked indifferently.

Put aside that Niu Kong was merely at the peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage, even if Niu Kong was at the peak of the Quintessential Saint Stage, he was not enough to make Duan Ling Tian fear him.

“Good! Good! Very good! Lad, you’re really brave! Originally, I thought I’ll leave you unharmed if you obediently hand the extra-large wicker basket over!” Niu Kong’s gaze was extremely cold as he looked at Duan Ling Tian. “However, I’ve changed my mind. I will teach you a lesson even if you willingly hand the extra-large wicker basket over. You’ll have to learn that newcomers have to be respectful toward their seniors in the Punishment Zone!” Niu Kong said angrily.

As soon as he finished speaking, a vast aura surged out of his body. He was mobilizing the Saint Energy in his body!

“Senior Brother Niu Kong is really angry now!”

“This newcomer is really courageous! To think he actually dares to anger Senior Brother Niu Kong! He’s doomed!”

“Niu Kong originally has a bad temper. Now that he has made him angry, I don’t think things are going to end well for him.”

“I just hope that Senior Brother Niu Kong will show some mercy. Otherwise, I’m afraid this newcomer will be bedridden for quite some time.”

The group of Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples watching from the side discussed among themselves as they looked at Duan Ling Tian sympathetically.

“You’re Niu Kong, aren’t you?” Under the watchful eyes of the others, and faced with the furious Niu Kong, Duan Ling Tian merely looked at him coldly. “I’ll give you a chance! Get out of my sight in the span of three breaths. Otherwise, you’ll have to bear the consequences!”

Although Duan Ling Tian did not speak loudly, his words were still heard over everyone’s discussion.

The entire place fell silent immediately.

**Chapter 1965: Who Is The One Teaching A Lesson Now?**



“You want me to get out of y-your sight in the span of t-three breaths?” Upon hearing Duan Ling Tian’s loud and confident threat, like the other Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples, Niu Kong was momentarily stunned. When he regained his senses, he looked at Duan Ling Tian as though he had just seen a ghost.

For a moment, he even thought he had heard wrongly. That was why he had asked again to make sure he had heard correctly.

At the same time, the other Four Symbols Sanctum’s disciples had also regained their senses and burst into a commotion. Similar to Niu Kong, they looked at Duan Ling Tian as though they had seen a ghost.

“I didn’t hear wrongly, right? This new disciple is threatening Senior Brother Niu Kong?”

“H-He actually wants Niu Kong to get out of his sight?”

“Is he crazy?”

The Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples discussed among themselves. All of them felt this newcomer was too arrogant.

Those who were arrogant in the Punishment Zone usually did not live a good life unless they were strong.

However, no matter how they looked at it, they did not think this newcomer was powerful. At the very least, they did not think he was stronger than Niu Kong.

Upon hearing the discussions in the surroundings, Niu Kong knew he did not hear wrongly. The newcomer had really threatened him.

“Lad, you’re seeking death!” Niu Kong was enraged. His eyes burned angrily as Saint Energy surged out from his body like an angry dragon.

“I’ve given you a chance...” Duan Ling Tian said indifferently again, “The span of three breaths is up!”

Whoosh! Whoosh!

The moment Duan Ling Tian finished speaking, his Sun Saint Energy that had long been accumulated burst out of his back, transforming into a pair of wings that seemed to burn with a scorching flame. It was visually impactful.

In the next second, he flapped his wings suddenly.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!

...

All of a sudden, the sound of air explosions rang in the air. It was caused by the Golden Crow’s Wings on Duan Ling Tian’s back.

Naturally, such a huge commotion shocked many of the Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples.

Swoosh!

Almost at the same time, Duan Ling Tian who had cast the high-grade movement Divine Ability, Duan Ling Tian seemed to have transformed into a cannonball as he charged toward Niu Kong at a ridiculously fast speed.

“SH\*T!” Niu Kong finally regained his senses the moment Duan Ling Tian cast his movement Divine Ability and charged at him. His heart jolted as horror dawned on him.

At this moment, he finally realized the reason why the newcomer had dared to act so arrogantly. It was because he was strong!

Since Niu Kong had accumulated his Saint Energy beforehand, he instantly mobilized his Saint Energy and cast a movement martial tactic in an attempt to avoid Duan Ling Tian who was charging at him.

Although Niu Kong’s cultivation base had already broken through to the peak of the Eminent Saint Stage, he had yet to master any movement Divine Abilities that was at the medium-grade or above.

It was only natural since if he had mastered a medium-grade or above movement Divine Ability, with his cultivation base at the peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage, would it not be easy for him to snatch an extra-large wicker basket in the Punishment Zone? Would he need to snatch it from a newcomer?

“You’re too slow!” Duan Ling Tian’s cold words sent a jolt straight to Niu Kong’s heart.

In the next instant, as Niu Kong was trying to avoid Duan Ling Tian, the Golden Crow’s Wings suddenly flapped again. His speed turned even faster.

In just a blink of an eye, Duan Ling Tian had appeared next to Niu Kong.

Boom!

Duan Ling Tian casually pushed his hand that contained the vast Sun Saint Energy out. A dazzling golden light appeared and shrouded Niu Kong.

Although Niu Kong had cast a defensive martial tactic, it was full of weak spots since he was unprepared. It was easily crushed by the Sun Saint Energy from Duan Ling Tian’s palm.

Bang!

As a loud sound reverberated, Niu Kong’s body shook and was sent flying backward immediately. He crashed onto the ground and continued to slide back violently. He was throwing up blood as well. The ground was covered in blood, presenting a ghastly sight.

This scene scared the Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples as well. All of them gasped in fright.

Niu Kong, a Martial Cultivator at the peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage, could not even strike back in front of this newcomer and was severely injured with just a blow.

“I’ll give you a chance! Get out of my sight in the span of three breaths. Otherwise, you’ll have to bear the consequences!”

Duan Ling Tian's threat suddenly appeared in their minds. Although the words were the same, the feeling was completely different.

Before the fight, they felt this newcomer was arrogant and had overestimated his own strength. However, when they saw the newcomer had severely injured Niu Kong in just one blow, they realized how strong he was. He did not overestimate himself at all.

"Which Sanctum is this newcomer from?" Soon after, the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples shifted their eyes to Duan Ling Tian.

Based on his strength, he was definitely at the Quintessential Saint Stage!

The Quintessential Saint Stage disciples were all well-known in the four Sanctums.

Although the people here were a mix of people from the four Sanctums, none of them recognize this newcomer at all.

"Don't tell me he's a new disciple who has just entered the Fire Worship Sect but has already committed a crime and is sent to the First Mine?" Many of the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples made their own assumptions.

"You only have this bit of power, and yet you wanted to snatch my thing?" Duan Ling Tian looked at Niu Kong coldly. Currently, Niu Kong looked wretched. Colors drained from his face when he saw Duan Ling Tian's cold gaze.

He instantly apologized profusely, "I failed to recognize a great person, Senior Brother, please forgive me!" He had apologized because he was afraid Duan Ling Tian would attack again.

Although the Fire Worship Sect forbade disciples from killing one another, it was okay to fight as long as they did not kill or maim.

Duan Ling Tian's anger dissipated a lot when he saw how cowardly Niu Kong was. He asked coldly, "Didn't you say you're going to teach me a lesson earlier?"

"I don't dare! I don't dare!" Niu Kong quickly lowered his head. He did not dare to look at Duan Ling Tian in fear of making him angry.

"Hurmph!" After Duan Ling Tian snorted, he no longer bothered with Niu Kong. Instead, he followed the tunnel and walked deeper inside.

Duan Ling Tian felt it was not unreasonable for Niu Kong to try and snatch his extra-large wicker basket once he found out what a rare commodity it was in the Four Symbols Sanctums' First Mine.

However, Niu Kong was just unlucky for picking on someone stronger than him. Otherwise, his extra-large wicker basket would belong to Niu Kong now.

From the beginning until the end, Niu Kong merely intended to snatch his extra-large wicker basket and did not intend to kill him. Since snatching an extra-large wicker basket was common in the Punishment Zone, Duan Ling Tian no longer bothered with him. He never had the intention to kill him.

When Duan Ling Tian was around, the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples did not even dare to breathe. Now that Duan Ling Tian's figure is getting further and further away, they sighed in relief. At the same time, they begin to discuss among themselves.

"Who's he? With his strength, he has to be a Quintessential Saint Stage powerhouse! I'm a White Tiger Sanctum's disciple, and I've seen such a powerful person in our White Tiger Sanctum before I was banished to the First Mine!"

"I'm from the Azure Dragon Sanctum, and I've also never seen such a strong person in our Sanctum!"

"I'm from the Vermilion Bird Sanctum, and I've also never seen someone like that in our Sanctum!"

"I'm from the Black Turtle Sanctum, and just like all of you, I don't know him at all!"

They were all puzzling over Duan Ling Tian's identity.

"His wings of flames must be a very powerful movement Divine Ability!" A Four Symbols Sanctum's disciple shifted the topic to the high-grade movement Divine Ability, the Golden Crow's Wings, that Duan Ling Tian had cast earlier. He sounded shocked.

"I've never seen such movement Divine Ability before! Heck, I haven't even heard about it before. However, I feel like it's not inferior to the treasured movement Divine Ability in our Vermilion Bird Sanctum. Not only that, but the visual impact is even more powerful than the treasured movement Divine Ability in our Vermilion Bird Sanctum!"

"That's right! The movement Divine Ability he cast is just too powerful! The wings look as though it had grown from his body! It didn't look out of place at all!"

"I agree!"

The group of Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples was in awe over Duan Ling Tian's movement Divine Ability.

"I remember now!" Suddenly, a sharp voice rang out and overpowered everybody's voice, effectively attracting everyone's attention.

The person who had cried out loudly was skinny and small.

He looked like a thief with his small, shifty eyes. With just a glance, one could tell he was not a good person.

"Have you guys forgotten?" When this Four Symbols Sanctums' disciple saw everyone's attention was on him, he said excitedly, "There's one Black Turtle Sanctum's disciple who has recently been sentenced to the First Mine's Punishment Zone. Didn't we just speak about him before this? Not only that, but among the three high-grade Divine Abilities mastered by that Black Turtle Sanctum's disciple, isn't one of them a high-grade movement Divine Ability that allows him to grow a pair of wings?"

Upon hearing this Four Symbols Sanctums' disciple's words, everyone's eyes widened immediately.

Gasp! Gasp! Gasp! Gasp! Gasp!

Their gasps echoed in the underground mining cave tunnel before everyone fell silent.

## Chapter 1966: I, Duan Ling Tian, Am Taking That!

After they stopped gasping, the group of Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples, including Niu Kong, stood looking at each other at a loss. They saw the answer in each other's eyes.

"Duan Ling Tian!" Many Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples exclaimed in a low voice at this moment. Various expressions could be seen on their faces.

"How could I have forgotten him... Three months ago, he killed two Vermilion Bird Sanctum's disciples. Rumor has it that one of them was at the Early Quintessential Saint Stage!"

"Even if he has not reached the Intermediate Quintessential Saint Stage yet, I'm sure it must be pretty close to the Intermediate Quintessential Saint Stage!"

"Rumor also has it that he possesses the yellow Innate Spiritual Root. By right, an ordinary disciple with a yellow Innate Spiritual Root shouldn't be able to break through to the Quintessential Saint Stage! However, he still managed to kill a Vermilion Bird Sanctum's disciple at the Early Quintessential Saint Stage!"

"I heard that his cultivation base has not even reached the Quintessential Saint Stage. The reason he's so strong is all thanks to the three high-grade Divine Abilities that he mastered!"

"Put aside his Innate Spiritual Root. Let's talk about his ability of mastering Divine Abilities. I'm afraid not many people can compare to him in the Fire Worship Sect. After all, he has comprehended three high-grade Divine Abilities. In the Fire Worship Sect, it's said that even Lord Sect Leader has only mastered three high-grade Divine Abilities!"

"What's most surprising is that even though he had killed the Vermilion Bird Sanctum's disciples for no good reason, the Saint Land Enforcement Hall still protects him! Not only that, but when a Saint Land Bronze Flame Elder with blue Innate Spiritual Roots made a commotion at the Saint Land Enforcement Hall regarding Duan Ling Tian killing of the Vermilion Bird Sanctum's disciples, the elder was sentenced to death instead!"

"Perhaps, Duan Ling Tian's Martial Dao innate talent is ordinary but his innate talent in mastering Divine Abilities is definitely extraordinary. However, what's most amazing is his mysterious background!"

"You have a point. If it's not for his extraordinary background, why would the Saint Land Enforcement Hall protect him in the first place?"

When the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples discovered the newcomer was Duan Ling Tian, they began to discuss among themselves. They were no longer surprised by his strength. After all, they had all heard about him.

"So he's Duan Ling Tian..." A bitter smile appeared on Niu Kong's face. If he had known the other person was Duan Ling Tian, he would not even dare to attempt to snatch the extra-large wicker basket even if he was 100 times more courageous.

Many of the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples looked at Niu Kong sympathetically. Although Niu Kong was quite strong, he could hardly compare to Duan Ling Tian!

Meanwhile, Duan Ling Tian was unaware that the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples had guessed his identity correctly.

He continued to walk further into the mining cave. He was mining as he walked. With his current strength, the entire process went smoothly. Soon after, the extra-large wicker basket on his back was already filled with high-grade Saint Stones.

The Saint Stones ranged from big to small. They had not been polished so they looked very coarse.

"To think that I haven't even found a quasi Celestial-grade Saint Stone." Despite having mined a basket-full of first-grade Saint Stones, Duan Ling Tian still had not come across any quasi Celestial-grade Saint Stone ore. He felt slightly disappointed.

'Now that my wicker basket is full, it's time for me to hand the Saint Stones over. I wonder how many baskets of first-grade Saint Stones I'll have to hand in to complete today's task,' Duan Ling Tian thought to himself.

In truth, Duan Ling Tian could be faster when it came to filling his wicker basket full of Saint Stones. He was a little slow because he had secretly sent many first-grade Saint Stones into the Seven Treasures Exquisite Pagoda.

If it was not for the fact that he would be found out if he took too many Saint Stones for himself, he would have continued on.

'I'll continue again when I mine next time. It's time for me to stop.' The moment he thought of this, he carried the extra-large wicker basket that was filled first-grade Saint Stones and walked out. As soon as he appeared, everyone's attention shifted to him again.

"It's Duan Ling Tian!" When Duan Ling Tian heard the low exclamations of some of the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples, he realized his identity had been exposed.

'I can't believe they identified me so quickly...' Duan Ling Tian shook his head.

When he walked out, he realized the people that had originally been tailing him had disappeared as well. He did not think it was strange since he finally understood why so many people were following him earlier when he entered the cave. As it turned out, all of them coveted his extra-large wicker basket. However, after he had shown his strength and his identity was exposed, those people no longer dared to covet the extra-large wicker basket on his back.

What a joke!

In the Punishment Zone of the Four Symbols Sanctums' First Mine, there was currently a total of 90 extra-large wicker basket, including the one Duan Ling Tian possessed. However, there were only about 50 to 60 people who were at the Quintessential Saint Stage or above in the Punishment Zone.

In other words, there were many elite powerhouses at the peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage with extra-large wicker baskets as well.

Apart from those who are insane, the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples in the Punishment Zone would definitely rather snatch an extra-large wicker basket from those at the peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage rather than snatching them from Duan Ling Tian.

Duan Ling Tian was strong enough to kill an Early Quintessential Saint Stage Martial Cultivator! His strength was almost on par with an Intermediate Quintessential Saint Stage cultivator!

As Duan Ling Tian was about to leave the mining cave, there were also many Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples who were leaving. He stopped a middle-aged man who was about to leave and asked politely, "Senior Brother, do you know how many Saint Stones we have to mine today to complete our tasks?"

"Senior Brother Duan Ling Tian, you can just address me as junior brother. I don't dare to have you address me as senior brother!" The middle-aged became a little anxious when he saw Duan Ling Tian appearing before him. He was terrified, just like a mouse that had seen a cat, when he heard Duan Ling Tian calling him senior brother.

Earlier, he was present when Duan Ling Tian had injured Niu Kong with just a blow. For this reason, he knew the person standing before him was Duan Ling Tian, a Black Turtle Sanctum's disciple, who had been sentenced to serve in the First Mine's Punishment Zone.

He was only an Intermediate Exemplary Saint Stage Martial Cultivator, it was natural for him to panic when faced with Duan Ling Tian.

"With your extra-large wicker basket, you'll only need to fill it six times to complete today's task, Senior Brother Duan Ling Tian." Despite feeling terrified, the middle-aged man did not dare to act carelessly in front of Duan Ling Tian.

"Thank you." Duan Ling Tian merely shook his head and did not speak unnecessarily when he saw how afraid the middle-aged man was.

Swoosh!

In the next instant, Duan Ling Tian made a move and increased his speed. Soon after, he left the mining cave. 'Six wicker baskets of Saint Stones... With my previous mining speed, it'll take me 15 minutes at most to fill the basket up with first-grade Saint Stones. However, I still need to spend another 15 minutes to send some first-grade Saint Stones into the Seven Treasures Exquisite Pagoda... All in all, it'll take me about 30 minutes. It'll take me three hours to fill up 6 wicker baskets. Adding on the traveling time to hand the Saint Stones over, it'll take me about four hours at most to complete the task!' Duan Ling Tian calculated the time inwardly.

Meanwhile, he followed the throng of people to the allocated place to hand over the Saint Stones.

Naturally, Duan Ling Tian became the center of attention since he was carrying the extra-large wicker basket. Many people were staring at him in jealousy, envy, and greed.

Some of the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples suspected Duan Ling Tian was a newcomer when they saw his face. They instantly began to have covetous thoughts toward his extra-large wicker basket.

However, when they found out he was Duan Ling Tian, horror dawned on them immediately. They had no choice but to dismiss the idea of snatching the wicker basket and suppress the greed in their hearts.

What a joke!

This person was Duan Ling Tian! Someone who killed an Early Quintessential Saint Stage Vermilion Bird Sanctum's disciple! They would just be seeking death if they tried to snatch his extra-large wicker basket.

When Duan Ling Tian arrived at the place to hand over the Saint Stones, he attracted the attention of a White Tiger Sanctum's Bronze Flame Elder who was in charge of collecting the Saint Stones as well. 'An extra large wicker basket? This person seems unfamiliar though...'

"Duan Ling Tian?" When he was registering Duan Ling Tian, he finally found out who Duan Ling Tian was. He finally understood what had happened.

If he was Duan Ling Tian, it was not a surprise for him to possess an extra-large wicker basket since his strength was obvious!

Compared to the Vermilion Bird Sanctum's Bronze Flame Elder, this White Tiger Sanctum's Bronze Flame Elder was also very polite to Duan Ling Tian after learning about his identity.

"Duan Ling Tian, you just have to send this one basket of Saint Stones today. You've just arrived at the First Mine, it's better for you to rest for now." Based on his words, it was obvious he was also giving Duan Ling Tian special treatment.

"There's no need for that!" Duan Ling Tian instantly rejected his suggestion. He was anxious when he heard the elder's words.

What a joke!

He wanted to stay in the mining cave longer. The longer he stayed in there, the more first-grade Saint Stones he could send into the Seven Treasures Exquisite Pagoda.

Although the first-grade Saint Stones were not useful to him in the Fire Worship Sect, it would be extremely useful for his family and friends.

To the Azure Cloud Mansion that was located far away in the Lower Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land, a huge number of Saint Stones would raise their wealth. Moreover, it might even raise the strength of the Azure Cloud Mansion!

"Huh?" Although the White Tiger Sanctum's Bronze Flame Elder had no idea why Duan Ling Tian would reject his good intention, he no longer said anything since Duan Ling Tian insisted on staying.

It took another three hours before Duan Ling Tian finally completed his task for the day.

'It's time for me to find a place to stay. It's said that in the Four Symbols Sanctums' residence in the Punishment Zone, there's a hovering mansion with a cultivation environment that's on par with a Primus house. I, Duan Ling Tian, am going to take that mansion as my own!' Duan Ling Tian's eyes shone as he made up his mind.



## **Chapter 1967: The Sun Saint Energy That Was Equivalent To The Saint Energy at the Intermediate Quintessential Saint Stage**

The Four Symbols Sanctums' residence in the Punishment Zone of the Four Symbols Sanctums' First Mine had numerous cultivating residences. Just like each Sanctum of the Four Symbols Sanctums, they were divided into Primus houses, Secundus houses, Tertius houses, and Quartus houses that were placed in a pyramid formation.

Due to the reason there were not many Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples in the Punishment Zone, there were not many residences as well. For example, there were ten Primus houses in each Sanctum, but there was only one Primus House here.

In the Punishment Zone of the Four Symbols Sanctums' First Mine, there were only ten Secundus houses and a hundred Tertius houses. They had slightly more Quartus houses here. There were 2,000 Quartus houses.

When Duan Ling Tian came to the Four Symbols Sanctums' residence in the Punishment Zone of the Four Symbols Sanctum's First Mine, his eyes were trained on the mansion on the highest suspended island. The highest suspended island was like a moon surrounded by stars or a stork standing among a flock of fowls. It appeared particularly eye-catching.

"Is there no one in there?" Duan Ling Tian hovered near the Primus House as he extended his Divine Consciousness and discovered the house was vacant.

'Looks like the person residing in this Primus house is not back from work yet,' Duan Ling Tian thought to himself as he waited for the owner of Primus house to come back.

"The fact that he's staying in this Primus house means he must be the strongest among all the disciples in the Punishment Zone of the Four Symbols Sanctum's First Mine!" Although Duan Ling Tian knew the other party was strong, he was not afraid at all.

Currently, his cultivation base had entered the peak of the Divine Saint Stage. Just with his Sun Saint Energy alone, it was already at the peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage.

For this reason, with the help of his Divine Ability, the Golden Crow's Wings, he could severely injure Niu Kong who had just broken through to the Exemplary Saint Stage with just a blow!

In terms of Saint Energy, he was superior to Niu Kong. Naturally, it was easy for him to defeat him. However, Duan Ling Tian felt no sense of accomplishment in defeating Niu Kong. In fact, even if he defeated the current owner of this Primus house, he would not feel a sense of accomplishment as well.

When Duan Ling Tian's cultivation base was at the Intermediate Divine Saint Stage, with the various Divine Abilities that he mastered, he could already kill an ordinary Early Quintessential Saint Stage Martial Cultivator. His strength was comparable to an Intermediate Quintessential Saint Stage Martial Cultivator!

He had made two consecutive breakthroughs and entered the peak of the Divine Saint Stage currently! In other words, his strength is far superior to most of the Mastery Quintessential Saint Stage Martial Cultivators and was almost on par Martial Cultivators at the peak of the Quintessential Saint Stage.

In fact, he could even defeat Mastery Quintessential Saint Stage Martial Cultivators if they did not master any powerful Divine Abilities, particularly high-grade Divine Abilities. Otherwise, Duan Ling Tian would not dare to say he would be able to defeat them since there were too many unknown variables.

“Isn’t that Duan Ling Tian? Why’s he standing outside the Primus house?” Soon after, two Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples who had completed their tasks returned and saw Duan Ling Tian carrying the extra-large wicker basket on his back as he stood outside the Primus house. They were shocked.

One of them quickly figured out what was going on, and his eyes widened in disbelief as he said, “Don’t tell me that he’s going to challenge Senior Brother Sun De from the Primus house?”

“It’s possible!” The other person nodded.

“Crazy! He’s really crazy! Does he think Senior Brother could be compared to the Early Quintessential Saint Stage Vermilion Bird Sanctum’s disciple whom he killed? In fact, Senior Brother Sun De already has one foot in the Mastery Quintessential Saint Stage. He could break through to the Mastery Quintessential Saint Stage at any time now!”

“That’s right! Once Senior Brother Sun De breaks through to the Mastery Quintessential Saint Stage, he’ll have a chance of becoming a Saint Land disciple. Once he becomes a Saint Land disciple, he’ll be able to leave the First Mine since he no longer has to serve his sentence!”

As the two Four Symbols Sanctum’s disciples were speaking, they praised the owner of the Primus house. The owner was a Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciple named Sun De.

Based on their words, it was clear they did not think Duan Ling Tian was a match for Sun De.

When they saw Duan Ling Tian hovering outside the Primus house with his eyes closed to attain mental composure as he waited for Sun De’s return, they were in no rush to return to their houses. Instead, they waited along with Duan Ling Tian for Sun De’s return.

As time continued to pass, more and more Four Symbols Sanctum’s disciples returned as well.

When they found out Duan Ling Tian intended to claim ownership of the Primus house, they did not return to their own houses. All of them waited for Sun De to return as well.

“Tsk tsk! Duan Ling Tian wants to challenge Senior Brother Sun De? Senior Brother Sun De is the strongest powerhouse among all the Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples in the Punishment Zone of the Four Symbols Sanctum’s First Mine. He already has one foot in the Mastery Quintessential Saint Stage!”

“Not only that, but Senior Brother Sun De even mastered two medium-grade Divine Abilities! It’s said that he has already more or less mastered the treasured Divine Ability, the Black Turtle’s Barrier from the Black Turtle Sanctum. Before he was banished to the First Mine, he was widely acknowledged as one of Black Turtle Sanctum’s disciples who’s most likely to successfully comprehend the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle’s Barrier.”

“Senior Brother Sun De is from the Black Turtle Sanctum and so is Duan Ling Tian... This show is going to be interesting!”

More and more Four Symbols Sanctum’s disciples gathered together. Duan Ling Tian could hear their words clearly.

‘He already has one foot in the Mastery Quintessential Saint Stage? And he’s one of Black Turtle Sanctum’s disciples who has the highest chance to successfully comprehend the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle’s Barrier from the Black Turtle Sanctum?’ The first part of their discussion did not faze Duan Ling Tian, but the latter part gave his heart a jolt. ‘If Sun De has successfully comprehended the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle’s Barrier, it’ll benefit me!’

Duan Ling Tian had been eager to watch another person cast the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle’s Barrier of the Black Turtle Sanctum. He discovered that by watching other people cast a Divine Ability would help his heart that had been tempered by the Sovereign Heart Sword to comprehend a Divine Ability quickly!

“Senior Brother Sun De is back!” Duan Ling Tian finally opened his eyes when he heard a cry.

As soon as he opened his eyes, he saw a Four Symbols Sanctum’s disciple, Sun De, walking on air toward him.

Sun De was a middle-aged man who appeared inconspicuous.

No matter how big the commotion was, there were no changes in his expression at all. From the beginning until the end, he had a glum expression on his face as though someone owed him something big.

Soon after, Sun De arrived before Duan Ling Tian and stood opposite him. He asked calmly, “You want to challenge me?”

“Please give me some pointers, Senior Brother Sun De.” Duan Ling Tian nodded his head.

“Make your move then!” Sun De was very straightforward. The instant his words left his mouth, a vast aura surged out of his body. It was the aura of his Saint Energy. When the Saint Energy finally appeared on the surface of his body, the air began to visibly tremble. This was the power of an Intermediate Quintessential Saint Stage powerhouse!

“Elementary Devouring Tactic!” With just a thought, the Sun Saint Energy in Duan Ling Tian’s body surged out through the 99 Saint Veins inside his body as he cast his high-grade Divine Ability, the Elementary Devouring Tactic.

In just a blink of an eye, whirlpools appeared around his body.

As the whirlpools churned, a powerful suction force appeared suddenly. After a while, the surrounding Heaven and Earth Spirit Energy was completely devoured!

“It’s that high-grade assist-type Divine Ability that Duan Ling Tian mastered!”

“What a horrifying assist-type Divine Ability! In just a blink of an eye, he devoured the Heaven and Earth Spirit Energy in the surroundings! I can hardly sense any Heaven and Earth Spirit Energy around us now.”

“His Saint Energy is continuously being raised...”

As Duan Ling Tian cast the Divine Ability, the Elementary Devouring Tactic, the Four Symbols Sanctum’s disciples’ attention was all on the whirlpools around his body.

Although they had heard about how Duan Ling Tian had mastered a very powerful high-grade assist-type Divine Ability, they were still shocked when they witnessed it with their own eyes.

As soon as Duan Ling Tian cast the high-grade assist-type Divine Ability, they could clearly sense that Duan Ling Tian’s Saint Energy was continuously rising.

Originally, Duan Ling Tian’s Sun Saint Energy was merely exuding the aura of a powerhouse at the peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage. However, as his Saint Energy continued rising, it began to surpass that of a cultivator at the Early Quintessential Saint Stage. In the end, it was raised to a stage where it was on par with the Saint Energy of a cultivator at the Intermediate Quintessential Saint Stage!

Duan Ling Tian’s Sun Saint Energy had already been raised to a stage where it was comparable to Sun De’s Saint Energy. Both of their Saint Energies were at the Intermediate Quintessential Saint Stage!

Naturally, unlike Sun De, Duan Ling Tian’s current Saint Energy that was raised by his assist-type Divine Ability would not last long.

“I was present when Duan Ling Tian defeated Niu Kong earlier. However, I didn’t pay attention so I’m not sure if Duan Ling Tian used his assist-type Divine Ability! However, based on what’s happening now, I don’t think he cast this Divine Ability when he fought Niu Kong!”

“Duan Ling Tian who had cast his assist-type Divine Ability has actually raised his own Saint Energy to a stage where it’s equivalent to the Saint Energy at the Intermediate Quintessential Saint Stage Saint. When he raised his own Saint Energy to where it was equivalent to the Saint Energy at the peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage previously, he managed to kill the Vermilion Bird Sanctum’s disciple who was at the Early Quintessential Saint Stage!”

“I’m afraid it won’t be difficult for him to defeat Senior Brother Sun De!”

“My goodness! Duan Ling Tian has gotten so much stronger in just these three months! Is he really just a commoner who has a yellow Innate Spiritual Root?”

After the group of Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples witnessed the Sun Saint Energy that Duan Ling Tian raised through the Elementary Devouring Tactic, they widened their eyes in disbelief and shock.

## **Chapter 1968: Dao Cultivator Sun De**

Although most of the Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples present on the scene knew Duan Ling Tian had defeated Niu Kong, they thought Duan Ling Tian was able to defeat him in just a blow because he had cast the high-grade assist-type Divine Ability! However, at this moment, they finally realized that was not the case at all.

“Before he casts his Divine Ability, his Saint Energy is already at the peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage. In other words, his cultivation base is most likely at the peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage!”

“How’s that possible? Three months ago, his cultivation base was only at the Intermediate Exemplary Saint Stage!”

“He actually made a breakthrough to the peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage from the Intermediate Exemplary Saint Stage in just three short months? I’m afraid only those monstrous geniuses with indigo Innate Spiritual Roots would be able to have such progress!”

“Duan Ling Tian only has a yellow Innate Spiritual Root. How did he progress this quickly? Something must be wrong!”

“Could the Black Turtle Sanctum make a mistake when they tested his Innate Spiritual Root? When he killed fellow disciples in the sect, even the Saint Land Enforcement Hall protected him. Could it be that he has shown them his Innate Spiritual Root?!”

“That might be possible!”

“If that’s the case, then everything makes sense!”

The Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples whispered among themselves. They began to suspect that Duan Ling Tian had a high-grade Innate Spiritual Root. Otherwise, how could he possibly break through to the peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage from the Intermediate Exemplary Saint Stage in just three short months?

At this moment, a Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciple suddenly chimed in loudly, “I don’t think that’s the case.”

After successfully attracting everyone’s attention, he said, “From what I know, when Duan Ling Tian arrived at the Fire Worship Sect, he concealed his cultivation base using some special technique. I’m thinking that, perhaps, he also concealed his cultivation base at the Intermediate Exemplary Saint Stage?”

The statement from this Four Symbols Sanctum’s disciple prompted many Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples to recall all sorts of rumors regarding Duan Ling Tian previously.

“It does seem so... That’s possible as well!”

“Well, that makes sense. However, I can’t believe Duan Ling Tian actually hid his strength so well!”

“His cultivation base is at the peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage. Perhaps, this is the cultivation limit of a person with a yellow Innate Spiritual Root!”

“With the three high-grade Divine Abilities that Duan Ling Tian mastered, coupled with all the techniques he cast, even if his cultivation base is only at the peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage, his strength is still equivalent to a Martial Cultivator at the Mastery Quintessential Saint Stage!”

Currently, the truth had been muddled. Duan Ling Tian’s innate talent and cultivation became even more mysterious and confusing.

However, there was one thing the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples present on the scene were certain of. That was Duan Ling Tian's current strength that had been raised by his assist-type Divine Ability was much stronger than Sun De!

Meanwhile, Sun De's expression turned solemn. It was apparent he had felt the pressure as well.

Whoosh!

After witnessing Duan Ling Tian's strength, Sun De did not dare to act recklessly. With a raise of his hand, a seven-foot-long spear appeared in his hand as Saint Energy rushed into it, causing a spear ray to skyrocket into the sky!

"Senior Brother Sun De instantly took out his Hundred Inscriptions Saint Weapon. It seems like Duan Ling Tian's current strength has pressured him as well!"

"Of course! However, even if Senior Brother Sun De took out his Hundred Inscriptions Saint Weapon, there's not much suspense left in the battle. Unless he makes a sudden breakthrough to the Mastery Quintessential Saint Stage or he has mastered the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier from the Black Turtle Sanctum, he might be able to fight Duan Ling Tian!"

"That's right! Although Duan Ling Tian probably can't maintain his current strength for too long, with his current strength and the three high-grade Divine Abilities he mastered, it won't be difficult for him to quickly defeat Senior Brother Sun De!"

In the beginning, the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples present on the scene had a high opinion of Sun De, but after seeing Duan Ling Tian's strength, they now regarded Duan Ling Tian highly.

Whoosh!

Under the watchful eyes of the others, Sun De chose to strike first to gain the advantage. He charged toward Duan Ling Tian like a ghost.

Boom!

Rumble!

At the same time, Sun De spun the Hundred Inscriptions Saint Spear and a vast Saint Energy swept out, causing turbulence in the air and a thunderous explosion.

"Golden Crow's Wings!" Faced with Sun De who was charging at him with his spear, Duan Ling Tian cast his movement Divine Ability, the Golden Crow's Wings, in a neither hurried nor slow pace.

In just a blink of an eye, a pair of wings made of flames appeared behind Duan Ling Tian.

Without warning, the Golden Crow's Wings flapped forcefully!

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!

Thunderous explosions reverberated in the air as though it could make Heaven shake. Duan Ling Tian moved at lightning speed and easily dodged Sun De who charged at him.

Sun De's speed was nothing in front of the Divine Ability, the Golden Crow's Wings!

'You know it's impossible to chase after me so you're giving up?' After dodging, Duan Ling Tian realized Sun De had come to a halt. He did not make a move for a long time that Duan Ling Tian thought Sun De had given up.

"Huh?" However, before Duan Ling Tian realized it, Sun De had made a move again.

Sun De raised the Hundred Inscriptions Saint Spear in his hand with the tip of the spear pointed up in the air.

At this moment, Duan Ling Tian's Divine Consciousness could clearly sense a wave of mysterious energy surging out of Sun De's Hundred Inscriptions Saint Spear toward the sky at a fast speed.

One could not see the energy at all. If it was not for Duan Ling Tian constantly extending his Divine Consciousness, he would not have noticed it. He did not make a move for the time being since the energy was not aimed at him. He looked up into the sky instinctively.

"What's he doing?" Duan Ling Tian was baffled. However, in the next instant, his eyes widened.

When Duan Ling Tian looked up, the mysterious energy that shot up into the sky from the Hundred Inscriptions Saint Spear in Sun De's hand hit the sky and caused a violent turbulence in the air.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!

In the next moment, claps of thunder began to sound in the air and bolts of purple lightning as thick as a baby's arms appeared out of thin air in the midst of the turbulent sky.

There were about a hundred bolts of purple lightning in the air, giving it a mysterious appearance.

Time seemed to have stopped at this moment.

"Descend!" Sun De shouted loudly at this moment.

When Duan Ling Tian looked at Sun De, he saw him spinning the Hundred Inscriptions Saint Spear in his hand and pointing the tip to the front before shifting it down.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!

...

As Sun De made his move, a thunderous noise sounded above Duan Ling Tian. A hundred bolts of lightning that were as thick as a baby's arms accompanied it.

"Dao Cultivator!" Duan Ling Tian narrowed his eyes as his expression turned grave when he saw that Sun De was not a Martial Cultivator but a Dao Cultivator instead.

Duan Ling Tian did not encounter many Dao Cultivators ever since he came to the Dao Martial Saint Land.

All these while, he was slightly curious as well. The 'Dao' and 'Martial' in the Dao Martial Saint Land referred to Dao Cultivators and Martial Cultivators! However, he did not encounter many Dao Cultivators even though he had been in the Dao Martial Saint Land for quite some time. It was the same even when he came to the Upper Province. Duan Ling Tian thought it was just a coincidence he did not encounter many Dao Cultivators.

Now, he finally encountered a Dao Cultivator and a powerful one at that!

The moment he made his move, he immediately used the force from the world, transforming them into a hundred bolts of lightning that were as thick as a baby's arm that was aimed at him. Each of bolts of lightning was fast and was in no way inferior to the attack speed of an ordinary Intermediate Quintessential Saint Stage Martial Cultivator.

"There seems to be more than just the Dao method in these bolts of lightning! There's some trace of Divine Ability as well!" Duan Ling Tian's extended Divine Consciousness could clearly sense something when it touched the lightning.

"The Dao method, the Hundred Planetary Lightning, that Senior Brother Sun De is casting now seems different from the Hundred Planetary Lightning that he used to cast! Didn't he already reach the highest stage of this Dao method long ago?" As the hundred bolts of lightning struck at Duan Ling Tian, the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples also noticed something strange.

"Isn't this the aura of the medium-grade offensive Divine Ability, the Cataclysmal Thunderbolt?" At the same time, someone else also noticed that apart from the Dao method, the Hundred Planetary Lightning, Sun De's strike also contained the medium-grade offensive Divine Ability, the Cataclysmal Thunderbolt.

"Hundred Planetary Lightning? Cataclysmal Thunderbolt?" Duan Ling Tian raised his brow. Faced with the hundred bolts of lightning that were as thick as a baby's arms, he did not dodge as the people expected. Instead, he stood motionlessly.

10,000 Swords Territory!

At this instant, the area in within 100-meter radius of Duan Ling Tian became a golden ocean formed by 10,000 golden sword rays. It blocked everyone's vision, including Sun De.

"Clear!" With just a thought, an opening appeared above the 10,000 Swords Territory, allowing the hundred bolts of lightning that were as thick as a baby's arms to enter it.

Duan Ling Tian was instantly exposed and vulnerable to the bolts of lightning.

Sizzle! Sizzle! Sizzle!

At this moment, Duan Ling Tian's body underwent an earth-shattering transformation as he transformed into a Nine-clawed Dragon Warrior!

**Chapter 1969: The Black Turtle's Barrier**



Duan Ling Tian who had transformed into a Nine-clawed Dragon Warrior was completely exposed to the hundred bolts of lightning that were as thick as a baby's arms. Even then, Duan Ling Tian stood unmoving just like a mountain.

As lightning flashed across the sky, a purple light appeared, causing the dragon scales on Duan Ling Tian to reflect the light, making it dazzling and blinding for all.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!

...

Finally, the hundred bolts of lightning that were as thick as a baby's arms descended and struck Duan Ling Tian.

Each of the hundred bolts of lightning contained combat force that was in no way inferior to the attack of an Early Quintessential Saint Stage Martial Cultivator.

When they were close to Duan Ling Tian, they seemed to have merged together and completely shrouded Duan Ling Tian.

At this moment, Duan Ling Tian only felt a vast and terrifying energy sweeping over him, causing his body to tremble. Soon after, he realized that with the help of brute strength of a Nine-clawed Dragon Warrior that had been infused with the Sun Saint Energy, he was not injured at all even though the force of the bolts of lightning made his body shake until it felt like his internal organs were also rattling. Despite the powerful force of the lightning, it was unable to break the defense on his body.

The brute body of a Nine-clawed Dragon Warrior, coupled with the Sun Saint Energy that was on par with the Saint Energy at the Intermediate Quintessential Saint Stage Saint Energy, easily blocked Sun De's attack that contained a Dao method and Divine Ability.

'As expected from the defense of the body of a Nine-clawed Dragon Warrior. It's comparable to an Eight-clawed Divine Dragon!' Duan Ling Tian sighed in relief.

"Based on Sun De's cultivation base, this attack is probably his most powerful attack!" Duan Ling Tian who forcefully withstood the hundred bolts of lightning that were as thick as a baby's arms was unharmed. At the same time, all his dragon's characteristics disappeared as he returned to looking like a human again.

He had hidden his identity as a Nine-clawed Dragon Warrior well.

"It's my turn to attack now!" Duan Ling Tian's eyes shone as he withdrew his 10,000 Swords Territory that had blocked everyone's sight.

In the next instant, a completely unharmed Duan Ling Tian appeared before everyone's watchful eyes.

Sun De who was standing nearby had a horrified expression on his face when he saw this. He had thought his attack that he unleashed unreservedly would at least injure Duan Ling Tian.

If Duan Ling Tian was injured, he would have created an opportunity for himself. Perhaps, he could stall for time until the effect of Duan Ling Tian's assist-type Divine Ability was gone. Once Duan Ling Tian lost the effect of his assist-type Divine Ability, he would return to normal or he might even be weakened.

Duan Ling Tian whose cultivation base was only at the peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage without the help of his assist-type Divine Ability would not be a match for him.

However, imagination was always beautiful, but the reality was mostly cruel.

Although he had unleashed his strongest attack, he had failed to injure Duan Ling Tian at all.

He did not know what kind of method Duan Ling Tian had used when he consolidated his Territory, but the fact remained that Duan Ling Tian was uninjured!

It was due to this reason that the upper hand he thought he would gain was lost and had now fallen into a disadvantageous position.

“He’s unharmed?” At the same time, when the Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples saw Duan Ling Tian was unharmed, they were greatly shocked.

Although they knew Duan Ling Tian was stronger than Sun De now, they did not expect he would escape unscathed!

“Unfortunately, the Territory that Senior Brother Duan Ling Tian consolidated blocked our sight. Otherwise, we would be able to see how he withstood Senior Brother Sun De’s attack!” Many Four Symbols Sanctum’s disciples found this to be a pity.

Naturally, it did not cross their minds that Duan Ling Tian had intentionally consolidated his Territory to block their vision. They merely thought that Duan Ling Tian had to rely on his Territory to withstand Sun De’s full-force attack.

‘Senior Brother Sun De is going to be defeated now!’ At the same time, the Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples present on the scene thought to themselves. They did not think there would be any more surprises left in this battle.

At the same time, Duan Ling Tian looked at Sun De and said, “Senior Brother Sun De, I’m sorry!”

After giving him a warning, the wings made of flames appeared again. It was the Divine Ability, the Golden Crow’s Wings.

In the next instant, the Golden Crow’s Wings flapped abruptly.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!

Thunderous explosions sounded in the air.

At the same time, Duan Ling Tian charged toward Sun De at an extremely fast speed.

Sun De’s expression turned grave immediately as soon as he saw the Golden Crow’s Wings flapping. The Saint Energy emanating from the surface of his body increased rapidly. One could see he kept mobilizing his Saint Energy as though he was trying to do something.

At this moment, Duan Ling Tian who moved at lightning speed appeared near Sun De.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

As Duan Ling Tian's Sun Saint Energy surged out of his body, golden sword rays appeared around him as well. Each of the sword rays contained a piercing aura that could tear through everything.

There were hundreds of these sword rays.

'Go!' Duan Ling Tian thought. The hundreds of golden sword rays that were originally revolving around his body seemed to have understood his order as they charged toward Sun De.

The hundreds of golden sword rays soared through the sky in a compelling manner!

Although the attack was not as visually impactful as Sun De's attack, the force was in no way inferior to Sun De's attack at all. It pressured Sun De as well as it charged toward him.

Under the watchful eyes of the others, Sun De's eyes were bloodshot as he cried out suddenly, "Black Turtle's Barrier!" His voice was extremely loud.

His words shocked the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples so much that they widened their eyes in disbelief.

Meanwhile, Duan Ling Tian was equally as shocked that he was momentarily stunned.

Black Turtle's Barrier?

In the next instant, Duan Ling Tian could clearly see that before the hundreds of golden sword rays that were infused with the profundity of the Sovereign Heart Sword could get near Sun De, they had already been blocked by an invisible energy. It was as though they had crashed into an invisible wall!

In the next instant, under the watchful eyes of the others, the silhouette of a gigantic Black Turtle mysteriously appeared around Sun De's body.

The Black Turtle's silhouette was translucent, and if one did not pay close attention, one would not be able to see it clearly.

The hundreds of golden sword rays controlled by Duan Ling Tian were blocked by it. It seemed as though Sun De was protected by an iron wall.

Naturally, although the Black Turtle's silhouette managed to block the attack, it was not easy either.

The gigantic Black Turtle's silhouette was repeatedly attacked until rattled violently. Subsequently, a ripple appeared in the air and continued to spread out. It was visually impactful!

"This is the Black Turtle's Barrier?" Despite his failed attack, Duan Ling Tian was not in a hurry to attack again.

Although he knew he would be able to easily shatter the Black Turtle's silhouette using his Divine Ability, the Otherworldly Celestial, he was not in a hurry to do so. This was because he had something more important to do!

Duan Ling Tian was staring intently at the Black Turtle's silhouette before him as though he was studying it. He was completely immersed in it.

As for the other Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples, they finally regained their senses one by one. They all had an expression of disbelief on their faces. "S-Senior Brother S-Sun De has successfully cultivated the treasured Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier from the Black Turtle Sanctum?"

"Not only is the Black Turtle's Barrier the most treasured Divine Ability in the Black Turtle Sanctum, but it's also the number one defensive Divine Ability in our Fire Worship Sect! I can't believe Senior Brother Sun De has successfully comprehended it!"

"Comprehending the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier, also means that Senior Brother Sun De can now head to the Saint Land and become a Saint Land disciple!"

"When did Senior Brother Sun De successfully comprehend this Black Turtle's Barrier? Since he has already successfully comprehended the Black Turtle's Barrier, why didn't he leave?"

The Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples whispered among themselves. Many of them found it weird that Sun De did not leave the First Mine despite having successfully comprehended the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier.

"Don't tell me Senior Brother Sun De has only just comprehended the Black Turtle's Barrier?" A Four Symbols Sanctums' disciple could not help but guess.

His question created a commotion immediately.

Everyone looked at Sun De who was enveloped in the Black Turtle's silhouette with a puzzled gaze.

Did he really just comprehend the Divine Ability from the Black Turtle Sanctum, the Black Turtle's Barrier, now?

Was this true?

These were all the questions in their hearts.

Soon after, Duan Ling Tian regained his senses. His eyes were bright as he looked at Sun De who was enveloped by the Black Turtle's silhouette as he asked, "Senior Brother Sun De, did you just successfully comprehend the Black Turtle's Barrier now?"

Duan Ling Tian had noticed the pleasant surprise on Sun De's face that was why he asked this question.

Earlier, when he was studying the Black Turtle's silhouette, Duan Ling Tian had also noticed numerous flaws.

Due to this reason, he could tell that Sun De must have only successfully comprehended the treasured Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier, from the Black Turtle Sanctum not too long ago. However, when he saw the pleasant surprise on Sun De's face, he was even more certain Sun De had only successfully comprehended the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier, during the battle!

"That's right!" When Sun De heard Duan Ling Tian's words, Sun De suppressed the happiness in his heart and cupped his hand in front of his chest. "Junior Brother Ling Tian, it's all thanks to you that I successfully comprehended the Black Turtle's Barrier today! Thank you very much."

As soon as Sun De finished speaking, he bowed at Duan Ling Tian.

Upon seeing this, the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples were dumbfounded.

What was happening?

Sun De had successfully comprehended the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier, but why was he giving the credit to his opponent?

The Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples were baffled and so was Duan Ling Tian. "Senior Brother Sun De, what do you mean?"

"Earlier, due to the pressure from your attack, it seemed as though I was going through a life or death situation. At the brink of a situation like that, the numerous questions I encountered in the process of comprehending the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier, in the past have all been answered. It's all thanks to you I comprehended the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier!" Sun De who was extremely happy patiently explained to Duan Ling Tian

### **Chapter 1970: Heavy-loaded News**

The Black Turtle's Barrier was a high-grade defensive Divine Ability. Not only was it the most treasured Divine Ability in the Black Turtle Sanctum, but it was also the number one defensive Divine Ability in the Fire Worship Sect!

As the number one defensive Divine Ability in the Fire Worship Sect, the Black Turtle's Barrier was very famous even in the Upper Province of the Dao Martial Saint Land.

Naturally, it was extremely difficult to successfully comprehend this Divine Ability.

Currently, there were not more than ten people in the Fire Worship Sect who had successfully comprehended the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier.

Due to this reason, the Four Symbols Sanctum's disciples were greatly shocked when they saw Sun De casting the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier!

Once news of this spread, it would definitely cause an uproar in the Four Symbols Sanctums!

"Senior Brother Sun De has successfully comprehended the Black Turtle's Barrier just now?" Upon hearing Sun De's reply to Duan Ling Tian, many of the Four Symbols Sanctum's disciples were shocked.

"No wonder! If Senior Brother Sun De had already comprehended the Black Turtle's Barrier earlier, he wouldn't have stayed here, let alone go to the mines today. As it turns out, he has only successfully comprehended the Black Turtle's Barrier now!" Many of the Four Symbols Sanctum's disciples finally understood what had happened.

"From what Senior Brother Sun De said, the reason he successfully comprehended the Black Turtle's Barrier is thanks to Duan Ling Tian!"

"Sometimes, pressure is also a kind of driving force. Under the pressure that Duan Ling Tian gave him, Senior Brother Sun De finally found a suitable opportunity to comprehend the Black Turtle's Barrier successfully!"

“Now that Senior Brother Sun De has successfully comprehended the Black Turtle’s Barrier, it means there’s no need for him to remain in the First Mine any longer. How enviable!”

“Not only does he not have to stay in the First Mine, but since he successfully comprehended the Black Turtle’s Barrier, he doesn’t even have to go through the Saint Land’s assessment. He’ll instantly become a Saint Land disciple!”

The Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples discussed among themselves. They looked at Sun De with envious gazes.

Becoming a Saint Land disciple was the dream of every Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples!

To the Four Symbols Sanctums’ disciples who were banished to the First Mine, not only would they realize their dreams of many years, but they would also be exempted from their punishment as well if they were able to become a Saint Land disciple. There would no longer be any need for them to stay in the Four Symbols Sanctum’s First Mine.

Due to this reason, they were very envious of Sun De!

“Congratulations, Senior Brother Sun De!” Upon hearing Sun De’s explanation, Duan Ling Tian finally understood. He quickly congratulated Sun De.

“Junior Brother Ling Tian, since I’ve already mastered the treasured the Divine Ability of our Black Turtle Sanctum, this means I no longer have to serve my sentence in the Four Symbols Sanctum’s First Mine. I can go to the Saint Land to become a Saint Land disciple. From today onward, the Primus house in the Punishment Zone of the Four Symbols Sanctums’ First Mine is yours!” Sun De said to Duan Ling Tian with a smile.

However, when he reached the end of the sentence, a wry smile appeared on his face as he said, “Naturally, even if I can’t leave, I still wouldn’t be able to retain ownership of this Primus House, Junior Brother Ling Tian... I’m very clear that although I’ve successfully comprehended the Divine Ability Black, the Turtle’s Barrier, and managed to block your attack, you still haven’t used all your strength. If you had cast a high-grade offensive Divine Ability, it would’ve been impossible for me to block your attack even if I cast the Black Turtle’s Barrier!”

Based on his words, Sun De was very aware of his strength. He bluntly said that he was not a match for Duan Ling Tian even though he had already comprehended the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle’s Barrier!

Upon hearing his words, the Four Symbols Sanctum’s disciples present on the scene agreed with him.

Duan Ling Tian shook his head before he said humbly and politely, “Senior Brother Sun De, you flatter me too much. You’re very strong as well! If I didn’t have my assist-type Divine Ability, I wouldn’t be your match at all!”

“The assist-type Divine Ability is also a part of your strength. Junior Brother Ling Tian, I can’t wait to see you in the Saint Land!” Sun De also shook his head. After he finished speaking, he bade farewell to Duan Ling Tian and left immediately.

Since Sun De had successfully comprehended the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier, from the Black Turtle Sanctum, there was no need for him to continue staying in the Four Symbols Sanctum's First Mine.

He could enter the Saint Land directly and become a Saint Land disciple!

"Sure!" Looking at Sun De's silhouette that was getting further and further away, Duan Ling Tian narrowed his eyes and muttered under his breath, "It's an unexpected windfall for me to witness Senior Brother Sun De cast the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier!" Duan Ling Tian became excited the more he thought about it.

Although Sun De only managed to comprehend the Divine Ability Black, the Black Turtle's Barrier, due to the pressure from him, he also managed to witness the Black Turtle Barrier being cast.

Now that he had witnessed Sun De casting the Black Turtle's Barrier, he was inspired by it. "I believe I'll be able to comprehend the number one defensive Divine Ability in the Fire Worship Sect, the Black Turtle's Barrier, in six months at most!" Duan Ling Tian was very confident about this.

Then, under everyone's watchful gaze, Duan Ling entered the Primus house that used to belong to Sun De.

From now on, this would be his, Duan Ling Tian, residence!

'Initially, I thought I'd have to stay in the Four Symbols Sanctums' First Mine for six months before I can head to the Saint Land for the assessment. However, now that I've personally witnessed Senior Brother Sun De casting the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier, there's no need for me to wait six months. As long as I manage to successfully comprehend the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier, like Senior Brother Sun De, I'll be able to head to the Saint Land directly and become a Saint Land disciple!' Duan Ling Tian thought to himself after he entered the Primus house.

When he thought about this, a determined expression appeared on his face. "Ke'er, I'll enter the Fire Worship Sect's Saint Land very soon! I know that you're in the Saint Land Enforcement Hall! Wait for me! You and I will meet again soon! And our daughter... this incompetent father will be able to meet her soon as well," Duan Ling Tian muttered to himself as his gaze turned gentle. There was a hint of anticipation in his eyes as well.

'From now on, I'll dedicate my heart and soul into comprehending the Black Turtle's Barrier, the Black Turtle Sanctum's most treasured Divine Ability that's also the number one defensive Divine Ability in the Fire Worship Sect!' The moment Duan Ling Tian thought of this, he entered the fourth level of the Seven Treasures Exquisite Pagoda and immersed himself in comprehending the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier.

Since he had witnessed Sun De casting the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier, his progress while comprehending this Divine Ability was pretty smooth. Many of the questions he encountered previously were also solved.

One could say that this time, apart from accidentally helping Sun De comprehending the Black Turtle's Barrier, he had also helped himself as well. Otherwise, he really had no idea who he should ask to cast the Black Turtle's Barrier so that he could watch!

Witnessing Sun De casting the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier, was like God's gift to him!

With the help of his heart that was tempered by the Sovereign Heart Sword, he had faith he could comprehend the Black Turtle's Barrier successfully in a short period of time.

As Duan Ling Tian cultivated in the Primus house, he had no idea that the Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples outside still had not returned to their homes.

These Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples were still talking about Duan Ling Tian.

"I can't believe Duan Ling Tian is so strong!"

"Indeed! To think that even Senior Brother Sun De who has mastered the number one defensive Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier, in our Fire Worship Sect is no match for him! Senior Brother Sun De is an Intermediate Quintessential Saint Stage powerhouse! What's more, he's going to the Saint Land soon and become a Saint Land disciple as well!"

"Hurmph! He only has a yellow Innate Spiritual Root. His cultivation base at the peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage is already at the limit. He can only stay there forever..."

"High-grade Divine Abilities are really terrifying! Just a mere Martial Cultivator at the peak of the Exemplary Saint Stage with the help of three high-grade Divine Abilities became so powerful that he's not inferior to an ordinary Mastery Quintessential Saint Stage powerhouse!"

"How nice would it be if I can master a high-grade Divine Ability too!"

As the saying went, 'Even the finest feast would come to an end.'

After the group of Four Symbols Sanctums' disciples discussed for a while, they all began to return to their homes.

The second day, shocking news swept through the Fire Worship Sect's Four Symbols Sanctums!

This shocking news was Sun De, the Black Turtle Sanctum's disciple who had been banished to the Four Symbols Sanctum's First Mine for 20 years, had been exempted from his punishment because he had successfully comprehended the treasured Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier, from the Black Turtle Sanctum. He had gone directly to the Saint Land and become a Saint Land disciple!

"Somebody has successfully comprehended the treasured Divine Ability in the Black Turtle Sanctum, the Black Turtle's Barrier?"

Similar discussions could be heard everywhere in the Azure Dragon Sanctum, White Tiger Sanctum, and the Vermilion Bird Sanctum. It pressured the disciples from the three other Sanctums as well.

In fact, the Divine Ability from the Black Turtle Sanctum was widely acknowledged as the hardest to comprehend Divine Ability among the four Sanctums of the Four Symbols Sanctums!

The hardest Divine Ability had already been successfully comprehended by someone. If there was no one from the Azure Dragon Sanctum, White Tiger Sanctum, and Vermilion Bird Sanctum who had



comprehended their respective Sanctum's Divine Ability, would they not be looked down upon by others?

Would other people not feel the other three Sanctums were inferior to the Black Turtle Sanctum?

At once, many people began going to the altars in the Azure Dragon Sanctum, White Tiger Sanctum, and Vermilion Bird Sanctum.

All of them were enthusiastically trying to comprehend the Divine Ability of their respective Sanctum!

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"Good one! Senior Brother Sun De!"

"Haha, there's another one who managed to comprehend the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier, in our Black Turtle Sanctum! Senior Brother Sun De has really made our Black Turtle Sanctum proud!"

Unlike the other three Sanctums, the Black Turtle Sanctum was in an uproar.

Many people celebrated joyously that one more person had successfully comprehended the Divine Ability of their Black Turtle Sanctum!

At the same time, another news that came from the Four Symbols Sanctums' First Mine spread to the Four Symbol Sanctums like a nuclear bomb. Duan Ling Tian had defeated Sun De whose cultivation base had long entered the Intermediate Quintessential Saint Stage and had also mastered the Divine Ability, the Black Turtle's Barrier, the day he was banished to the Four Symbols Sanctum's First Mine!