

Star Gate 27

Chapter 27: To Be A Teacher (I)

6pm. The workday was over.

Li Hao packed up his things, the third gen vortex gun still on him. Although Liu Yan said that he could pick whatever weapon he set his eyes on, he didn't choose any for the time being. The more formidable a weapon was, the less convenient it was to carry around.

Hand grenades, on the other hand, weren't too bulky. They fit in a pocket, so long as they didn't also explode in the pocket.

He glanced at the sky—it was another day of clear weather. Rain didn't seem likely on the forecast tonight.

“The Demon Hunters...” Li Hao flung his leg over his bike and turned back to look at the Law Enforcement building in the distance. It felt like there was a pair of eyes, or several pairs of eyes, on him.

Was it Liu Long? Was the team already keeping a watch on him and commencing the plan with him as bait?

“It's not that I can't trust Liu Long, but that I can't fully trust him!” Li Hao held his own standards of judgment. He wouldn't immediately be close friends with Liu Long since he wasn't familiar with the man. The captain wouldn't intentionally hurt Li Hao if he truly stood on the side of justice. At the same time, however, he wouldn't do anything if the scarlet shadow killed the young man!

Sacrificing Li Hao for a dead supernatural might be a trade that Liu Long made without blinking. Not even Yuan Shuo could say anything about that! There was nothing his teacher could do so long as Liu Long didn't personally kill the young man.

Based on Li Hao's current train of thought, his teacher was possibly the reason why Liu Long refrained from asking about the stone blade and sword. The position of captain of the law enforcement team still hobbled the man.

After all, Liu Long wasn't on the side of evil and wrongdoing. He was one of the Inspectorate and overseen by the Night Watchers.

"Even if teacher does nothing at all... he is still a silent factor in saving me." Li Hao was well aware that without the greatness of his teacher, Liu Long would absolutely ask about the treasures, if not outright kill him. He might even force Li Hao to hand them over in the name of bait.

This purposeful ignorance was plainly out of reservation for Yuan Shuo.

"When it comes down to it, it's all because I'm too weak!" Li Hao's bike creaked as he rode on. He didn't know whether the scarlet shadow faction was watching him or whether Liu Long and the others were following him. It was very difficult to locate those who'd made up their minds to stay out of sight.

"The only thing I can do is to get stronger!" he murmured. He didn't trust even the enthusiastic Liu Yan. She might not save him when real danger was at hand. "I hope I can grow stronger before they make their move!"

He hadn't dared drink too much sword water before because digestion was slow and he was worried about exhausting the mysterious power. But now that he looked at it, all the energy in the world would do him no good if he died. Therefore, he was going to steep the sword to drink as much as possible!

Not only that, but he was even considering whether he should destroy the jade sword to release more energy. At this point in time, it didn't matter whether or not it was a family heirloom. And if the jade sword wasn't the solution to his problems, there was another stone blade at home!

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The bike slowly trundled forward as Li Hao stared off into space, uncaring of anything he saw. Openlight quickly appeared in his line of vision.

#302 of Building 6.

Panther darted out of a corner like a shadow before the young man set foot inside. The little black dog was noticeably faster than before.

“Arf!” Panther wagged its tail happily, as if saying all had been well today. No one paid attention to the house after Li Hao left for work and no one came sniffing around.

Meanwhile, the young man looked at a dog that seemed a little bigger than yesterday and gently patted its head. He pushed open the front door, took off his outer clothes, and turned on the light. It threw off dim illumination as the curtains were pulled tight.

Li Hao sat on the couch and contemplated the events of the past two days. So much had happened so quickly that he was having a hard time digesting everything. Properly analyzing all of the various clues was a tall task.

“The Demon Hunters, scarlet shadow faction, Night Watchers, eight families... I might be the only survivor out of the eight families!

“The scarlet shadow’s target is me, the Demon Hunters want their supernatural, the Night Watchers are busy elsewhere and might not come, but someone from their side should be here because teacher is about to go into the field.

“Was the shadow last night and the person behind it just one part of their faction, or was that everyone?”

How many supernaturals are we talking about?

Li Hao had no idea! However, probably more than one as the one from last night was very possibly a scout. It wasn't likely to be their entire contingent.

“Has Liu Long thought about this? Can the Demon Hunters handle the situation if there's more than one supernatural on their side, maybe even three or four?” Li Hao gently knocked on the table. While the team was of some help, they didn't offer a sense of security. A multitude of thoughts ran through his mind, but there was no one who could help him.

No, no wait. Li Hao struggled for a moment before taking out his communicator. He needed his teacher's help—mere consolation, if nothing more concrete.

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The Veteris Institute of Silver City.

Yuan Shuo practiced an extremely ugly boxing method in his yard. It'd be more accurate to call him a squawking hen as opposed to a training cultivator. Rather than the technique known as Chicken Fists, it was the fowl style of the New Book of Five Styles!

Tiger, deer, bear, ape, and fowl. The ape style was suited for escape and the fowl for speed—which actually made it even more appropriate for escape than the ape style. A killing technique was also embedded within each style!

Whether it was the ape or fowl style, all contained their ways to kill. Li Hao didn't know because he hadn't studied the styles in sufficient breadth or detail. He'd always thought of the ape style as just a way to ensure safety.

Humm!

Yuan Shuo moved slowly without force. He looked like a flapping hen when he swung his fists around. Despite the complete lack of elegance, explosive sounds rang through the air.

A Sunderer of Hundreds! One who used to be at the peak of martial dao!

Sadly, his stamina had declined with age. The appearance of supernatural abilities and popularization of hot weapons also gradually phased out this kind of person. In the eyes of outsiders, he was pure literati and a premier expert of ancient civilizations.

Ring ring ring!

The interruption shook Yuan Shuo out of his ungainly motions. He flicked a sideways glance at the communicator off to the side and picked it up.

“So you’ve decided to go to the law enforcement team?”

“Yes!”

Yuan Shuo wasn’t surprised. If his final disciple said he was going to do something, then he would do so without hesitation. The esteemed professor also seemed to know that Li Hao had called because he needed something.

“What is it?” Yuan Shuo chuckled. “Are you doubting yourself? Did Liu Long take you down a peg today? Do you think you haven’t anything to your name and can’t hack it in the outside world?”

“A little,” Li Hao admitted with a sigh. “Teacher, do you think there’s still a future for academic studying after an entire new world has appeared in our society?”

The young man felt that future prospects for the scholastic field were dim after witnessing the might of supernaturals. Would this world be the domain of supernaturals in the future? Could mundane folks such as his teacher and himself live in peace and enjoy life?

“There is naturally no way forward for pure academia! But there’s even less of a way forward for sheer violence!” Yuan Shuo responded firmly. “I’ve never heard of anyone conquering everything through pure military might. Human intelligence is the key to uniting the world and becoming the master of all!

“Those who walk the path of martial dao might see half the result with twice the effort if they try to learn our knowledge, but we see twice the result with half the effort if we pursue martial dao! Don’t think that you’ve wasted your time up till now—it was all in preparation and a foundation!

“If you do end up making the crossover, you’ll find that wisdom and intelligence are priceless treasures. They ensure that the road ahead is much less broken!”

It was his task to shine a light when a student was lost. Such was to propagate dao, disseminate learning, and resolve confusion! To Yuan Shuo, it was normal that self doubt would circulate after Li Hao came in contact with the supernatural field for the first time. It was also imperative that his student’s faith didn’t waver at this time.

“While I won’t go so far as to say that I was invincible beneath the heavens, I was one of the few at the top of the pyramid before the dawn of the occult. However, I was known not for my fighting capabilities, but my research efforts in the field of ancient civilizations. That is why I am renowned throughout the land!

“Those in my generation who only knew martial might naturally didn’t meet with good ends after hot weapons grew in popularity. The more famous one was, the faster one died! But me? Here I am, still alive and well. I am an honored guest to those supernaturals—while there are certain restrictions placed on me, I go where I wish and do what I want.

“The supernaturals may be strong for the moment, but that doesn’t mean there is no one who can keep them in check or pass judgment on them...”

Li Hao listened quietly as his teacher rambled on, the knot in his heart easing slightly. After a while, Yuan Shuo laughed heartily.

“Don’t think too much when it comes to the law enforcement team. Liu Long and his guys may not be able to take care of real trouble when it comes knocking, so I leave you with what I said before—you can hide out with me anytime.”

“Teacher, are the Night Watchers aware of the situation in Silver City?” Li Hao asked after some thought.

“I don’t know. They might be, but they won’t be first on the scene even if they are. Liu Long and his men are the canaries in the mine and cannon fodder!” Yuan Shuo responded without an ounce of mercy. The true status of the Demon Hunters induced bone-piercing horror!

“There aren’t that many Night Watchers, which means each supernatural is incredibly precious and not to be easily sacrificed. As the current situation in Silver City is vague, cannon fodder like Liu Long will be sent out first.

“It’s fantastic if they’re successful and not a huge loss if they’re not. The Night Watchers will gain a general understanding of their opponent’s capabilities. To know oneself and the enemy’s strength is the path to victory—they will know what level of strength to deploy for the latest trouble plaguing Silver City. This is why the Night Watchers so rarely appear.”

The organization maintained their sense of mystery so that outsiders were unaware of their particulars. Fringe groups like Liu Long’s team were lookouts. It didn’t matter if they died. But if they managed to kill a supernatural and cross over, they would add to Night Watcher strength if they joined the shadowy faction.

This was the true cloud looming over Silver City and Yuan Shuo had long seen through it!

Li Hao exhaled softly, how mercenary! His teacher's words parted some of the fog and helped him understand that the Demon Hunters were likely in contact with the Night Watchers. Perhaps Liu Long was a peripheral member?

It was impossible!

"Don't think too much," Yuan Shuo suddenly said. "I can't force you to come to me if you're unwilling. Since you understand more of the situation, I'll give you a brief overview so you are better able to protect yourself."

What? Li Hao had thought his teacher would give him some treasure, but that plainly wasn't the case.

Yuan Shuo suddenly switched to a secret language—a unique mode of communication between him and his students. For an expert like the esteemed professor, crafting a special way of transmitting messages was very easy.

"The sword of the Lis, blade of the Zhangs... They are families in the folk song and even specific supernatural items. They would be jokes in times before, but that may not be the case now!"

Li Hao started, then quickly regained his calm. If even Liu Long could guess the truth, why not his teacher? In the young man's eyes, Yuan Shuo was the smartest and wisest man he knew.

"It is both a blessing and a curse if you have them! Zhang Yuan's death is possibly related to this. Plainly, supernaturals have you in their sights and this is likely what they want. The folk song of the eight families has circulated for countless years. I've heard of it, but I don't know where it comes from. Perhaps it was never recorded anywhere and just passed on through word of mouth from generation to generation..."

"According to my research, the song may have something to do with the ancient civilizations. Being my student, you know a bit about them and how I discovered the New Book of Five Styles in a ruin. I simply modified the method a bit."

Li Hao listened silently to his teacher.