

Star Gate 40

Chapter 40: Dominator of Thousands! (II)

Yuan Shuo looked at the cup again and stroked his beard of modest length. Something occurred to him with a smile.

“So water can be infused with mysterious power? But... it won't have an effect! And with my body the way it is, it's not the most pleasant experience to absorb energy these days...”

He hazarded a guess at the truth, but fine. He'll drink it since it was a token of his student's filial appreciation! His body was very weak as his injuries were yet to heal. It might put him in a spot of trouble if mysterious power ran through it...

At the same time, he was still a Sunderer. What could such a small cup of water do? There weren't even 0.1 cubes of energy in it!

So what if the entire cup was mysterious power? He'd drink it so he could end the kid's hopes.

Sword-steeped water? He truly guessed its origins and what made it unusual. He flicked a glance at Li Hao—the sword being on the young man's body, water from the sword was no different from Li Hao's bathwater.

Ai! What a good teacher I am. I'm going to drink a student's bathwater in order to not hurt his feelings!

It wasn't like Yuan Shuo had never absorbed energy from supernatural objects before; the gesture was completely useless!

A thousand thoughts running through his mind, Yuan Shuo threw the contents back with a toss of his head. He shouted before he even swallowed, “Wonderful! I feel the effects already. You are a good boy, Li Hao...”

The young man's face spasmed. Teacher, the water's still making its way down! Is this act really necessary?

Yuan Shuo roared with laughter and fired a barrage of exaggerated compliments. He was about to launch into a few jokes when he suddenly paused—mysterious power was unfurling through his body with none of the usual violent impact!

It was gentle! A warm current! Very incredibly mild! He'd never experienced such mellow energy before! Everything he'd come in contact with, no matter the type, was extremely tyrannical and harsh.

The old professor froze with shock.

“Teacher, the breathing method!” Li Hao quickly reminded.

Right, the breathing method! Yuan Shuo hadn't even thought of utilizing it as he didn't want power to rampage through him. He'd been concerned that overpowering force would make him vomit blood and break his composure.

The elderly man immediately called upon the Breathing Method of the Five Styles and readied himself to be assaulted to the point of vomiting blood. But...

Yuan Shuo's mouth and eyes opened wide.

What was this?

He was swiftly absorbing the mysterious power, but it remained a warm current as before. A hot spring slowly eddied through the bottom of his heart. It was so comfortable!

Absorbing mysterious power had always been synonymous with pain, but this time, it was easy and effortless. A pleasant warmth seeped into his bones.

“Ahhhh!” Yuan Shuo couldn’t help a moan.

Li Hao’s lips twitched. His teacher sounded like... um... well... like an old cat in heat!

The esteemed professor shot to his feet, his eyes full of shock and amazement. This wasn’t mysterious power! He stared fixedly at his pupil. He’d seen all manner of mysterious power before, but never this kind. Even energy used for healing resulted in pain when it entered the body. That kind of mysterious power forcefully closed some injuries afterwards, but what Yuan Shuo experienced now was entirely different!

The professor said nothing as he quietly underwent the experience. He was much stronger and experienced than Li Hao, so he focused on observation and analysis.

Recovery... and nourishment... of the mind and body! Yuan Shuo’s shock was visible to the naked eye when he felt the tattered parts of his heart slowly knit back together.

Unfortunately, too little of it mended as he was overly strong. There was so little energy in the cup of water that less than half a millimeter of the five millimeter gash on his heart closed. Not even ten times the warm current would be enough, and it would be harder to heal the closer to full recovery it reached.

All the same, this energy was enormously precious. What was it?

Yuan Shuo was powerful and the Breathing Method of the Five Styles incredibly capable. He swiftly absorbed the entire flow without leaving any for discharge. There wasn’t enough for his own use, so how would there be sufficient energy to leak out?

Cosmic power was also easier to absorb than mysterious power.

There's no more!

Abrupt dissatisfaction struck Yuan Shuo, but he realized something with a sigh. A smile crossed his face despite the regret. "Not bad, but... you should save something like this for yourself. There are many secrets to your sword and there can't be much of this kind of mysterious power. Don't waste it and use it sparingly."

"Was it effective, teacher?" asked an anticipatory Li Hao, ignoring what his teacher said.

"It was alright," Yuan Shuo chuckled. "Fine enough!"

Supernatural objects wouldn't hold vast reserves of energy and he was old! There might not be a marked effect even if he sucked the sword dry. It was better to leave it for the kid—it was a waste on him.

A million thoughts ran through Yuan Shuo's mind and momentary impulse grabbed him. If he was as if before, he might demand the sword from his student. But now?

Forget it.

He'd grown soft in his old age; the impulse quickly died down upon consideration that there was never much power to be found. Yuan Shuo, oh Yuan Shuo, don't destroy the benevolent image that your student holds of you.

"Just alright?" Li Hao was quite disappointed. So it wasn't very effective? How could that be? Or was it that his teacher was too strong and there was too little water? He wasn't willing to accept this outcome and quickly said, "Let's try a few more times, teacher."

"Don't bother!" Yuan Shuo interrupted.

“You must’ve drank too little!” Li Hao continued doggedly. “It wasn’t that effective because you’re too strong. The cup of water was just a test, drinking more should prove more effective... My dog’s fur is glossier after drinking a cup yesterday!”

“If water doesn’t work, try absorbing it directly!” The young man grew animated. “I absorbed some last night too—roughly ten times what was in the cup—and saw some effects...”

Yuan Shuo:

The professor stared wordlessly at his pupil. A dog drank that much? And Li Hao absorbed tentimes that amount last night? The hell?

Things were rather confusing. His student’s little jade sword was tiny, so he could guess without trying just how much mysterious power it contained. So what was Li Hao talking about? Was the sword of the Lis truly different?

Yuan Shuo couldn’t retain his detached composure and coughed, his voice so low that he almost rasped, “You... Little Hao, are you saying that you have a lot more of this kind of energy?”

“I don’t know!” Li Hao shook his head. “But I absorbed some last night and don’t feel like it’s decreased any. I think there should be a lot more and it might be useful for you if you absorb it all, teacher.”

“Don’t feel like it’s decreased any?” Yuan Shuo stroked his beard and looked at his student again. “Was that a casual steeping of the sword just now?”

“Yeah!”

“.....” Yuan Shuo accidentally tugged out a beard hair. He blew it away, looking at Li Hao with new eyes. Really?

How was this possible?

“Do you... do you want to let me have a try?” The elderly professor could barely contain himself. He’d wanted to preserve the energy for Li Hao, but the little bastard fed it to dogs! How could the brat waste it like that! Then... then I’ll try and absorb a little more?

Li Hao heaved a sigh of relief at his teacher’s acquiescence and quickly took out the jade sword, offering it up. Yuan Shuo frowned when he took it; he didn’t detect the slightest hint of a supernatural aura!

Was this a self-defense mechanism, or was it hibernating? Did it require Li Hao to activate it for use? It would appear that the family weapons of the folk song were quite uncommon, and they differed from the supernatural objects that he’d handled before.

“Can I draw the energy out of it?” Yuan Shuo immediately summoned a warm current when he operated the breathing method! “Ahhh!”

He groaned, feeling a comfortable sensation drape around him and sink into his bones. This was better than when he sought pleasures of the flesh in his youth! There was so much and it was so dense! He really could draw it out of the weapon!

His mind seemed to transcend the body and it almost journeyed the world by itself. He could get drunk on this!

Powerful energy coursed through his body. Not only did his heart furiously absorb mysterious power, but so did the deep minute fractures of his blood vessels and marks on his bones. Every particle that defined Yuan Shuo took in energy!

Once a premier martial master on the cusp of breaking through to Dominator of Thousands, his body deeply craved what the jade sword offered. Old injuries crisscrossed inside and out, all of which were rejuvenating in this moment.

Yuan Shuo walked on air! He forgot that he wanted to save some for Li Hao as his thirst for this type of power built to overpowering heights. This was a healing panacea, an immortal pill!

A little more, just a little more, I want only a little more...

Yuan Shuo started and jerked back to wakefulness a second after the thought floated through him. To regain his clarity under such conditions demonstrated just how transcendental the mindset of a grandmaster was!

He clenched the jade sword with one hand and formed a fist with the other, coming to terms with shock roiling through his thoughts. He looked at his student with a completely different look and spoke with sudden severity, "You're in bigger trouble than you can imagine!"

Li Hao looked blankly at his teacher. Aren't you absorbing mysterious power? Why are you suddenly saying this? Do you want to rob me, teacher? I have a blade, y'know, how about you take that instead? The jade sword is a family heirloom.

"This item far exceeds all supernatural objects that I've ever encountered. Those who have their sights set on it may possibly understand its true value. If they do, you are definitely in greater trouble than you think! They will be determined to lay hands on it and the key thing is, this sword may still be sealed!"

That's right, it was sealed away!

Even the experienced Yuan Shuo was moved—it was highly likely that this sword was yet to be freed from its seal. What he'd just absorbed was just a portion of its reserves and not the most precious it had to offer. The sword was most invaluable!

The eminent professor could barely contain himself when his thoughts traveled here. It was easy enough to imagine the attention the sword would draw once it was unleashed.

“The eight families of Silver City...” Yuan Shuo murmured. So what if the city boasted of a legend of eight great families? The world was incredibly vast and Silver City pitifully small. How strong could these families be?

But in this moment, he questioned his skepticism. Could all of this be related to an ancient civilization?

There was also the sealed sword to consider!

Yuan Shuo took stock of his condition again—the wounds to his heart had recovered by an incredible thirty percent! Would it fully heal after a few more tries? And if he absorbed energy a few more times after that, would all of his injuries be gone? And a few more times after that... might he regain the prime of his youth and try for Dominator?

Get outta here with that!

I’ve already given up and lost all hope. ...is Dominator of Thousands still a possibility for me? What if I try to cross over after ascending? Won’t I stand a greater chance than a few years back?

Yuan Shuo swallowed hard as his thoughts ran wildly. His heart pounded furiously and his eyes suddenly snapped to Li Hao.

“Have you told anyone else about this?”

The young man’s heart jolted. What was with that tone? Did his teacher really want to rob him?