

Star Gate 43

Chapter 43: Master and Disciple Ascend in Unison (III)

Within the yard.

A limping Yuan Shuo returned, out of breath.

“Teacher!” Li Hao anxiously met the elderly man.

Yuan Shuo breathed out heavily and suddenly grinned. “What? I’m fine! That scared the crap out of me!”

...huh? What the heck is going on?

“What you looking at? Use your brain!” Recent happenings made for a perfect teaching moment. Yuan Shuo continued with trepidation, “I lost my temper just now and happened to be in a state of change. I couldn’t hold myself back and accidentally hit them too hard!

“They were Night Watchers—the foremost supernatural organization. We still need their protection!” chuckled the professor. “I’ll make enemies out of them if I beat their members half to death—now wouldn’t that be awful! Not to mention, that was a little girl. Killing her would levy a charge of bullying at my feet...

“Keeping a lower profile also results in some benefits! They need to hurry up and give me some treasures since I’m dying. After all, they still need me for what comes next!”

Li Hao sucked in a deep breath. His teacher thought through so much in a split second?

“And another thing, the mouthful of blood I spat was the putrid blood in my body—the result of various wounds I’d accumulated. It was the ideal pretext for them to ‘confirm’ that I am beyond saving and on death’s door. There is no need to guard against me anymore!”

Li Hao took another deep breath. So there’d been another layer of meaning to everything that’d just happened? His teacher was truly a wily old fox... No, a very deliberate and calculated person!

Of course, this wasn’t the main point. “Teacher, your wounds...” the young man lowered his voice.

“They’re almost all healed!” Yuan Shuo grinned radiantly. “Keep this quiet, but I’m almost fully recovered and now is the perfect moment! I wasn’t at liberty to chase those two away, but now that they’re at least a thousand meters out... it’s time that I returned to perfect health!”

Multiple birds with one stone!

The two had been too close before. Being supernatural, they might possibly sense something unusual taking place. But due to his fit of rage and their injuries, they’d moved one thousand meters away. This was a moment of absolute privacy and Yuan Shuo’s chance!

“Perfect health... will that lead to a breakthrough?” Li Hao asked apprehensively. He was still taken by his teacher’s earlier performance. What a display, what a show!

The professor had traversed hundreds of meters in seconds. It was Li Hao’s first time knowing that one could actually fly with the fowl style! Although only one hundred meters was possible at a time, extended flight could be achieved through leverage. Meanwhile, that one hundred meters was true flight!

Yuan Shuo had been flying! He required only one punch to render a supernatural into a gravely wounded state and the other into overawed silence...

There was only one thought running through Li Hao’s mind—this is with teacher not having broken through yet! Once he’s fully healed and ascends, he’ll easily trounce whichever supernatural he faces!

Yuan Shuo couldn't be bothered with his student's flight of fancy. That punch turned out in his favor as it conveniently expelled all of the blood lingering from his internal injuries. It was the ideal medium to purge whatever was left behind from old wounds.

Walking away with compensation wasn't key. He wouldn't need those treasures after he made a full recovery; he could give them to Li Hao.

Yuan Shuo bent his mind to absorbing another warm current of mysterious energy. He wasn't looking to cross over to the supernatural domain, but to take the martial dao leap.

Dominator of Thousands!

He'd been a step away from that threshold years ago. At present, new blood coursed through his veins, cleansing his body of old bodily trash. His muscles closed in on themselves—flexing with more tension instead of fusing as inseparable chunks.

A smile spread over Yuan Shuo's face when even his hair showed hints of darkening. More than seventy years old, his body was transforming to a forty-ish version of himself. That had been the prime of his life, whereas decline set in after fifty. His physique weakened and it was only through rich experience that he maintained his edge.

“A Dominator of Thousands can fight a thousand opponents by themselves!” Yuan Shuo suddenly said. “Sunderers already count as superhuman as they exceed the limits of the human body. Dominators used to be considered walking gods. Since time immemorial, any who reached that level left a deep mark on martial dao and were the only ones who could defeat army generals.

“While Dominators can take on a thousand at once, prudence must still be exercised. One cannot be dumb enough to openly face thousands at the same time. Retreat is in order if the situation turns south—you will never be captured that way!”

Enemies that numbered more than the thousands did not necessarily mean doom for a Dominator either. That was only the case if the martial master was too dumb or surrounded by so many people that they couldn't escape. Otherwise, they were extremely slippery to pin down if they refused to engage in direct combat.

Granted, that was only applicable in the era of cold weapons. These days, Dominators were easily ambushed in a moment of carelessness and could die to ordinary people.

“Li Hao, do you know what the greatest characteristic of a Dominator of Thousands is?”

“No!” The young man shook his head. I don't even know what it looks like to be a Sunderer! I only know that a Slayer elicits resonance between bone and meridian and a vigorous internal force.

“The consciousness!”

Consciousness? Li Hao blinked. What about it?

“Premier martial masters have trained their minds to an extreme. Their physical bodies are incomparably strong and the mind is another kind of aura! So as I stand here, I am the mountain. So as I stand there, I am the river! Winds howl and rain pours, but the mountains and river remain untouched. Such is a Dominator of Thousands!”

The scene changed in front of Li Hao's eyes—his teacher suddenly seemed to be a mountain. No, a river. A mountain was immobile and a river in constant motion. These contradictory notions coexisted at the same time.

BOOM!!

The sound of blood flowing drummed like a racing river. Yuan Shuo's blood and qi frothed while his body remained a static landmass. His blood rushed wildly with abandon as his bones and meridians roared like thunder!

So strong!

The professor's aura exploded throughout the small yard. Li Hao felt like he was a dinghy drifting through the open sea, at risk of capsizing at any time. He began to sway and struggled to stay on his feet.

Meanwhile, Yuan Shuo's aura built and his amused tone traveled through the air like the voice of a god or a demon. "Witness for yourself the aura and consciousness of a Dominator! You won't be at a loss for what to do when you encounter this type of individual in the future and neither will you be afraid!"

With experience came familiarity; a Dominator of Thousands wasn't a personage that just anyone could meet.

Li Hao drifted among the breeze and swung back and forth.

"Practice the ape style!" Yuan Shuo shouted. "My aura may be able to guide you to ascending too. When your internal force burgeons and your bones and meridians resonate in unison, that is a sign that you are a true Slayer of Tens!"

Li Hao had practiced the New Book of Five Styles for a scant three years and treated it as a fitness routine. He'd seen decent improvement over this time, but only in terms of his foundations. He'd never reached the Slayer threshold.

With Yuan Shuo's vibrant aura whipping through the surroundings and the secret art of the same method as lead, Li Hao settled into the ape style. He staggered through the yard like an ape, drunkenly running through a boxing method alongside his teacher.

Indeed, Yuan Shuo practiced a boxing method as well! The ape style!

Teacher and disciple lost themselves in a series of punches, jumps, and leaps. As time passed, Li Hao began to feel an upswing of internal force from the depths of his body. Contrary to mysterious power, this force seemed to be an innate product of himself. It oscillated from his core and traveled toward his legs, filling them with internal force.

On his next kick, cracks and pops filled the air!

Bones and meridians resonating in unison!

Due to the guidance of a grandmaster about to set foot into Dominator of Thousands, Li Hao broke through himself, using the advantage of their methods sharing a common origin! This was a fortuitous opportunity that countless people could only dream about.

Li Hao had brought opportunity to Yuan Shuo, and so did Yuan Shuo return chance to Li Hao. Otherwise, the young man might not set foot into Slayer of Tens for another half month to a year and a half, even if he kept absorbing mysterious power.

It all depended on luck! But now, under the guidance of his teacher's aura, he easily made the leap!

Not only that, but there was another massive benefit conferred by the tutelage of a Dominator grandmaster. When he met opponents in the future, he would not fear them so long as they weren't that much stronger than Dominator!

Fear was the most common manifestation of the gap between cultivation levels. The weak cowered before even engaging the strong. They were overwhelmed by their opponent's aura, but that would never happen to Li Hao because he ascended with a Dominator of Thousands!

"Hup!" Li Hao roared as Yuan Shuo grunted.

Furious gales whipped through the yard!

Another round of explosive pops sounded when Li Hao kicked his foot. Off to the side, Yuan Shuo wasn't nearly as flashy as his student. He gently retracted his hands and feet without much disturbance, as if he was returning to his origins and roots.

But when Li Hao looked over, his jaw dropped in disbelief. His teacher's white hair was completely black. Pieces of old skin flaked off the elderly man's body and fluttered in the wind. Some floated to Li Hao and stuck to his mouth...

"PBTHH!!" the young man quickly spat with disdain and disgust. He was struck with incredulity anew when he looked at his teacher. Despite possessing a biological age of seventy, Yuan Shuo looked to be in his forties!

This method can reverse the clock?

Yuan Shuo remained where he was, digesting his gains. He glanced at Li Hao with a wide smile, appearing in front of his student before the flabbergasted young man could react. The latter could do nothing when pulled in close for a hug.

SMOOCH!

Li Hao went slack-jawed with disbelief. Had he just been... harassed by his teacher?

Yuan Shuo grabbed his face and landed a hearty kiss on it, grinning from ear to ear.

"Good child!" The professor threw his head back with laughter. He roared with such mirth that it bordered on manic!

I, Yuan Shuo, am back!

Dominator of Thousands!

Who in the world will be a match for me when I set foot into the supernatural domain?! Twenty years? What is that worth?? None of you have the right to stand on my level even with another eighty years!

“Good child! We will sweep the land from today forth! No one can measure up to us and the mere supernatural world can be popped with a flick of a finger!”

Arrogant!

Incredible arrogance beyond belief!

A mixture of excitement and agitation seized Li Hao. Teacher is this amazing now? Then what the hell am I afraid of? Hot damn, the scarlet shadow ain't worth shit! My teacher is a Dominator of Thousands!!