

Star Odyssey

Chapter 1766: The Star Disappears

The treasures that were reserved for the ninth floor of Yi's Emporium could almost be regarded as Qing Shaohuang's private collection, and the most valuable items had just been taken.

On top of that, if Lu Yin had not been stopped, he would have also taken away everything from Yi's Emporium's eighth floor as well. The bastard was completely shameless.

Qing Shaohuang also learned of what had happened, and his expression turned ugly. Even though Lu Yin had only taken three things, each one of them was just far too valuable. Even a single one of the items would have been enough to incite chaos, and yet Qing Shaohuang was supposed to cover everything Lu Yin had just spent.

Subconsciously, Qing Shaohuang looked over at Attendant Yi, and the chief attendant happened to look at Qing Shaohuang at the same time. When Attendant Yi saw Qing Shaohuang's eyes, the man fell to his knees and said, "Your Majesty, everything this lowly one possesses was given to me by you. Please, Your Majesty, don't even consider paying for this incident! This lowly one would rather die!"

Qing Shaohuang's expression improved greatly. While he was wealthy and did not particularly care about his wealth, he was still upset to suddenly owe such an outrageous sum. "Don't worry, I won't allow you to suffer. He will willingly repay everything that he owes."

Attendant Yi's expression showed all of his grief and rage. He was resentful, yet felt helpless about everything that had happened. In fact, the handprint Lu Yin had left on the man's face was still visible. "Your Majesty, there are still a few days before the banquet."

Qing Shaohuang's heart dropped. Given the shameless behavior Lu Yin had just shown, it was impossible he would behave before the banquet. He would definitely run up a shocking tab. "There's no choice; prepare the banquet to be held sooner. We can't wait."

"Yes, Your Majesty. This lowly one will start preparing immediately." Attendant Yi left in a hurry.

Qing Shaohuang let out a drawn out breath and clenched his fists tightly. Lu Yin was truly too shameless!

After leaving Yi's Emporium, Lu Yin felt quite relieved. He reached over to pat the shop owner on the shoulder. "You did a good job! Not bad at all."

The shop owner was frozen in fear and regret. He was still reacting to what had just happened. This young man had just played with Yi's Emporium and Attendant Yi, and the shop owner had been the one who had led Lu Yin to Yi's Emporium in the first place! This was the end! The shop owner knew his death was imminent, and no one could save him.

Lu Yin glanced at the man. "Hey, don't look like you're about to die. I'll tell Qing Shaohuang to take care of you, and he'll have to do at least that much for me. That's just a given."

Hearing Lu Yin's words, the shop owner felt like a life-saving straw had just been offered to him. He kneeled down before Lu Yin and started wailing, "Sir, you have to save this lowly one! I don't want to die yet! My life has only just begun, and I'm still very young! I don't want to die! Though you asked me to take you to the most expensive place in the city, I was ignorant before taking you to Yi's Emporium! You must save me! Save me!"

Lu Yin lost his patience with the man. "I already told you that I'd save you! Enough, let's go. Where else can I spend more money?"

The shop owner turned pale. This man was brutal in the way that he spent money, which meant that he had to have a powerful background. After seeing how Lu Yin had offended Yi's Emporium, the shop owner did not dare take Lu Yin to such a place again. Any place that Lu Yin went, people would be offended, and if the man took Lu Yin anywhere else, there would not be any place for him to call home on the Divine Venom Continent, or even within the entire empire.

Seeing the shop owner's reaction, Lu Yin knew that the man did not dare show him any other place. Still, Lu Yin did not want to lose the rare opportunity, so he decided to try to intimidate the man.

"If you don't take me anywhere expensive, then I'll just abandon you. Yi's Emporium will certainly remember you, and actually, I slapped Attendant Yi's face in your own store," Lu Yin spoke slowly.

The shop owner trembled as he listened to Lu Yin's every word. Each word sounded like a declaration of death. This person was too terrifying and too cruel.

Lu Yin was in no hurry, and he simply started looking around.

The shop owner felt cornered. "Young Master, this lowly one knows a place, and though I cannot be certain if it is expensive or not, it should not be too bad."

Lu Yin looked at the man. "You don't know? Haven't you been there before? Where is it?"

The shop owner bitterly explained, "It's a secret auction. I happened to visit it once by accident, but I was almost immediately removed, as I had insufficient funds."

Lu Yin's eyes lit up. "Do they check people's funds before entering?"

"Yes. Each person must have at least a million star essence to be able to enter."

"Take me!" Lu Yin had no hesitation. Even though a million star essence were practically nothing for Lu Yin, it was a staggering amount for most cultivators, even Enlighters who had completed thirty-two cycles. Only a million star essence were usually required to complete that cycle, while new Enlighters only needed about 120,000 star essence to complete a cycle.

Lu Yin had long been confronting the powers that controlled the Innerverse's eight great flowzones, or even the monstrous forces of the Neoverse, and these were groups that handled hundreds of millions of star essence. Still, as far as most average cultivators were concerned, millions of star essence was enough to last even an Enlighter for their entire lifetime.

This meant that the entry requirements for this auction was essentially limited to Enlighters.

There were not a large number of Enlighters even in the Innerverse's eight great flowzones, so a place that was limited to such powerhouses was naturally quite tempting to Lu Yin.

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There were 108 Astral River tributaries that wrapped around the Innerverse's Little Millennium Flowzone. It was a truly unique scene that was highly unusual given its precise order.

Countless spacecraft arrived every day at the border of the flowzone, hoping to be contacted by the Starsibyl Sect. Also, there were also quite a few people who simply hoped to see Starsibyl herself.

"Brother Liang, I heard that you once sat at the same table as Starsibyl long ago! This has got to be another chance to see her again. This time, I just want to step into the Starsibyl Sect to have a glimpse of her beauty."

There were many vessels docked on a meteorite that had been transformed into a space station. There was even a small market that could be found.

Within the space station, a group of young people were drinking tea and chatting. Every so often, they would spar among themselves with an audience, sparking a lively atmosphere.

"Brother Ping is being too humble. Back then, Brother Ping also spoke with Starsibyl when she was only an Explorer. It's even said that you spoke to her for longer than any of your peers, which makes one truly jealous."

"Haha, none of us can compare to Brother Liu. As part of the Sword Sect Liu's family, he can laugh as he wanders about the universe with Starsibyl, while waiting here is our only option."

A short ways away, a young man's mouth curled into a smile as many people turned to look at him with envy. His name was Liu Dong, and he was someone from the same generation as Liu Shaoqiu in the Liu family. However, Liu Dong was far inferior to Liu Shaoqiu, and could not even measure up to Liu Ling or Liu Xiaoyun. Still, due to being part of the Liu family, Liu Dong had indeed managed to meet with Starsibyl.

Liu Dong put on a humble demeanor as soon as he saw everyone direct their attention towards him. "There is more than one Starsibyl, while I've only spoken with the Limiteer Starsibyl. I've never been able to speak with the Explorer Starsibyl, let alone the Cruiser or Enlighter Starsibyls."

The man who had been referred to as Brother Liang voiced his jealousy, "Who knows, maybe the current generation of Starsibyls are different from before, and they're actually all the same person and are just the various clones that were created with the Nine Clones Secret Technique. When Brother Liu spoke to the Limiteer Starsibyl, it might have been the same as speaking to all of them. Even Starsibyl herself treats you with respect! Just don't forget about me waiting here if you're able to enter the Starsibyl Sect, Brother Liu."

"We'll thank you now, Brother Liu."

"We'll thank you now, Brother Liu."

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Liu Dong laughed loudly. Even though they all thought that he looked impressive, the truth that only he knew was that when he had seen Starsibyl,

she had not even looked at him directly. From her perspective, what was different between Liu Dong and the people around him? He also did not qualify to enter the Starsibyl Sect.

If he was someone who stood at the same level as Liu Shaoqiu, things would be completely different. While Liu Shaoqiu did not have the same sort of status as Starsibyl or the Ten Arbiters, he was still someone who would one day become a powerhouse who could stand tall in the entire universe after he mastered the Thirteen Swords.

Liu Dong dreamed of comprehending the Thirteen Swords, especially since an outsider like Lu Yin had managed such a feat, and had even defeated senior disciple sister Liu Tianmu with the Sword Sect's own Thirteen Swords. Liu Tianmu's loss had shocked the entire Liu family, and outsiders would never believe that the family was just feigning their calmness.

If Liu Dong could reach the same level as Lu Yin, even Starsibyl would have to kneel down to greet him. Liu Dong could not help himself from starting to daydream and imagine becoming Lu Yin.

Suddenly, space shattered, and the entire space station was swept away. Everyone's bones were pulverized instantaneously, and people, spaceships, and celestial bodies were all destroyed in that instant.

A black shadow suddenly stood at the center of Little Millennium Flowzone. They glanced around, revealing a pair of slitted scarlet eyes.

Then, the figure disappeared.

It was not long before all of Little Millennium Flowzone was completely destroyed. News of the Starsibyl Sect's disappearance almost instantly spread through the Innerverse, and then throughout the entire Fifth Mainland.

The Starsibyl Sect was a power that had a powerful influence on the entire universe. Whether or not people believed in divination, the sect would still have an impact on them. Each of the Starsibyls was individually powerful, and yet all of them had vanished in a moment.

The Starsibyl Sect's disappearance had an even greater effect than if one of the powers that led any of the eight great flowzones had suddenly disappeared.

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In Venom King City, the shop owner led Lu Yin around until they entered a dark alley. They quickly passed through the alley to arrive in a dark place that led to a long passageway.

The moment Lu Yin and the shop owner entered the corridor, oil lamps lit up on both sides, and each flame slightly distorted the void, giving the hallway an extraordinary appearance.

"Asset confirmation: one million star essence. Please present it." A voice spoke up. It sounded soulless, and it had appeared completely without any prior indication. The shop owner was startled by the voice, and he quickly ducked his head, hoping to not be recognized, or even worse, remembered later on. The shop owner was already aware that Lu Yin was intending to help himself to a free meal, and he was absolutely going to create a mess. Even if the shop owner had hidden his appearance, it would mean nothing if Lu Yin was going to go all out on this trip.

A secret auction indicated an auction held in a hidden place that catered to those who could not be exposed. This was not only referring to the goods being sold, but also the people bidding on the items.

Everyone who participated in a secret auction would hide their identity so that no one would know who attended the auction. This was also done to protect the secret auction.

Lu Yin had naturally also hidden himself. He glanced out of the corner of eyes and lifted a hand that held an Enhanced poison from Elder Wu. The poison was tossed out, and it instantly disappeared. "Check for yourself."

Asset verification could be done with star essence or items of equivalent value. As long as the value matched a million star essence, it would be enough.

The poisons that Lu Yin had obtained from Elder Wu and then upgraded were able to affect even Envoys, which meant that the value of the poison would greatly exceed a million star essence, especially in the Divine Venom Dynasty.

After a while, the bottle reappeared and Lu Yin retrieved it.

"Approved. Please enter." As the voice spoke, the passageway grew dark once again, and Lu Yin proceeded along with the shop owner.

The shop owner could not decide if he should be happy or concerned. After all, he had not only accompanied Lu Yin to the legendary ninth floor of Yi's Emporium, he had also made it into the secret auction. The shop owner was visiting all sorts of places he would never have gained access to in his entire life, but would his final destination for the day end up being his own grave? All he could do was hope and pray that Lu Yin possessed a conscience and would save him.

After passing through the passageway, the two entered a dark room. Only a platform at the front was illuminated, but there were hundreds of compartments all around the room. Each one was tens of meters away from the others, and it was impossible to see inside any of the compartments from the others.

Chapter 1767: Unbelievably Expensive Information

Lu Yin was led along by an attendant to a compartment that only had a single window that faced the illuminated platform.

There was plenty of food and drinks arranged within the compartment, and there was also a woman chained to a corner. She was clad in revealing clothing, but her eyes were blank. She was beautiful, and there was an innocence to her that would captivate almost any man.

Lu Yin frowned. There was a great deal of darkness in the universe, but almost everyone believed that life was better than death, and it was clear that this woman felt the same way, given her situation.

Lu Yin asked the attendant to remove the woman before quietly taking a seat.

The shop owner stood beside Lu Yin, but he was casually told, "Sit down."

The shop owner trembled as he lowered himself into a seat.

"What's your name?" Lu Yin asked, as he still did not know the man's name.

The shop owner answered in a respectful tone, "This lowly one is named Chang Wu. You are welcome to just call me Little Wu."

"You're even aware of something like this secret auction, so you seem to be doing quite well for yourself," Lu Yin said.

Chang Wu bitterly answered, "It's not that this lowly one wanted to know, as it truly was nothing more than a coincidence. I was once being chased and beaten, and I stumbled into that dark alley and entered the corridor by accident. I thought I was being robbed when they demanded to verify my assets, and it was also the last thing that I remember hearing before I was driven away."

Lu Yin nodded and stopped asking any questions. He instead focused on the tall platform.

After waiting a long time, a man in a mask appeared on the high platform. It was impossible to see the man's face, but he was an Enlighter. Although Lu Yin could not see the man's face, there was no way that the Enlighter's runes could be hidden from Lu Yin.

"Everyone should already know the rules of this venue. This place only provides a space and conducts the auction itself. We hold no responsibility for the items being auctioned off, though if you have anything that you wish to sell, you can reach out to this business. Now, I'm happy to bring out the first item for sale. There are sixteen bottles that were produced by Poisonous Old Man before his death. There is no starting price."

The void twisted after the auctioneer spoke, and a tray appeared. Atop it were sixteen bottles of varying sizes.

"50,000 star essence." The moment the bottles appeared, someone instantly made a bid. It was clear that the voice had been processed in some manner, and it sounded extremely stiff.

"60,000 star essence."

"80,000."

"90,000."

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Lu Yin was curious, "Poisonous Old Man?"

Chang Wu bowed his head and said, "Poisonous Old Man was a powerful Enlightener who lived in the Divine Venom Dynasty. He was very cruel, and once, he slaughtered an entire planet's inhabitants with poison before he was finally killed by the emperor. Any poison left behind by him is extremely powerful and invaluable for research."

Lu Yin did not have any particular interest in poison, as he only wanted a few of them to upgrade and improve. He did not really think about using poisons in his fights, and neither did he expect the Allied Forces to utilize poison. While there were many different methods of cultivating, poison was something that felt evil to most people, and the Great Eastern Alliance did not want such stigma attached to them.

In the end, Poisonous Old Man's sixteen bottles of poison were bought for 200,000 star essence.

The next items that appeared were mostly more poisons, which was disappointing to Lu Yin. No matter how potent the poisons might be, they were still far from measuring up to Samaritan's Tears or Transience, which were the Divine Venom Dynasty's best poisons.

After watching for a while, Lu Yin started to get quite bored, which Chang Wu noticed. "Young Master, the truth is that poisons and jincans are the two most

in demand products in the Divine Venom Dynasty. If you don't have any interest in either of these products, then there likely won't be anything here that will interest you at all. My Divine Venom Dynasty is isolated from the outside world, so you likely will not find anything that you need here."

Lu Yin was also able to see that the people in this place were not interested in natural treasures like what cultivators in other places wanted. In the Divine Venom Dynasty, poisons and jincans were the equivalent of natural treasures.

"Aren't there any battle techniques here?" Lu Yin felt stubborn.

Chang Wu gave a wry smile. "The battle techniques and cultivation arts here also use poisons and jincans. After all, this is Venom Flowzone, and since ancient times, people have always known that only poisons and jincans can be found in this place, making Venom Flowzone a dangerous place that no one wants to visit."

Lu Yin felt the situation was a true pity as he watched the items appear and be auctioned off one by one.

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"The starting price is 50 million star essence."

Lu Yin's eyes snapped back to the platform—50 million star essence?

Lu Yin was not the only one to react in this way the moment the price was announced. Everyone was staring at the platform. 50 million star essence? That was insane! What could possibly be worth that price?

No one was informed of the items to be sold before the auction started, and that included even the auction house itself. Only those who needed to know the items and prices would be informed, as the auction house had to adhere to the prices required by the seller.

Lu Yin could also sell things if he wanted to, and he would be the one to set the starting price. He could set it as high or as low as he wanted, and the auction house had absolutely no say in this matter.

At this moment, even the auctioneer on the stage was clearly startled by the price of this item. He had been the auctioneer for many years, and he had never once come across an item with such a high starting price. The most important detail was that what was being sold was not even a physical item, but rather information.

"What could be so expensive? Why don't you show us?" Someone asked. This was not because the person was interested in buying this item, but rather

born from pure curiosity. This was something that almost no one could possibly afford.

"Show us quickly! This young master wants to find out what's so expensive!"

"Show us quickly."

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Chang Wu was also staring at the platform with powerful curiosity. Such a high starting price had to be something left for the record books.

Lu Yin narrowed his eyes. 50 million was a lot even by his standards.

Up on the platform, the masked auctioneer stepped forward and held up a hand. "Everyone, this next item is not a physical object, but rather a piece of information."

"Information worth 50 million star essence? Could this be news about His Majesty's illegitimate child?" someone teased, clearly unafraid of being discovered by Qing Shaohuang. The secret auction was a powerful business, and all of the customers also kept their identities hidden.

"Or could it be about some sort of research into a production method for a poison that surpasses even my Venom Flowzone's Samaritan's Tears?"

"It doesn't have to be something related to Venom Flowzone, then couldn't it be connected to the outside world?"

"That's possible—maybe it's something about Lu Yin. They say that the leader of the Great Eastern Alliance is in Venom King City right now, so could this secret be related to his cultivation?"

"That's worth more than 50 million star essence. That'd be worth around 500 million!"

"500 million is something you'll never be able to afford, hahahaha."

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Many people were talking about the next item to be auctioned, but everyone remained focused on the platform. There were also some whose eyes darted about, as they were wondering which person was selling this information. That person was absolutely in one of the compartments in this room.

Lu Yin listened in silence. Chang Wu had an odd expression on his face, as the person that these people were all gossiping about was actually in the same room as them. If they knew the truth, it was possible that these people would be scared to death. While some of them might be important enough

that even the imperial family had to tread lightly around them, Chang Wu had watched Lu Yin slap Attendant Yi right in the face.

"Cough. You all already know that something big has recently happened in the Outerverse. The Neohuman Alliance slaughtered many people from the Sixth Mainland, and it was because the matters in the Horned Galaxy had something to do with the Neohuman Alliance. They started their insane slaughter because they were searching for something, and that thing is related to the black crystals that were found in the galaxy afterwards," the masked man said. The room fell completely silent.

Lu Yin's eyes grew solemn. Was this information connected to the Neohuman Alliance and the black crystals? This was Venom Flowzone, so what possible connection could there be?

When it came to the Neohuman Alliance, no one would dare to underestimate them.

"Alright, 50 million star essence. The bidding may begin," the masked man stated.

However, not a single bid was placed. The events in the Outerverse had happened quite recently. Even though the Neohuman Alliance's slaughter had died down a bit, it still had not stopped. The Neohuman Alliance was one of the Three Dark Hands and also the Hall of Honor's greatest enemy. The enemy of humanity was not something that these people could stand up to.

The people who were able to attend this secret auction were not ordinary people. They had access to far more information, and they were naturally warier as a result.

The masked man called out a few more times, yet there were still no bids. In the end, the information could only be skipped over in the auction.

In his compartment, Lu Yin grew thoughtful. He had left the Outerverse and purposely and openly traveled to Venom Flowzone in order to avoid getting caught up in the Neohuman Alliance's search. It was impossible for him to bid on this information, as it would be very easy for him to be discovered.

Still, not being able to make a bid in the secret auction was one thing; getting the information was something else entirely. He absolutely had to know what this information was.

Lu Yin released his domain that had reached the spirit manifestation realm and swept through the auction house. Unless there was an Enlighter or Envoy

present who was also skilled at domains, no one would be able to sense Lu Yin's actions at all.

In fact, there were three Enlighters in the building, which was not something that most forces could match.

In addition to the three Enlighters, there were also all kinds of poisons present to prevent anyone from spying on others. There were even poisons in each compartment, and Lu Yin was almost discovered because of these poisons.

Fortunately, Lu Yin's mastery of his domain allowed him to avoid detection and also keep an eye on the masked auctioneer.

The auctioneer was speaking to an attendant backstage, but he was entirely ignorant that Lu Yin was observing him.

Once, twice, three times. Lu Yin's eyes narrowed, and he suddenly focused on a compartment across the room. While the auctioneer had been speaking, he had glanced at that particular compartment three times. Either someone extremely important was sitting in that compartment, or it was the person who was selling the information. Lu Yin was inclined to believe that it was the latter.

Lu Yin pushed through to look into the compartment and see who was inside it. He found an old man with a rather sluggish expression. The man was not quite at the Hunter realm, and his breathing was a bit unstable. It was immediately clear that he was injured.

After learning the identity of the seller, Lu Yin was no longer in any rush. It would be easy for anything he did to be noticed. After all, the Divine Venom Dynasty's poisons were quite odd. Lu Yin was not able to hide his location on the Divine Venom Continent from Qing Shaohuang, and it was quite possible that it would be just as difficult to hide anything from the master of the secret auction house.

While Lu Yin was not concerned about the people behind the auction house, he was very worried about drawing the Neohuman Alliance's attention.

The auction lasted for half a day before it finally finished. Lu Yin watched as the old man left his compartment. All of the clients left the auction house at different times and took different routes to prevent them from meeting with each other.

Lu Yin constantly kept an eye on the old man through his domain. After Lu Yin exited a different dark alley than the one he had arrived at, he sent Chang Wu back to his shop to wait for him before starting to follow after the old man.

Chang Wu was nervous, and he did not dare to actually return to his store. Before knowing that he was safe, he did not want to go home. He felt like he had just entered the darkest time of his entire life.

Lu Yin did not follow the old man for very long, as the man suddenly died. He watched as the old man fell to the ground and was reduced to a puddle of blood. Lu Yin shot forward to try to save the man, but it was already too late.

Lu Yin looked back towards the secret auction house. Judging from the old man's expression when he had left the auction house, he should have sold his information. Since it had not been sold during the auction, the only other option was that the auction house itself had bought the old man's information.

After thinking things through this far, Lu Yin turned back, only to discover that the secret auction house had collapsed and that a raging fire had filled the sky. There was a crowd of people standing around to watch the entertainment, and the city guards had sealed off the nearby area.

That fast? From the time the old man had left and died to when Lu Yin had returned, it had been less than the time needed to brew a cup of tea, and yet someone had already killed people to silence them and burned down the entire building in order to hide all traces. Still, there were flaws.

Lu Yin shot a subtle glance towards a certain man in the crowd. He was the masked auctioneer.

Chapter 1768: A Visit

When Lu Yin swept out with his domain, he had taken note of the masked auctioneer, particularly the man's hands, as there was blood and dirt embedded under the nails. It was quite obvious that the man had been involved in something nefarious.

The masked man watched the flames burn for a while before leaving. The secret auction could be easily abandoned by whatever power was behind it.

Lu Yin did not secretly follow the man, instead tracking the man's whereabouts with his domain while maintaining plenty of distance. Finally, after it became dark, the masked man entered a mansion. Lu Yin slowly lifted his head, as it turned out that the man had entered Yuan Taishi's mansion. It turned out that Yuan Taishi was the power behind the secret auction.

Lu Yin did not disturb anyone and simply returned to his own residence.

Qing Shaohuang had constantly kept track of Lu Yin's whereabouts, and he was surprised to see the young man returning to his own quarters after approaching Yuan Taishi's mansion. Qing Shaohuang was not surprised to

see Lu Yin approach Yuan Taishi, but why had he not gone in to actually see Yuan Taishi?

"Your Majesty, I've looked into the matter, and Lu Yin was just at a secret auction." Attendant Yi returned to provide a report.

Qing Shaohuang's eyes flickered. "Whose?"

"Yuan Taishi's," Attendant Yi replied.

Qing Shaohuang was not surprised. No matter if it was Yuan Taishi or Attendant Yi, it was normal for people to have their own businesses. "Did anything valuable appear at the auction?"

He had not received word that he needed to pay another tab for Lu Yin, which meant that Lu Yin had not bought anything, which was quite strange.

Attendant Yi remembered the losses that his Yi's Emporium had suffered, and his entire body started trembling from rage. "There was supposedly a bit of information regarding what the Neohuman Alliance is searching for in the Outerverse."

Qing Shaohuang's head snapped up and his eyes grew sharp. "Related to what happened in the Horned Galaxy?"

"Yes, but there were no bidders due to the excessively high price," Attendant Yi explained.

Qing Shaohuang instantly understood. It was quite clear that Yuan Taishi had acquired the information and then destroyed the secret auction. However, no one had expected Lu Yin to discover this matter as well and also learn that Yuan Taishi was the hidden hand behind the auction.

After considering his options for a while, Qing Shaohuang finally said, "Don't get involved in this matter, and don't even ask about that information again."

"Then what about Yuan Taishi?"

"That won't be any problem. Yuan Taishi only wants the Divine Venom Dynasty to be stable, and if this information gets out, tragedy will strike this empire. Yuan Taishi will never share anything with Lu Yin. It will be as if the secret auction never happened, and everyone who attended the secret auction will be tracked down, and their mouths will be sealed."

"Yes, Your Majesty."

The only reason why Qing Shaohuang had agreed to help the Sword Sect and the other Innerverse powers deal with Lu Yin was because the emperor was

afraid that Lu Yin would go after Venom Flowzone. Both Qing Shaohuang and Yuan Taishi agreed that Lu Yin would never let go of Venom Flowzone, but their disagreement stemmed from the fact that Yuan Taishi did not believe that Lu Yin had the power to force his way into Venom Flowzone.

Still, they both agreed that they wanted peace and stability for Venom Flowzone.

If word of this information leaked out, it would inevitably bring chaos to the entire Divine Venom Dynasty. As soon as the Neohuman Alliance got involved, there would be nothing that Qing Shaohuang or Yuan Taishi could do, as not even Lu Yin was able to stop the Neohuman Alliance.

This was why Qing Shaohuang was absolutely certain that Yuan Taishi would simply destroy the information. Others could not be allowed to know of it, and Qing Shaohuang did not want to know either.

Lu Yin wanted to get the information from Yuan Taishi, but that was impossible.

Shortly after Lu Yin returned to his temporary residence, he received word that the Starsibyl Sect had vanished.

Chills ran down his back when he saw the report, and his first thought was of the Neohuman Alliance. If what they were searching for was so important to the Neohuman Alliance, then it was possible that their only way to find it was to use the Starsibyl Sect.

It appeared that the item the Neohuman Alliance was searching for was even more important than what Lu Yin had initially imagined. Yuan Taishi had gotten his hands on the information, and Lu Yin had already decided to give up on obtaining it, as it was impossible to do so in secret. Also, it was possible that Qing Shaohuang would get involved as well, and Lu Yin would most likely be targeted by the Neohuman Alliance after he obtained the information.

However, the Starsibyl Sect had disappeared. The Neohuman Alliance's behavior in searching was getting more and more exaggerated, which made Lu Yin's heart skip a beat.

It looked like he could not just let this matter go. He needed to visit Yuan Taishi.

Lu Yin's expression grew solemn, and he started rubbing his cosmic ring. No matter what, that bubble with the red liquid could never be exposed.

At the same time that Lu Yin was thinking about the Starsibyl Sect's demise, there were people in an Aeternal Kingdom who were thinking about him.

"When disaster struck the Autumnfrost family's territory, Lu Yin was also in the Outerverse, and he was even quite close by the Autumnfrost family and the Horned Galaxy," said a voice within a dark tower.

"Are you suggesting that Lu Yin attacked the Autumnfrost family?"

"That's not impossible. He certainly had the capability."

"But he has no motive. Although he did have a conflict with the Autumnfrost family once, there was no need for him to go after the Autumnfrost family at the same time that the Great Eastern Alliance was being forced out of the Outerverse."

"Remember when Autumnfrost Qing disappeared? The route that he was taking led towards Frostwave Weave."

The dark tower fell silent for a time.

"I will learn why Autumnfrost Qing left the family's territory as soon as possible. No matter how small the chance, if there's any possibility at all, we cannot leave it alone. However, Lu Yin also cannot be abandoned."

"His mere existence is related to our big plan, so don't make any moves unless you are absolutely certain."

"Where is he right now?"

"The Divine Venom Dynasty's Venom King City."

"Then have that guy go talk to him."

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Lu Yin was informed that the banquet to celebrate Qing Shaohuang's breakthrough would be held in three days. He had initially wanted to visit Yuan Taishi in two days, but it looked like his plans would have to be pushed forward.

Lu Yin actually had no need to visit anyone at all from the Divine Venom Dynasty, and before attending the secret auction, he had not even considered visiting Yuan Taishi. This was someone who only wanted peace for Venom Flowzone, and they did not view Lu Yin favorably at all. There was no reason for Lu Yin to visit such a person, and his only reason for doing so was to acquire the information.

Lu Yin soon arrived outside Yuan Taishi's mansion, and his presence was quickly announced. The gate opened, and guards and servants lined up on either side of the gate to respectfully welcome Lu Yin into the estate. Yuan Taishi personally went out to greet Lu Yin, and he brought Yuan Miaomiao along as well.

"I apologize, Alliance Leader Lu. You've come to visit my humble abode, and I was not able to greet you in a timely manner." Yuan Taishi was a spirited old man with eyes that had seen the passage of many years. Although he was not an Envoy, he was an Enlighter with a power level of more than 400,000, which made him a top powerhouse within the Divine Venom Dynasty.

There were not many experts present at the mansion, and it came nowhere close to comparing to the protection that had been present at the secret auction.

Lu Yin smiled. "I've wanted to visit Yuan Taishi for quite some time, but I've never had the opportunity. Venom King City is a prosperous place, and this junior has not yet seen enough of it, haha."

Yuan Taishi's eyes flickered. Junior? This was not the proper way for Lu Yin to refer to himself, as there was no need for Yuan Taishi to personally greet a junior. For Lu Yin to be acting so humble, there had to be something that he wanted...

In an instant, a thought flashed through Yuan Taishi's mind, and his expression fell.

"This is my granddaughter, Miaomiao. Miaomiao, come greet Alliance Leader Lu," Yuan Taishi said.

Yuan Miaomiao bowed. "Alliance Leader Lu, we meet again."

"Have you two met before?" Yuan Taishi seemed genuinely surprised.

Lu Yin smiled. This old man seemed to be quite the actor. "We've met once before. Miss Miaomiao's great beauty left quite the impression."

Yuan Taishi just laughed. "Alliance Leader Lu's ambition is not something that can compare to that of ordinary people. Please come in, Alliance Leader Lu."

"Senior, please."

The group quickly entered the mansion.

Yuan Taishi's son and daughter-in-law did not live at the mansion, but their daughter, Yuan Miaomiao, lived with her grandfather. There were rumors that Yuan Taishi's son had already died, but this had never been confirmed.

The mansion was quite large, and the group was also in no hurry. They slowly walked through the building as they chatted about random topics. The Great Eastern Alliance was not brought up, and neither was the secret auction. Lu Yin also did not mention anything at all regarding the purpose for his visit until he was seated with his host. "Two days ago, this junior stumbled upon a strange place that I entered through a dark alley. After passing through, I found a secret auction. I wonder, do you know about this place?"

Yuan Taishi's eyes grew sharp, and Yuan Miaomiao quickly left. The old man stared at Lu Yin. "What is it that you wish to know, Alliance Leader Lu?"

Lu Yin would have only brought this subject up if he already knew that Yuan Taishi was the one behind the secret auction, so there was no need to try to hide anything.

Lu Yin grew serious. "There was a piece of information that was sold related to what happened in the Horned Galaxy incident. This junior is very curious about that information."

Yuan Taishi remained perfectly calm. He took a sip of tea and remained silent.

Lu Yin was in no hurry, so he waited quietly.

"Alliance Leader Lu, are you not afraid of getting burned by this?" Yuan Taishi asked.

Lu Yin looked at the old man. "Everyone who participated in the secret auction is aware of this information's existence, but no one else knows that you were the one who acquired it in the end. Right now, this is something that only you and I know, and possibly Emperor Qing Shaohuang. I also know that as long as the Divine Venom Dynasty wants to avoid the Neohuman Alliance's attention, this information will never be leaked. I will not spread anything, and I am merely curious about the contents of this information."

Yuan Taishi set his teacup back down and stared at Lu Yin. "I'm afraid that Alliance Leader Lu will only be disappointed."

"Oh?" Lu Yin arched his brow. He actually did not want to get involved in what had happened in the Horned Galaxy, but since it might be connected to the "Murkiness" plan that Mister Mu had asked him to look into, Lu Yin could not ignore it.

"The information being sold was false," Yuan Taishi stated.

Lu Yin laughed. "Those are not very convincing words."

Yuan Taishi sighed. "I completely understand that Alliance Leader Lu won't believe me, but false is false. That man was completely evil, and he was being hunted down by his enemies. He came up with this scheme in an attempt to survive a truly desperate situation, and I have to admit that it was a good plan. The outside world is still buzzing over what happened in the Horned Galaxy, though no one wants to get involved in it.

"If he had not set such a high starting price for his information, someone might have bought it, but he was too greedy. After I learned that the information he was trying to sell was false, I shut everything down. I hope that Alliance Leader Lu can understand why I would go to such extreme measures. Although people claim that we are terrible, my Divine Venom Dynasty cannot afford to be targeted by the Neohuman Alliance."

The explanation was quite reasonable, and Lu Yin originally did not believe that there would be any information in Venom Flowzone that was related to the Horned Galaxy incident, so he did not argue with Yuan Taishi. "In that case, what was the information about? Old Master, can you tell me?"

Yuan Taishi tapped a finger on the table. He was reviewing what he knew about Lu Yin's history, and he realized that if he did not say anything, Lu Yin would never let him go. Yuan Taishi was trapped. "He claimed that the emperor of my Divine Venom Dynasty, His Majesty Qing Shaohuang, obtained one of the symmetrical black crystal fragments and used it to achieve his recent breakthrough."

Lu Yin frowned. He was the person who had drawn all of the attention towards the black crystal fragments, so he naturally knew that this information was a lie. However, others would not know this, and such information might be able to deceive some people.

After another half an hour, Lu Yin left. He could only choose to believe Yuan Taishi, as it was impossible to prove that he was lying.

Chapter 1769: The Hidden Flower

"Alliance Leader Lu, what did Miaomiao say when she met with you?" Yuan Taishi suddenly asked.

Lu Yin remembered the young woman's beautiful face, as well as that captivating flower on her face, and his heart was unwittingly moved. Her beautiful face with the image of the flower had been just too alluring. "Nothing much. Why does Senior Yuan Taishi ask?"

Yuan Taishi bitterly replied, "That child, Miaomiao, has changed a great deal after her meeting with the alliance leader, and she seems quite lost. Alliance Leader Lu, this old man has a request that I hope you can help me with."

"Senior, please tell me," Lu Yin said.

Yuan Taishi grew embarrassed, but he still gritted his teeth and continued on to say, "I would ask Alliance Leader Lu to speak with Miaomiao again in order to loosen the knot that has formed in her heart. You would have this old man's deepest gratitude."

After speaking, the old man actually bowed to Lu Yin.

Lu Yin quickly helped the old man back up. "Yuan Taishi, this sounds quite serious. If there's anything that I can do to help Miss Miaomiao, this junior feels obligated to do so."

"I owe you my greatest thanks. Here, show Alliance Leader Lu to see Miaomiao," Yuan Taishi ordered a servant.

Lu Yin bade goodbye to Yuan Taishi before following a maid to Yuan Miaomiao's quarters. If he was being honest, Lu Yin was a bit excited. While he did not feel anything in particular towards the woman, she did possess an irresistible charm, and besides, everyone appreciated great beauty.

When Lu Yin entered the room, his eyes were greeted by an active spring with a soft mist rising from it, but what caught his attention were the puerile snow-white feet playing in the spring water. It was like watching a young girl play, and water splashed up and sprinkled on the lotus that was blooming within the spring.

It was a truly beautiful scene, especially when Yuan Miaomiao turned to the side to look at Lu Yin, showing him the image of the flower on her face. The sight stunned Lu Yin for a moment; the sensation was the same as when he had first met Madam Nalan, or when he had fallen into Ming Yan's tub on Shenwu Continent. It was a sensation that a person could drown in.

Yuan Miaomiao blushed when she saw Lu Yin approaching her, and she hurriedly rose to stand and cover her feet with her white dress. Her back faced Lu Yin, as she was quite embarrassed.

Lu Yin coughed, as he also felt a bit embarrassed. He stepped forward and said, "I'm sorry about that."

Yuan Miaomiao hummed softly as she put on her shoes. She took a few deep breaths, turned to face Lu Yin, and then gave a slow bow. "Alliance Leader Lu."

"We're both about the same age, so just call me Brother Lu," Lu Yin said.

Yuan Miaomiao's face was still red, but it was impossible to see that through the veil she wore. Still, her eyes were entrancing, and they looked like beautiful stars that glittered when she flicked them over to Lu Yin from time to time. "Lu- Brother Lu, why did you come here?"

Lu Yin's expression grew a bit stiff. "Yuan Taishi asked me to come see you. He mentioned that you've been feeling rather off lately, so he asked me to come speak with you."

As Lu Yin was speaking, something suddenly popped up in his mind, and he quickly corrected himself. "I mean, to try to help you."

"Help me with what?" Yuan Miaomiao blinked, looking somewhat dazed.

Lu Yin had no idea what else to say. Anyone would end up at a loss when faced with this kind of woman, no matter how powerful they might be. "Help cheer Miss Miaomiao up."

Yuan Miaomiao laughed gently. "Tell my grandpa that his daughter's not in a bad mood. It's just his imagination."

"Since that's the case, I'll say goodbye," Lu Yin said.

"Brother Lu!" Yuan Miaomiao called out. She pursed her lips and remained silent for a bit before finally saying in a quiet voice, "Join me for a drink. I actually like to drink, but Grandpa doesn't let me."

Lu Yin thought for a moment, but then he quickly nodded with a smile. "Sure thing."

The two of them sat across from each other at a stone table as they enjoyed some snacks and wine. It was a unique atmosphere, given that they were surrounded by the spring's soft white mist.

Lu Yin found that chatting with Yuan Miaomiao was very relaxing. She made no further mention of the Great Eastern Alliance or the Divine Venom Dynasty and instead simply talked about trivial matters, as well as interesting gossip from Venom King City. It allowed Lu Yin to enjoy a rare moment of relaxation.

It was dark when Lu Yin finally left Yuan Tiashi's mansion.

The day had passed in a hurry, and that night, Lu Yin reached out to Qing Longlong and asked her to arrange a meeting with Yuan Miaomiao.

Qing Longlong immediately left to visit Yuan Tiashi's mansion. After arriving, she stared at Yuan Miaomiao. "You met Lu Yin again? Did the same thing happen?"

Yuan Miaomiao shook her head. She felt a little lost, but also a bit happy. "No."

"No? How could you ask meet him without me? Last time, you sent me away at the restaurant too. You must have a crush on him." Qing Longlong hated the fact that her friend had ended up in this situation.

Yuan Miaomiao looked at Qing Longlong and blinked. "Do you not approve?"

Qing Longlong sighed. "How can I not approve? Still, Lu Yin is too much to go after. Do you know what he did to conquer the Outerverse? Now the entire Innerverse is his enemy."

Yuan Miaomiao rolled her eyes. "We've only met twice! How much do you think has happened?"

Qing Longlong smacked a hand against her forehead. "Two times! Just two times you've met, and yet you're already like this. You need to see him again."

"So you'll help me see him?" Yuan Miaomiao laughed.

Qing Longlong shrugged. "I don't really want to, but..." As she spoke, her voice grew bitter. "I haven't seen you this happy in a long time."

Yuan Miaomiao froze and stared at Qing Longlong with a sincere look in her eyes. "Thank you, Longlong."

Qing Longlong just showed a sour smile. "Who asked me to become your little sister? By the way, you still haven't said anything to your grandpa. Will he agree?"

The smile disappeared from Yuan Miaomiao's face. "Right now, he can't wait to get me into Lu Yin's bed so that Lu Yin will leave Venom Flowzone."

Qing Longlong opened her mouth to say something, but nothing came out. What could she even say? Everything that Yuan Taishi did was for the Divine Venom Dynasty, even if it meant sacrificing Yuan Miaomiao. He was someone who had sacrificed his own family for the benefit of the entire Divine Venom Dynasty, but Qing Longlong had benefited from the old man's sacrifices.

"Miaomiao, I can't help you. I'm sorry," Qing Longlong apologized.

Yuan Miaomiao smiled back. "What are you apologizing for? I'm not upset. It's definitely better than being shipped off to some old man."

Qing Longlong perked up at her friend's words. "I'll pick you up tomorrow."

"No, I'll go by myself."

"What? Do you not need me anymore? Miaomiao, you have to stay firm! There are some things that you can only do after marriage!"

"Damn it, girl! What are you talking about?"

...

There were still two days left before Qing Shaohuang's celebratory banquet, and Lu Yin found himself sitting in a restaurant. He was waiting to meet with Yuan Miaomiao again, as she had asked to meet in the same restaurant when they had met for the first time.

Lu Yin did not wait for long when a familiar scent appeared. It instantly reminded him of the misty spring shrouded in shadows.

"Brother Lu, I've made you wait," Yuan Miaomiao quietly apologized as soon as she arrived.

Lu Yin felt curious. "Where's Qinglong?"

"She didn't come."

"Okay," Lu Yin said and closed the door. He then turned to look at Yuan Miaomiao before glancing at the table, where there were two words that had been written with wine. These words had not been on the table when the two had first met, as Lu Yin had just written them down. They were copied from what Yuan Miaomiao had written the previous day when she had chatted with Lu Yin by the spring.

"What do you mean?" Lu Yin asked.

Yuan Miaomiao suddenly dropped to one knee, providing Lu Yin with an incredible and shocking view, but he did not move.

"Alliance Leader Lu, please save me! Save me from Yuan Taishi's mansion!" Yuan Miaomiao begged as her eyes grew red and tears dripped down.

Lu Yin felt puzzled. "Yuan Taishi is your grandfather. He-"

"He is not my grandfather!" Yuan Miaomiao raised her head, revealing hatred and sadness that filled her eyes. "He killed my parents! He is not my grandfather!"

Lu Yin frowned. "What are you talking about?"

He suddenly thought about the imposter masquerading as Ancestor Autumnfrost. The same situation could not happen twice; that would be too much of a coincidence. What was going on here?

Yuan Miaomiao sadly explained, "Yuan Taishi adopted my parents. After I was born, he poisoned me with this love flower."

As she spoke, she removed her veil so that Lu Yin could clearly see the image of the flower on her face again before she continued explaining. "He killed my parents just because they learned of his greatest secret: he- he's working with the Neohuman Alliance!"

Lu Yin's expression instantly changed. "What was that?"

Yuan Miaomiao stared up at Lu Yin. "Yuan Taishi worked with the Neohuman Alliance to develop a poison here in the Divine Venom Dynasty. My parents were killed after they learned about this. He thinks that I don't know, as I was very young at the time, but I overheard my parents talking about it, and I've never forgotten.

"He's put on the appearance of being my grandfather for many years, but the truth is that he controls me with both love and this jincan. He arranged my first meeting with you, Alliance Leader Lu, hoping to get you to leave Venom Flowzone by offering me to you. He must be worried that you'll learn that he's been working with the Neohuman Alliance to develop a poison. He's not trying to help the Divine Venom Dynasty to have peace! That's nothing but lies."

"What's the poison?" Lu Yin asked in a low voice.

Yuan Miaomiao thought for a bit before remembering. "It was... What was it? Vital-something?"

Vitality Poison! Lu Yin's eyes instantly grew stern. Vitality Poison was always accompanied by a number that indicated how powerful it was. This was a name that no one would ever know unless they had personally come across the poison. This was something that not even many of the Neohuman Alliance's corpse kings knew about.

The moment Yuan Miaomiao had mentioned the word "vital," Lu Yin had lost all consideration that she might be lying. Given her strength and position, it was impossible for her to have ever encountered Vitality Poison outside this situation.

If Yuan Miaomiao's words were true, then the most likely reason why Yuan Taishi was pushing for the Divine Venom Dynasty to not get involved in the conflict between the Great Eastern Alliance and the Inniverse was because

he was afraid that the conflict would disturb the development of the Neohuman Alliance's Vitality Poison. It was possible that the information related to the Horned Galaxy that had been offered at the secret auction had not been fake like Yuan Taishi had claimed, but rather something that the old man could not afford to let leak to anyone.

Lu Yin asked Yuan Miaomiao to stand up, and then he sank deep into thought.

Yuan Miaomiao did not bother Lu Yin, and she just stood to the side as she watched him with eyes that occasionally flickered with a bit of hope.

"Your parents only said that Yuan Taishi's working with the Neohuman Alliance, right? They didn't mention anyone else?" Lu Yin asked.

Yuan Miaomiao shook her head.

Lu Yin let out a sigh of relief, as his biggest worry was that Qing Shaohuang was also an accomplice of the Neohuman Alliance. If that were the case, then Venom Flowzone would be nothing more than the Neohuman Alliance's personal nest, and it would be very difficult for him to leave in safety.

It was reasonable and made perfect sense that the Vitality Poison had been researched and developed in Venom Flowzone. This place was filled with all kinds of poisons, and researching poison in such a place would not attract any attention at all. Even better, Venom Flowzone was an isolated place, which meant information was even harder to obtain. It was an ideal location for the Neohuman Alliance's work.

Why did Lu Yin run into the Neohuman Alliance wherever he went? Aeternus really had pervaded the entire Human Domain.

Lu Yin looked back at Yuan Miaomiao, wanting to say something, but suddenly, his pupils shrank. Earlier, Yuan Miaomiao had taken off her veil when she had been telling Lu Yin her story, and he was still able to clearly see the image of the flower on her face. Each and every line and curve that detailed the flower was crystal clear, but within the image, there was a second, hidden flower.

The second flower was a perfectly ordinary little flower, and it was far from as glamorous and dazzling as the love flower. However, there were nine dots around that little flower. Although it just looked like an ordinary flower, Lu Yin felt like he was struck by lightning when he saw it, as he instantly recognized it: it was the emblem of Progenitor Chen.

Chapter 1770: Infernal Zone

Lu Yin had witnessed some of Progenitor Chen's memories in the memory bubbles in Progenitor Chen's Mausoleum. Most of the memories had been about fighting, but there had occasionally been some memories of peace, and Lu Yin had witnessed one of the Progenitor lying drunk in a sea of flowers.

Nine stars surrounding a small white flower was Progenitor Chen's emblem.

Lu Yin stared blankly at Yuan Miaomiao. Why did she have Progenitor Chen's emblem on her face, let alone hidden beneath the image of the love flower?

Lu Yin was staring at Yuan Miaomiao's face, and she believed that he was smitten with her beauty. She lowered her head, blushing all the way down to her neck. "Alliance Leader Lu..."

Lu Yin woke up from his daze, and he gave Yuan Miaomiao an appraising look. When she looked back up at him, he glanced away, as he did not want her to see the look in his eyes at the moment.

Yuan Miaomiao was confused at his behavior. "Alliance Leader Lu?"

Lu Yin steeled his expression and returned to normal before he faced Yuan Miaomiao again. He felt rather embarrassed by his reaction. "Sorry, I got a little lost for a moment and embarrassed myself."

Yuan Miaomiao looked down once again. This was not a comment that was easy to respond to.

"By the way, Miss Miaomiao, is that love flower on your face a jincan?" Lu Yin asked.

Yuan Miaomiao nodded. "The love flower poison can also be thought of as a jincan. It's quite famous in the Divine Venom Dynasty, but my love flower jincan has been altered by Yuan Taishi, and it's completely different from the original one. He can use it to control me, and I don't want to live under his oppression anymore. My life is one of fear and worry. I beg you, save me!"

As she spoke, she dropped to her knees once again.

Lu Yin quickly helped the young woman up, and then continued to hold her by the wrist. Her hand felt silky and was quite comfortable to hold. However, given her incredibly low cultivation, why would she bear Progenitor Chen's emblem?

This could not be a coincidence. Lu Yin was completely certain that Progenitor Chen's emblem was hidden beneath the love flower. While the love flower supposedly controlled her life and death, it also seemed possible that it had been put on to hide Progenitor Chen's little flower.

Lu Yin carefully observed Yuan Miaomiao for a moment before saying, "Don't worry, I'll definitely find a way to save you."

Yuan Miaomiao felt incredibly grateful. "Thank you, Alliance Leader Lu!"

"Alright, we still have some time, so take a seat, and we'll talk," Lu Yin said. When he looked into Yuan Miaomiao's eyes, there was a hint of obsession that clearly showed that he did not want to separate from her.

Yuan Miaomiao felt rather embarrassed by Lu Yin's stare. "Mhmm."

The two remained in the restaurant for a long time, until they were disturbed by the appearance of a man who was obsessed with Yuan Miaomiao. He was tossed out by Lu Yin, but the two's time together had already been disrupted.

Lu Yin did not escort Yuan Miaomiao home. It was what Yuan Miaomiao wanted, and Lu Yin did not want to start up any rumors.

Lu Yin stared at Yuan Miaomiao's back as she walked away, and a burning question filled his eyes: just what was the connection between this woman and Progenitor Chen? No matter how he looked at it, Yuan Miaomiao had Progenitor Chen's emblem on her face.

On top of that, there was also the issue of Yuan Taishi colluding with the Neohuman Alliance, as well as Qing Shaohuang's plans to move against Lu Yin. Things were quite busy in the Divine Venom Dynasty for Lu Yin.

Lu Yin returned to the palace that he had been lent, only to be informed that he had guests waiting for him. When he made his way to a sitting room, he was surprised to see Yuehua Mavis waiting for him.

The two were old acquaintances. Yuehua Mavis had once been the most powerful expert that the Mavis family had stationed in the Outerverse. Lu Yin had even watched the woman use the Mavis family's techniques to briefly hold her own against an Envoy.

That incident had left a deep impression on Lu Yin, as it had shown how many extraordinary abilities and items the Mavis family possessed.

Upon entering the room, Lu Yin saw that Yuehua Mavis's strength had greatly improved since they had last seen each other.

"Alliance Leader Lu, it's been a long time." Yuehua Mavis politely greeted Lu Yin when he entered the room.

Lu Yin smiled. "It has indeed been a long time, Senior."

Yuehua Mavis replied, "When speaking with Alliance Leader Lu, other than age, I have absolutely no qualifications to be referred to as a senior. Given your current strength, Alliance Leader Lu, I believe that a single palm would be enough for you to deal with me."

Even without a palm, just spiritual force or my domain would be enough, Lu Yin thought to himself. However, he would never say such a thing out loud. "Senior, you are being too modest. Please, have a seat."

Yuehua Mavis nodded and sat down.

Lu Yin looked at her. "Is there something troubling you, Senior?"

He had noticed a slight sad expression flicker over her face out of the corner of his eye.

Yuehua Mavis grew serious. "I sought you out at this time, Alliance Leader Lu, to officially offer you an invitation: my Mavis family would like to invite Alliance Leader Lu to be our guest."

Lu Yin was surprised. "Why this sudden invitation?"

Yuehua Mavis replied solemnly, "The Mavis family has invited you several times in the past, but you've never visited our home. This time, my Mavis family wanted to officially extend an invitation in hopes that Alliance Leader Lu would accept."

This was an official invitation that was being formally extended from the Mavis family to the leader of the Great Eastern Alliance. Not accepting the invitation at this time would be too disrespectful to the Mavis family.

Lu Yin grew solemn as he accepted the invitation card. "Very well. Once I'm done with my visit here in Venom Flowzone, I'll be sure to make a visit."

"The Mavis family will await your visit, Alliance Leader Lu." With that, Yuehua Mavis left.

Lu Yin looked at the invitation. The Mavis family's actions were very formal this time, which was completely outside his expectations. He had wanted to visit the Mavis family for a long time, but it had never been a priority for him. After all, the Mavis family was far more powerful than any other force that Lu Yin had ever considered visiting, which meant that Lu Yin had far less to gain from them. While Lu Yin loved money and the Mavis family was the wealthiest power in the universe, that was not enough of a reason for him to visit the Mavis family.

However, why was the Mavis family being so formal about inviting him? Could it be...? Lu Yin suddenly had a guess.

That night, the Second Nightking went to visit Lu Yin in his quarters.

Lu Yin gave the man an image of a person. "Look into anything at all regarding this person in the entire Divine Venom Dynasty."

The Second Nightking looked at the picture on the screen of an ordinary-looking old man. "Is that all?"

"He's already dead, and I need you to keep your investigation secret. No one can know about this, but go ahead and use your full power to check the entire Divine Venom Dynasty," Lu Yin solemnly ordered.

The Second Nightking left. Given his strength, no matter how odd the Divine Venom Continent might be, it was impossible for anything to remain hidden from the powerhouse.

Lu Yin wanted to take advantage of the Second Nightking's powerful spiritual force to track down any and all information regarding the old man who had tried to sell the expensive piece of information in the secret auction. That way, Lu Yin could potentially unearth some clues related to the information itself. The knowledge that Yuan Taishi was collaborating with the Neohuman Alliance and that he had also eliminated the old man's information made Lu Yin very curious as to what that information was, as well as whether it was true. No matter if the information was true or not, Yuan Taishi had deliberately destroyed the information and all of its traces.

The Second Nightking was truly capable. While he did not care about anything that Lu Yin did, the old man's information was dug up within a single day, and the Second Nightking delivered a report to Lu Yin on the afternoon of the second day, catching Lu Yin by surprise. He had not expected results to come so quickly; even if a specialist had investigated, they would not have been able to accomplish anything this quickly.

"The Divine Venom Dynasty already investigated the person, and he's also a celebrity," the Second Nightking explained as he delivered the report.

Lu Yin skimmed the information about the dead old man. The man's name was Shui Pai, and he had been a Hunter. However, he had cultivated a jincan that had the power of an Enlighter.

In the Divine Venom Dynasty, anyone with the power of an Enlighter had to be recorded down, and Shui Pai had been infamous for slaughtering several families in an act of revenge. However, he had later been chased down and

killed, which had created quite a stir in the Divine Venom Dynasty for some time.

This incident had even caught Qing Shaohuang's attention.

Shui Pai had been constantly watched, as practically half of the Divine Venom Dynasty had been hunting after him. His revenge had offended too many people.

Lu Yin glanced through the list of Shui Pai's accomplishments with admiration. This person's life was the model blood feud that came after a successful revenge. Unfortunately, everything had happened in Venom Flowzone, so even after the man had achieved his revenge, there had been no place for him to hide.

Many times, Shui Pai had completely disappeared without anyone able to locate him. He had been an expert at hiding himself and avoiding his enemies. Still, all the information that had been gathered about the old man was compiled into the report Lu Yin was given. Even after glancing through it all, Lu Yin saw no mention of a special hideout. Either one had never been discovered, or it had held nothing of value when found.

One thing of particular importance was that he had managed to escape from Venom Flowzone's forbidden region in his youth. He had kept himself hidden for decades, and he had only become famous once he had become a Cruiser. At that time, he had wiped out an entire family and had embarked down his path of revenge. Everything had started when he had left that forbidden zone.

The forbidden region that Shui Pai had escaped from in Venom Flowzone was a place known as the Infernal Zone. It was a deadly place that was filled with crimson mist, and anyone who entered it could only rely on luck to leave with their life intact. Two of the Divine Venom Dynasty's emperors had died in the Infernal Zone, and Qing Shaohuang did not dare to enter the place. His ancestors had only entered when their lives were reaching the end, desperate to find something within the Infernal Zone that could save their lives.

Shui Pai's family had been exterminated, and everyone had assumed that he was dead when he fled into the Infernal Zone. No one could have imagined that decades later, the same person would get his revenge and kill everyone who had participated in his family's eradication. Shui Pai's accomplishments had encouraged many people to go into the Infernal Zone, only to die.

Lu Yin looked away from the report; could Shui Pai's hideout be in the Infernal Zone?

...

The next day, all five of the imperial palace's gates leading to Venom King City were opened. A mighty bell was rung, and the entire city shook.

There were very few instances throughout the entire history of the Divine Venom Dynasty when outsiders had been invited into the imperial palace. This time, Qing Shaohuang had invited cultivators from all over the Fifth Mainland to visit Venom King City, which was something to be recorded down in history.

King Qing Li arrived at Lu Yin's guest residence to personally escort him to the imperial palace.

One by one, high-ranking officials from the Divine Venom Dynasty escorted representatives from various major powers of the Fifth Mainland.

Countless members of the Divine Venom Dynasty watched in excitement from outside the imperial palace. Balsam, Wen Yao, Wen Sansi, Yuehua Mavis, and more were led by the officials to enter the imperial palace through one of the five gates.

The palace's central square was surrounded by clear water, and Qing Li gestured to Lu Yin. "Alliance Leader Lu, please be seated."

Lu Yin had been given a position that was nearly equal to that of Qing Shaohuang himself.

Of the Inniverse's eight great flowzones, Qing Shaohuang was the master of Venom Flowzone, which put him on the same level as Liu Qianjue, Ling Qiu, and the other leaders. Lu Yin was the master of Blazing Mist Flowzone, so he was technically the only one of Qing Shaohuang's peers to attend the banquet.

Across from Lu Yin, seated at the same level, was Mr. You.

The man was an overseer and represented the Hall of Honor, which meant that he had a very high status. If they were anywhere outside of Qing Shaohuang's empire and palace, Mr. You would actually hold a position above even Qing Shaohuang.

As Mr. You took his seat, his gloomy eyes swept over to glance at Lu Yin before stopping.

The corners of Lu Yin's mouth curled into a smile. He had no worries about Mr. You at all, as he was someone who was about to lose his position. Instead, Lu Yin looked at the Mt. Microcosms Protector who stood behind Mr. You. The Protector noticed Lu Yin's attention, and his face grew pale as he felt his heart drop.

Lu Yin was sitting next to Qing Li, as every single guest from outside the Divine Venom Dynasty was accompanied by a member of the empire. King Qing Li accompanied Lu Yin while Yuan Taishi accompanied Mr. You.

When Yuan Taishi arrived, Lu Yin reflexively looked around for Yuan Miaomiao, only to see that she had already taken a seat. She was actually staring right at Lu Yin. When she noticed his gaze, she quickly ducked her head.

Lu Yin then looked over at Yuehua Mavis. A member of the Mavis family could reasonably be given a higher position than Lu Yin, but Lu Yin was quite special, and so Yuehua Mavis was accompanied by Qing Longlong.