

### **Chapter 71: Imitation And Bewildering Strength**

The gravity training room adjacent to Lu Yin's opened to reveal Jenny Auna, who grew curious at the commotion and opened his door. However, her expression warped the moment she saw him, and after leveling an angry glare, she firmly slammed the door closed and left, leaving the surrounding students stunned.

What happened? This was a question Lu Yin shared with the crowd. This woman had to be crazy to give him that sort of threatening expression; didn't she know the Aunas had a marriage agreement with the Zishan Family?

His guess wasn't wrong; Jenny was indeed aware. Torry had revealed it by accident, and while the agreement didn't mention any names, even a fool would know that the Zishan heir would only be married to the Auna heir. The Zishan Family's prime was far more splendid than the Aunas', so as long as the marriage was forced, Jenny herself would be the one wedded to Lu Yin. She didn't have a good impression of him to begin with, and when she contacted her family about it, their answer had frozen her heart— they would most likely go through with the agreement. The girl had felt like her entire life had dimmed down and come to the training room to vent her anger, but she'd bumped into that scoundrel once more. It felt like she'd stepped into dog poo.

Jenny wasn't gone long before a joyous Lulu Mavis ran over, identifying Lu Yin's training room and jumping in without hesitation.

"Lulu?" Lu Yin was astonished.

"Eh, you're perfect. My hands are itchy, let's practice!" she challenged.

Curious about the Mavis Family's battle techniques, he didn't reject her. Lulu had showcased terrifying strength and extreme speed in Beijing, and he wanted to know if it was innate or a battle technique he could copy in secret.

The girl licked her lips in excitement; she had observed Lu Yin for a long time, and the defeat of even a freshly awakened Nightking was no mean feat, "Don't hold back, I want to experience what you learnt from that inheritance stone firsthand. Here I come!"

Lulu's body vanished as she finished talking; even under 30 times normal gravity, her speed was still so terrifying that she left behind phantoms that merged with the daylight. Fortunately, she wasn't beyond the grasp of the Cosmic Art, which revealed her snaking palm to Lu Yin immediately. When he stepped aside and allowed her hand to crash into the wall, the entire training room rumbled.

"Good. Again!" Lulu beamed with delight, rushing towards him once more. The increased gravity didn't seem to affect her at all. Lu Yin stared at her fist and raised his own, white and black alternating in the formation of the Daynight Punch.

BANG! A shockwave rumbled out as both combatants took several steps back, the sheer volume of the impact shocking the students outside. Lulu herself was surprised, "This is the technique you learnt from the inheritance stone? It's not much."

Lu Yin clenched his own fist and stared at her in amazement. While the speed was a battle technique, her punch itself was not. She had relied on brute force to stop the Daynight Punch; could that strength be the Mavis Family's innate gift?

"Continue," Lulu barked, sweeping her legs towards Lu Yin who stared at them while dodging. She disappeared the very next moment, starting to attack from all directions.

Lu Yin couldn't learn Qingyu's speed technique at all, but Lulu's display gave him some clues. His legs subconsciously started imitating her movements as he integrated things with the Roving Step, slightly improving his own speed. However, the Daynight Clan's battle techniques always had this unique rhythm that he simply couldn't learn outside of that inheritance stone; imitation had its limits.

Lulu backflipped and landed before staring at him in shock, "That... You were copying my White Flash, weren't you?"

Lu Yin nodded, "But it can't be emulated."

She burst out in laughter, "You're really imitating the White Flash, and even managed to copy it a little. Interesting, you're too interesting!"

Lu Yin was lost, "Is that strange?"

She smiled, "Of course it's strange. It's common knowledge that battle techniques cannot be imitated, and many different races' battle techniques require specific conditions to receive their inheritance that even powerful copying techniques cannot break. This is the fundamental reason why the great clans dominate the universe, but you actually managed to copy this a little. You're a strange fellow; not only did you inherit one technique, but you copied the White Flash, too. So mysterious, haha!"

Lu Yin could not figure out why it was so amusing, "Are you still fighting?"

"Yes, continue. But thirty times gravity is too low, can we raise it a little?" she suggested cunningly.

Lu Yin's brows raised, "Sure, how much?"

Lulu thought about it before sticking out four fingers, prompting him to squint. Forty times? This was vicious, even a Sentinel from Yu Academy like Raas wouldn't be able to withstand that. Was this woman testing him?

The gravity room was quickly adjusted to forty times gravity, and Lu Yin immediately felt his body sink further. His legs felt like lead, while the terrifying pressure left him barely able to speak. This sort of gravity was meant only for Melder bodies; he could barely hold on.

Lulu's expression turned uglier as well, but she stubbornly stared at Lu Yin and beckoned him over. He felt strange, "Hey, aren't you having trouble with this too?"

She gritted her teeth, "Of course not."

Lu Yin was speechless. He could tell that this brat was holding on through will alone, but she acted as if she was all fine.

At this point, the door to the gravity training room opened and Xia Luo walked in. He smiled, "Can I join too?"

Lulu's lips curled, "Don't throw away your reputation, Melder."

Xia Luo laughed, "I won't use battle techniques, nor will I initiate the attack."

"Whatever, it's just training anyway. Begin," Lu Yin shrugged. He and Lulu attacked the youth simultaneously, but Xia Luo dodged with zero effort. Forty times gravity was nothing much to a Melder like him, and avoiding the duo's attacks was like a walk in the park.

When their combined attacks hadn't even touched Xia Luo's clothes after trying for a while, Lulu grew worried, "Hey, did you come here to mock us?"

Xia Luo raised one leg to block Lu Yin's Skybeast Claw, while he whipped the other out towards Lulu, "I'll show mercy."

Lulu snorted, then clenched her right fist so hard the air trembled. Lu Yin subconsciously stepped back just as a dull echo resounded on the spot, knocking Xia Luo back one step. The youth exclaimed, "Such strength!"

Lulu was pleased and she blew her fist. Then she leaned towards Xia Luo provocatively, "If you want to fight, seal yourself and come back."

"Alright, be right back," Xia Luo smiled and left the training room.

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The Perseverance passed through another wormhole to enter the second filament of the Great Yu Empire, now less than ten days away from the Capital Star. Within the gravity training room, Lu Yin, Lulu, and Xia Luo sparred frequently, going through a hundred bouts in five days. Lulu was a fighting maniac, sharing the violent tendencies of others with great strength. That was within Lu Yin's expectations, but he hadn't expected that Xia Luo would even be willing to seal himself in order to spar with them. The man was strange—this sort of battle should have been useless to him— but Lu Yin felt quite comfortable in his presence.

On the sixth day, another person joined them, Zhang Dingtian. He had been training in a distant gravity training room himself, but had come here after bumping into Lu Yin. Lu Yin had always known him to be a freak, but he still hadn't expected the man to be able to withstand forty times gravity. He did not shrink back even if his skin was about to split or his vessels about to burst. This earthling without battle techniques could suppress school leaders like Parlie, and was a realmbreaker who could even match someone like Raas. Even Sigmund stated that this man was an exception that could join the Thirteen Imperial Squadrons right away. Xia Luo admired Zhang Dingtian, and sometimes even shook off Lu Yin and Lulu to train the man. He slowly guided the Bladesage in developing a battle technique that truly fit him.

Two days later, another participant arrived: Seruzen. The monk scared Lulu into hiding behind Lu Yin when he first appeared; a frightening exterior was a threat unto itself, and he had an aura of incongruity that ensured normal people wouldn't dare act against him. Seruzen could not withstand the high gravity, so he simply opened the door and took one step in. He placed his other foot in once he'd

adapted, leaving everyone speechless. Lu Yin and the rest ended up fighting with the door half-open, and combined with Seruzen's appearance, they attracted many onlookers everyday. Xu San had also come around, but Lu Yin forced him to fetch them water and refreshments. The man was alright with such a job; he was at least of some use this way.

## **Chapter 72: Bai Qian**

Quite a few students were creeped out by Lu Yin's training room as they passed by, shocked that people could battle under 40 times gravity. Even the elites of many institutions couldn't achieve such a feat.

More students left the Perseverance as time went on, including Gerlaine, Balaror, Eddy, and Hayden; at this point, Lu Yin recognized very few of the students left behind. Before Gerlaine left, she looked for him and waved her fist, "You better watch out, I haven't repaid you for robbing me just yet."

"Wanna try again?" Lu Yin was defiant.

The girl was frightened and quickly ran away, but she tried to intimidate him once more before she left, "Don't belittle Yu Academy. You won't be fighting Sentinels anymore, you'll be facing Melders. Just wait for my brother to crush you!"

Lu Yin laughed at first, but an introduction of Gerbach sprang to mind and his expression turned heavier. The man was one of Yu Academy's strongest students, and had even joined one of the Thirteen Imperial Squadrons. Although his own status was rather high now, these kinds of people wouldn't necessarily defer to him. He had to work hard and become a Melder to protect himself.

As he was rushing back to the training room, Lu Yin came across Bai Xue who was staring into space alone. Her beauty with the stars in the background moved him; she seemed to be a glowing fairy, attracting fervent gazes from many of the students around her. Be it on Earth or in the wider universe, such looks would never go away.

"What are you thinking about?" he walked over to her side, "Why don't you train with us."

"The universe is really too big, and Earth is too insignificant. No wonder the planet can't hold on to its people," she answered indifferently.

"Didn't you walk out yourself? Don't take things with Liu Shaoge too seriously."

"Not him," she shook her head.

"Huh? Who else?"

She turned to look at him, "Do you know who discovered Qingyu?"

"Bai Qian," he blurted out instantly.

Bai Xue's expression darkened, "That's right, Bai Qian."

That's right, Bai Qian was the one to step onto Neptune and fetch the so-called corpse. This was the first person to come into contact with alien life, but there was no such name among the Seven Sages. How was one of Earth's most elite astronauts simply gone? Lu Yin had always felt like there was something amiss. "Who is it? You share surnames, is he related to you?"

An expression of agony filled Bai Xue's face, "She's my elder sister."

"She's a woman?" Lu Yin was stunned.

Bai Xue nodded, unable to help a smile as she watched Lu Yin's surprise, "Shocking, isn't it. The media exploded with news of her reaching Neptune, but no one mentioned a hint of personal information, not even gender. You always thought she was a dominant man like Zhang Dingtian, didn't you?"

Lu Yin smiled bitterly and nodded, "You're right. So, what happened to her? She left Earth?"

Bai Xue looked down, her long hair covering her eyes as she explained gloomily, "Rainbows paled in comparison to my sister's face. She was a strategist like Zhuge, had the heart of an empress, and was a genius swordswoman. But she abandoned me, abandoned Earth, and went into the heavens alone. I'll probably never see her again."

"Into the heavens? How?" Lu Yin felt it was strange.

"When Qingyu was first brought back, there was a message engraved on leather with him. We tried to decipher it for the longest time but could only make out three words; it was an invitation letter. It was this letter that opened her path to the heavens, she vanished soon after. She'd only just entered the Realm of Sky; a Sentinel."

"So brave. An unknown invitation and she stepped into the greater universe, without fear of being crushed by space and time," Lu Yin exclaimed in admiration.

Bai Xue gazed toward the dark universe and said longingly, "My sister would never do anything she wasn't confident in. Academics, sports, swordsmanship or exploring the heavens, she was always outstanding. Even Zhang Dingtian and the rest had no choice but to accept it as well, no one could compare to her. Maybe Earth just couldn't satisfy her."

Lu Yin could not help a laugh; this woman worshipped her sister too much. Perhaps Bai Qian could excel on Earth, but the greater universe was boundless. Just like Balaror or Parlie, there were many different races of beings, and some were born Sentinels or stronger. Normal humans couldn't compare to them at all.

The Daynight Clan was already very terrifying, and the Nightkings were their rulers with frightening innate gifts. Any elite would be overshadowed by such freaks. He would use the unlimited possibilities of his die to compete with them, but what about Bai Qian?

Bai Xue was right about something; she might not be able to meet Bai Qian again in this life. Normal people couldn't even step into the boundless universe. A face that made rainbows seem pale in comparison? It was a pity that he couldn't catch that sight.

"Oh, do you have a photo?" he asked, really wanting to take a look.

"We weren't allowed photos," Bai Xue shook her head, but then she glared at him like he was a thief, "What do you want?"

“Just wanted to take a look, but it’s alright. Come and train with us if you’re free. It’s easy to grow sick of things if you stay by yourself,” Lu Yin commented and turned to leave. Bai Xue recollected her thoughts and looked back at the darkness of space with a complicated expression.

Earth was mysterious indeed. One Qingyu and one trial had brought out so many monsters. Zhang Dingtian the realmbreaker, Bai Xue and Xu San with innate gifts, Seruzen with incomparable willpower, Liu Shaoge’s silent endurance, and the perfect Bai Qian. Lu Yin didn’t know what these people would experience amongst the stars, but the future would be exciting yet. Oh, he could be considered an earthling at this point. Was he a monster too?

The Perseverance grew quiet over the next few days as students left one after the other. Bai Xue joined Lu Yin’s training group, but just like Seruzen, she was unable to withstand the gravity. She helplessly followed the monk’s method, her breathtaking beauty a stark contrast with his nightmare-inducing appearance. Lu Yin was left speechless in the face of these polar opposites at the exit of the training room.

Xu San noticed something strange in Bai Xue’s gaze, and felt like the woman must have been pushed in some way. Why else would anyone follow that monk’s torturous method to adapt to the gravity?

Lu Yin completely adapted to the increased gravity during the ten days, something that shocked Xia Luo. Even a newly advanced Melder wouldn’t adapt so quickly. Lulu had gotten used to it even earlier, but no one was amazed by the Mavis Family’s freakishness. In the meanwhile, Zhang Dingtian got to a point where he could move around without issue, while Seruzen had taken this time to advance... one entire step. This was the only normal bit; it was ridiculous for Sentinels to adapt to 40x gravity in the first place. Surprisingly, Bai Xue’s progress was even faster; she had gotten to the same point herself.

This gravity training room had already become famous on Perseverance, and even Sigmund had looked over at one point. Everyone there outside of Xu San could defeat school leaders; it was hard not to attract attention.

“Careful, I’m coming,” Lulu barked, and her fist swept past Lu Yin’s ears to hit the walls. She retracted her hand and looked discontentedly at him, “Hey, show some respect, I’m hitting you!”

Lu Yin said apologetically, “My bad, I was distracted. I just received a notice that students who succeeded in trial missions are to head to the Capital Star to be examined for recommendation into Astral-10.”

“That doesn’t concern me,” Lulu rolled her eyes, and Xia Luo paid no attention either. It was only then that Lu Yin recalled that these two weren’t simple; one was from the Mavis Family that was not one whit inferior to the Daynight Clan, and the other had shown his background by knowing and succeeding with the Daynight inheritance stone. The Empire’s recommendations likely meant nothing to them.

Lu Yin nodded, “Everyone in the trial failed except me. No one can be nominated to participate in the Tenth Academy’s examination.”

“I don’t need any recommendation, I can go there myself,” Zhang Dingtian pipped.

Lulu rolled her eyes, “Go yourself? You must be joking, you don’t even know where the Astral Combat Academy’s doors will open. You think anyone can get in? When Astral-10 arrives at the Frostwave

Weave, only major powers like the Great Yu Empire will know its concrete position and have means to approach it. A normal person wouldn't see it even if they passed by."

The Bladesage's gaze turned heavier as he gripped his blade.

### **Chapter 73: Astral Combat Academy**

"You know about the Astral Combat Academy?" Lu Yin looked at Lulu.

"Heard some seniors talking about it, want to know more?" she smiled craftily, her gaze shifting as he nodded, "I can tell you, but you have to promise me something. Help me get something if you enter Astral-10... Hey, don't leave, it's not anything extraordinary or something! I just need you to fight someone; you should know that information about Astral Combat Academy is restricted. Even that General Sigmund might not know; no one will tell you except me!"

Xia Luo interrupted gently, "The Astral Combat Academy is an umbrella term for ten institutions, the first eight in the Innerverse. Astral-9 is in the Endless Weave of the Outerverse, while Astral-10 is going to appear here in the Frostwave Weave. Every academy is said to have supreme battle techniques inherited from ages past and is overseen by unequalled powerhouses. The academies also determine the top 100 youths across the universe, and then there's the true attraction of the legendary Three Realms and Six Daos."

Lulu clenched her jaw in fury, but everyone else focused on Xia Luo, "Three Realms and Six Daos?"

"Legend goes that there are nine trial zones passed on from ancient times, hiding supreme battle techniques. Longevity, strong blood vessels, unstoppable strength... rumors say you can acquire all kinds of things there, but there is one thing we know for sure," Xia Luo's smile faded, "Almost half of the Ten Arbiters of the Universe Youth Council have walked through the Three Realms and Six Daos."

Lu Yin's expression changed as well; the Ten Arbiters had taken the Universe Youth Council from an obscure organization to the behemoth it was today. These ten devilish geniuses were the greatest prodigies of their generation; while he didn't know just how strong they were, a single one had destroyed a major organization that defied the Council's ruling. That power had been far stronger than the Great Yu Empire.

The Universe Youth Council was originally responsible for the Outerverse competitions and rewarding or disciplining the younger generations, but ever since the Ten Arbiters came into power, its influence had broadened greatly. Not only did they rule over the young, but they now had judicial authority and supervised the various academies. They had the authority to investigate, pass, and enforce laws on education, military, and prisons, empowering the younger generations greatly. The Universe Youth Council was thus also called the Ten Arbiters' Council. Mira was a prime example of the terrifying prowess of this organization. Lu Yin had tried to get more information about the Ten Arbiters, but there was very little he could glean about them. Those from the Outerverse simply couldn't learn about them.

Lulu snorted, "Some of those freaks have indeed stepped through the Three Realms and Six Daos, but not all gained any technique from it. There is one certainty, though; any student that dares enter that place comes out much stronger than before. The Astral Combat Academy is like the gate to the Three Realms and Six Daos, which is why countless people are drawn towards it."

“Do you know who the Ten Arbiters are?” Lu Yin looked at Lulu. When she and Xia Luo looked back silently, he asked, “Don’t know?”

Lulu shrugged with a negative. When Lu Yin turned to Xia Luo, the youth shook his head as well, “Don’t ask me, no one here is qualified for such information. Even the Emperor might not know; those ten are way too high, and no media dares to even contact them.”

Disappointed, Lu Yin thought back to news broadcasts he’d seen before. The only images shown for rulings from the Ten Arbiters were ten silhouettes; he really wasn’t qualified to find out. The only person on the Perseverance who knew was Mira, but asking her would only garner ill-will. It would show lofty ambition with little perspective.

After the ship warped once more, a notice was transmitted throughout the ship that they were about to arrive at the Zenyu Star, the capital of the Great Yu Empire. Lu Yin looked out his window to see a mass of vehicles passing by. They were soon in sight of the massive celestial body, three rings of land circling around it constantly. It looked vast and magnificent, terrifying star energy ripples passing by on occasion. The spaceships around stretched into an unknown distance.

There weren’t many students left on the Perseverance at this point, only children of influential families like Raas and Huo Xiaoling. Watching the capital approach, an excited Raas activated his gadget, “Senior, please, you have to avenge me.”

“That is King Zishan; if we mess him up, we risk offending the entire Zishan faction.”

“Bah, the Zishan faction withered away long ago, and many have cast their lots in with my father. There are only a handful of people left that support him; His Imperial Majesty only gave him the position because of a past promise. He really thinks that title will last forever; the Crown Prince and Second Prince will always be worried if he doesn’t die.”

“Have you forgotten about the Thirteenth Captain?”

Raas was startled, but then he smiled, “That woman is just holding up the Zishan name. She might even thank us when he’s dead.”

The person on the other end of the call took a while to respond, “Alright, I can teach him a lesson, but it’ll be embarrassing him at most. I can’t help you kill him; that’ll be courting death.”

“Of course. Thank you, Senior!” Raas huffed and forced a smile, deactivating his gadget. He then gazed at the Capital Star that was almost within reach, “Do you really think that the title of King Zishan is so nice? You don’t understand; the bigger you are, the harder you fall.”

Just before the Perseverance reached the capital star, dozens of royal courtiers gathered in the Great Yu Palace, watching an imposing figure respectfully. This was The Undying Yushan, the man who had taken the weak Great Yu Empire into a powerful nation that spanned thirteen filaments today. Even the Inniverse had heard of the Ironblood Emperor, a man who had reached the top ten of the Astral Combat Ranking in his youth and shaken the entire universe. Although conspiracies had pushed back his ambitious charge into the Inniverse, he had still built the Great Yu Empire up to its current state. As a Hunter, he could live over a thousand years, but his dignified figure was now only a shadow of in his prime. He was aging quickly.



The Great Yu Empire had advanced technology, yet upheld ancient traditions. Ministers that represented the various territories had to stand respectfully, while the captains of the Thirteen Imperial Squadrons who had the highest authority stood in the front row. Compared to the uniformly dressed, dignified and serene councilors, these captains were much stranger. Some were dressed bizarrely, there was one who was two meters tall, one with fiery red hair, and even one blind baldy. All sorts of people were present, making it look like a mob. Although they looked random, each of them were the greatest powers in the Empire.

There were two figures in front of even the captains. One was the Second Prince, Duke Yushan. His hands were in his pockets, and he seemed to be chewing on something absentmindedly. The other seemed more alert to the situation, wearing a faint smile that concealed the imposing aura that flashed past his eyes on occasion. This man resembled The Undying Yushan more than his brother, and was the Crown Prince of the Great Yu Empire: Dorren Yushan.

“That will be it on diplomacy with the Grandtop Weave. I want to bring up one other person, Lu Yin,” the Emperor started to speak, his dignified gaze sweeping across everyone present as a hint of exhaustion flashed past his eyes. The hearts of the courtiers jumped at the name; it had shocked the court when it first appeared. This name represented a clan that had once shocked them all, even if it had now declined; the Zishan Family.

Crown prince Dorren Yushan had stepped forward and bowed, “Royal Father, Royal Brother Lu Yin is going to arrive, do you want your son to welcome him personally?”

Undying Yushan shook his head, “I sent Bronsen to welcome him; his identity should be sufficient to welcome him.”

“The First Squadron Deputy does have sufficient seniority,” Dorren agreed respectfully, returning to his spot. The Second Prince glanced at him and continued to chew with a displeased expression.

The Undying Yushan coughed several times, “Zishan and I called each other brothers in our youth, and it was with his help that I forged this great empire. His family might have perished today, but Lu Yin is the sole survivor. I’ve already given orders that he shall inherit the title of King Zishan; he can enjoy the honor and glory that comes with that title. You must all treat him like you treat the other royal children.

“Yes, Your Majesty,” all of them chorused.

The Undying Yushan nodded, then coughed a few more times.

“Your Majesty, this subject has a question that I am unsure whether to ask,” an older man walked out.

The Emperor smiled, “All courtiers are free to speak in my presence.”

“There was a marriage contract between the royal family and the Zishan Family that is still unfulfilled. Will it be taking effect today?”

All gazes fell upon the Emperor, this time including some of the Thirteen Imperial Squadrons and the hitherto-inattentive Duke. The man’s own eyes narrowed; this was a difficult question to answer. Denial would sully the Yushan name, but he couldn’t acknowledge it either. There was only one unwedded

princess in the royal family, Fifth Princess Wendy Yushan who wasn't yet thirty. However, she was no ordinary princess; tutored within the Myriad Swords Peak of the Innerverse, she was ranked within the top 20 of the Astral Combat Ranking. Few people across the Outerverse could match her, and she was the pride of the Frostwave Weave— no, the entire Outerverse itself. She was considered the second coming of the Emperor's own talent, and even he couldn't compare to her in status. Regardless of willingness, he simply didn't have the ability to decide for her.

The Emperor suddenly broke out into a fit of violent coughing, and a few doctors immediately rushed up and injected him with some medication. He spoke feebly when the fit subsided, "Suspend the court, we shall begin again when Lu Yin is here."

#### **Chapter 74: Arrival and Capture**

The Perseverance slowly landed on the Capital Space Station, and Lu Yin and the rest beamed down to the Zenyu Star. The planet was flourishing wherever one looked, the entire city linked with bridges and flying vehicles streaking across the skies. Their white trails were everywhere, an indication of the technology at play here.

Lu Yin stretched as he felt the gravity of this new planet that was about the same as Earth. The air was much fresher, and the surging star energy all around far surpassed anything he'd ever felt back home. The Zenyu Star was tens of thousands of times larger than Earth, and he couldn't estimate its population or even the number of different races that lived here.

Xu San gazed in amazement at his surroundings, at this extraterrestrial civilization that had supervised Earth. There was nothing that Earth could compare to, be it in terms of science or cultivation. Zhang Dingtian, Bai Xue, and Seruzen remained calm, as they had seen introductions to the various technologies in the library. On the contrary, the Zenyu Star's technology looked a little backward to what they'd read about.

The Perseverance returned to tranquility and the troops descended quickly, Sigmund, Shalosh, and Torry among them. Mira had already departed earlier. Seeing the capital's guards suddenly surround them from the distance, Zhang Dingtian frowned as he felt something was wrong. These troops looked solemn, and some were even leaking bloodlust. As someone who had grown up in an army himself, he was very sensitive to this prelude to an attack. He warned the rest, "Careful."

Lu Yin also felt something amiss in the wary gazes of the soldiers, and the area around the Perseverance was quickly sealed off. He noticed several invisible weapons locking onto them, especially Sigmund whose expression turned heavy at the sight of a man descending from the distance, "Bronsen, what is the meaning of this?"

Everyone looked on at the man, feeling his powerful aura. This man was at least an Explorer, able to move around freely in space. While the Emperor was a Hunter, someone over 100,000 combat level, there were few like him across the Empire. Even Cruisers—50,000 or higher— were rare, so Explorers were quite powerful. Sigmund was an Explorer, as were Shalosh and Torry.

Bronsen retrieved an arrest warrant, "The Emperor has ordered your capture, Sigmund Mathers. Your crime is treason against the crown by collusion with outside powers."

A commotion quickly broke out amongst Sigmund's shocked soldiers, with Lu Yin sharing their sentiment. Treason? That was a capital offense!

Shalosh and Torry looked at each other in confusion. As vice-captains from the Thirteen Imperial Squadrons, they hadn't received any news about such a thing at all; this was obviously sealed off so Sigmund couldn't escape. The only one who could do such a thing was The Undying Yushan himself; did Sigmund really betray the Empire?

Sigmund frowned and stared at the arrest warrant, color draining from his face as he recognized its authenticity, "Why? I didn't commit any treason, why is His Majesty arresting me?"

Bronsen looked on coldly, waving for a squadron to capture the man. Sigmund didn't resist, only staring at him for an answer until he eventually stepped forward and said, "27 corpse kings escaped during Earth's evolution, and Barudar betrayed us and destroyed Genma Space Station."

"What?!" Sigmund's eyes shrank.

Bronsen activated his gadget and a screen lit up to show Sigmund conversing with Barudar, "You're the last person that met Barudar, and also the one in charge of Earth's trial. The Empire has reason to believe that you colluded external powers to steal those corpse kings. Bring him away!"

Sigmund's face turned ashen. While he was an Explorer, he did not put up any resistance at all and allowed the troops to escort him away. Watching his arrest, everyone else remained silent. Even a general of the Empire, an actual Explorer, could suffer such an end. Lu Yin stared at that despondent figure, recalling the moment that the man had declared him the King Zishan and assured that he could help with any trouble. Who would have thought things would change so greatly?

Bronsen nodded towards Shalosh and Torry before walking directly to Lu Yin and bowing, "The Third Seat of the First Imperial Squadron pays his respects to King Zishan."

Lu Yin returned his gaze to Bronsen, "At ease."

"Thank you, Your Majesty. His Imperial Majesty has tasked this humble servant with escorting you to the palace. Please, follow me."

"What about my friends?" Lu Yin asked.

"Please rest assured, the Empire has made arrangements," Bronsen replied.

Lu Yin nodded and glanced at Zhang Dingtian's trio before having Xu San follow him out with Bronsen. Xu San followed him like a mouse, frightened of letting him go too far.

Feeling like things were getting boring, Lulu ran off by herself. Xia Luo also strolled through the area at leisure, with no one caring about him. Looking at Lu Yin's figure with envy, Raas followed Munoor and Eddy away to the first ring which contained Yu Academy. Huo Xiaoling, Jenny Auna, and the other nobles were welcomed by their families and left.

In the end, Zhang Dingtian's trio was brought to follow Raas's group to Yu Academy, where they would undergo formcast remodeling as a reward for their accomplishments during the trial. This normally

wasn't a reward given out easily, but these three had displayed great talent and would be absorbed into the Empire as fresh blood.

The Zenyu Star's space station was enormous, and after a while of walking a flying vehicle stopped in front of Lu Yin, "Your Majesty."

Lu Yin and Xu San boarded the vehicle while Bronsen flew up by their side. The machine started with a low boom and quickly shot into the distance. Xu San measured this machine curiously with his eyes, especially the screen which had already mapped out the route. It was on autopilot.

"General Bronsen, can I ask you a question?" Lu Yin asked.

Bronsen dispersed the airflow around them using star energy and replied, "Of course, Your Majesty."

"You mentioned 27 corpse kings earlier, what does that mean?"

Bronsen's gaze trembled, "The evolution of the planet Your Majesty was on birthed many strong cultivators, but it also gave rise to zombies. There is one type of zombie called the corpse king that can swallow natural energy crystals to achieve great power. They have formed their own faction called the Neohuman Alliance, posing as the future of humanity, but they are extremely dangerous."

Lu Yin's gaze flashed as he thought of the long-haired zombie king and the one that Zhang Dingtian killed. Innate gifts were rare among humanity, but those things could achieve a similar effect by swallowing energy crystals. This meant the entire Neohuman Alliance had innate gifts; it was no wonder that the Great Yu Empire was concerned. "The escape of 27 of them from Earth's trial, is it a serious offense?"

Bronsen only muttered two words, "Death sentence."

## **Chapter 75: Royal Court**

"Generally, they have to dispose of the zombies once the trial ends, precisely to prevent the corpse kings from being taken away by the Neohuman Alliance" Bronsen added, "But Sigmund did not do so, and Barudar defected as well, so the Empire ruled that it was a case of collusion."

Lu Yin nodded and didn't ask further questions. The Mathers Family were old Zishan subordinates, but he had just arrived at the capital and didn't have the clout here to help Sigmund. The man could only pray for himself.

He thought of Silver, feeling sure that the youth was somehow related to this Neohuman Alliance. Was he a corpse king himself? He didn't feel like one. Silver had left at Genma Space Station, which made Barudar's defection all the more suspicious. However, he quickly dismissed it from his mind. Even if he knew the truth, he couldn't say anything. Sigmund hadn't been given a moment's chance to explain himself before he was judged to be guilty of treason; it might have had something to do with the Zishan Family. This conspiracy was different from the probing of Raas. It had bloodlust that even Explorers couldn't avoid.

It took two hours of travel across the Zenyu Star for Lu Yin to reach the royal palace. Every tower pierced of the center of the Empire's authority pierced into the skies, its dignified appearance stunning him even

from miles away. Xu San's lips trembled as he gazed into the distance; to him, it seemed like this was a palace that had swallowed the heavens and was coming for him.

"There are thirteen gates to the royal palace, guarded by each of the Thirteen Imperial Squadrons. The main gate is called the Grand Astral Gate, guarded by the First Squadron. His Imperial Majesty ordered me to bring you in through it," Bronsen informed him deferentially.

Lu Yin nodded and got off the vehicle, looking up at the palace that stretched into the skies and pulsed with so much star energy that onlookers shuddered. Xu San had to remain behind at this point; he was not qualified to enter. The fact that he'd come so close was already a testament to Lu Yin's title.

The royal palace was enormous, taking twenty minutes of travel from the Grand Astral Gate to arrive at the royal court. Lu Yin saw many peculiar details of the Empire's culture along the way, with carved columns and jade buildings illustrating countless stories. The technology clock seemed to wind back further as he traveled into the palace; by the time he was at the court, he even suspected that he'd arrived in ancient times.

Bronsen bowed towards the royal court and gestured for Lu Yin to proceed, waiting outside himself. Taking a deep breath, Lu Yin sensed the enormous fluctuations of star energy all around him and walked in step by step. He came to a stop right outside.

"Come in." The Undying Yushan coughed twice before raising his head with a smile. All the courtiers within stood rooted in place seriously, with only the captains turning around to look outside with curious gazes.

Lu Yin entered the royal court, feeling the world change with one step. Indescribable pressure descended from the sky, turning everything in sight an ashen gray while the ground buzzed him deaf. His eyes narrowed at this imposition of absolute powerhouses, watching the air twist as threads seemed to connect the heavens to the earth. His organs started to ache and his vision turned blurry, the star energy within refusing to budge.

It was at this point that the courtiers turned to look at the doors, all sorts of expressions on their faces. Dignity, ridicule, pride... A native had shaken off his mortal coil and transformed into King Zishan who existed above the masses; this was something they could not accept. The pressure came from all of them; it wasn't intentional, but simply a combination of their displeasure. The entire court wanted to throw him out.

Lu Yin slowly felt dizzy and his fingers trembled, the figure of the Emperor slowly vanishing in front of his eyes until he almost couldn't endure it anymore. He grunted and bit his tongue, tearing open the flesh of his palm with his nails until fresh blood dripped to the ground. It was this pain that awakened him, giving him the strength to raise a leg and step forward once more, entering the hall completely. The pressure suddenly disappeared like the tide, replaced with looks of amazement. It was no mean feat for a mere Sentinel.

Up at the front, the Crown Prince smiled, while the Second Prince's lips curled as well. The blind, bald man among the captains nodded imperceptibly, while The Undying Yushan laughed from his position at the head of it all, "Come closer!"

Lu Yin huffed and raised his head to match the Emperor's gaze with a solemn expression of his own. He stepped past each of the courtiers, then the captains, finally stopping at the same row as the princes, "Lu Yin pays his respects, Your Imperial Majesty."

The Undying Yushan smiled and was about to speak, but he coughed a few times and immediately drank some water, "Call me Royal Uncle."

Lu Yin bowed, "Yes, Royal Uncle."

The Emperor nodded, "You have spent so many years outside, it must have been difficult."

"Thank you for the concern, Royal Uncle," Lu Yin replied respectfully.

"Royal Brother, His Imperial Majesty has always remembered the Zishan Family. Where have you been all these years? Why wasn't there any news? And who named you Lu Yin?" Dorren had many questions.

Everyone looked at Lu Yin. The Great Yu Empire had been investigating him ever since his bloodline was verified, but inconceivably, they couldn't find anything. They were the foremost power in the Frostwave Weave, but couldn't investigate a single individual's background. It left them quite curious about him.

Lu Yin had already prepared his answer, "I'll be honest, I've lost my memory. The only thing I could remember was this name; if anyone doesn't believe me, they can feel free to search my mind."

The Crown Prince hurriedly waved it off and laughed, "That is too much to ask for, Royal Brother. Your identity as the successor to The Undying Yushan has been verified; regardless of what happened earlier in your life, the Great Yu Empire will always be your strongest supporter."

"The Crown Prince is right, Little Yin. You can remain at ease in the Empire and take over the Zishan crown; bring it to glory," the Emperor said brightly. Lu Yin nodded and bowed.

"Royal Father, have we settled Royal Brother's accommodations? If not, your son is willing to arrange them," the Second Prince spoke for the first time.

The Undying Yushan smiled, "Little Yin's accommodation need not be arranged by others. The Zishan Residence is his home."

Everyone was shocked upon hearing this. "Your Imperial Majesty, no, the Zishan Residence holds a lofty position within the capital. It is not only a representative of the Zishan title, but also the glory of the Great Yu Empire and His Majesty The Undying Zishan's achievements. Even if we give it to the new King Zishan, we should wait until he's matured."

"Yes, Your Imperial Majesty, please reconsider."

"Your Imperial Majesty, please reconsider."

...

Lu Yin felt the pushback rather bizarre. These people had to be mental! It was just a residence, why did they have to debate it like it was a matter of life and death? The Emperor seemed to agree, thumping

against his throne in anger, "I have already given my word, do you want me to go back on it? I have not passed yet, it isn't your turn to make my decisions."

"We plead for Your Imperial Majesty's forgiveness," the courtiers paled. The princes similarly bowed.

Lu Yin glanced around him and noticed that the few strange-looking people remained still. Eh, there was even a little girl?

When he had first walked into the royal court, he had already noticed these strange people. There were a total of seven of them; one was two meters tall and jet-black from head to toe. The next had red hair and a stern face, the third emitted a frostiness all over, and there was a short, blind, bald person. Another wore a big white coat and looked like a scientist, while the next was excessively good-looking and seemed even more gentle than Xia Luo. Last was the petite little girl. A total of seven people that had rather striking looks stood quite close to the front, behind only the Crown Prince and Second Prince. He guessed that these were captains of the Thirteen Imperial Squadrons, holding the most power here.

"What are you looking at, have you never seen a pretty girl?" The delicate-looking girl glared at Lu Yin, who turned away speechlessly. Even if they didn't want to attract attention, these people would draw gazes anywhere. This was especially true of the bald man, whose horrific appearance was second only to Seruzen's.

The dainty little girl saw Lu Yin turn away and was pleased. She proudly puffed up her chest and raised her head.

"Alright, the court is dismissed, I am tired. Crown Prince, Second Prince, Little Yin, stay behind," the Emperor shook his hand lethargically. The courtiers withdrew quickly, and the girl glared at Lu Yin again before leaving herself. Lu Yin didn't care; a little brat like that could be called a captain?

The Undying Yushan brought the trio into the palace's garden, where the air was fresh and there were many varieties of plants that Lu Yin had never seen. It was fortunate that he had lived in the greater universe before for a while, even in the Inverse, so this wasn't too strange.

Perhaps the Emperor was getting older, but he dragged the trio over and started reminiscing about old times. He recalled past times as they toured the gardens, leaving Lu Yin quite helpless. He wasn't a Zishan in the first place, why would he have the time to hear this old man's stories? But the Emperor had already set his mind, and even the princes couldn't escape. They were forced to listen to his rambling for three whole hours.

## **Chapter 76: Emperor's Promise**

Lu Yin's legs were a little wobbly by the time the Emperor grew tired and ended his stories.

"Forgive me, I'm tired. When people get older, we like to recall the past," the man said with a smile and a shake of the head, pushing some food over, "Try these, they were some of Zishan's favorite snacks."

Lu Yin nodded and tried them, finding them rather good. The Emperor seemed like he wanted to say something, but it was only then that he noticed that Dorren and Duke, "Oh, you two are still here, you can leave. I want to speak to Little Yin alone."

Lu Yin nearly spat out, feeling like he was being toyed with. He had listened for three whole hours, and the man didn't seem to bother with his own emotions at all. The two princes seemed used to it, giving their salutations before departing.

"There are many things troubling the Great Yu Empire, and I can only maintain the calm for a little while. Everyone knew the Undyings when I and Zishan made a name for ourselves across the universe; pity, he left before me while I've struggled at death's door for centuries. I'd assumed I would never see his descendants in my life, but fate brought you along, Little Yin. I am grateful to be able to see you before my death," the Emperor said, sighing with sorrow.

Lu Yin could only humor him, "Royal Uncle's power is at the peak of the universe. Living for another ten thousand years will be no problem."

"I know my own body well, you don't need to comfort me." The man chuckled, shaking his head, "I have seen everything related to Earth's trial. You're quite good to be able to defeat a Nightking, even if newly awakened. Few can match you at the same level; there is a hint of the young Zishan in you."

Lu Yin felt ashamed, "Qingyu was too strong. If not for the cooperation of the students, I would not be able to defeat him"

The Undying Yushan smiled, "Intelligence is ability as well; that final battle was under your control. The end where you forced a Melder to attack for you was quite smart; it's the kind of cleverness that extends lives."

Lu Yin did not speak.

"I also understand about the matter on the spacecraft; go settle it with a free heart. As long as I am on the throne, you'll be fine," the Emperor suddenly changed topics.

Lu Yin immediately retreated two steps, "Thank you, Royal Uncle."

The Undying Yushan nodded and retrieved a cosmic ring, "This is your first time on the Capital Star, and money is needed everywhere. Here is a crystal Mavis Card and some star crystals, use them freely."

Lu Yin expressed his thanks once more, and the old man grunted, "You are currently too weak, I have ordered Bronsen to be your bodyguard for now. I am tired, you can leave."

Lu Yin wanted to reject this arrangement, but seeing the old man close his eyes, he couldn't bring himself to. Making his own salutations, he left as well. The Great Yu Empire's Ironblood Emperor was like a setting sun. In his reign of 800 years, he had more than doubled his territory. This was someone whom Lu Yin admired from the depths of his heart, but even the greatest of achievers eventually fell to the claws of death. He didn't know how history would evaluate him, but he was rather grateful for this man's care.

He looked inside the cosmic ring to find twenty cubes of star crystals. It wasn't much, but it certainly was significant to all Sentinels. Wondering how much money was in the card, he left the garden under the guidance of a maid.

Bronsen was already waiting outside the garden and greeted him immediately, "Your Majesty."

Lu Yin smiled, "This must be troublesome for you, General Bronsen."



“Protecting Your Majesty is only my responsibility, there is no need for you to be so courteous.”

Lu Yin nodded and walked out of the palace, with the Explorer following behind at an exact one-meter distance. He asked as he strolled along, “Oh, General, you mentioned you’re the Third Seat of the First Squadron. Could you explain the Imperial Squadrons to me?”

“Gladly,” the man paused to collect his thoughts, “The Thirteen Imperial Squadrons correspond to the thirteen gates of the royal palace; any movement in or out must go through them. They are His Imperial Majesty’s shields, and each captain is at least a Cruiser. We are at the top of the Frostwave Weave and known throughout the Outerverse, but more importantly, we correspond to the thirteen filaments of the Great Yu Empire. We take care of almost half the administration across the Empire; the lord of each filament is one of the captains.”

Lu Yin was shocked, “So the Imperial Squadrons are the rulers?”

“His Majesty appointed the captains as the Filament Masters of the thirteen filaments, and their left-hand deputies are the ones in charge of normal administration.”

Lu Yin now understood. No wonder the Thirteen Imperial Squadrons were the division of the Empire with the most authority; each captain was effectively a regional governor, and even had the authority to appoint or dismiss other administrators. The Undying Yushan had shared his authority and controlled things from the source, saving himself trouble while not having to worry about rebellions. This sort of practice could be only in place if there was trust in the Center, and it clearly showed how much confidence the Emperor had in himself.

Bronsen also introduced the captains, but Lu Yin didn’t react as he did not recognize any of them. It was only when he mentioned the thirteenth captain that he was shocked, “Liuying Zishan? Where is she”

Bronsen nodded, “She is currently in the thirteenth filament handling her duties; she will return shortly.”

Lu Yin’s brows knitted together, “She’s from my family?”

“No, Captain Liuying is not a Zishan herself. As for her name... perhaps you should ask her yourself.”

Lu Yin’s eyes gleamed. Not from the Zishan Family but had the Zishan name, where did this woman come from? The Undying Yushan had not mentioned it when they had met; had he forgotten?

Before he knew it, Lu Yin found himself at the Grand Astral Gate, where Crown Prince Dorren smiled at him gently. He immediately walked over, “Why are you here, Your Highness? You couldn’t have been waiting for me.”

Dorren smiled, “Of course I was waiting, Royal Brother. This is your first time at the Capital Star, and I have nothing much to give, so here’s a small welcome gift. I hope you like it.”

Lu Yin’s eyes flashed as he received a cosmic ring, examining it in Dorren’s presence without shame before thanking courteously, “You are much too kind, Your Highness, declining this would reject your goodwill. I will take care of this, thank you.”

Dorren laughed, "You are quite forward, Brother. Right, the Zenyu Star is quite big, and you might not be able to move about freely right now. I have arranged the latest model of transportation to be sent to you; it will be waiting outside the gate for your personal use."

Lu Yin thanked him again, and after some pleasantries, Dorren instructed Bronsen to take good care of him. The captain of the First Imperial Squadron was The Undying Yushan himself, while the left-hand deputy was the Crown Prince. The right-hand deputy was Second Prince Duke, while Bronsen was their subordinate who sat just lower.

Lu Yin looked at the cosmic ring after Dorren left, shocked to find that he had been given a whopping fifty cubes of star crystals. This was even more than the Emperor! So generous, who knew if it was a bribe? He couldn't help but sigh, "The Crown Prince is too kind, so humble and modest. No wonder he's the next Emperor."

Bronsen's head was bent low and he did not comment. Lu Yin walked two steps forward and suddenly recalled something, growing excited and clenching his fists as he walked out of the Grand Astral Gate with a strange smile.

Xu San was hiding at one side, watching a dazzling flying vehicle in the distance. Be it design or size, this one far surpassed the one they had flown in on, with a streamlined body and bold style that was every man's dream. He almost started drooling on the spot; who knew who it belonged to? This was surely quite valuable.

Moments later, Lu Yin walked out of the gate and waved to him before walking straight for that cool plane. He immediately ran over, "Boss, careful where you put your hands. This toy looks very expensive, don't let others think we have ill designs over it."

Lu Yin went silent for a moment before shaking his head. "Stop being an embarrassment, come on," he opened the cabin door and sat within.

Xu San was stunned, then grew excited, "Boss, this is ours?"

"You don't say." Feeling like this man was an embarrassment, Lu Yin decided to give him a tour to expand his knowledge and increase his worth, "Let's go to the first ring, Zhang Dingtian and the others are there."

"What are they doing there, Boss?"

"Yu Academy, formcast remodeling. Let's go," Lu Yin said as he activated the vehicle. A strong jet of air set it off and it entered autopilot, following a predetermined path to the first ring. Bronsen immediately stepped into the void and followed them.

## **Chapter 77: Provocation**

The Capital Star was surrounded by three rings of land, even the closest of which took two hours of travel to get to. Lu Yin was traveling in the newest model of plane in the Great Yu Empire, its speed even exceeding a Limiteer's. From his perspective, the distance between the Capital Star and the first ring was an ocean's width.

During his flight to the first ring, Lu Yin crossed only about a dozen other planes that were slower than his. Not just anyone could enter these restricted zones; they were military grounds, and the first ring was under Yu Academy's autonomous control. It was clear that this plane from the Crown Prince was specifically approved; it was unobstructed the entire way, not even having to stop at the flight platform as it flew directly toward the formcast pool.

"Boss, this is too cool, look at all those people getting examined. They look like the Empire's officials, but even they need to stop for inspection while we can pass directly. This is a noble life!" Xu San was excited.

Lu Yin got him to shut up and glanced at Bronsen who was floating nearby. He had appeared when they were approaching the flight platform, and all the soldiers and officers on it saluted him. Although he was the third seat, his status was at least on par with the other vice-captains, not because he was an Explorer, but purely owing to his status. Watching the man, Lu Yin's own thoughts ran wild. Home had asked him to inherit the Zishan status to infiltrate the Great Yu Empire. Did they also want him to join the Thirteen Imperial Squadrons? What about the Great Yu Empire's Youth Council? What did they want him to do? No one had contacted him yet.

The first ring was about the same width as the Zenyu Star, but its surface area was far greater. It had an unfinished vibe to it, with sand and dust pervading the air while the occasional tornado thundered across and left Xu San pale. This was the location of Yu Academy, the training grounds for its elites and garrison for its troops.

The plane flew along a predetermined route. There wasn't any danger at first, but ten minutes or so into the journey, a roar shook the skies and tore open the earth and sky. A terrifying blast of air nearly overturned the plane, but Bronsen was fortunately around to obstruct it.

Lu Yin was shocked; this was a roar of an existence at the Limiteer's level. Though it was not as unparalleled in power as an Explorer, it could still cause his heart to tremble. Did Yu Academy elites frequently deal with Limiteers? He thought of Raas and Eddy before shaking his head; that couldn't be the case.

"Boss, I feel like the Zenyu Star is safer. Maybe we should head back," Xu San spoke timidly, but Lu Yin ignored him.

The sky started to darken an hour later, and a huge mountain range showed up on the horizon. Most eye-grabbing of all was the hollow in the center of a mountain, surrounded by some unknown transparent material. Countless soldiers were floating all around it, giving off a dense, imposing aura. This was Yu Academy's formcast pool, the reservoir of formcast models.

The plane landed and was sent to parking, while Lu Yin pulled Xu San along. This time, even he was stopped—Bronsen's status wasn't enough to allow him in directly, and they had to present a certificate of clearance. This left him curious, "Even you can't enter the Academy as you please?"

"Yu Academy is a top-tier institution reserved for the Empire's elite, even His Imperial Majesty cannot meddle however he wishes. This was an order he'd sent down when he first assumed his position. Your Majesty, I cannot interfere in anything at this place unless your life is in danger. Please take care of yourself."

Lu Yin nodded, unable to help but feel more respectful of The Undying Yushan. He had given the younger generation liberty and freedom, but that was exactly what won him their hearts.

As they neared the formcast pool, Lu Yin heard a soft howl of extreme pain. His expression changed and he was about to charge in the moment he recognized its owner, but Bronsen spoke up, "Formcast remodeling is often a painful process, like the physical body being smashed into pieces and reorganized. It requires one's cells to be remade from the ground up, with even the blood being generated once more. An inability to endure it means failure, and failure means death."

Lu Yin paused, then regained his calm and walked in. The pool was surrounded by countless troops and under the protection of numerous experts of Yu Academy, with even Explorers among their ranks. It consumed far too many resources; Zhang Dingtian only qualified for the process because he was a realmbreaker, and had nothing to do with the man defeating school leaders. Entry to the pool was forbidden while it was in use, and Lu Yin saw Bai Xue and Seruzen waiting outside as well. The former's gaze lit up when she saw him.

"How long has he been inside?" he asked.

"Quite a few hours," she replied.

"He's been suffering like that for hours?!"

Bai Xue nodded, her own face a little pale already. However, Lu Yin was extremely impressed. Rebuilding one's physical body clearly required great suffering, and even a stone-cold soldier like Zhang Dingtian found it hard to bear. He glanced over at Seruzen, curious about how this monk would behave and whether he would scream.

"Damn it, where's that dog barking from? It's disturbing me!" a rude voice suddenly rang out. Lu Yin looked over to see several youths whose clothes had been messed up from what he assumed to be training. They seemed to be Yu Academy elites, at least on Eddy's level.

"What are you looking at, trash? Such a waste of the Empire's resources. If the pool was given to us, we'd have become Melders long ago. Just a bunch of native nonsense!" One of the youths was clearly in a bad mood, insulting Lu Yin with a provocative tone. A few others looked at Bai Xue and their eyes nearly popped out. The youth that had just cursed saw her as well, and his jaw dropped open in amazement.

Bai Xue was disgusted, "If you want the resources, fight for them yourselves. We won this opportunity."

"Oh, sassy. Alright, fight for it, you say? Let's see what ability you have," one of them was obviously very interested in Bai Xue, and took the initiative to stretch a hand towards her. He was trying to touch her face.

Lu Yin frowned, but sensing the lack of bloodlust, he didn't act. Bai Xue snorted and struck out with her fist. While the youth's expression was frivolous, he met the attack with a serious gaze. He knew that those who could join Yu Academy had some substance to them, and also understood the qualifications required for remodeling. His hand immediately formed a claw as he barked, "Skybeast Claw!"

Bai Xue's expression changed, but not into one of fear. She was much stronger than she had been on Earth, and the training on the Perseverance proved effective right now. Her body blinked away with the Roving Step, something Lu Yin had taught her. Having adapted to forty times gravity much faster than Seruzen, her speed far surpassed the average Sentinel. The attack crashed into the ground without much damage, while her hand pressed down on the youth's abdomen and a layer of ice extended across it.

"Frost?" the youth was overwhelmed, retreating without a thought. The ice shattered with a bang, and a shadow flitted past the youth as another strike headed towards Bai Xue.

"Despicable!" Lu Yin's gaze focused, and he raised his own hand which had a shocking five stars within. Bronsen had almost intervened at the same time, but he stopped the moment Lu Yin struck out. The newcomer was clearly a Melder, but he had sensed that Lu Yin's attack was actually stronger!

Two attacks streaked past Bai Xue and collided with each other, a violent shockwave pushing her away in an instant. The other students and Seruzen soon followed, a vacuum popping in the emptied void as Lu Yin finally saw the stranger's face. He focused on the youth's vicious gaze; the target wasn't Bai Xue, it was himself. Terrifying pressure crashed down as the Melder tried to crush him with star energy alone, the weight of it all causing him to shiver, but the stars within his palm exploded in response. The first three withstood the opposing strike, the fourth changed the stranger's gaze and prompted a Skybeast Claw, while a growl and the fifth sent both parties flying backward.

BANG! Shockwaves radiated in all directions, drawing the attention of the formcast pool's guards. Lu Yin retreated five steps, while the dumbstruck Melder was pushed back seven. Bronsen and the guards all watched on in shock; a Sentinel had actually knocked back a Melder, this wasn't simply a realmbreaker. The other side was an elite of Yu Academy!

Bai Xue also looked at Lu Yin with surprise. He was even stronger than before.

### **Chapter 78: Hall Master Of Yu Academy**

"Tyson lost?" the students from Yu Academy were stunned, "How's that possible? He's one of the only Melders in our branch, that kid's just a Sentinel!"

"Let's go again!" the youth called Tyson glared, dashing towards Lu Yin and attacking with a Skybeast Claw. Lu Yin's eyes narrowed; this attack was even stronger than Munoor's. It seemed like this school truly was where the cream of the crop gathered. However, the five-star Cosmic Palm gave him confidence against anyone at or around his level, and he wouldn't back down.

Just as the two were about to collide, a tremendous force swept through the area and rocked the people present. This was Melder energy just like Tyson's, but the sheer power left Lu Yin's hair standing on end. This was someone whom he was no match for. Tyson paused, turning pale by the time he even turned around to see the distant figure ambling over. Lu Yin followed his gaze to a man who looked even younger than his current opponent, but one look and he knew that this young Melder was the cause of that force just now. He was far more powerful than Tyson, to the point that even the Cosmic Palm was useless. He turned grim; this was the strongest Melder he'd met so far.

"H-Hall Master Tianming!" Tyson looked horrified.

Hall Master? Lu Yin was confused. He didn't know much about Yu Academy; information about the school was restricted by the Empire. Gerlaine and the others hadn't divulged much either, just that the strongest youths in the Empire were gathered here. How exactly they were chosen and what sort of hierarchy the place followed was a total mystery.

"You're getting smarter, aren't you, Tyson? You even learnt how to ambush people now. Want to try that on me? If you defeat me, I'll give you my spot." Tianming walked over and nodded amicably at Lu Yin.

Hearing the cold voice of the Hall Master, Tyson's expression quickly changed, "I didn't do it on purpose, Hall Master! I just saw—"

"I saw what happened quite clearly. Your target wasn't the girl; what gives you the nerve to ambush the King Zishan?" This question did not get an answer. Sweat beaded on Tyson's forehead, but a wave of Tianming's hand sent out an invisible beast claw that smashed into his chest and sent him flying, "Scram!"

The other youths quickly left as well, not daring to look back.

The moment he saw Tianming attack, Lu Yin felt his heart leap. This was a Skybeast Claw that was different from Tyson's, practiced to the point that one didn't even need to shape their hand first. This was a master.

"Yu Academy is managed by its students. There are five halls located across the first ring, and this is one of the Hall Masters and thus one of the five strongest people in Yu Academy. His name is Tianming," Bronsen softly whispered from behind.

"Who are the other four?" Lu Yin's eyes gleamed as he remembered Gerlaine mentioning that her brother was an elite in Yu Academy as well. Was he a hall master too?

"Schutz, Gerbach, Logan, Huo Zhong, and Tianming. They are the five strongest youths in the Empire's current generation."

Lu Yin nodded. In the meanwhile, Tianming finished Tyson off and turned towards him to apologize, "It's my fault for not disciplining him properly. Are you alright, Your Majesty?"

"You're being kind. We just had a bit of a scuffle," Lu Yin answered. Tianming wasn't just any other student of the academy but someone with great power.

Tianming sighed, "There is an obvious difference between a scuffle and an ambush. There have been few talents in Yu Academy in the past few years and there's been no lack of disgraceful people like him. I heard the people from the Academy completely humiliated themselves in the trial on Earth. Apologies for the embarrassing display."

Lu Yin laughed, "It was only thanks to someone from the Yu Academy that we managed to win at the end. You're being too courteous."

Tianming laughed and exchanged some pleasantries with Bronsen before glancing at Bai Xue, "I apologize on behalf of all Yu Academy students, Miss. I saw everything on the cameras, I'm very sorry."

Silent as always, Bai Xue simply nodded.

Lu Yin was curious, "Mr. Tianming, I recall that Yu Academy possesses 108 forms of the Skybeast Claw. May I know if I can learn it?"

Tianming nodded, "Of course. The moment you touched down onto the Capital Star, you became part of the Academy. I give you permission to learn the first five forms."

Lu Yin frowned, "Just the first five?"

Tianming smiled, "You might not know this, but the Skybeast Claw is the Academy's ultimate battle technique, and considered one of the best in the Empire. Most people can't begin to learn it; even those who enter the Academy need permission from a Hall Master to begin. Permission from one hall master can give you the right to five, three to ten, and all five to twenty forms."

"So you had a rule like that." Lu Yin could do nothing about this.

"Sentinels usually only learn the first five forms. The technique isn't easy, and that is normally enough. Only Melders can go to ten, and the stronger ones twenty. Tyson has had access to all twenty forms, but only managed to comprehend the thirteenth. There will be some time before he finishes this." Tianming explained everything slowly, seemingly in a good mood.

Lu Yin recalled that Raas had learnt five forms. Munoor probably knew ten, and Tyson knew thirteen. He's already learnt seven from the former two, but with 108 forms in total, he hadn't even gotten to a tenth of it yet.

"May I know how much you've learnt already, Mr. Tianming?" Bai Xue suddenly asked.

Everyone's attention shifted to the Hall Master. Lu Yin was quite curious, too. The Skybeast Claw that Tianming had nonchalantly thrown out was far stronger than Tyson's. To be able to become a hall master and keep Tyson in line meant he was not someone to be trifled with.

"43," Tianming smiled, and their expressions changed. This was a terrifying number. He'd learnt nearly half of it! This explained the disparity in power. He continued, "Of the five hall masters, Logan's actually comprehended the most at 49. His Skybeast Claw is the strongest among us."

"What should I do if I want to learn the entirety of the Skybeast Claw?" Lu Yin asked.

"Defeat any one of us, become a hall leader, and you get access to all of the Academy's resources," Tianming said with a shrug and wave, "Alright, I've still got things to deal with, so I'll be off. Best of luck. Also, anyone who's done with their formcast remodeling needs to enter the Academy. If you don't have any other choices, you can join my hall. I'll take care of you."

"We've been booked by the Thirteen Squadrons. Can we still join the academy?" Bai Xue inquired.

Tianming smiled, "Being in the Thirteen Squadrons does not clash with Yu Academy. The Academy is a place for learning, the army is where you apply that in combat."

Zhang Dingtian's moans had dissipated by this point, and Bai Xue entered the formcast pool. She, too, cried out in agony, but her voice was much nicer to hear. Lu Yin started to get a little frustrated, "Bronsen, who's performing the remodeling for them? Is it a man or woman?"

“Neither. They’re enduring it on their own,” Bronsen answered nonchalantly.

Lu Yin nodded. This was good. If there was a guy in there doing it for Bai Xue, he’d be annoyed. Bai Xue wasn’t his lover, but he didn’t want anyone taking advantage of her either.

“By the way, Seruzen, which squadrons want you guys?” Lu Yin suddenly remembered the monk and asked.

Seruzen looked up and said in a hoarse voice, “Zhang Dingtian, was taken by, Fifth. Bai Xue, Sixth. I’ll join, Eleventh.”

Lu Yin hummed. Bronsen had told him before that the captain of the Fifth Squadron was called Huo Qingshan. He was the head of the Huo Family in the Great Yu Empire, and was Huo Xiaoling’s father. That was the middle-aged man with fiery hair at the palace. The captain of the Sixth was that little girl, and she was called Peach. The Eleventh Squadron’s captain was that blind, bald man known as the Blind Monk.

It was normal that Huo Qingshan thought well of Zhang Dingtian, a realmbreaker. It was also obvious why the Blind Monk had chosen Seruzen. Both of them were frightening people externally, and Sigmund had mentioned that Seruzen’s perseverance had garnered someone’s interest. But why did Peach choose Bai Xue?

Lu Yin had a strong impression of that girl, but he quickly dismissed it as it had nothing to do with him. Since they were off Earth, these people would have to control their fates themselves. There was something that was a huge shame, though. The Astral Combat Academy was about to reach the Frostwave Weave. Zhang Dingtian needed to train again after formcast remodeling and would not be able to make it.

## **Chapter 79: Lighting Up The Zishan Residence**

Lu Yin bade Seruzen farewell, heading back to the Capital Star with Xu San and Bronsen. Everyone from Earth had their own fate to follow, and it wasn’t his place to interfere. That being said, it wasn’t like he could do anything anyway; whether they would meet again depended on themselves.

The trio traveled through the night to return to the Zenyu Star, and it was when he saw the Zishan Residence in the distance that he realized why all the courtiers had been against him living in it back at the palace. The Capital Star’s most grandiose structure was certainly the royal palace, having the tallest spires on the planet, but the Zishan Residence was a close second.

Bronsen explained, “When His Imperial Majesty became god-brother of King Zishan, he built the Zishan Residence taller and turned it into a landmark second only to the palace. The Zishan Family has disappeared for centuries, but the residence still remains and nobody is allowed inside.”

Lu Yin drew a deep breath, “Let’s go in.”

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The Capital Star was bustling with activity even deep in the night, the lights shining as bright as day. For many, their nights were just beginning. Dozens of planes flew around leisurely on some hills not too far from the royal palace, to the tune of incessant cheering from a crowd of thousands.



“Raas, Raas, Raas...” the shouts filled the hills.

Raas arrogantly glanced at a man nearby, “This is the last round, Wukai. If you lose, you’ll have to prostrate yourself every time you see me.”

Wukai gritted his teeth, “I won’t lose. Don’t forget what you promised me.”

Raas said disdainfully, “When have you ever won? But I’ll keep my word. If you win, I’ll get my father to plead on General Sigmund’s behalf. But that won’t be happening, haha!”

The cheers grew louder below.

Elsewhere in a huge manor, Huo Xiaoling was helplessly being dragged around by a little girl, “You promised me that you’d take me out to play! You can’t go back on your word.”

She could only smile wryly, “Yes, yes, Xiaoxiao. I wasn’t lying to you, so let go of me first.”

The little girl pouted, “No, that’s how you cheated me the last time! I can’t run as fast as you.”

Huo Xiaoling sighed.

The little girl laughed slyly, “I’m actually helping you!”

“Helping me?” Huo Xiaoling was confused.

The little girl smiled cheekily, “Those idiots from the Fireforge Planet keep pestering Father to push the marriage forward. Let’s run away!”

Huo Xiaoling rolled her eyes, “Don’t even dream about it, you cheeky little thing. Don’t think I don’t know what you’re thinking.”

“You’re stupid!” the little girl huffed and continued pouting.

Elsewhere in a clamorous bar, a bunch of people were dancing passionately. A girl in revealing clothes and black boots was yelling in excitement, drinking and shouting on occasion.

A depressed youth entered the bar and plopped down in front of the bar, “I want something strong!”

A bright green spirit came out soon enough, and the man took one huge gulp before choking on it and coughing hard. To the man’s embarrassment, many started mocking him. The girl in skimpy clothing, in particular, and kept pointing at his nose while laughing.

The man was furious, “Shut up, you worms!”

In that one moment, the bar went completely quiet. Everyone froze and stared at the man, but not with anger. In their gazes was pity, and a hint of respect. The man felt something off about the situation, but quickly ignored it. He was the strongest student in the Imperial Military Academy, Ian; in terms of status, he was far above the kind of trash that lingered around in nightclubs.

The girl in skimpy clothing slowly walked over to Ian with narrowed eyes. He only saw her pretty shoulder as she put an arm around him and got closer, “Were you talking about me just now, kiddo?”

Ian frowned. He felt certain urges as he sniffed that enticing fragrance, but at the thought of the kind of person that would visit these types of places, he instantly felt repulsed, "Get lost!"

The girl burst into laughter, quickly followed by the rest of the bar. Everyone was guffawing, including security, leaving Ian confused. What was going on?

"Someone's scolding you, Miss Dana. The fact that there's someone with the courage to scold you is something to celebrate about. Let's drink to being called worms!"

"Cheers!" Everyone yelled.

The bar suddenly got all excited, leaving Ian even more confounded. These people were crazy. Why were they happy to be cursed at?

The girl called Dana was happy as well and kept slapping the bar, "This is fun! How many years has it been since someone had the nerve to scold me? Great, I'll pay everyone's tab today!"

"Thanks, Miss Dana!" Everyone raised their glasses in celebration.

"Enough of that!" Ian fumed, but it was at that moment that a suffocating force descended on the place. The counter cracked as his gadget blew up, the pressure leaving him unable to even breathe. He stared at Dana in disbelief. That forced... it had come from her?

Nobody else reacted; he was the only one who felt that surge of strength. He couldn't even begin to fathom the level of strength she possessed. Was she a Melder? A Limiteer? Or... an Explorer?

Dana drew even closer, "Know who I am, kiddo?"

It was only with blood dripping down the corner of his mouth that Ian realized he'd provoked someone powerful, "I- I don't."

Dana licked her lips as she burst into a seductive smile, "I'm the daughter of the captain of the Ordnance Mercenaries."

Ian was first confused at first, but his expression quickly changed. Everyone knew about the Ordnance Mercenaries amongst the higher echelons of the Great Yu Empire. It wasn't impressive at first glance, but the vice-captain of the group was Shalosh, the captain of the Eighth Imperial Squadron.

He was in trouble.

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A lot happened that night, but a lot could only happen at night. Zenyu Star's night life was quite luxurious. Those with money and power, the strong, those seeking thrills, criminals and so on... Numerous people went out and participated in the capital's glamorous nightlife. However, it was amidst this glamor that there was a darkness never to be illuminated—that of the Zishan Residence.

The Residence was extremely vast and second only to the royal palace in height, casting a shadow of eternal darkness over the Zenyu Star. This was how things had been for the past few centuries, but that darkness suddenly... lit up.

The dark residence seemed to burst into daytime as Lu Yin stepped in, drawing the attention of everyone nearby. All attention was diverted from the plane contest in the hills as everyone glanced over, with the sole exception of Wukai Mathers. All he wanted to do was win this competition and get Sicar to plead on his father's behalf, and not even a fire in the royal palace would distract him from that goal. On the other hand, Raas cursed. Distracted by the residence, Wukai had been gone before he knew it. He'd lost the round.

Within the Huo Family, Huo Xiaoling was right about to take little Xiaoxiao out when she saw the Zishan Residence light up. She was shocked as the image of a man appeared in her mind, as well as a dagger that had been placed at her throat. Lu Yin...

The bar had been shrouded in the Zishan shadow, so the residence lighting up drew everyone's attention. Most of the patrons headed out and gazed up at the lofty building that wasn't far away.

"Isn't that the Zishan Residence? It actually lit up. Does that mean someone from the Zishan Family came back?"

"I heard it's true. There's a young man whom His Imperial Majesty granted the title of King Zishan."

Ian stared on frozen, Lu Yin's image appearing in his mind. That man had been able to rob him so easily, leaving him ridiculed by everyone in his academy. He'd been mocked as the weakest leader in the school's existence, all because of that bastard! If it weren't for him, he wouldn't be in such a difficult position as to come to a bar to get drunk. If it weren't for him, he wouldn't have offended the Ordnance Mercenaries. It was all that despicable bastard!

"So how shall we deal with you scolding me, kiddo?" Dana ignored the residence and focused her attention on Ian, who hung his head silently. She snickered, "You're entering the Ordnance Mercenaries from today, and you'll be my personal servant. You'll cook and clean for me to make up for this."

Ian opened his mouth with the intention to reject her, but in the face of danger, he could do nothing but agree. It wasn't like he could go back to school anyway. There was nothing left for him in that place than ridicule.

Within the royal palace, The Undying Yushan glanced at the distant Zishan Residence with longing in his eyes, "If you were still alive, Brother, I'd charge into the Inniverse with you once more, and take my empire with me."

The Zishan Residence's re-opening resulted in happiness, sorrow, longing and anger. None of these had nothing to do with Lu Yin for now, and he focused on his gadget. A stranger was contacting him.

## **Chapter 80: Silver's Gift**

A familiar figure appeared on Lu Yin's screen when he answered the unknown call, "Hey, friend. Hope you're doing well."

"How did you get my number?" he was shocked. He never could have guessed that Silver would contact him, but fortunately he'd given Bronsen a residence in the outer courtyards of the residence just to keep any secrets in check.

Silver smiled, "I can find out anything I wish to know."

“What do you want from me?” Lu Yin asked indifferently.

Silver laughed, “I haven’t seen you in quite some time, I missed you. Also, I wanted to give you a gift.”

“Gift?” Lu Yin asked, unconvinced.

Silver sent over some location coordinates to his gadget, “There are a few corpse kings hidden in these areas.”

Hearing this, his gaze sharpened, “So you really are involved with the Neohuman Alliance. I guess you were also the one behind Barudar? You almost killed Zhang Dingtian on Earth because he was about to shell the zombies, and then took them away with you.”

Silver cupped his own ear, “Quieter, someone might hear you! I don’t belong to the Neohuman Alliance, I just happened to find out about it. Don’t push the blame onto me.”

“And why would you tell me?” Lu Yin’s eyes twinkled.

“I already said I was helping you.”

“And I also told you that I wouldn’t reciprocate in the future.”

“Haha, how heartless of you. Even so, just take it as me being a good guy,” Silver laughed.

Lu Yin stared at the youth on the other side, “Destroying the Neohuman Alliance is an obligation of all mankind. I’ll take care of those corpse kings, but I’m on your trail too. Don’t try to escape; once I find out where you are, I’ll catch you and send you to the Thirteen Imperial Squadrons.”

Silver’s mouth twitched, “Oh? Then let’s see just how capable you really are. Goodbye!”

Lu Yin raised his head to look at the sky. The Neohuman Alliance was a behemoth of the Outerverse; what was Silver’s role among them? Why did he help out? Was it because of his status as King Zishan? If that were the case, this title was perhaps more useful than he gave it credit for. Home had allowed him to become the King Zishan, and the Neohuman Alliance had taken the initiative to approach him because of this. The Great Yu Empire was just one of the major forces in a single weave; what was so appealing about this title?

He sighed it off, not wanting to think about it anymore. He only wanted two things right now: first, to enter the Youth Council, and second, Astral-10. Everything related to his title could wait. Looking outside, he turned off the light in his room. It was now time to roll his die again, another gamble to look forward to.

After running some calculations, he knew that he had about 70 cubes of star crystals. This was an unprecedented wealth that could make for as many rolls, but he could only hold out for a maximum of four before the exhaustion kicked in and forced time off.

“Alright, here it goes,” he mumbled to himself, looking exactly like any other gambler. The die appeared within one palm, glowing brightly with hazy starlight. It was at this point that he tapped his head in annoyance; he’d forgotten that it could regenerate on its own even without star crystals. The time he’d taken to travel from Earth to the Capital Star was more than enough for the restoration, but it was too late for regrets.

Looking at the die, he stretched a hand out to set it off. It spun rapidly and slowly came to a stop, ending up with a two.

“Not bad,” he mumbled to himself as the vortex formed before him, taking several items out of his cosmic ring and throwing them in. This included a few spare cosmic rings as well, and most of the materials obtained after disassembly were unfamiliar to him. He threw everything in repeatedly until it came out without a change, and the only thing he recognized was imperial gold. He now had three small ingots in total; while not a large amount, the material was quite expensive. As for the rest, he just stowed it away on the assumption that it was quite valuable.

Five minutes passed in the blink of an eye, and Lu Yin had a varying yet small quantity of what he felt were good materials. He then took out a cube of star crystals to regenerate the die, and set it rolling once more. This time, it stopped on five, Gift Copy. He immediately felt an urge to rush out the door and copy someone’s innate gift, but he quickly quashed the thought. Just who would he be able to find in ten seconds? There wasn’t anyone to sponge off. There were bound to be many cultivators with innate gifts on the Capital Star, but he didn’t know any of them.

Lu Yin’s mouth twitched as he let the ten seconds pass by, at which point the twitching suddenly grew worse. Wait a minute, how had he forgotten Xu San? He was left speechless, unable to believe that he’d forgotten all about his own subordinate. Unfortunately, there was no point crying over spilt milk. He sighed to himself and fetched more star crystals, this time rolling a number which he hadn’t so far. It was six, which he quickly learned was Possession.

Before he could rejoice at this new roll, a terrifying suction emerged from within the die, extracting all of the star energy in his body in an instant. The star crystals from his cosmic ring were absorbed as well without even giving him a chance, transforming into star energy that disappeared into the die. A rift appeared in space right before him, but it disappeared in a second and everything returned to normal.

What just happened? Lu Yin gasped, staring at the die that was dark as night. He’d clearly rolled Possession, but nothing had happened! Why had his star energy disappeared? He suddenly had a realization and rushed to check his cosmic ring, being devastated to find out that his newfound wealth had now vanished as well. He cried out in agony, “No, this is blatant theft!”

Of the six sides of the die, only the roll of three was still unknown to him. The other four sides didn’t demand as many star crystals as Possession, which only opened a small slit somewhere with seventy cubes. And he didn’t even find out what it did!

He suddenly felt a bad sense of foreboding; was it always going to be like this when he drew Possession? Was the roll of six just an immediate extraction of all his star energy? That couldn’t be it, every roll had its own purpose. It had to be that this use was a little frightening, and something that he couldn’t support right now.

As he looked at his dark, glowless die, Lu Yin let out a sigh. The day had been ruined, he was out of star crystals and star energy, and all he could do was slowly wait to recover. What a bother! He lost any interest in continuing training for a day and immediately went to bed, only growing more resolved to complete his plans.

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Many people didn't sleep that night, all wildly speculating about the light from the Zishan Residence. When Lu Yin got up the next morning, he contacted Zhang Dingtian's trio and found that they were at Yu Academy. He only conversed casually; the road ahead was something they would have to travel themselves.

"Boss, someone wants to see you!" Xu San shouted from outside his room.

"Who is it?" Lu Yin walked out.

"Some high-ranking army officer, he says he's a commander-in-chief named Long Chu."

Lu Yin had Xu San guide the guest into the lounge, soon meeting a formidable-looking middle-aged man who grew excited the moment they crossed gazes. The man bowed courteously, "I am the commander-in-chief of the third ring, Long Chu, Your Majesty."

Lu Yin stepped forward and pulled the man up, "No need for formalities, Commander, please take a seat."

Filled with emotion, Long Chu continued, "Your Majesty, we have long awaited your return."

Lu Yin's eyes darted across to Xu San, signaling for him to leave. He then looked back, "What do you mean by that, Commander?"

Just before Long Chu could open his mouth, he subconsciously looked around his surroundings. Lu Yin laughed, "Bronsen isn't here."

Long Chu huffed and whispered, "I used to be a subordinate of His Majesty The Undying Zishan, and many of us served him. But ever since the disappearance of the Zishan Family, we were deployed to the third ring. I'd already given up all hope of seeing a successor in this lifetime; it was wonderful news to hear that his successor had showed up."

"The third ring?" Lu Yin asked in confusion.

Long Chu nodded and continued in a somewhat agonized tone, "Ever since the disappearance of the Zishan Family, the soldiers who served under them were deployed to the third ring. On the surface, we're the first line of defense for the Capital Star. In reality, it's just a place for youths of powerful families to frolic about. We veterans who served under His Majesty were thrown away like garbage. We're military men, we will not stand for such humiliation!"