

No. 1 Supreme Warrior chapter 2561 2565

Chapter 2561

Rudy nodded seriously, that was what he was worried about. "What do we do? Are we supposed to just keep on waiting here? I don't want to stay here for a moment longer, I just want to go back to Golden Pills."

Rudy was incredibly afraid. Back when Elder Simon did not allow them to head back, he felt troubled but was helpless about it. At that moment, Rudy did not think Phoenix Valley was such a good place, but it was not incredibly dangerous either.

Yet, Phoenix Valley had turned into a place filled with uncertainty in Rudy's mind. He did not know when he would get sucked into a whirlpool of danger and never be able to leave.

He was afraid that he would die without even knowing what happened to him. Rudy really wanted to leave that place. Even if he

would never get resources as good as he would there for the rest of his life, that was fine as well. He just wanted to stay alive instead of feeling terrified and worrisome every day.

"I'm so lucky. If I had been the one sent to the courtyard alone that day, I'd be the one who's missing!"

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Saying that made Rudy's tears threaten to fall. The fear in his heart had already completely consumed him. He felt absolutely miserable.

If Jackie was not next to him, Rudy would already be sobbing uncontrollably. Jackie frowned as he looked at Rudy meaningfully.

He said, "Our living arrangements were not a matter of luck. It was already arranged to be so.

"Grayson was arranged to stay alone in the other courtyard because he would disappear. He did not disappear because he was arranged to stay in the other courtyard."

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Jackie's words were like a splash of water on Rudy's face. Jackie was right, their living arrangements had been dealt with by Mr. Zayne.

The three of them did not pay much attention to it back then, but thinking back, Rudy understood that Mr. Zayne had specifically arranged for it to be so because Grayson would disappear.

For all they knew, Grayson might have gone missing right after bidding them farewell. Rudy shuddered upon that thought as if he had just been blown by a gust of cold wind.

“Jackie! What do we do? Will we...”

Jackie reached out and stopped Rudy’s words

as he interjected, “There shouldn’t be anything happening for the moment. Since he arranged for Grayson to stay alone, it means that he did not want anyone to notice. Other than the two of us, no one else has ever seen Grayson.”

This means that Phoenix Valley intends to completely conceal this incident. We’ve already shown ourselves to everyone. If we suddenly disappeared, it might attract attention, so we should still be safe.”

Rudy nodded, but he was still fearful as he said, “But... I think this won’t be settled so easily. It’s not like we’re safe just because he said we’re safe. It’s just like you’ve said, we’re only safe for the time being. We have to find a way to leave this place!”

Jackie glanced at Rudy and realized how desperate Rudy was. He was nowhere near as brave and secure as Jackie was.

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After what had happened earlier, Rudy knew that he could not stand out in the midst of so many masters. The place was dangerous to boot, so how could he be willing to stay on?

Jackie nodded, “The safest option may be to

leave this place, but we saw it for ourselves. Phoenix Valley is far away from other territories, and it’s surrounded by many mountains.

“There are guards everywhere. Even if we want to escape, we wouldn’t be able to. You are so weak as well. If you see a beast outside, wouldn’t you just die?”

Chapter 2562

Rudy started to thoroughly panic when he heard that. Jackie was right. It was not possible for him to escape or even just leave either.

“Are we supposed to just stay on and be worried and scared every day?” Rudy’s tears started to fall from his eyes as he finished his words.

He was truly afraid. He felt like he was right next to the gaping maw of a wild beast. If he was not careful, he would fall right in.

Jackie frowned as he reached out and patted Rudy on the shoulder, "I know you're afraid, but it's pointless to be scared right now. In the short term, we should both be fine.

"Even if you want to leave, we have to look for the right moment. Without the right chance, we shouldn't do anything."

Rudy nodded reluctantly. Jackie was afraid that Rudy would be too scared and end up acting rashly, so he immediately added, "If you do anything and those people notice, they might think we're trying to leave this place. That could cause them to make a move on us. You should know what I mean..."

Rudy nodded, "I understand!"

Even though Jackie did not spell things out for him directly, Rudy still knew how serious the problem was.

Since Mr. Zayne said everything he did without any reservations, it meant that Zayne was not afraid of anything Rudy could do at all. He probably even felt like Rudy being too afraid and wanting to run away would be in his scope of control.

That was because they would not be able to run at all. The moment anyone noticed that they had any intentions of running away, those intentions would probably be ripped out at their roots.

Rudy smiled bitterly as he said, "If I knew this would happen, I would never have asked to take part in the alliance's test. Then none of this nonsense would have happened to me."

Jackie sighed and said, "It's already too late to say that. What we need to do now is to keep to ourselves and do what we should. As for everything else, we would wait for the right opportunity to present itself before we do anything."

The moment he said that a knock was heard on the door. Lou's voice could be heard, "Jackie, the stuff is here. Can I come in?"

Jackie glanced at Rudy. Rudy nodded before standing up and leaving. The Green Sun Pill was not a big matter to Jackie. After two days, Jackie handed in the task and got three thousand and nine hundred spirit crystals.

On top of the five thousand he had won,

Jackie had managed to get eight thousand and nine hundred spirit crystals in just a few short days. It was quite an impressive sum for a sixth-grade alchemist.

However, that amount was nothing compared to Jackie's goal. That was why Jackie put his full focus on the task hall for the next half a month.

He would walk around the task hall every day to see if there were any suitable tasks. As long as Jackie liked the task, he would accept it without hesitation.

He was also frequently seen in the Hall of Wishes. He needed his body to catch up with his memories, so he needed constant training. Time seemed to pass by very quickly for Jackie.

Ever since the Elder Hall, Jackie had never seen Harold. Jackie had initially thought that Harold would not relent after being dealt such a huge impact, and would constantly harass Jackie.

Chapter 2563

Unexpectedly, Harold seemed to have completely disappeared. Harold no longer caused him any trouble, which saved Jackie a lot of frustration.

In half a month, Jackie had managed to earn fifty thousand spirit crystals. He was already able to condense three thousand pill runes. Jackie was ready to undergo the test to be a seventh-grade alchemist, but he did not do so.

Even though he really needed spirit crystals, he could not afford to drop his training. After all, he was a warrior first and foremost. He did not only need ninth-grade spirit crystals to enter Wild Gorge Pass, he also needed to possess certain skills.

Thankfully, Phoenix Valley does not only raise alchemists, they raised warriors as well. At noon, Jackie called Lou to the sect. The two of them sipped on tea as they spoke.

As they talked, Jackie tried asking how he could get to where the warriors were. When Lou heard that, he immediately knew what Jackie was planning on doing. Lou respectfully answered, "The warriors in Phoenix Pavilion are raised like any other clan. They are separated into outer, inner, and chosen disciples."

"However, there's a barrier between where we are and where they are. Even though we're both parts of Phoenix Valley, it's impossible to get there without a transfer array."

Jackie frowned strangely when he heard that. In order to stop the two sides from meeting, a barrier was set up. That aroused suspicion in Jackie.

Since they were both in the outer valley and a part of Phoenix Valley, Jackie did not think it would cause any trouble for the two of them to interact. After all, they were in different systems.

There were no conflicts of interest, so why would a barrier be needed? The two sides were completely separated and even needed a transfer array.

Jackie's expression had been obvious, so Lou immediately saw through what Jackie was thinking. He let out a small laugh before he said, "Jackie, you don't know this, but it's actually a big problem if you look at it closer even though it seems like alchemists and warriors do not have a conflict of interest. Warriors need the support of pills.

"If we don't separate the two, the warriors would constantly interact with the alchemists. Then, if they start to buy pills in private, Phoenix Valley would be in chaos.

"Those problems are why a barrier was erected to separate the two.

"If an alchemist wants to train in combat, they need to use the transfer array to head to where the warriors are. They need to report it as well to prevent any unnecessary deals."

With Lou's explanation, Jackie immediately understood the purpose of the barrier. Warriors need a large number of pills to help with their training. The reason alchemists were regarded so highly was because of how much warriors needed them.

If the two sides interacted too much, their relationships would be unclear, and there would be conflicts.

"Do you know if there's a place to train soul-focused martial arts here?" Jackie asked intently.

After all, Jackie's skills were something incredibly rare.

Lou widened his eyes as he looked at Jackie in admiration. Jackie's question meant that Jackie had to be a spirit technique user.

They were incredibly rare in the world, and all of them were incredibly talented.

Chapter 2564

He never expected that Jackie would be as talented in martial arts as he was in alchemy which made Lou feel envious.

He took a deep breath as he nodded before saying, "Yes, that place is called the Soul Grotto."

The Soul Grotto was at the eastern end of where the warriors were. After Jackie used the transfer array to arrive at the warriors' area, he asked a few questions before arriving at the Soul Grotto.

Jackie had thought that the place would still be a grand hall despite being named the Soul Grotto, but he was proven wrong the moment he arrived. It really was a grotto.

To put it in another way, it was more like a broken-down cave. There were guards in front of the Soul Grotto as well. Jackie had already asked about all the rules for entering the day before, so he did not panic when he arrived.

After he showed his identification badge to the guards, the guard waved him in. Only, the guard had a curious look on his face when he saw that Jackie was an alchemist. It was probably the first time he had ever seen an alchemist entering Soul Grotto.

The interior of the grotto was quite clean. There was enough space for eighty to ninety people. Moving forward was a cliff that hung in the cave. The place looked like a cliff wrapped within the cave.

The cliff dropped into an incredibly dark hole. There were countless orbs of yellowish light floating in the air. They were like stars in the night sky. The lights were basically soul crystals.

The soul crystals emitted a yellow glow as they constantly moved around in the air. They danced around like comets in the sky.

Everyone who came into the Soul Grotto came for the soul crystals. The soul crystals were very useful to soul attribute warriors.

Absorbing those crystals could raise the power of their souls and even improve their understanding of various techniques. Jackie had gone there precisely for those crystals.

Those crystals were constantly dancing around in the empty darkness. Their shapes were uneven and so were their speeds. Getting them would require one to stand at the end of the cliff and utilize various soul techniques to break the outer shell.

Only by breaking the outer shell would the spirit crystals be obtained. That was a test for everyone. Furthermore, the Soul Grotto was not somewhere anyone could enter.

Each person was only allowed in once a month. If they missed the chance, they could only wait until the next opportunity arises. That was why everyone who entered the Soul Grotto would do their best to shatter the outer shells.

After obtaining the soul crystal, they would absorb it in the empty space in front. Breaking the shells was not something easy. Everyone would expend a lot of power just to break the shell of one soul crystal.

Jackie entered and saw that there were two queueing up in front of him. There were about twenty odd mats on the ground. Five people sat on them, and those five had inner disciple uniforms on.

They were all seated while absorbing the soul crystals. Some of them looked like they had expended all their power to break the soul crystals. Of the five there, there was one who stood out because he had a head full of white hair,

Even though the man had a head full of white hair, he did not look old.

It seemed like the white hair was just a special characteristic of his.

The white-haired man frowned and said, "Francis Lloyd, haven't you had enough? It's been an hour, and you haven't even broken a single outer shell. The ones waiting behind you are about to go crazy."

Chapter 2565

Francis turned around angrily as he stared at the white-haired man, "Can you shut up? Do you think I want to take so long? The outer shell is way too hard! What can I do?!"

The white-haired man snorted as he raised an eyebrow and replied, "Don't even try that with me. If you'd just picked a smaller one, wouldn't it be much easier? You're just greedy. You insisted on picking a big one. Obviously, it would be harder!"

Francis grunted coldly and ignored the white-haired man. Jackie raised an eyebrow, remembering the rules that Lou had said.

The size of the soul crystals was not even. The larger the soul crystal, the larger the outer shell. Just a slight increase in the size of the soul crystal would result in a much harder outer shell.

Jackie could see that Francis was working hard, trying to attack the Soul Crystal. In truth, the soul crystal was not even that big considering all the others. It could only be considered medium-sized. However, it seemed like a shell of that size was already incredibly difficult for Francis.

He had spent so long without even breaking the outer shell. However, it was not like his efforts had been a complete waste. The outer shell of that soul crystal was already beginning to crack.

As long as Francis worked a bit more at it, he would be able to destroy the shell in a short time and obtain the soul crystal.

The white-haired man shrugged, "Greed isn't enough to get you what you want. Just look at Buck Tooth behind you. He's so angry he's about to bite you. He's already been waiting for you for over an hour, can't you hurry up?!"

The man called Buck Tooth really did have

two incredibly large buck teeth. The man looked quite burly and was glaring impatiently at Francis with his arms crossed.

Jackie felt like Buck Tooth was about to lose his patience.

“Don’t make him shout at you! He’s right, you’re just too greedy! Can’t you find a smaller one? You insist on hitting a big one. Are you so confident that you can get that soul crystal?” Buck Tooth said coldly.

Francis froze. He could ignore the whitehaired man’s words, but Buck Tooth had waited for a whole hour behind him, so those words had been reasonable.

However, he could not stop his attacks. If he took back his soul energy, that soul crystal would start to move again. Then it would be incredibly hard to look for it again.

All he could do was answer as he attacked, “I’m so sorry, I have no other choice. It should not take much longer. Just look, there’s already a crack there. It should be mine soon!”

Buck Tooth replied unhappily, “ You just keep mumbling about. If you hadn’t made any progress, I would have already tossed you aside.

“If we weren’t both inner disciples, I wouldn’t have bothered to argue with you. I’d have just attacked. Stop talking and hurry up!”

Francis knew he was in the wrong, so he did not say anything. Jackie walked over and stood behind Buck Tooth. The sudden newcomer caused everyone to look over.

Jackie was wearing his alchemist attire. He stood out in the group of inner disciples like a sore thumb.

The white-haired man looked at Jackie curiously and asked, “You’re an alchemist?”