

Tang Sect 131

Chapter 131: The Tang Sect

Wang Dong rushed to speak first, "Let me go first."

Elder Mu suddenly said, "Why don't the both of you write your paths on my hand at the same time?" As he spoke, he smiled while extending both his hands.

Elder Mu's hands appeared extremely youthful, unlike his face. His palms were slender, and his skin was clear like jade. A sparkling radiance subtly flashed, but it was different from Wang Dong's glossy skin. There was a sense of simplicity to his palms.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong stared at each other. They acted with great chemistry, and came to Elder Mu's side.

Elder Mu smiled and said, "You can begin."

They lifted their hands and extended their index fingers at the same time. They wrote the paths that belonged to them on his palms. These were the paths that they would walk for their entire lives.

Elder Mu's smile widened. He clenched his palms into fists when they both stopped.

"The two of you have indeed found the paths that belong to you. Very good. I'm very comforted." As he spoke, he lifted his hands, and they intersected. His palms faced towards Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong.

There were two words on both his palms, and they shone with a dim golden color.

"Tang Sect."

"Tang Sect!"

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong exclaimed together. They were shocked as they looked at each other. They were momentarily stunned.

Was this chemistry? It couldn't be simply described using chemistry anymore. The paths they chose were exactly the same.

Elder Mu smiled and said, "Wang Dong, tell me first why you chose this path. What does it mean to you?"

Wang Dong replied, "I'm actually not very sure myself. Both my martial souls are assault-type. Without a doubt, my path should be assault-based. But during the process of deep meditation, the words 'Tang Sect' popped up for no reason. I also realized that my strength is closely related to the different capabilities of the Tang Sect. Besides being unskilled in secret weapons, the rest of the Tang Sect's methods are aligned with my skills. They include the Controlling Crane Capturing Dragon, Purple Demon Eyes, Mysterious Jade Hands, Ghost Shadow Perplexing Track, etc. Both the Radiant Butterfly Goddess and Clear Sky Hammer require offensive tactics. The most accurate soul master just unleashes his soul power, whereas a stronger soul master unleashes his soul power cleverly. I hope to become a soul master that combines my soul skills with the Tang Sect's techniques. This is the path that I want to take."

Elder Mu nodded his head and said, "Very good. Huo Yuhao, what about you?"

Huo Yuhao looked at Wang Dong and said, "My situation is more complex than Wang Dong's. But I think that the Tang Sect is more suitable for me."

"I have two martial souls. One is a control-type, and the other is an assault-type. While I can use both of them at the same time, their effects are unleashed on their own. It's extremely crucial for my future cultivation to organically combine both my martial souls. At the same time, I'm not just a soul master, but also a soul engineer. If I only cultivate my martial soul, I will only be a pure soul master. But I don't wish for it to be so. I'm unwilling to give up my soul tools. That's why I thought of the Tang Sect."

"I've learnt all of Tang Sect's Six Great Secret Techniques – the Purple Demon Eyes, Mysterious Jade Hands, Controlling Crane Capturing Dragon, Ghost Shadow Perplexing Track, Hidden Weapon Hundred Separation and Mysterious Heaven Technique. I'm more skilled in the Mysterious Heaven Technique and Purple Demon Eyes among these six techniques. I only have brief experience with the other four techniques."

"But when I thought of the Tang Sect, I found to my surprise that all of my capabilities can be related to the Tang Sect. My Spirit Eyes are greatly connected to the Purple Demon Eyes. I only managed to possess a spiritual-type ability like the Spiritual Shock because of the Purple Demon Eyes. My Spirit Eyes' attainments in the aspect of spiritual control can also help me to use many of the Tang Sect's secret techniques. This includes the Tang Sect's secret weapons. And that's not even mentioning the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion. An ice-type soul skill combined effectively with the Tang Sect's capturing techniques and footwork. Just like Wang Dong said, it'll increase my abilities greatly."

"When I first studied secret weapons in the Tang Sect, eldest senior told me that the only way to rebuild the glory of the sect was by combining soul tools and secret weapons. I'm more and more inclined to believe that this will work. That's why my future path will combine the Tang Sect's secret techniques with my own capabilities. This is my choice."

Elder Mu nodded repeatedly as he heard Huo Yuhao's words. "Very good. The two of you have made good choices. The Tang Sect's secret techniques once prospered under Tang San, the founder of the Tang Sect. Tang San managed to save the world of soul masters using the Tang Sect's Six Great Secret Techniques and break through the bottleneck, achieving rapid progress. The collapse of the Tang Sect doesn't equate to the collapse of the Tang Sect's secret techniques. It's just that no one suitable has been able to master the Tang Sect's secret techniques. Both of you have extraordinary talents. I hope that you can continue to walk this path and complete it. You shall inherit the Tang Sect's ancestors' immense strength and write your own legends."

Elder Mu turned his wrists around, and something else appeared in both his palms.

In front of Huo Yuhao was the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's left arm bone that he had once seen at the top-ranked auction in the Starlight Auction house. A thick, icy fog caused the temperature in the hall to dip quickly.

There was a right arm bone in Elder Mu's other hand. This right arm bone presented itself in bright gold, and the radiance that came from it carried an intense aura of sharpness.

“Yuhao, I’ve analyzed this left arm bone before. It’s a soul bone that came from at least a ten thousand year soul beast. Although soul bone absorption won’t be as tremendous as a soul ring’s reaction, the Ultimate Ice aura contained within this soul bone is extremely domineering. I believe the saying about the Ice Explosion Technique is real. Are you confident?”

Huo Yuhao’s eyes lit up, and he nodded his head with strength.

Elder Mu smiled and passed him the Ice Jade Scorpion Left Arm Bone. He said, “Then you can start fusing it here.”

“Wang Dong, this right arm bone is called the Broken Devil of Light. I obtained it when I was young, but it’s a pity that I already had six soul bones then. Otherwise, you’d have had no fate with it. This Broken Devil of Light came from an extremely rare element-type soul beast. This strong presence can only be nurtured in a place where the light element is in abundance. I’m still not sure what soul skill the Broken Devil of Light carries, and I can only tell when it combines with you. But I’m certain that it carries a powerful offensive soul skill. It also has a strong restraining effect on all dark and evil powers. I believe evil soul masters will be afraid when they see it.”

“When soul bones are being paired, it’s best to pair the corresponding soul bone to an existing soul bone that you possess. Since you already have the Golden Light Left Arm Bone, the addition of this Broken Devil of Light will greatly enhance all your soul skills. You can also start fusing it here. I shall protect the both of you.”

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong were both surprised, especially Huo Yuhao. After Elder Mu exposed his Ice Jade Empress Scorpion, he was still anxious, although he had completed his deep meditation. But Elder Mu had passed the Ice Jade Scorpion Left Arm Bone to him now, which made him more assured and enabled him to understand that Elder Mu’s words were true; that the academy wasn’t bothered about the origin of his second martial soul.

Both of them received their respective soul bones and sat cross-legged on the ground to either side of Elder Mu.

Wang Dong gently caressed the Broken Devil of Light’s smooth surface. At the same time, his left arm also lit up with an intense, golden flame. The golden light seeped into the Broken Devil of Light slowly, and caused the right arm bone to light up with the same light too. An intense aura of light caused Wang Dong’s body to become transparent again. The Radiant Butterfly Goddess’ wings flapped open behind his back before stretching forward to cover his entire body. Bright, golden halos started to spread from his body.

This soul bone that Elder Mu gave him was the academy’s treasure, and not a reward from the tournament. Since the soul bone was personally picked out by Elder Mu, it was guaranteed to be compatible.

Amidst the undulation of the light aura, the Broken Devil of Light started to fuse with Wang Dong’s right arm. Wang Dong only felt a patch of warmth on his right arm, and didn’t experience any pain.

It was easy for Wang Dong to absorb this Broken Devil of Light with the golden light in front of him because the Radiant Butterfly Goddess was once baptized by the golden tree’s aura of light. But he was still inferior to Huo Yuhao in terms of compatibility.

Huo Yuhao felt an indescribable sense of closeness that came from the Ice Jade Scorpion Left Arm Bone when it entered his hand.

If this soul bone had appeared in front of other soul masters, they would immediately be affected by the ultimate chill released by the soul bone. Even Elder Mu had to use his own power of light to suppress it.

But Huo Yuhao only felt a sense of closeness. To him, there was no sense of chill to speak of.

An azure light lit up Huo Yuhao's chest and back. The Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's skeleton seemed to have been awakened by this left arm bone. The aura of a ruler that belonged to the Ice Jade Scorpions was gradually exuded, while the left arm bone in Huo Yuhao's hands seemed to come alive. It trembled slightly, then leapt up like a child that had seen his mother. It turned into a streak of white light before penetrating Huo Yuhao's left arm.

Huo Yuhao felt the chill this time. The ice-cold flow of gas rose rapidly along his left arm and penetrated his shoulder. Then, it reached his chest and clavicle. An intense, azure light also shone from his body.

The power sealed within the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's skeleton was stimulated and rapidly connected with the Ice Jade Scorpion Left Arm Bone. Huo Yuhao's left arm was also dyed an azure green. An intense undulation of soul power surged maniacally. The pain that he felt when he had once fused the skeleton appeared again.

Ultimate ice and heat alternated with each other. Fortunately, it was only on his left arm this time.

"What, again?" Huo Yuhao laughed bitterly in heart. But he couldn't do anything except tolerate it at this point.

In fact, it was not that the Ice Empress wanted to train him. It was that the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's skeleton was modifying this Ice Jade Scorpion Left Arm Bone.

No matter how strong this Ice Jade Scorpion was, its cultivation was only around ten thousand years or so, whereas the Ice Empress had cultivated for four hundred thousand years!

The skeleton was the core of the body, and the spine was the most important of the six soul bones. The rest of the soul bones connected to it. If it were any other soul bone, the Ice Empress might not be bothered. But this Ice Jade Scorpion Left Arm Bone came from the same origin as her, and thus the modifications were very smooth. The key lay in the sense of familiarity!

The immense power sealed within the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's skeleton started to surge into the left arm bone. Huo Yuhao wasn't in any danger, but the pain he once felt came back...

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Shrek Academy. External Courtyard. Second grade, Class 1.

"Why is everyone silent? Have all of you become dumb?" Zhou Yi suddenly slammed the table and revealed an infuriated look.

The students under her kept quiet out of fear; no one dared to speak.

While Zhou Yi's teaching method was simple and crude, it was quite suitable if she wanted to intimidate these talented youths. In the past year or so, the students from Class 1 maintained strong camaraderie and achieved significant progress under her. The crucial thing was that they listened to her! No one dared to defy Zhou Yi, and all of them diligently completed the tasks that she gave them.

While Zhou Yi had expelled many in the first academic year, not one student had yet been expelled in the second academic year. She would at most reprimand them if they made mistakes, or even give them two kicks. They would be motivated to cultivate harder through this.

However, the current atmosphere in the classroom was very tense, and all the students lowered their heads.

Zhou Yi scanned everyone before she fixed her attention was on Zhou Sichen. "Zhou Sichen, stand up."

Zhou Sichen lamented in his heart and knew that he couldn't escape. If he had known this would happen, he wouldn't have become the class monitor after Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong left.

Zhou Yunchen bit the bullet, stood up and answered, "Teacher Zhou."

"Did you not eat?" Zhou Yi raged, "you don't seem to have any guts! You're a man. Puff up your chest."

"Yes!" Zhou Sichen acknowledged her words and puffed up his chest.

"Tell me," Zhou Yi said indifferently, "as the class monitor, what are you going to do with regards to the competition suggested by the Class 2?"

Zhou Sichen's lips moved a little, and he shouted in his heart, "Go for it!"

"I'll go." He replied loudly.

Zhou Yi's eyes lit up. "Good. This is how my students should be. So what if you lose? I don't expect you to win. But we must have the aura. As the class monitor, I will give you full authority to choose your team members. Choose another six to compete with you."

The second academic year was already halfway done, and the mid-term exams had ended. Class 1 had tipped Class 2 to become the most outstanding class in the level. This was achieved even without Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao.

Class 2 was unconvinced! That's why the teacher of Class 2, Mu Jin, proposed to Zhou Yi for both classes to have a friendly competition. Both classes would choose 7 members each to form a team. The losing team had to sweep the level where all the second grade classes were held for the rest of the academic year.

The punishment for losing was nothing. Sweeping and maintaining hygiene were nothing to these young soul masters. They were fighting for glory in this competition. The losing team would lose the glory of their class!

Class 3 or 4 wouldn't participate in this competition. If they weren't auxiliary-type soul masters, they possessed miscellaneous martial souls. They weren't in a position to challenge the assault-type, control-type, defense-type and agility-type soul masters in the first and second classes.

Zhou Yi and Mu Jin were rivals in love in the past. Zhou Yi also had a hot temper. After being provoked by Mu Jin, she accepted the challenge impulsively. But she immediately regretted agreeing to the challenge. She would naturally be unafraid if Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao were in the academy. Since Class 2 had Dai Huabin, Xie Huanyue, Zhu Lu and the others, Class 1 would have an absolute advantage only if 7 members were selected to compete. But she had lost three of her most outstanding students, negating her advantage in this competition. It was rumored that Dai Huabin's soul power had reached Rank 39 after a period of tireless cultivation. He might become Shrek Academy's youngest soul ancestor ever.

Dai Huabin was very strong himself. No one from Class 1 could win against him in a one-on-one situation. In addition, he and Zhu Lu possessed the Netherworld White Tiger. In a 7 v 7 team battle, it would take a miracle for Class 1 to win.

But Zhou Yi couldn't take back her words. With Zhou Yi's temper, she couldn't back off even if she regretted her decision! That's why she could only try to relieve the pressure. She figured that losing the competition wasn't the end of the world, and it was enough if her students managed to unleash their rightful abilities. She would keep an eye on the competition and prevent her students from getting hurt.

Zhou Yi heard from Fan Yu that Huo Yuhao and the other two were back, but they were taken to Sea God's Island. Fan Yu was also unclear why they hadn't returned to class. He only told Zhou Yi that it was a good thing for the three of them.

Zhou Yi had asked about them several times over the past few days. While Fan Yu's status wasn't low in the Soul Tool Department, he still didn't have the right to inquire about news from the Sea God's Pavilion. The competition was coming soon, and she couldn't hesitate any further. That's why she had to start picking her members.

Zhou Sichen revealed a cheeky look on his face after he heard Zhou Yi's words. He scanned the class, and there was a myriad of expressions from the other students. Some dodged his gaze, while some begged him to spare them. They were not afraid of competing, but who was willing to throw their own face knowing that they were bound to lose?

Zhou Sichen lifted his hand and tapped on Cao Jinxuan beside him. He said with an awe-inspiring look on his face, "Brother, we might not have been born on the same day or at the same time. But we hope to die on the same day and time. Follow me into battle."

Cao Jinxuan's lips trembled a little as he lifted his head to glare at Zhou Sichen. He seemed to subvocalize something to him. Zhou Sichen could only subtly make out that Cao Jinxuan was cursing his father. He tried his best to withhold his laughter before looking at the rest.

Zhou Yi seemed to relinquish her authority and allowed Zhou Sichen to choose as he pleased. She also approved of Zhou Sichen in her heart, as he was quite capable. He made a conscious decision to choose Cao Jinxuan. Cao Jinxuan was his best friend, while this competition didn't bode well. By choosing Cao Jinxuan first, what could the others say if they were chosen next?

"Lan Susu, Lan Luoluo. The two of you shall come along too. The two of you shall complement Little Cao, who will be the main controller."

Lan Susu and Lan Luoluo nodded their heads lightly. They were well-liked in class, and they were also very good-tempered, which made them close to the rest. Although everyone was still young, there were many male students who had already developed a liking towards them. Once they were picked up, there were immediately a few who volunteered themselves to be their chaperone.

Zhou Sichen very quickly picked out the strongest three. They were all assault-type soul masters. Thus, their team of 7 was formed.

There were 4 assault-type and 3 control-type soul masters. This was a rather good combination of assault-type and control-type soul masters.

Zhou Yi nodded and said, "Alright, the 7 of you shall practice in the afternoon. Tomorrow's competition shall depend on the 7 of you. There's no punishment for losing, but the reward for winning is being relieved of your cleaning duties in the class. Class has ended. Everyone is free to do what you want. The 7 of you, follow me."

After she finished speaking, Zhou Yi turned around. While she wasn't confident in tomorrow's competition, she didn't want to give up either. She was making her last-minute preparations and giving tips on how her students should work with one another. Zhou Sichen, Cao Jinxuan, Lan Susu and Lan Luoluo were all the academy's core disciples even though their overall strength was inferior to their opponents'. They were not that bad themselves either! They were all close to Rank 30.

Class 2 was also choosing their team, although the atmosphere was different from Class 1. They managed to pick their choices much more easily.

Mu Jin stood behind the podium and chose her team members directly, "Dai Huabin, Zhu Lu, Xie Huanyue, Wu Feng, Huang Chutian, Cui Yajie and Long Xiangyue. The 7 of you shall compete tomorrow. I won't say too many motivational words. If all of you don't want to continue living in Class 1's shadow, then give it your all. I want to see if Zhou Yi still dares to be complacent in front of me."

Dai Huabin sat quietly in the last row. He appeared much steadier now, and had lost some of the arrogance that he had had in the past. A greater sense of gloominess was revealed in his eyes as he blinked. He also seemed to be less magnanimous compared to his elder brother, Dai Yueheng.

But one couldn't deny his talent in cultivation. He was even better than his seniors. His Rank 39 soul power wasn't a joke; that was his true cultivation. Although it wasn't easy to rise from Rank 39 to Rank 40, Dai Huabin was determined to do so before he entered the third year. He wanted to obtain his fourth soul ring.

Dai Huabin was deeply convinced that his superiority in cultivation to Huo Yuhao meant that Huo Yuhao couldn't beat him even if he possessed twin martial souls or was extremely gifted.

Dai Huabin believed that he was never inferior to Huo Yuhao before. It was more of a coincidence. If it were a pure one-on-one battle, he believed that Huo Yuhao wouldn't be his match.

Dai Huabin was filled with jealousy and hate as he thought of how Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao took part in the Continental Advanced Soul Master Academy Soul Dueling Tournament even though they weren't as powerful as him. It was just that they had left for so long, but hadn't returned. Did they

perish in the tournament? After he humiliated Class 1 tomorrow, it would be time for him to make a trip and inquire about the tournament results.

He had been keeping a low profile ever since it was known that he had instructed someone to attack Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong. He cultivated tirelessly, and rarely made any contact with the outside world. On the other hand, Dai Yueheng was instructed not to reveal any information about the tournament after he returned to the inner courtyard, and went into retreat in the inner courtyard due to pressure from his upcoming graduation. That's why no one from the outer courtyard knew anything about the academy in the tournament. The academy only announced that they had returned as champions, but didn't reveal any of the details of the process. There was nothing extraordinary about Shrek becoming champions in many of the students' eyes.

In reality, it was not only Dai Huabin from Class 2 that resented Class 1. Zhu Lu, Xie Huanyue, Wu Feng and Huang Chutian – who used to be the Lan sisters' partner, but was also chased out like Wu Feng – all possessed hatred towards Class 1. Class 1 only had assault-type and control-type soul masters, but they had defensive-type and agility-type soul masters in addition to those two. Although they lacked any auxiliary-type soul masters, they still formed a rather powerful team. The importance of an auxiliary-type soul master had also dwindled due to the development of soul tools. There were fewer and fewer auxiliary-type soul masters in the Continental Advanced Soul Master Academy Soul Dueling Tournament.

Early morning.

The weather was a little hazy, but the air was very fresh. It carried a slight moisture from Sea God's Lake. When inhaled, it left one feeling relaxed and refreshed.

Many students were already gathered at the Soul Dueling Area within Shrek Academy's outer courtyard in the early morning. They were all from the second grade of the outer courtyard, and it wasn't just the students from the first and second classes. Students from the third and fourth classes were also gathered here. Their reason was very simple – they were here to observe and learn.

Zhou Yi gave off a very cold and rigid look when she wore a mask. It was as if she was warning everyone not to come close to her. Zhou Sichen and the others were already prepared beside her, but it was obvious that they were still a little anxious from the looks on their faces.

The students from Class 2 were a little late. Under Mu Jin's leadership, Dai Huabin and the rest were all feeling very competitive. Even the rest of the students behind them were all in high spirits, and looked very proud.

It wasn't a surprise that they were like that. The first class of every grade in the outer courtyard was always the strongest, and they were always superior to the other classes. But it was a little special for Class 2 in the second grade. Class 2's abilities were greatly increased because Dai Huabin, Huang Chutian, Wu Feng and the other core disciples that had been chased out of Zhou Yi's class. This also developed their competitive streak. Although their overall abilities were still incomparable, Class 2 still possessed an advantage in today's competition.

Many of Class 2's students reckoned that Class 1 wouldn't be able to match up to them even if Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao were present. That's because only 7 team members could be selected.

After all, Huo Yuhao and Xiao Xiao only had 2 soul rings. In Class 2, it was not only Dai Huabin who had managed to reach an astounding Rank 39 soul power. Xie Huanyue was slightly lousier at Rank 35, but was still commendable. The two of them were the top two in the second grade. Wu Feng and Huang Chutian had crossed the Rank 30 mark, whereas Zhu Lu and Cui Yajie were only slightly off from Rank 30 at Rank 29. Zhou Sichen and Cao Jinxuan managed to reach Rank 28, and were among the top few agility-type students. They were also chosen to compete this time. The depth of Class 2's strength was obvious.

On the contrary, the greatest strength of Class 1 was that the average cultivation of the entire class was above Rank 25. But none of them were above Rank 30 as of now. Zhou Sichen, Cao Jinxuan, Lan Susu and Lan Luoluo were all Rank 29, while the other 3 were Rank 28. There was a huge gap in both team's abilities. Wang Dong, Huo Yuhao and Xiao Xiao would make it better if they were here. After all, Wang Dong had crossed the Rank 30 mark, and Huo Yuhao and Xiao Xiao both had twin martial souls. They would have a fighting chance.

Class 1's morale was extremely low, which was a stark contrast from Class 2. All of them lacked energy, which revealed their despondence.

Zhou Yi's expression couldn't be seen, as she wore a mask. But she already regretted her decision. She was naturally aware of the disparity in the abilities of both classes. She regretted her impulsiveness for agreeing to the challenge after Mu Jin provoked her. She wasn't afraid of losing, but the impact on the students' fighting spirit if they lost. However, she wasn't fully devoid of confidence. She recalled Fan Yu mentioning that Xiao Xiao had ended her retreat. She had asked her to find her in the inner courtyard yesterday. But why were they not back?

"Teacher Zhou." Mu Jin brought her 7 team members in front of Zhou Yi at this point. She appeared calm, but the complacency in her eyes couldn't be concealed.

"Teacher Mu." Zhou Yi answered indifferently.

Mu Jin looked at the 7 behind Zhou Yi and revealed a slight smile on her face. "Eh, there should be a few students with decent cultivations in Teacher Zhou's class if I remember correctly. Where are they? Were they expelled because they made some mistakes?"

Zhou Yi revealed a cold look in her eyes. Mu Jin was asking an obvious question, "Teacher Mu, you don't have to worry about this. How my students are is my problem."

Mu Jin smiled and replied, "You can't put it this way. Teacher Zhou, the students in every class across all grades are the most brilliant talents that have been picked out. Their development is extremely crucial. Although I'm in charge of Class 2, it's also necessary for me to be concerned about the academy's future. However, our grade is a little special. In terms of overall abilities, Class 1 is strongest. But Class 2 is better in terms of high-end combat strength. There are already 4 students in my class that are Rank 30 and above. It seems like Teacher Zhou is still incomparable to me in terms of nurturing outstanding students."

Behind Zhou Yi, Zhou Sichen couldn't help but say, "Teacher Mu, Dai Huabin and the rest..."

"Shut up." Zhou Yi interrupted him.

Zhou Sichen was shocked, and didn't dare to speak anymore. His eyes were filled with indignance. Teacher Mu's skin was extremely thick. Out of the 4 students from Class 2 that were Rank 30 and above, 3 of them came from Class 1. The only exception was Xie Huanyue. It was just that these 3 were chased out by Zhou Yi.

Mu Jin laughed uncontrollably. "Teacher Zhou, your teaching attitude is undesirable. How can you stop your student from speaking? This would not happen in my class. We have to preach democracy. If your students cannot adapt to your teaching style, they can find me in Class 2. The doors to Class 2 are always open."

Zhou Yi turned more and more dismal under the mask, and she said coldly, "Teacher Mu, you're full of nonsense. As Shrek Academy's teacher, aren't you aware that soul power rank doesn't represent everything?"

Mu Jin straightened her look, "Good, I was waiting for you to say that. We shall meet in the Soul Dueling Area. I want to see how your students can prove to me that soul power rank doesn't represent everything."

"They will prove it to you. We'll prove this point to you, Teacher Mu." A crisp voice rang out at this moment. The students behind Zhou Yi stood aside and created a path. Three people walked towards them with big steps.

Zhou Yi's fury that was about to erupt instantly turned into a bellyful of surprise when she saw the 3 of them. She couldn't help but scream, "You three rascals still know when to return!"

Three students wearing second grade uniforms quickly walked over as they were surrounded by excited Class 1 students. They were led by Huo Yuhao, while Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao followed behind.

Xiao Xiao had only undergone her retreat for slightly more than 30 days, but Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong had been secluded for more than 60 days. That's why their abilities had increased so significantly.

Xiao Xiao hadn't left after she finished her retreat. She had remained on Sea God's Island to absorb her soul bone. She was supposed to return to the outer courtyard after she finished absorbing the power of the soul bone, but she was retained by Elder Mu. He invited the strongest auxiliary-type soul master in the Sea God's Pavilion to guide her personally in her cultivation. Since she had chosen to be an auxiliary-type soul master, she had to learn vastly different things from what she did before.

There was another reason why Elder Mu kept her in the inner courtyard. That was because both her and Huo Yuhao's cultivation had reached a bottleneck. After Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong ended their retreat, Elder Mu was going to instruct someone to bring them to hunt suitable soul beasts to enhance their soul rings.

After Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong ended their retreat, they both absorbed their respective soul bones before reuniting with Xiao Xiao outside of the Sea God's Pavilion. Elder Mu gave them a few days to rest and allowed them to readjust themselves. They went to obtain their third soul rings after that. It was also at this point that Fan Yu reached the inner courtyard and found Xiao Xiao.

Fan Yu didn't tell Zhou Yi that Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong had ended their retreat, as he wanted to give her a surprise. At this point, Zhou Yi's best students had finally returned.

Chapter 132.1: Class Stand-off

“Teacher Zhou.” Huo Yuhao arrived before Zhou Yi and bowed to her respectfully.

It had been more than three months since they had left the academy. Zhou Yi looked at Huo Yuhao and the two others. The suffering that they had endured over the past three months had clearly made them calmer, and it even felt like they had grown taller. The determined look in their eyes astonished Zhou Yi even more – that was an expression of unwavering faith and unshakable belief! She had only seen this kind of look from inner courtyard disciples before.

Her amazement was amplified because they were familiar. Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao seemed to have transformed in Zhou Yi’s eyes. They had shed their youth and inexperience, and they had truly become restrained and mature. Even though they were only children who were not even thirteen years of age, Zhou Yi could see the embryonic shadows of top-ranked soul masters in them.

“Glad to see everyone back.” Zhou Yi realized that her voice was a little shaky when she said these words. Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong, and Xiao Xiao had been the most outstanding students she had ever mentored since she became a teacher in Shrek’s outer courtyard. Zhou Yi placed a lot of hope and faith on the three of them – but greater hope meant greater disappointment. Zhou Yi was far too worried during the three months that they weren’t around, but her position inside the academy was not high enough, and she couldn’t possibly know too many secrets.

She only heard about their bewildering performance from Fan Yu after the Continental Advanced Soul Master Academy Soul Dueling Tournament’s conclusion. She was filled with pride – she was one who had taught them, and they were her students! She longed for their return, and even the thought that the academy could take them into the inner courtyard crossed her mind.

The three of them had finally returned. When Fan Yu told Zhou Yi that Elder Xuan had decided to let the three of them continue learning in the outer courtyard, Zhou Yi was so excited that she didn’t sleep for the whole night. However, their subsequent closed-door cultivation would take nearly two months. The relationship between Zhou Yi and the three of them wasn’t just a normal teacher-student relationship anymore; there was a special emotional attachment involved. She felt as if she were a mother watching her children grow up.

Zhou Yi was exhilarated, but Mu Jin’s expression was a little dark. The initially proud look in her eyes had clearly changed. She could tell that Huo Yuhao and the two others’ personalities and demeanors were quite different from before, and her confidence in absolute victory immediately took a hit.

Dai Huabin stepped forward and whispered in her ear, “We will definitely emerge victorious, Teacher Mu. We will win even if we have to sacrifice everything.”

Mu Jin’s eyes sparkled as she glanced at him, and Dai Huabin nodded his head forcefully. Mu Jin could see roaring flames in his eyes – how incredible was that fighting spirit?

Dai Huabin had never accepted Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong. Their appearance completely unleashed every ounce of his fighting spirit.

Mu Jin grunted coldly and said, “Honesty is the best policy, Teacher Zhou. It seems like you are preparing a trump card especially for me. It is truly unexpected that Teacher Zhou is starting to employ

battle tactics.” Huo Yuhao and the two others had been back for quite a while from her perspective, but Zhou Yi had hidden them away.

What was Zhou Yi’s temperament? She wouldn’t explain anything to Mu Jin as she answered plainly, “Didn’t you just say that we would meet in the Soul Dueling Area? I believe my students will prove to you that soul power rank isn’t everything.”

“Hmph.” Mu Jin grunted indignantly before she took Dai Huabin and the six others, as well as the rest of Class 2’s students, directly towards the Soul Dueling Area,

“You’re finally back, big brother Huo.” Zhou Sichen pounced on Huo Yuhao and immediately gave him a bear hug. He had been the interim class monitor, and he had felt the pressure from this contest most acutely. Huo Yuhao’s return made him feel like the onset of spring, and both his mental and psychological pressure immediately vanished into thin air.

The other Class 1 students swiftly circled around and began to ask about everything. Morale was initially low, but it immediately skyrocketed. When everybody entered the academy as freshmen, everyone witnessed Huo Yuhao’s toils and utmost efforts in cultivation, and his subsequent improvements, with their own eyes. Huo Yuhao had never let them down ever since he became the class monitor. Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong, and Xiao Xiao’s return instantly gave them all a mainstay.

If one described a class as a constructed room, then Huo Yuhao and the other two were its toughest pillar. The three of them could carry the entire class on their backs.

Huo Yuhao and Zhou Sichen hugged and he chortled, “The academy only gave us a single task. It was delayed because of some things. Let’s go – we shall go in first, so we don’t keep Class 2’s students waiting.”

Zhou Sichen hammered his fist on Huo Yuhao’s shoulder and said, “Are you confident in taking them out, big brother Huo? You have no idea – Dai Huabin and the others have been stomping around as if their victory was assured when you weren’t around. I have been patient with them for far too long. You have to lead us and teach them a lesson.”

Cao Jinxuan never forgot to tease his buddy. “Some people are just so shameless. Someone was just anxious like a lady about to enter a marriage sedan, and now he’s become an eager pervert.”

“Will you die if you shut up?” Zhou Sichen shot him a glare.

Cao Jinxuan chuckled, “Yes.”

Huo Yuhao guffawed and said, “Confidence isn’t something that hangs from our mouths. We have to prove it with actual substance. Come, let’s proceed.” He waved one hand and followed closely behind Zhou Yi as he led Class 1’s students into the Soul Dueling Area, and everyone behind him walked in with grandiose majesty.

Class 3 and Class 4 were enjoying the show from one side before this. The person standing at Class 3’s forefront was their class monitor, Ning Tian, who possessed the Seven Treasures Glazed Pagoda martial soul.

A small girl with a dainty frame beside Ning Tian whispered, “Sister Tian’er, Huo Yuhao and the others actually returned on time. Who do you think will win?”

Ning Tian’s eyes had been following Huo Yuhao this whole time till his shadow disappeared from sight. “It’s hard to say. Huo Yuhao’s true strength is a little mysterious, and his spiritual-type soul skills are also very unique. However, Class 2 are still stronger in terms of battle prowess, unless Huo Yuhao and Xiao Xiao obtained their third rings. Huo Yuhao has become Class 1’s absolute core, and he can even be said to be their spiritual leader. Class 1’s morale is a lot different with him around, and the participants’ fighting strength will thus naturally be fully unleashed.”

The dainty girl giggled and said, “Spiritual leader? Just like you and Class 3? It’s a pity that fighting is not our forte. If not, how interesting would it be to face them in battle?”

Ning Tian’s eyes squinted a little and she replied, “Don’t worry, that day will come. Come, let’s go inside.” Class 3 and Class 4’s teachers were not around, as both classes weren’t directly involved in the contest. Ning Tian waved her hand and led both Class 3 and Class 4 inside. These two classes’ fighting strengths couldn’t be compared to Class 1 and Class 2, as the latter’s main curriculum was fighting. However, especially with an extraordinarily powerful class monitor like Ning Tian, Class 3 and Class 4’s cohesiveness was still quite impressive.

Over a hundred students from Class 4 quickly entered the Soul Dueling Area. Everybody stepped onto the spectator’s grandstand, other than the two participating parties.

Zhou Sichen and Cao Jinxuan both wanted to participate. If not, they would have immediately opened a gambling ring or something of the sort in the spectator’s grandstand, even though it was just for entertainment purposes, and wouldn’t be for money. They would unquestionably stake everything on Class 1 if they were betting. This had nothing to do with relative strength – it was about team honor and glory.

“Arrange our battle strategy, big brother Huo.” Zhou Sichen handed the mantle of class monitor back to Huo Yuhao without hesitation once the three of them returned, as if it were a burden. The seven participants representing Class 1 were Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong, Xiao Xiao, Zhou Sichen, Cao Jinxuan, Lan Susu, and her sister, Lan Luoluo.

Zhou Sichen, Cao Jinxuan, Lan Susu and her sister had fire in their eyes, while Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao shared the same expression.

Their performance during the Continental Advanced Soul Master Academy Soul Dueling Tournament was exemplary, but that stage was still too immense for Huo Yuhao and the others. That competition was far too challenging, and it wasn’t a competition that they should be participating in at their level. The truth was that luck had played a substantial part in their stellar performance and them bringing back the championship in the end.

If both Xiao Hongchen and his sister weren’t injured before the last round – and Xiao Hongchen was actually severely wounded – they wouldn’t have emerged victorious even if they had unleashed their two martial soul fusion skills.

It was different this time. They were back, and they had returned to Shrek Academy, and they were still Year 2 students. What they had to do now was fight against others of the same age group. They had

been through the Continental Advanced Soul Master Academy Soul Dueling Tournament. How could they feel even an inch of pressure now? Huo Yuhao had become the absolute dictator, and the three of them would have an absolute impact on the outcome of the battle. They were at the pinnacle of their age group, and their current circumstance weren't something that could be compared to the pressure they felt during the Continental Advanced Soul Master Academy Soul Dueling Tournament. This battle was exhilarating to them, if it could be described with one word.

"There's no need to arrange anything. Just follow my instincts during the contest," Huo Yuhao said with a smile on his face.

Zhou Sichen was a little taken aback. If these words came from someone else's mouth, they would have given others a condescending or arrogant feeling. However, Huo Yuhao spoke as if it was a matter of fact. Huo Yuhao himself didn't feel anything special after saying those words.

Lan Susu covered her mouth and giggled. "Your dominance is overflowing, class monitor."

Huo Yuhao chuckled and replied, "It's good to let it leak out a little."

Chapter 132.2: Class Stand-off

Zhou Yi stood by the side and watched the youthful and adolescent children. She had no intention of interrupting them, as she was acutely aware of what Huo Yuhao and the two others had done in the Continental Advanced Soul Master Academy Soul Dueling Tournament. The contest they were about to participate in was not a big deal to them at all. Mu Jin, heh heh.

"It's about time. Let's go." Wang Dong was overflowing with fighting spirit, and he bounced on the tips of his toes as he spoke.

The teachers from both classes led their respective participants into the Soul Dueling Area. The clamorous commotions on the spectator's grandstand instantly quieted down.

There was no doubt that this contest represented a battle at the highest level amongst all of Year 2's classes. With the return of Huo Yuhao and the others, both classes' standards didn't appear all that different. Everybody wanted to see which class had made faster progress after half a year of cultivation.

Nobody noticed several people slinking into a dark corner inside the spectator's grandstand – were they not the Martial Soul Department's Dean, Yan Shaozhe, and the teaching director, Du Weilun?

Du Weilun knew about everything that went on within the Martial Soul Department. If Du Weilun knew about everything, that naturally meant that Yan Shaozhe was aware as well.

The reason why Yan Shaozhe had placed so much emphasis on the outer courtyard's Class 2 was undoubtedly because of Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao. Dean Yan was here to witness the results of their closed-door cultivation.

Du Weilun whispered, "Dean, why don't we just watch the battle from the podium?"

Yan Shaozhe shook his head and replied, "Forget it. The children may be spooked if we come out officially. I don't want to affect Huo Yuhao and the others' daily training in the outer courtyard. I want to take them to the Great Star Dou Forest after this contest, and hopefully they will benefit from the expedition."

Du Weilun heaved a sigh and said, "I didn't see that coming!"

Yan Shaozhe smiled. Yes! He had never expected Huo Yuhao to grow at such dazzling speed over the course of a little more than a year. He hadn't thought much of Huo Yuhao before, but now even his own master held Huo Yuhao in high regard.

Both parties had arrived on stage at this point.

Mu Jin said, "Teacher Zhou, shall the two of us be the judges for this competition? We will rescue our own students if something unfortunate happens during the contest."

Zhou Yi nodded and answered, "Okay."

Mu Jin's eyes sparkled. "We are definitely going to win."

Zhou Yi said plainly, "I wonder if you will be personally present when we clean up the Year 2 teaching block."

"We shall see."

"Come."

These two competitive teachers ordered their students to retreat and distance themselves from each other.

Dai Huabin stood at the forefront of Class 2's seven participants. His eyes were flaring with hysterical belligerence as he stared at Huo Yuhao.

Huo Yuhao didn't match his gaze. He closed his eyes, as if he were contemplating something.

The Soul Dueling Area's arena was a lot bigger than the one in the Continental Advanced Soul Master Academy Soul Dueling Tournament. The stage was circular, and this enabled the competition to develop more smoothly.

The seven people from Class 2 had clearly been through teamwork drills that boosted their chemistry. Dai Huabin stood at the very front, while Wu Feng was on his left side and Huang Chutian stood on his right. Three assault-type Soul Elders stood shoulder-to-shoulder, and created a powerful and invisible form of pressure.

Zhu Lu, Cui Yajie, and Long Xiangyue stood behind them, and they were all agility-type soul masters. Xie Huanyue, who was a defense-type soul master, was positioned at the back to anchor the lineup.

The formation was a little peculiar – a 3-3-1 formation was a rare sight. However, one couldn't disregard their overall fighting strength.

Huo Yuhao and company walked back side by side as well. Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao stood beside Huo Yuhao, while the others calmly awaited Huo Yuhao's orders.

Both parties retreated to the Soul Dueling Area's borders.

Mu Jin and Zhou Yi raised their right hands at the same time. Their gazes met as they exclaimed in unison, "Begin!"

Seven people lunged forward from Class 2. Dai Huabin was at the vanguard, and he released his martial soul as he pounced forward. White fur mixed with black patterns covered his entire body, and a black “King” character appeared on his forehead, making him unnaturally ferocious – he suddenly became a lot more intimidating and overbearing. One couldn’t fail to mention that he was the White Tiger Duke’s son, and he was an outstanding student in terms of both talent, fighting spirit and determination. Huo Yuhao had defeated him many times, but each defeat made him even more determined and resolute, as if defeat consistently fueled and triggered his fighting spirit.

Two yellow soul rings and one purple soul ring sparkled as soul power surged and rippled across his body. It felt as if his soul power could transform three soul rings into four at any time.

The dragon scales on Wu Feng’s body were conspicuously more numerous. Two yellow soul rings and a purple soul ring glowed as fire seemed to pour directly from her eyes, while dense and fiery-red soul power circled around her body and burned vigorously. The hate she harbored towards Huo Yuhao was second only to Dai Huabin. Of course, this hatred only came from her unconvinced attitude and her unwillingness to submit, rather than Dai Huabin’s intense feeling of humiliation.

Huang Chutian’s soul power was black. The Herculean Ape martial soul made his body extremely strong. He wasn’t inferior to Dai Huabin in terms of size and volume, and three soul rings sparkled at the same time. Unlike the others, he shot a ferocious gaze towards Zhou Yi. Never in his life would he forget the time when Zhou Yi had chased him from the class, and it was because of this that he cultivated as much as he could inside Class 2, and finally broke through Rank 30. From his perspective, his opportunity for vengeance was here, and he wanted Zhou Yi to see that expelling him from her class back then had been a dreadful decision.

The seven participants from Class 1 released their respective martial souls as Huo Yuhao roared, “Go!”

Class 2’s students felt a chill run down their spines as they watched Huo Yuhao’s two white soul rings glow. Ten year soul rings represented weakness on other people, but were Huo Yuhao’s white soul rings really ten year soul rings?

Class 1 was originally formed up in one row, but their formation started to change in the blink of an eye. Huo Yuhao was a control-type soul master, but he led the entire pack with Wang Dong while the other five instantly experienced the wonders of Spiritual Detection Sharing.

Nobody needed Huo Yuhao to give out instructions – everybody’s positions were already in place.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong stood in front of everyone. Zhou Sichen, Cao Jinxuan and Xiao Xiao formed the second row, while Lan Susu and Lan Luoluo were at the back; it was a 2-3-2 formation.

Class 2’s overall strength was formidable, but they had an obvious weakness – they didn’t have a control-type soul master. Huo Yuhao’s party had four control-type soul masters, and that was excluding Xiao Xiao.

Mu Jin and Zhou Yi didn’t sit around idly. They released their respective martial souls and followed their students closely. Their students were extraordinary prodigies, and most of them were the outer courtyard’s core disciples. How could they answer to their superiors if something happened to these children? Mu Jin was a six-ringed Soul Emperor, just like Zhou Yi.

Both parties retreated at a normal pace, but their forward movement was as quick as lightning. Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong pushed forth side by side, while his left hand grabbed onto Wang Dong's right hand right before their opponents' watchful eyes. Thick and violent soul energy instantly rippled from their bodies.

Both sides were within fifty meters of each other at this point. Huo Yuhao swung his left hand, and Wang Dong's body flew into the air with the force of his toss. The Radiant Butterfly Goddess' wings closed inwards, and he immediately hugged Huo Yuhao.

Brilliant radiance exploded within a sphere of five meters in diameter with the two of them as the center. Their bodies released a unique glow, and it was a peculiar luster that phased between blue, purple and gold.

An enormous light appeared behind Wang Dong. It was a complete, elegant and impeccable Radiant Butterfly Goddess.

A large shadow of a vertical eye shimmered behind Huo Yuhao. The vertical eye's entire body was golden, but its pupils emanated a plain purple hue.

Two gigantic lights glimmered at the same time and lunged forward.

"Move away!" Dai Huabin howled without hesitation, and his forward movement immediately transformed into a flank.

This wasn't the first time such a peculiar transformation had occurred with Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong. They had relied on this transformation during the freshman's assessment back then to defeat Dai Huabin, Zhu Lu, and Cui Yajie with this single strike, and eventually became the ultimate freshman champions. It was natural that Dai Huabin reacted like he did when the two of them used the same technique once again.

However, just as he was feeling astonished, Dai Huabin felt that Huo Yuhao was insane. The competition had only just begun, and Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong had already unleashed their martial soul fusion skill. Furthermore, Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong's Golden Road fusion skill was formidable, but it was only one strike, and it only attacked in a straight line, and most of their soul power would be consumed afterwards. Who fought like that? Was he insane? Did he really think that they would maintain their original positions for him to hit us?

Dai Huabin's movement was swift, but Class 2's participants weren't slow either. Seven figures darted to the side almost at the same time, and everyone gave up their central positions. Everyone was afraid to be hit by that radiant Golden Road.

The lustrous three-colored golden light had appeared, but it only surged out for two meters before it dissipated in midair.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong returned to their original form. They weren't using a martial soul fusion skill at all, and both of them didn't even connect to each other to channel the Haodong power. They blitzed past half the entire arena within that tiny period of time, and his team's current position was where Dai Huabin and the others had quickly dispersed and before they leapt towards different spots.

It was a perfect Imitation. Huo Yuhao had become much more adept with Spirit Eyes' functions and applications as his spiritual power increased. He completely understood his soul skills' powers after they were boosted beyond their maximal year after his closed-door cultivation, and his Imitation's area of effect was increased from a diameter of three meters to five meters.

Chapter 132.3: Class Stand-off

When Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong unleashed the Golden Road, the initial radiance could cover an area up to 10 meters in diameter. But Dai Huabin and the others naturally wouldn't know the exact figure.

The best way to avoid the Golden Road was to leap to either side. This was what Dai Huabin and the others did.

Dai Huabin, Wu Feng, Zhu Lu and Xie Huanyue all leapt to the left, while Huang Chutian, Cui Yajie and Long Xiangyue leapt to the right. The 7 of them were separated now, and acted freely on their own. What formation was there to speak of now?

An intense blue halo was emitted from behind Class 1. Countless blue streaks turned into a huge net that stretched towards one side. The net covered Huang Chutian, Long Xiangyue and Cui Yajie. This was the Hairnet unleashed by Lan Susu and Lan Luoluo.

Class 1 managed to unleash their full strength under Huo Yuhao's dispatch. Cao Jinxuan's Time-Elapsing Clock rose up silently behind him. His second soul ring flashed with a yellow light. The light distorted and landed on Huang Chutian. It was the Time Lock.

Huang Chutian was very familiar with Lan Susu and Lan Luoluo. The Hairnet was this pair of sisters' first soul skill. Although it was very restrictive, it could still be overcome with enough force. But everything around him seemed to go still just as he was about to unleash his power. He stood there in a daze without moving too. Cao Jinxuan's Time Lock had locked time.

Cao Jinxuan was able to become a core disciple of the outer courtyard because of his magical Time-Elapsing Clock's special time-type soul skill. It couldn't be shaken off easily. Even though Huang Chutian's cultivation was above his, he was still paralyzed for two seconds in front of the Time Lock.

These two seconds were enough for the Hairnet to be put to use.

Long Xiangyue and Cui Yajie seemed to have become dazed, and the Hairnet descended on them. They were both agility-type soul masters, and didn't possess Huang Chutian's strength. They were helpless after they were covered by the Lan sisters' Hairnet. It was even too late for Huang Chutian after he was trapped. Countless needle-like strands of hair also quickly blocked their sensitive areas. It was the Lan sisters' second soul skill, Pierce. Huang Chutian might be very strong, but he was a strength-type soul master, and not a defense-type soul master. He didn't dare to use his body to test the close-range, all-around attack of the Pierce.

3 out of the 7 were already down, including a Soul Elder. It couldn't be much simpler than this.

Mu Jin was totally stunned. What was going on?

Huo Yuhao's actions didn't stop. He used Imitation to scam his opponents first before using the Spiritual Detection Sharing to help the Lan sisters' Hairnet to determine their precise location and enable Cao

Jinxuan to use the Time Lock to paralyze Huang Chutian. He unleashed his Spiritual Interference to affect Long Xiangyue and Cui Yajie. He did all this in one shot without stopping.

As he was doing all this, he burst towards Dai Huabin and the others along with Wang Dong, Xiao Xiao and Zhou Sichen.

Dai Huabin let out a tiger's roar. He twisted his head and burst towards Huo Yuhao. Zhu Lu chased after Dai Huabin hurriedly, whereas Xie Huanyue and Wu Feng stayed close to the both of them. Although 3 of them had lost their ability to fight, the remaining 4 of them were the core of the team's abilities. They were not totally helpless if they banded together. After all, this was just a competition, and their lives were not at stake. Class 1 had also used 3 members to control Huang Chutian and the other two. They believed that they still had a fighting chance.

Xiao Xiao's Ninephoenix Worshipping Flute sounded at this point. The four of them reduced their speed quickly. Following that, a huge cauldron appeared and divided into 3 parts instantly. It was the Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron.

Even Wang Dong couldn't use both his martial souls at the same time in the past. Only Huo Yuhao could control the appearance of both his martial souls using his Spirit Eyes' immense spiritual power. However, Xiao Xiao managed to do so now.

Perhaps her limelight was always taken by Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong. But she still possessed twin martial souls.

The three cauldrons were positioned in the worst possible positions for Dai Huabin and the other 3. They were completely separated from one another because of the 3 cauldrons, and the cauldrons were also accurately placed in the paths that they had to cross to reach one another.

They had to stop, as they were intercepted at high speed. In addition, Xiao Xiao had grasped the precise timing to make her move because of Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection Sharing.

Dai Huabin burst forward on his own, while his 3 teammates behind him stalled for a second and were stopped by the Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron.

It seemed as if he was purposely left on his own, and he wasn't even aware of it.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong advanced together. While Huo Yuhao used the Ghost Shadow Perplexing Track to advance towards Dai Huabin, Wang Dong had already disappeared behind him.

Dai Huabin might possess a strong fighting will, but he was still petrified when he had to face Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong. He roared and unleashed both his first and third soul skills – the White Tiger's Shield and White Tiger's Vajra Transformation. A sharp aura instantly.

Dai Yueheng and Dai Huabin possessed the same first 3 soul skills. But Huo Yuhao didn't feel any pressure against Dai Huabin now.

Dai Huabin's aura was even more acute than Dai Yueheng's, but it lacked the steadiness and reservation of Dai Yueheng's aura, which resembled a suppressed volcano.

Dai Huabin's second soul ring also lit up as he roared at a distance of 3 meters from Huo Yuhao. The White Tiger's Fierce Light Wave surged towards Huo Yuhao.

However, he couldn't conceal any of his actions with the Spiritual Detection Sharing around. Huo Yuhao slipped 3 feet laterally and avoided the White Tiger's Fierce Light Wave. He also inched closer to Dai Huabin.

Dai Huabin sensed an abrupt, sharp aura and subconsciously lifted his right arm quickly.

"Ding!"

A golden light flashed before disappearing. Dai Huabin felt his right arm turning numb, and his body shook until he stopped moving.

Wang Dong's Guillotine Wings?

An ominous feeling suddenly rose in his heart. He couldn't see Wang Dong's actions with Huo Yuhao's Imitation concealing him. How could he continue to fight? He was outnumbered, and Wang Dong was even a three-ringed Soul Elder. His will to win was crushed. He also discovered that Wang Dong's soul power was much greater than before. He had put himself at a disadvantage amidst his haste.

His thoughts ran quickly as the battle continued.

When the Guillotine Wings stopped Dai Huabin, Huo Yuhao also slapped both his hands towards Dai Huabin. His palms flashed with a diamond glow, as if he were wearing a pair of diamond gloves. A streak of ultimate, chilly air rose up.

Ice Empress' Pincer

Dai Huabin used his right arm to block Wang Dong's attack. He lifted his left arm and his claws opened wide. He didn't dodge as he stretched his left arm forward to claw at Huo Yuhao's chest.

His arm wasn't much longer than Huo Yuhao's arm, but it was different with the tiger's claw. If Huo Yuhao continued to attack him, his own chest would also be pierced by the tiger's claw.

Dai Huabin's choice was right. He reckoned that Huo Yuhao couldn't challenge him in terms of strength, even with Wang Dong's help. Huo Yuhao had no choice but to dodge this strike. There was no other way out for him. Once Huo Yuhao stepped back, Dai Huabin could also retreat rapidly and gather his teammates again before attacking once more. He had no more confidence in fighting Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong by himself.

However, Huo Yuhao didn't hide. He clasped his palms before his left hand slapped the outer area of Dai Huabin's left wrist. His right hand also slapped the inner area of Dai Huabin's right arm.

Dai Huabin was delighted. He thought to himself how Huo Yuhao couldn't blame anyone but himself for seeking death. He concentrated his soul power in his left arm. With the White Tiger's Shield and White Tiger's Vajra Transformation's enhancements, the strength of his strike couldn't be blocked easily, even by a four-ringed Soul Ancestor.

But his delight only lasted for an instant.

"Kacha, kacha." The crisp sound of bones being crushed was very obvious in the Soul Dueling Area. Dai Huabin's left arm was instantly distorted, and changed shape. His tiger claw was wrenched away before it could claw at Huo Yuhao's chest as his arm was snapped.

Dai Huabin was stunned at this instant. He didn't believe what had just happened in front of him. Furthermore, he didn't feel an intense pain. That's because an ultimate chill was injected into his arm as soon as it snapped, freezing his broken arm and nerves.

Huo Yuhao trampled on Dai Huabin's body to lift himself into the air. His right shoulder knocked heavily into Dai Huabin's chest. Dai Huabin was sent flying into the air as a bang was heard. A layer of frost also covered his body instantly.

All of this happened instantly.

Who would have expected that Dai Huabin, the strongest among the Year 2 and even Year 3 students, didn't even manage to last 3 seconds against Wang Dong and Huo Yuhao.

At this point, Zhu Lu, Wu Feng and Xie Huanyue all burst out from the trap laid by the Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron.

Zhu Lu rushed towards Dai Huabin in shock. Wu Feng rushed towards Huo Yuhao, inspired by her hatred. Xie Huanyue hesitated for a moment instead. But the three of them were stopped by the Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron, which blocked their paths.

Class 2 appeared very disorganized. They collapsed under Class 1's attack.

Wu Feng's hatred towards Huo Yuhao was not any less than Dai Huabin's. Her confidence was at an all-time high after she obtained her third soul ring. A sharp dragon's roar sounded from her mouth, and she leaped forward. She appeared in front of Huo Yuhao in the blink of an eye.

Chapter 133: A Powerful Enemy Suddenly Descends

Scorching dragon flames were unleashed by her first soul ring ability Dragonfire. Dragonfury was also unleashed at the same time. This caused Wu Feng to look like a ferociously burning piece of coal.

Huo Yuhao was expressionless as he went to face Wu Feng's charge head on. His right hand slapped forward quickly; it was still the Ice Empress' Pincer.

The seemingly simple palm strike of his developed countless changes. While Wu Feng was impulsive, she wasn't weak. She was just like a weaker version of Ma Xiaotao. Her intelligence wasn't low even though she seemed very reckless. However, to her horror, she found out that she couldn't dodge Huo Yuhao's palm strike no matter how many transformations she underwent. She clenched her fists and punched them out towards Huo Yuhao's right palm.

Something weird happened at this moment. Huo Yuhao's right palm suddenly disappeared, and Wu Feng's fists hit nothing but air. After she expended all her strength, Huo Yuhao's right palm seemed to re-appear illusively and strike her fists.

"Pssh—"

The sound that rang out suddenly seemed as if burning coal had been thrown into a basin of ice water. Steam rose up, while the red light on Wu Feng's body dissipated at a shocking speed. She couldn't use her third soul skill now even though she wanted to.

A streak of golden light flashed and hit her from the side, and she was sent flying. This second consecutive strike was unleashed by Wang Dong. Wu Feng and Dai Huabin were tackled in different manners, and this was only a competition after all. That's why his Guillotine Wing didn't land on Wu Feng.

Huo Yuhao twisted his head suddenly, and the purplish-golden radiance in his eyes shone extremely brightly. A seemingly tangible ray of light flashed in his pupils before disappearing. Zhu Lu screamed in horror and instantly collapsed to the ground not far from Huo Yuhao. Fresh blood flowed from her mouth and nose.

Dai Huabin's hopes of forcefully unleashing the Netherworld Tiger with her were dashed. Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Shock stopped that from happening. Zhu Lu had no chance of resisting Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Shock with her Rank 29 cultivation.

Huo Yuhao's gaze turned to Xie Huanyue, who had burst out of the Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron's trap. He asked with the expression in his eyes, "Do you still want to continue?"

As he looked at Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong, Xie Huanyue swallowed his saliva with difficulty and laughed bitterly while shaking his head.

What was there to continue?

Behind Huo Yuhao, Zhou Sichen had been watching fiercely, but had yet to make his move. Both Dai Huabin and Wu Feng were three-ringed Soul Elders, but they were taken down before they even had the opportunity to unleash their second strike towards Huo Yuhao. While Xie Huanyue thought highly of himself, he didn't think he was stronger than Dai Huabin.

Huo Yuhao seemed to have become a new person after disappearing for a few months. He seemed to be completely beyond their age level. Xie Huanyue had still believed that they were evenly matched, but the competition ended so quickly.

Mu Jin was in a daze upon seeing what had happened. Huo Yuhao displayed not just his abilities, but also his calmness and composure. Even as a teacher, she was petrified when she saw Huo Yuhao's gaze as he fought.

It was a look that was filled with wisdom and farsightedness. It was as if everything was under his control. This match was also entirely under his control. Class 2 didn't even have a chance from start till end. Class 1's 7 members held an advantage over the weaker Class 2's 7 members throughout the competition. Dai Huabin didn't even manage to block one attack by Huo Yuhao in the process.

Dai Huabin's soul power had reached Rank 39, and his White Tiger also added sufficient enhancements to his body. But his White Tiger couldn't overcome the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion no matter how strong it was.

The Ice Empress' Pincer was a pure strength-type soul skill that was supplemented by other elements. After Huo Yuhao's body was enhanced by the ten thousand year Whale Rubber, Life Gold and other treasures, he was no longer inferior to Dai Huabin. More importantly, there was a Wang Dong behind Huo Yuhao.

Wang Dong's soul power had reached Rank 36, and wasn't far off from Dai Huabin's. Huo Yuhao was also Rank 30 himself. The combination of their Haodong Power was immensely strong. Even a four-ringed Soul Elder wouldn't have it easy against Huo Yuhao's Ice Empress' Pincer. But Dai Huabin regarded himself so highly that he believed his arm could resist Huo Yuhao's Ice Empress' Pincer. In short, he was seeking death.

The competition ended even faster than Huo Yuhao had expected. He looked at Wang Dong before turning to Xiao Xiao, who had put her Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron and the Ninephoenix Worshipping Flute away. The three of them felt that this competition was too simple. It ended before they had unleashed their full powers. Their opponents were even the elites among those in their same grade.

The more it was like this, the better they understood the benefits of participating in the Continental Advanced Soul Master Academy Soul Dueling Tournament, as well as the influence and change the closed-door cultivation had on them by enabling them to find their own paths.

Zhou Sichen, Cao Jinxuan and the Lan sisters didn't look excited now. They were more stunned. As the four of them looked at one another before turning to Huo Yuhao, it wasn't just friendship that was revealed in their eyes. There was even a tinge of admiration.

Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection Sharing had had a magical effect on how they were dispatched. They just needed to unleash their soul skills and follow the rhythm and speed that Huo Yuhao provided them.

Cao Jinxuan was extremely awed, as he was a control-type soul master himself. This was true control! It wasn't just about controlling one's opponents; it was about controlling one's teammates too. With such a godlike team leader, he was even confident in fighting others above his level.

The Lan sisters let go of the Hairnet after Huo Yuhao gestured for them to do so and released Huang Chutian, Cui Yajie and Long Xiangyue.

Zhou Yi came beside Huo Yuhao and looked at the distant Mu Jin, who was in a daze. She wasn't excited, but proud. How could she not be proud with such a disciple?

"Teacher Mu, I hope that you and your students will take care of our level's hygiene in the future. If your students can't take it, don't bother challenging my class to a competition anymore."

After she finished speaking, Teacher Zhou turned around, lifted her head and walked away proudly, whereas Mu Jin turned pale.

Huo Yuhao revealed a slight smile on his face. He actually liked Teacher Zhou in this manner. Zhou Yi guided him with this temperament and strictness of hers. He could sense the passion behind her strictness. Although she was harsh on her own students, she was also very protective of them. Those who truly knew her wouldn't forget her.

It wasn't just Zhou Yi who walked out of the Soul Dueling Area with her head held high. The students from the entire Class 1 also did the same. They were all feeling exalted!

They didn't just win this competition. They won it beautifully. That exhilarating feeling made the students from Class 1 tempted to rush into the venue and battle alongside their classmates.

In a dark corner of the stands, the teaching director, Du Weilun, was in a daze.

“Does he really only have two rings? Dean? Why do I not recognize this Huo Yuhao anymore?”

Yan Shaozhe revealed a smile on his face. “It’s not just you who’s surprised. Even the teachers are awed by his abilities. More importantly, this kid doesn’t just possess talent. His desire to pursue self-improvement is even more outstanding. He will become a leading figure of the younger generation if given another 3 to 5 years. I don’t think he even used half of his powers when he teamed up with Wang Dong earlier.”

Du Weilun was in awe. “Fortunately, you fought for him. Otherwise, such a talent would have been taken by the Soul Tool Department...”

Yan Shaozhe interrupted him with a sigh. “I owe the Soul Tool Department a favor because of this. From this year onward, we shall allow the Soul Tool Department to choose our third-grade students and above once they pass the advancement examinations. This is provided the students are willing to go to the Soul Tool Department. We’ll grant them permission to leave as long as they’re willing to.”

Du Weilin was shocked. “Dean, we’ll lose many talents!”

Yan Shaozhe sighed and said, “Teacher is right. I’m not generous enough with my actions. I’ve also figured things out during this period of time. The Martial Soul and Soul Tool departments are a family. In addition, I have to admit that I agree that the situation of the world of soul masters is going to change as soul tools develop after I heard Wang Yan’s detailed description and analysis of the tournament. If we continue to remain deluded, we’ll be surpassed one day. It’s time to change things.”

Du Weilun still seemed a little lost. Yan Shaozhe patted his shoulder and said, “Just follow my instructions. Go and find Wang Yan and see what he has to say. You’ll understand what I’m doing after that.”

Wang Yan had remained cooped up in the inner courtyard after he led the team back from the tournament. He only proceeded to the Library of the Sea God’s Pavilion. He was like a thirsty sponge that kept on absorbing the knowledge that he had yearned for in the past.

As they were conversing, a weird voice suddenly sounded. “Little Xuan, come out now.”

This voice didn’t seem very loud, but it echoed in one’s ears. It was as if a clap of thunder had sounded in one’s head. More frighteningly, this voice engulfed the entire Shrek Academy. These simple few words seemed to cause the atmosphere around Shrek Academy to turn gloomy.

Yan Shaozhe’s expression changed greatly, and he said in a deep voice, “This is not good. There’s a powerful enemy coming. Weilun, instruct all students to remain in their classrooms. I shall make a move first.” As he spoke, Yan Shaozhe shook his body and shot out quickly from where he was. He didn’t advance towards the direction where the voice came from, but went straight for Huo Yuhao, who was in the Soul Dueling Area.

Fortunately, Huo Yuhao had only just left the area. He was also startled as he heard this sudden voice. The weird voice caused his Spiritual Sea to shake. He said in shock, “Very strong spiritual power. Who is this? He’s here to find Elder Xuan?”

Wang Dong’s expression also changed greatly, but a layer of golden light flashed slightly from the depths of his eyes.

The rest of the students were more horrified compared to the two of them. They turned pale, and those with lower cultivations were even shaking.

“Yuhao, be careful. The owner of this voice is of the same level as the elder in the Sea God’s Pavilion.” Skydream Iceworm’s voice was very stern. It wasn’t just him. The Ice Empress and Electrolux seemed to have awakened too. Huo Yuhao could even feel a slight tension in his Spiritual Sea.

At this point, a gentle white light surfaced and covered Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao.

“Don’t resist. I’ll bring the three of you to the Sea God’s Island.” Yan Shaozhe’s voice rang in their ears. In the next moment, they felt as if they were flying among the clouds. It was all white around them. Zhou Yi and the Class 1 students who were around them only sensed a white light flashing before noticing that the three of them had disappeared. Only Zhou Yi was informed by Yan Shaozhe.

“Everyone, don’t panic,” she said hurriedly, “follow me back to the classroom immediately.”

Where was the safest place in Shrek Academy? It had to be the Sea God’s Pavilion.

“Old freak Du, it’s you?” Elder Xuan’s sonorous voice resonated above Shrek Academy at this point. A streak of bright, yellow light shot into the sky. That blinding radiance instantly covered the entire academy. In addition, a wave of immense aura came from within the academy. It shot into the sky like waves of billowing air.

“What a Shrek Academy. Are you going to bully us because we’re outnumbered by you? Let’s compete then.” Intense light and flame shot into the sky outside Shrek Academy. There were more than 20 beams of light within the flames, which didn’t dissipate as they shot into the sky. They were led by a dark green beam of light that was extremely thick. This beam of light was large enough to almost cover the rest of the beams behind it.

Elder Xuan stood in the air above Sea God’s Island. He continued to take a sip of wine and said coldly, “What? Old freak Du, are you planning to wage a battle against Shrek Academy?”

A figure slowly appeared from within the dark green beam of light.

It was a huge old man. His dark green hair flowed freely behind his back. But the funny thing was that he didn’t have hair on top of his head. He was bald.

This elder’s complexion was red and smooth like a baby’s. He didn’t have many wrinkles either. The only way one could tell his age was through the look in his dark green eyes – they seemed as if he had experienced the vicissitudes of life.

The twenty-or-so beams of light behind this elder lined up and gradually revealed the figures within them. They took different shapes and sizes, but they were undoubtedly all top-ranked individuals since they could float in mid-air with their own cultivations.

Chapter 134.1: The Sect Master of the Body Sect, Du Busi

It was important to know that non-flying-type soul masters could only fly in the air for a short period of time even if they were seven-ringed Soul Sages. It was only with eight rings that one could float in the air like this. At the Titled Douluo level, they were then able to fly for long periods of time using their soul power. This meant that the twenty-or-so people in the air right now had at least eight rings.

One had to have sufficient ability to provoke Shrek Academy and find trouble with them. These people were obviously here with ill intentions.

Over on Shrek Academy's side, figures also started to rise into the air. Many students looked into the distant sky from the windows of the teaching block. Their gazes were all stiff. Such a confrontation between top-ranked individuals was not something commonly seen. This was even the first time that the inner courtyard disciples had seen something like this.

The inner courtyard students from Shrek Academy soon realized that there were more than 30 people from the academy in the air. They outnumbered the intruders, and were led by Elder Xuan.

Elder Xuan seemed neither anxious nor worried. He said indifferently, "Old freak Du, what do you want with this lineup of yours today? Your Body Sect wants to re-appear in the continent and we're your first target?"

When the words 'Body Sect' came from Elder Xuan's mouth, some of the younger teachers behind Elder Xuan looked petrified. No wonder the other party had intruded into Shrek Academy so fearlessly – they were powerful individuals from the Body Sect.

Shrek Academy and the Body Sect were equally matched on the continent. The other party had their own history too.

The elder with green hair that was called old freak Du by Elder Xuan snorted and rolled his eyes. "Little Xuan, you're asking the obvious. Why? Have you forgotten what you've done?"

Elder Xuan laughed. "Forgotten what? Didn't I just lecture two rascals under you? Ask them what they did. They dared to attack me. If not for the fact that I was giving you face, do you think they would have returned alive?"

Old freak Du snorted furiously. "Nonsense, nonsense. You beat up my sect members, and you're still acting so upright. I won't let the matter rest. I want you to show me where your confidence is coming from." As he spoke, he roared furiously, and a thick dark-green radiance shot into the sky. This radiance caused half the sky to be dyed a dark-green color. His body ballooned in size and became 10 times bigger in the blink of an eye. His dark-green skin turned into huge muscles, and only the shorts that he wore that covered his sensitive area survived. Of course, those shorts were custom-made. Otherwise, they would have been torn apart by his expanding body.

The most frightening part was still his soul rings. There were 2 yellow, 2 purple, 2 black, and 3 red soul rings. He had 3 hundred thousand year soul rings. Once he unleashed his martial soul fully, he almost crushed the air with his arrogance.

Elder Xuan turned serious and roared too. He shot up into the sky, and an intense yellow radiance was released from his body. An overbearing aura erupted, and the dense yellow radiance supported the sky above Shrek. Yellow and green were clearly separated in the sky high above.

However, Elder Xuan's soul rings were slightly inferior to old freak Du's soul rings. He had 2 yellow, 2 purple, 4 black, and 1 red soul ring. But he only had 1 hundred thousand year soul ring. This also signified that he needed to have at least 2 more hundred thousand year soul bones than old freak Du.

Elder Xuan experienced huge transformations too. Under the light of the yellow radiance, he let out a deep groan in the air that forced the individuals from the Body Sect to retreat a hundred meters.

Elder Xuan's appearance changed completely as the intense yellow radiance spread.

He had the body of a sheep, and his eyes were below his armpits. He had the teeth of a tiger, and human hands. A pair of huge, weird horns appeared too. His body was more than 30 meters in length, and he even seemed stronger than old freak Du. The intense yellow radiance continued to advance, and the nine soul rings turned into circles of light that moved up and down between the huge horns that were around 5 meters in length.

Huo Yuhao and the other two had arrived outside the Sea God's Pavilion through Yan Shaozhe's guidance at this point. Yan Shaozhe was worried as he watched what was happening above him. He said to Huo Yuhao and the other two, "Enter the Sea God's Pavilion quickly. Don't come out no matter what. Do the three of you understand?"

"Yes." The three of them answered him hurriedly. They were all shocked by what was happening.

This was also their first time seeing Elder Xuan unleashing his full abilities.

"Don't bother entering the pavilion. Just watch from the door." A gentle voice sounded, and was heard by Yan Shaozhe, Huo Yuhao and the other two. Yan Shaozhe heaved a sigh of relief as he heard this voice. After bowing in the direction of Sea God's Pavilion, his toes touched the ground, and he changed into a white light that instantly rose into the sky. As the Martial Soul Department's Dean, how could he be absent when Shrek Academy was under attack?

The gentle voice undoubtedly belonged to Elder Mu. Huo Yuhao and the other two were naturally safe from danger since Elder Mu was around.

Wang Dong said softly, "Elder Mu, it should be a Martial Soul True Body that's just been unleashed. It's something that can only be done with at least a seven-ringed cultivation! It seems very strong! But why is that green giant in a human form? Did his martial soul come from some type of ancient giant?"

Huo Yuhao naturally couldn't answer Wang Dong's question, but Elder Mu could! Elder Mu's gentle voice rang out again, "What you're seeing is not just a simple Martial Soul True Body anymore. It's a powerful force that's revealed when soul power that's at least Rank 95 is injected into a Martial Soul True Body after a fusion of one's pure understanding of his martial soul. It's a technique that only a Transcendent Douluo can use. That person is called Du Busi, the Sect Master of the Body Sect. His martial soul is himself."

"Body Sect? Don't tell me..." After hearing the words 'Body Sect', Huo Yuhao was shocked. He also remembered what had happened to him in Star Luo City.

Elder Mu replied, "Yes. Without a doubt, they've come for you. It's worth it to make a trip for someone with a Body Soul and an Ultimate martial soul. I think they're also here for some other purpose. Yuhao, I shall not hide it from you. The Body Sect has researched Body Souls for ten thousand years. No one can rival them in this aspect. I believe that they have a way of making your Spirit Eyes experience their second awakening and make them stronger. The academy will not blame if you choose to leave. But if you stay, I'm sure you can tell that the academy will do our best to nurture you. The academy should be

better at nurturing your Ultimate martial soul. You have to tell me your decision, so that I know how to account to the Body Sect.”

After hearing Elder Mu’s words, Huo Yuhao answered him without any hesitation, “Elder Mu, the academy is in trouble because of me. But I won’t leave the academy. I’m already one of Shrek’s Seven Monsters. I will always be a part of Shrek as long as the academy doesn’t give up on me. Furthermore, I have a sect. I’m a Tang Sect disciple. How can I change my sect again? I wouldn’t have entered the academy if not for Teacher Xiao Ya and eldest senior. I might have even died in Star Dou Forest. I won’t join any other place apart from Tang Sect and Shrek Academy.”

“Good kid.” Elder Mu’s voice became gentler. There was also a sense of resolve within this gentleness.

A reverberating boom sounded in the sky at this point. Both Du Busi and Elder Xuan had started to make their moves.

The entire sky changed because of their battle. One side was dark yellow, while the other side was a domineering dark green. They both occupied one half of the sky. At the point where they intersected, they surged as Elder Xuan and Du Busi fought. This was an extremely frightening duel!

Elder Xuan’s Godly Taotie Bull burst forward in mid-air. The yellow radiance behind him struck towards Du Busi.

The dark-green giant converted from Du Busi sprinted in the air with huge steps. He was fearless as he went straight for Elder Xuan.

The two of them collided in mid-air amidst reverberating booms.

At this point, both Shrek Academy and the Body Sect cultivators that were in the air initially all descended rapidly. They returned to the ground.

A frightening pressure was exerted from the sky, and it only disappeared when one was around a hundred meters from the ground. This was a result of intentional control by both parties. After all, neither side wanted their own people to be struck by the aftermath. It also seemed like Du Busi had no intention of fighting Elder Xuan to the death.

Even so, Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao still shook as they stood on the ground. They turned pale too. It was as if the sky was collapsing.

Was this a duel between top-ranked individuals? Human strength was actually able to reach such a frightening level.

Huo Yuhao was completely shocked. Before today, he hadn’t expected a soul master’s strength to reach such a standard. This was already beyond his understanding of what a soul master was capable of.

He had witnessed the top-ranked, six-ringed Soul Emperor cultivations of Ma Xiaotao and Dai Yueheng before. While they were much stronger than him, he could still see the gap between him and them. But the abilities that Elder Xuan and Du Busi displayed were beyond his understanding, such that he couldn’t appraise them at all. He couldn’t even sense the presence of their levels.

Elder Mu’s voice didn’t resonate again. Neither did he explain anything to them. He left the three of them staring into the sky silently.

He left them outside and didn't allow them to enter the Sea God's Pavilion because he wanted them to watch this earth-shaking battle. Such a huge battle was rarely seen on the continent. To young soul masters, this was also an extremely valuable experience for them!

Chapter 134.2: The Sect Master of the Body Sect, Du Busi

The sudden collision of Elder Xuan and Du Busi in mid-air caused the sky to blow apart, as if fireworks had been ignited. The dark green radiance behind Du Busi formed a huge whirlpool-like patch in the air. The yellow radiance behind Elder Xuan instantly formed countless huge circles of light. After that, they changed into a huge meteor shower that struck towards the whirlpool-like patch.

Huo Yuhao had seen many meteor shower-type soul skills. The strongest that he had seen were Ma Xiaotao's Phoenix Meteor Shower and Dai Yueheng's White Tiger Meteor Shower. But those meteor showers were soul skills that imitated meteor showers. They only covered a few hundred square meters at most. But the meteor shower that Elder Xuan unleashed was truly mighty! It engulfed the entire area and was boundless. It was as if the sky was being torn apart.

But Du Busi was very powerful too. The huge, dark green whirlpool-like patch formed a funnel-like shape and allowed the meteor shower to strike it. The yellow light disappeared as it entered the funnel.

The two of them were at a stalemate right now. The green giant formed from Du Busi used its hands to grip Elder Xuan's horns tightly. While both competed to see who was better, neither could gain the upper hand over the other. The lights on their body also alternated between brightness and dimness, while their bodies were half-still.

Streaks of black light flashed past their sides. The light of stars could be subtly seen amidst the black light. They were spatial cracks!

The longer they fought each other, the more frequently the black lights appeared. A black circle soon formed around them, and began to expand outward.

"Du Busi, you're really mad." Elder Xuan's voice rang in the air.

Du Busi laughed loudly and said, "You're the mad one. I don't want to die with you. Let go and we'll go again."

A piercing, tearing sound could be heard in mid-air. The black circle dispersed and turned into countless streaks of black lights that snaked out in all directions. Wherever the black lights passed, Elder Xuan's yellow meteor shower and Du Busi's dark green whirlpool dissipated. The black lights reached extremely far before they disappeared.

Du Busi and Elder Xuan had separated at this point. There were more than a thousand meters between them. They gathered their powers once again, and the confrontation between yellow and dark green started again.

"Little Xuan, you've improved greatly after all these years of not seeing you!" Du Busi snorted.

"The same goes for you," Elder Xuan replied coldly, "why are you still not dead yet, old freak?"

Du Busi seemed to have been triggered. "Nonsense, why would I die? And you still call me old? How many years younger are you? At most 20 years. If you're not dead, why would I be? I can still survive another 100 years."

"If you're capable, live for another 1000 years," Elder Xuan replied disdainfully, "you'll be a thousand year tortoise then. Oh, I think this name suits your skin color."

"You're looking for death." Du Busi raged and flipped his hands. He mimicked a lifting action, while the dark green whirlpool behind him retracted. It was rapidly gathered within his body. The dark green of his body also started to turn transparent, and his size increased even further. His height reached more than a hundred meters instantly, and a similar black from earlier appeared around his body. It was smaller than the spatial cracks created by him and Elder Xuan earlier, but seemed denser.

Elder Xuan seemed awed, and the yellow radiance behind him also retracted. His Godly Taotie Bull's size also ballooned and instantly turned into an extremely domineering presence.

Du Busi glared at Elder Xuan furiously. His hands suddenly mimicked a wrenching action, as if he were smashing something onto the ground. A huge dark green ball of light with diameter of over 30 meters penetrated through space and crashed down towards Elder Xuan from above.

Elder Xuan didn't cower away either. A white light that shone as brightly as a diamond flashed between his horns. It stabbed into the dark green ball of light like a bolt of white lightning.

A piercing boom resonated for more than a thousand miles, and the dark green light ball turned into a light ring that dispersed in the sky.

Du Busi snorted and clasped his palms together. The space around Elder Xuan suddenly started to distort, and dark green lights appeared around his body like smudged stains. Several huge black holes started to appear too, and the frightening spatial cracks were seemed to be trying to tear Elder Xuan's body apart.

Elder Xuan grunted in disdain. The bright yellow radiance turned into a barrier of light that burst out. The black holes were all mended just like that.

Du Busi was slightly shocked. "Mending the sky, what a move! Little Xuan, you're indeed worthy as my opponent. But you're still lacking a little."

Du Busi absorbed all the dark green back into his body. As he spoke, his eyes suddenly lit up, and an azure light shone from his entire body. The intense light shone unprecedentedly brightly, and made him seem like an azure-green sun. The entire Shrek City below was covered in this azure-green light.

Du Busi clasped his palms before his chest, and a small dark green whirlpool formed. This whirlpool seemed to only have a diameter of one meter, and was extremely incompatible with his huge size. But the whirlpool seemed to contain boundless strength, causing the expression in Elder Xuan's eyes to change greatly.

A bright yellow shone from Elder Xuan's body. His Godly Taotie Bull's body turned back into human form, and only his horns still appeared obvious. His palms clasped together, and a strong will could be sensed from Elder Xuan's body. Both his hands probed forward, and his nine soul rings lit up as if they

were being burned. A ball of yellow light gradually grew bigger on his hand and turned into a weird-looking weapon.

The weapon was thick at the top but narrow at the bottom. Elder Xuan's body shrank back to his normal size so that the weapon's power was at its greatest. On a closer look, Elder Xuan's weapon seemed to have a similar shape to a chicken drumstick.

Du Busi shouted, and the dark green whirlpool in his hand turned into a ball of light that shot out. The ball of light shrank as it moved in the air. It left deep gorges in the air as it moved. It was as if its presence couldn't be tolerated in space.

Elder Xuan bellowed, and his muscles swelled. His entire body seemed to have distended, and he wielded the chicken drumstick weapon to tackle the dark green light ball that came his way.

"Puff—" When both parties collided, the dark green light ball stuck onto the 'chicken drumstick' and instantly seemed to stagnate. An immense pressure suddenly descended from the sky.

The powerful individuals from Shrek Academy and the Body Sect teamed up together to unleash a powerful aura. Many colors mixed together to form a light barrier that resisted the frightening will that came down.

"Ding—"

A crisp sound resonated in the sky. There was no release of any frightening force. The dark green light ball and Elder Xuan's 'chicken drumstick' disappeared at the same time, while Elder Xuan was sent flying as his body was stained dark green. It was obvious that he had been struck.

Du Busi was extremely delighted, and laughed, "Little Xuan, your soul rings are weaker than mine even if your cultivation is the same. I even possess a special Body Soul. You're still inferior to me in terms of your level. Concede defeat. If not for the fact that I'm afraid I'll lose an opponent like you, I would kill you now."

Elder Xuan only stabilized his body after flying for more than a thousand meters. It seemed as if nothing great had changed after the dark green subsided. Even his aura remained very powerful. However, his eyes revealed his greater impatience.

"Du Busi, stop sugar-coating your words. Do you dare to fight to death with me? I'll bring you along with me even if I die. At least I'll make you unable to provide for yourself."

Du Busi snorted, "Why won't I dare to? I'll at most be heavily injured if I kill you. You're still not powerful enough to make me perish along with you. But don't forget that this is Shrek's territory. If you fight to the death with me here, I'm afraid that Shrek Academy will disappear from the face of this continent."

Elder Xuan's expression changed. "I dare you!"

"There's nothing in this world the Body Sect is afraid of doing," Du Busi said arrogantly, "don't tell me you've forgotten who started the wave of beasts in Star Dou Forest?"

Elder Xuan was furious. "Shameless fellow. You still have the cheek to mention that incident? I don't think you find it a humiliation. Rather, you treat it as your glory. Many people lost their lives because of

the Body Sect. If Shrek Academy didn't resist the wave of beasts, it would have been a full-blown massacre."

Du Busi groaned and said, "What do you mean Shrek Academy resisted the wave of beasts? It's as if you're hinting we didn't do anything."

"Don't forget what the Body Sect promised after the wave of beasts receded." Elder Xuan said coldly, "Are you renegeing on your promise by coming here so boldly today?"

Du Busi replied, "Promise? So much time has passed. I don't remember anything. Even if I renege on my promise, what can you do?"

Elder Xuan twisted his lips and said, "I never expected that you'd become so shameless." While he spoke in this way, he was shocked in his heart. Du Busi's words seemed to foreshadow the appearance of the Body Sect in the world! In addition, they were likely to have a ploy.

Du Busi said, "Alright, we've already fought. The Body Sect and Shrek Academy still have some ties. We're not here to target Shrek Academy. I'm here today not just to demand an explanation. There's something more important. If you return our Body Sect member, I will turn around and leave immediately."

Elder Xuan snorted, "What Body Sect member? I don't know what you're talking about."

Chapter 134.3: The Sect Master of the Body Sect, Du Busi

Du Busi said, "Stop acting ignorant. Soul masters with Body Souls are automatically recognized as Body Sect disciples. Don't you know that? Where's that little fellow who took part in the Continental Advanced Soul Master Academy Soul Dueling Tournament? Hand him over now. Otherwise, don't blame me for being unkind. Don't forget what my name is. If I release my Body Soul's poison, how much of it can you resist? When that happens, your Shrek Academy will... hehe!"

Elder Xuan laughed coldly. "I knew you came here for Yuhao. Aren't you just trying to flaunt your strength by going about it in such a roundabout manner? Let me tell you. If you dare to release your lethal poison, at least half of your Body Sect members will remain here today, you included."

The expression in Du Busi's eyes changed. He revealed his ferocity. "Little Xuan, do you really think that I don't dare to make a move on your academy? What's risking everything if I can continue my sect's legacy?"

Elder Xuan's smile became gentler. "Old freak, you can only talk big if you have the ability to walk your talk. Do you really think the Body Sect can threaten Shrek Academy?"

"What? Du Busi argued, "Do you think you can stop me? Better hand him over quick, or don't blame me for going in directly to find him. It won't be so nice when it comes to that."

He did have his misgivings about Shrek Academy. Otherwise, he wouldn't have bothered with Elder Xuan for so long, given the Body Sect's hard-headed approach. Although Elder Xuan was slightly inferior to him, the gap wasn't too huge. Du Busi was unwilling to bear the consequences of an all-out fight.

“Little Xuan can’t stop you. But what about me?” A gentle voice sounded quietly at this point. A gentle halo was unleashed from Shrek Academy after the voice was heard. More accurately speaking, it came from the Sea God’s Pavilion.

A gentle, golden light spread quickly, even though it seemed very gradual. It reached a high altitude in an instant. As this magical scene appeared, both Elder Xuan and Du Busi’s auras were diminished under the engulfment of the golden light. The immense pressure from the sky also disappeared. Not only did the gentle, golden light engulf Shrek Academy, but it also covered all of Shrek City. Shrek City looked like a golden city from the outside now.

Du Busi’s expression changed greatly after he saw this scene, “Sea God’s Light? How is this possible? How is there still someone who’s able to unleash the Sea God’s Light in Shrek?”

“Busi, it’s been awhile. It seems like you’ve forgotten about me.” The gentle voice rang out once again. But only Du Busi could hear it.

“You, you are...” Du Busi was shocked as he looked at the shining, golden Sea God’s Pavilion. His dark green forehead instantly started to glimmer with beads of perspiration.

“I can still remember what you left for me,” Elder Mu said slowly, “your brother has the same temper as you. Recklessness is the devil. If your brother wasn’t reckless then, he might still be alive now.”

Du Busi confirmed his guess when he heard till this point. He was stunned as he asked, “You, you aren’t dead yet? How is this possible? Didn’t you...?”

Elder Mu replied gradually, “If I’m dead, you’ll bully Shrek Academy?” His words were simple, but they struck Du Busi hard. The intense, golden light instantly flashed in the air and Du Busi’s dark green body shortened by a meter. An intense, dark green radiance was also emitted from his body.

Du Busi was a little vexed as he said, “Dragon God Douluo, the battle then wasn’t simply about personal feelings. Why did my elder brother have to take a step back?”

“You know the full details of what happened.” Elder Mu replied, “I won’t debate it with you. You just need to know that the Master of the Sea God’s Pavilion is still me. I’ve already asked Huo Yuhao and told him about the Body Sect. He expressed his will to remain in Shrek. Please return. I won’t hold today’s matter against you on account of your brother. But if there’s a next time, or if the Body Sect tries to scheme against this disciple of mine in the future, don’t blame me for demanding an explanation from the Body Sect personally.”

Du Busi’s expression changed. “That fellow has become your disciple?”

Elder Mu answered coldly. “That’s right. Why? Do you think that you’re more suitable than me to guide him?”

Du Busi took in a deep breath, “Dragon God Douluo, I shall give you face and let the matter rest. An honest man doesn’t deal underhandedly. I must also tell you that we won’t give up on this kid. You’re older than me, thus you should know that we’re almost reaching our end. But the Body Sect still doesn’t have a successor.”

Elder Mu was a little stunned. "Why don't you have a successor? Isn't the Body Sect's Seed of Inheritance on you?"

Du Busi was a little vexed as he explained, "But no one new has appeared in the sect for almost 20 years. Furthermore, do you think that the Seed of Inheritance can just be passed on to anyone? I shall end it here today. I won't touch that kid as long as he's in Shrek Academy. But once he's out, we'll compete fairly. Dragon God, I don't believe that my elder brother didn't leave anything on you even though you're still alive. I'm not your match, but you'll still pay the price even if you kill me. The Body Sect isn't the only opponent of Shrek Academy either. We'll meet again someday."

After he finished speaking, Du Busi's dark green radiance flared up and burned a hole in the Sea God's Light. He waved his hand after he escaped, "Body Sect, retreat."

The twenty-or-so figures he had brought with him escaped rapidly and disappeared in an instant. The golden light in the air also retracted slowly back into the Sea God's Pavilion.

It was not only the Shrek Academy that was restless now. All of Shrek City was also drowned in a commotion over what had happened earlier.

Elder Xuan landed in the Sea God's Pavilion. The four deans also arrived.

Elder Mu's voice drifted out from the Sea God's Pavilion. "Shaozhe, go and appease the people in the city. The rest of you can return. Little Xuan, bring the 3 kids in."

"Yes." Yan Shaozhe acknowledged his words and left immediately.

Shrek City was still Shrek Academy's territory. It was also the foundation of Shrek Academy. All that had happened earlier was too strange, and someone had to handle the situation.

Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao hadn't recovered from their shock yet.

First was the collision between Elder Xuan and Du Busi. That was followed by the intense, golden light. Although only Du Busi could hear Elder Mu's voice, they could roughly guess that Elder Mu had engaged him.

Even the powerful Body Sect had to retreat in front of Elder Mu. This was Shrek Academy's true power. Elder Mu didn't need to fight, but still managed to force the enemy's troops back. Elder Mu's position in the three of their hearts rose once again. It was as if it was almost beyond them to even worship him.

Huo Yuhao now realized why he had felt so relaxed when he had fought Class 2's team.

He had been under immense pressure in almost every round of the Continental Advanced Soul Master Academy Soul Dueling Tournament. He managed to hang on along with his partners even under such immense pressure, and even became the champions. Every opponent they faced in each round was stronger than them by a lot. Although Dai Huabin and the others were also gifted, they were still very young. They were still lousier than the top-ranked students that had an average age of 19 years and above from the various academies in the tournament.

The closed-door cultivation that Huo Yuhao and the rest had experienced after they had returned had also been extremely crucial. Their experiences and outlook were now different from what they were before.

It's important to note that Huo Yuhao and the others had almost participated in the tournament as official team members. They weren't like most preparatory team members that hardly featured.

But they realized how lousy they were after they witnessed this top-ranked duel, even though it hadn't exploded into a full-blown conflict. They were still far off from the top-ranked soul masters. But Huo Yuhao wasn't as impatient as he was before. He was much more mature now. He had to walk his path step by step, which he had already laid the foundation for. His achievements wouldn't be low as long as he worked hard. There would be a day when he would reach Elder Xuan and even Elder Mu's level.

Elder Xuan looked a little dismal. It seemed as if he was unhappy that he had been suppressed by Du Busi. He brought the three of them to the Sea God's Pavilion's second level.

Elder Mu lay quietly in his chair. He appeared as frail as ever. Who would have expected that he was the one who had chased the entire Body Sect away?

"Elder Mu." Elder Xuan was a little depressed as he greeted Elder Mu.

Elder Mu smiled and asked, "Why are you depressed? You didn't lose. It's nothing to be repressed by Du Busi. If I wasn't fortunate, I would have died along with Du Busi's elder brother. Even though I preserved my life, I'm still disabled. I may not be much stronger than you even if I fought. After all, the Dragon God now is no longer like the Dragon God then."

"No, Elder Mu. You can't put it that way," Elder Mu said hurriedly, "you're Shrek's anchor!"

Elder Mu sighed. "My spine was snapped, and Du Busi's elder brother's – Du Bisi's - lethal poison entered my passageways. Although I preserved my life, I can't straighten my back anymore. But it's only through that clash that I managed to attain a breakthrough and escape a catastrophe. Du Bisi wasn't as fortunate as I was. He died of his injuries after hanging on for a while. It's a pity! He was also a hero of his time."

Chapter 135: Hallmaster of the Illustrious Virtue Hall, Jing Hongchen

Elder Mu revealed a look of disappointment on his face and said, "A person's life is limited, even for Titled Douluo like us. I can feel that my time is coming. After I go, the academy will have to be supported by you and the various elders. Little Xuan, you're too headstrong, and not composed enough. You must remain calm when you meet with something in the future and think of the academy."

Little Xuan was shocked and replied, "Elder Mu, you..."

Elder Mu chuckled, "Don't worry, I won't die so soon. I must hang on for a few more years until these little fellows mature before I'm relieved enough to go." As he spoke, his benevolent gaze landed on Huo Yuhao and the other two.

"Huo Yuhao, come over here." Elder Mu waved toward Huo Yuhao.

"Yes." Huo Yuhao hurried towards Elder Mu and came to his side respectfully.

Elder Mu smiled slightly and said, "Good kid, I'm pleased with your answer just now. You're not old, but you're very resilient. I was especially shocked by your development after you returned from the tournament. A soul master can be nurtured in all areas except attitude. You are good, very good."

Huo Yuhao lowered his head and said, "Elder Mu, you overestimate me. I'm an orphan. I have no more kin since my mother passed away. I was only filled with hatred then. I met Teacher Xiao Ya and eldest senior in Star Dou Forest, and they sent me to Shrek Academy using the Tang Sect's slot. I grew up with my mother in that freezing place since I was young. All I felt was humiliation and indifference. It was only after entering Shrek Academy that I feel a familial sense. The academy gave me warmth, fed and clothed me, and even educated me to become a soul master and a person. This is my family. Everything except family can change. I can do anything to protect and preserve the glory of my family."

His words were emotional. His eyes turned red as he spoke.

Elder Xuan was a little shocked as he looked at him. Elder Mu grabbed onto Huo Yuhao's right hand and said, "When I first saw you, I knew that you were a kid with a story. That's because the expression in your eyes was different from most others. Your eyes might have been very clear, but they concealed your pain. Your pain has only disappeared recently. As you said, Shrek is your family. It's also our family. I told Du Busi when I conversed with him earlier that you're my disciple. He told me that he won't target you as long as you're in Shrek. I understood what he meant. When you graduate from Shrek, he may target you again."

Huo Yuhao was stunned. He didn't expect that the Body Sect still hadn't given up on him.

Elder Xuan couldn't take it anymore. "Stupid kid, quickly acknowledge your teacher."

"Ah!" Huo Yuhao only reacted now. He knelt down immediately and bowed to Elder Mu respectfully. "Elder Mu, please accept me as your disciple."

Elder Mu laughed and said, "Good kid, stand up." He grabbed Huo Yuhao's right hand and pulled gently. A gentle strength was injected into Huo Yuhao's body and lifted him up.

Elder Mu was all smiles when he saw the sincere look in Huo Yuhao's eyes. The more he looked, the more pleased he was.

He couldn't make the proposal to Huo Yuhao to become his disciple with his current status. He could only hint. Fortunately, Elder Xuan reminded Huo Yuhao from the side, so he didn't miss out on such a great opportunity.

Huo Yuhao tried to test the waters by asking, "Elder Mu, are you agreeable?"

Elder Mu laughed. "Silly kid, it's time for you to say it."

Huo Yuhao was delighted, and hurriedly said, "Teacher." He wanted to kneel down again as he said it. But Elder Mu didn't let him do so this time by using his gentle soul power to lift Huo Yuhao up.

"You will be my closed door disciple from today onwards. I'm not very particular about the formalities. You don't have to kneel in the future. A bow will do."

"Yes." Huo Yuhao was still very respectful even though Elder Mu wasn't very particular about formalities. If Elder Mu and Elder Xuan were not around, he would have jumped in excitement.

Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao were envious as they saw this scene, and walked up to congratulate him hurriedly.

Elder Mu smiled. “The two of you are good too. Xiao Xiao, learn from Elder Xuan in the future. Let him analyze you – a special auxiliary-type battle soul master. As for Wang Dong, you’re a light-type soul master too. You can be my disciple in name temporarily.”

Wang Dong stuck out his tongue and said in a slightly brazen manner, “Elder Mu, this is unfair. I’m a light-type soul master just like you, but you accepted Huo Yuhao as your disciple although he isn’t the light-type. How can you be so discriminatory? I want to be your closed door disciple too.”

Elder Mu couldn’t help but laugh as he saw Wang Dong’s indignant look. He said, “You little fellow! You’re the first person to make such a request in front of me. There can only be one closed door disciple.”

Wang Dong moved closer as he saw that Elder Mu wasn’t angry. He said almost naturally, “It’s okay! With your status, you can set a precedent! Who will dare to doubt you? Moreover, both Yuhao and I possess martial fusion soul skills, and are one together. Just take the both of us as the same person.”

Elder Mu’s smile turned a little cheeky, “Oh? One together?”

Wang Dong blushed as he saw Elder Mu looking at him. He grabbed onto Elder Mu’s other hand and said, “Just accept me too. Otherwise, he will bully me in the future when he’s an official disciple but I’m just a disciple in name.”

Elder Xuan was stunned as he saw this scene. In his memory, no one, including Yan Shaozhe, had ever dared to be so brazen in front of Elder Mu! But Wang Dong didn’t only just do this. He didn’t seem vexed as he looked at Elder Mu. On the other hand, he appeared delighted.

Elder Mu smiled as he said, “Alright, alright. I can’t outtalk you. I shall accept you too.”

Wang Dong was elated, and knelt down hurriedly before bowing to Elder Mu.

Elder Mu lifted his left hand, and a wave of soul power dragged him up. Elder Mu said, “Little Xuan, did you see this? I was forced to accept two 关门弟子. Haha.”

Elder Xuan chuckled and replied, “I see that you quite enjoy it. This is not bad either! Both these fellows are good. Since this is the case, I shall accept a closed door disciple myself too. I’m not much younger than you anyway!”

Xiao Xiao was quick-witted, and knelt down in front of Elder Xuan hurriedly. She bowed to him, “Teacher.”

Elder Xuan lifted her up and chortled, “Little fellow, you must be outstanding when you’re under me. Don’t lose to those two fellows.”

Xiao Xiao laughed and replied, “Teacher, I will do my best. Just give me all the items that can enhance my strength.”

Elder Xuan laughed, “Wow, did I accept a closed door disciple or a little troublemaker? You’re definitely not standing on ceremony!”

Xiao Xiao laughed, “We’re on the same side. What’s there to stand on ceremony between us, right? I bought you a chicken drumstick too.” After she ended her retreat, she had been cultivating with Elder

Xuan, and was already very familiar with him. She was naturally extremely excited now that their relationship had been confirmed.

Elder Mu revealed a stunned look on his face at this point and said, "Du Busi just left, but someone just came. It seems like it's a good day today."

Elder Xuan squinted his eyes, and a sharp radiance flashed across them. He was about to make his move.

Elder Mu lifted his hand and stopped him. He said, "The visitor is a guest. Just invite him in."

Elder Xuan was shocked and asked, "Into the Sea God's Pavilion?"

Elder Mu smiled and replied, "Yes, into the Sea God's Pavilion."

Although Elder Xuan was shocked, he wouldn't go against Elder Mu's instructions. But he never recalled any outsiders being allowed into Sea God's Pavilion before.

Elder Xuan had already disappeared from where he was as a radiance flashed. He arrived outside the Sea God's Pavilion at the next moment. He looked into the distance and said coldly, "Since you're already here, you don't have to sneak around anymore. Come out." As he spoke, he grabbed at the air, and a huge citrine hand appeared in the air. The hand opened wide and grabbed in one direction. Suddenly, countless thin black cracks appeared in air in that direction.

Although these cracks couldn't compare to Du Busi's, they still existed.

"Elder Xuan, this is not a way to receive your guest." A dim golden radiance lit up. As a halo spread instantly, it rippled, and the distorted light rays canceled out Elder Xuan's huge hand. A figure also appeared in that direction.

The person that appeared wasn't tall, but he was plump. His long, elegant robe was embroidered with gold patterns. He placed his hands behind his back and smiled at Elder Xuan. Wasn't he the Hallmaster of the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy's Illustrious Virtue Hall, as well as the person in charge of the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy?

"It's you? Jing Hongchen." Elder Xuan was also shocked. Although he could sense his strong presence, he didn't expect it to be the Hallmaster of the Illustrious Virtue Hall.

Jing Hongchen smiled and said, "Elder Xuan, you shouldn't be surprised. Since you want something from the Illustrious Virtue Hall, I've come to personally pay a visit to Elder Xuan and Shrek Academy."

Elder Xuan's eyes flashed with a divine light as he thought to himself, "This Jing Hongchen came at such a coincidental timing! Did He come with the Body Sect, and only show himself at this point, or is it really a coincidence?"

Elder Xuan didn't reveal his thoughts, and spoke indifferently. "You're a guest, please come in." As he spoke, he turned around and walked into the Sea God's Pavilion.

Jing Hongchen was the one who was shocked now. He was already shocked when he had been discovered. With the concealment-type soul tool that he had created himself, he believed that he was

undiscoverable as long as he didn't move. But Elder Xuan managed to trace him. He was even more surprised that Elder Xuan invited him into the Sea God's Pavilion.

Jing Hongchen hesitated. The Sea God's Pavilion was probably a place that was easy to enter, but not easy to leave! After all, this was Shrek Academy. Although he had sufficient cards in his hands, Shrek Academy had been established for many years, and was ever-present on the Douluo Continent. It was also because of Shrek that the Sun Moon Empire had many misgivings and proceeded cautiously. They didn't dare to act recklessly even though they had sufficient resources.

Sea God's Pavilion. What a Sea God's Pavilion!

Elder Xuan walked in front of the Sea God's Pavilion before turning around and joking, "What? As the Hallmaster of the Illustrious Virtue Hall, you don't dare to enter the Sea God's Pavilion? Why are you here since that is the case?"

Jing Hongchen pricked his brows. His haughtiness was even greater than Du Busi's. He had only appeared now because he didn't want to mix with the Body Sect and affect his reputation. After being provoked by Elder Xuan, he laughed loudly before walking into the Sea God's Pavilion with big steps.

Elder Mu revealed a slight smile on his face and was in awe of Elder Xuan in his heart. Elder Xuan was indeed an expert in human psychology! The simple action of inviting Jing Hongchen into the Sea God's Pavilion greatly diminished his mighty aura.

After entering the Sea God's Pavilion first level, Jing Hongchen's gaze moved around the entire level. He was slightly stunned. It was obvious that he could tell that the Sea God's Pavilion was extraordinary.

Elder Xuan walked to the golden tree seats at one side of the first level before sitting down. He also gestured for Jing Hongchen to take a seat.

Jing Hongchen didn't stand on ceremony either. He smiled at Elder Xuan before sitting opposite him.

Neither of them spoke first, and they only stared at each other as they sat there. But the air around them was about to solidify because of their auras.

Elder Xuan and Jing Hongchen had similar auras – they were very pressing. But the difference was that Elder Xuan's aura appeared foundationally stable like the earth, whereas Jing Hongchen's aura originated from a suppression that might be unleashed at anytime.

"It seems like soul tools can help a soul master to a certain standard. Your cultivation is only around Rank 93, but you can stabilize yourself in front of me." Elder Xuan said slowly.

Jing Hongchen smiled and replied, "I believe that soul tool research is only in its preliminary stage. The world belongs to soul tools in the future. When the day comes when soul tools no longer rely on soul masters' soul power as a motivation, soul masters will be eliminated. I wonder if Elder Xuan is convinced by this belief."

Elder Xuan replied coldly, "It doesn't matter whether I believe it or not. Anyway, you won't live to see that day."

“It’s not important whether I’ll live to see that day,” Jing Hongchen said very casually, “it’s enough if it happens in the Sun Moon Empire, and it will happen in the Sun Moon Empire. Star Luo, Heavenly Soul, Dou Ling and even your Shrek Academy are too far off in the aspect of soul tools.”

Elder Xuan laughed, “Oh? Are we that far off? I don’t think so. Since when were you able to exploit this gap to defeat Shrek Academy? We only sent half of our main forces for the Continental Advanced Soul Master Academy Soul Dueling Tournament that just ended. But we still won. This proves that your advantage in soul tools is not decisive yet.”

Elder Xuan was surprised that Jing Hongchen nodded after hearing his words, “You’re right. I received news from your academy that expressed your interest to hold an exchange with the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy. I was very happy then. But for some reason, your academy changed its mind. If it’s because of the tournament, I don’t think it’s necessary. The Sun Moon Empire is magnanimous. A tournament is a tournament. We won’t develop a hatred because of accidents during the tournament.”

Elder Xuan asked, “Is this your reason for coming today?”

Jing Hongchen answered, “Partly. There’s another reason too. I want to get the Judgement Sword back. It’s one of my best creations, and holds great significance for me too. I hope that you can return it to me.”

Elder Xuan nodded his head seriously and said, “I can return it. I will return it to you as long as you can allow Ma Xiaotao to fully heal.”

Jing Hongchen turned dismal and replied, “Elder Xuan, you can’t put it this way. Many of our elite students have also died under your students’ hands. But we never asked for any compensation.”

Elder Xuan said indifferently, “Can your students compare to Xiaotao? Ma Xiaotao will succeed the role of Dean of the Martial Soul Department of our academy. She’s not even 20 years old, but she’s already a seven-ringed Soul Sage. Furthermore, she has a top-ranked martial soul. No one in the continent can match up to her in a one-on-one fight. Shrek Academy won’t seize your things forcefully, but Xiaotao’s condition is special. Her martial soul has transformed negatively, and she’s been in a coma till now. After we find a treatment for her using that sword, we’ll return it to you.”

Jing Hongchen furrowed his brows and asked, “Is there no room for negotiation?”

Elder Xuan didn’t speak and only looked at him calmly.

After pondering for a moment, Jing Hongchen said, “What if I exchange something of equal value for it?”

“I’ve told you that we’re keeping the sword to research Xiaotao’s transformed martial soul,” Elder Xuan replied coldly.

Jing Hongchen stiffened a little, then said in a deep voice, “Can I take a look at her?”

Elder Xuan was the one who hesitated now.

Elder Mu’s voice rang out at this point, “Yes, you can. Bring him to the second level.”

Jing Hongchen’s expression became terrified as he heard this voice. He quickly stood up.

Although he hadn't appeared with the Body Sect earlier, he had clearly witnessed the fight between Elder Xuan and Du Busi, as well as how Du Busi was deterred by Shrek Academy's golden light.

Jing Hongchen was very sharp even though he had not reached the level of a Transcendent Douluo. He immediately recognized that the external world's understanding of Shrek Academy was erroneous. The strongest in Shrek Academy wasn't the Taotie Douluo Elder Xuan, but someone else. Even Du Busi had to retreat in front of this guy. How powerful was he? That's why he sneaked into Shrek Academy after the Body Sect left, and didn't appear as uprightly as the Body Sect.

Jing Hongchen said in a deep voice, "Elder Xuan and unknown elder, I have at least 3 automatic Class 9 soul tools with me now. If I'm attacked, these soul tools are powerful enough to destroy the all of Shrek City. They can't be stopped either."

He was around Yan Shaozhe's age. It was normal for him to call Elder Xuan and Elder Mu his elders. It was an obvious showing of his weakness to boast about

This was Shrek Academy. There were more than 5 Transcendent Douluo from what Jing Hongchen knew. Regardless of how strong his soul tools were, he was only Rank 93. He wasn't a match for so many Transcendent Douluo at such close distance. But he came prepared. He also believed that Shrek Academy wouldn't really attack him. It wouldn't fit their standards.

"You're our guest now that you've entered the Sea God's Pavilion," Elder Mu said indifferently, "if I really wanted to touch you, your soul tools may not be able to unleash their full might."

Jing Hongchen didn't retort, but revealed a sense of relief. He laughed and said, "It's my honor to be a guest of the Sea God's Pavilion."

He came to the second level quickly under Elder Xuan's guidance.

Elder Mu laid in his reclining chair, while Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao stood behind him.

Huo Yuhao was very anxious. Before he underwent his retreat, he had once asked Elder Mu about Ma Xiaotao's condition. Elder Mu had told him then that Ma Xiaotao was fine, which gave him peace of mind as he retreated into cultivation. But it seemed like she was in grave condition from what Elder Xuan and Elder Mu said! How could he not be anxious?

Jing Hongchen was drawn to Elder Mu. Elder Mu might look like a frail elder and didn't unleash any of his powerful aura, but Jing Hongchen was certain that he was the one who had previously forced the Body Sect away! Elder Mu's abilities and cultivation couldn't be seen just by using one's eyes. It was unexpected that Shrek Academy had such a powerful figure. He felt surer and surer that he was right to have been cautious.

"Greetings, may I know elder's name?" Jing Hongchen bowed slightly to Elder Mu.

Elder Mu smiled and said, "My name is Mu En. I believe there's not many in this world who still remember my name."

Jing Hongchen was entirely lost as he heard Elder Mu's name. He couldn't recall such a name from his memory or investigations into Shrek Academy. He was warier of Elder Mu because of this.

Elder Mu said to Elder Xuan, "Little Xuan, bring him to take a look at Xiaotao's condition. Yuhao, the three of you shall come along too."

"Yes, Teacher." Huo Yuhao represented the rest and acknowledged Elder Mu. He quickly walked towards Elder Xuan.

Jing Hongchen's gaze changed direction as he heard Huo Yuhao's name. His name appeared the most in the reports of the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy. He appeared even more frequently than both Shrek's team leader Ma Xiaotao and vice-team leader Dai Yueheng.

Twin martial soul? And it was likely that one was an Ultimate martial soul with a cultivation of around two rings. But he was likely able to conceal his own cultivation and abilities.

During the last battle, he and his partner had unleashed a series of powerful martial soul fusion skills that earned them victory. He had a partner that also possessed twin martial souls which were compatible with his.

This series of information popped up in Jing Hongchen's mind and made him view Huo Yuhao in a different manner. He even obtained a useful piece of news – Huo Yuhao calling Elder Mu teacher. He was the disciple of a mysterious old man.

Huo Yuhao and the other two came beside Elder Xuan and greeted Jing Hongchen slightly by nodding their heads. They disliked those from the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy, and thus they weren't very formal with their greeting either. Elder Xuan and Elder Mu acted ignorant of the matter.

"Follow me." Elder Xuan walked towards the higher steps and brought them to the third level, whereas Elder Mu remained where he was and shut his eyes. It seemed like he was resting.

Jing Hongchen looked at Huo Yuhao interestedly as he walked. He said, "You're Huo Yuhao? These two must be Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao." All of their appearances were described in detail in the Illustrious Virtue Hall's files.

Huo Yuhao nodded but didn't speak. He was only worried about Ma Xiaotao now.

Jing Hongchen wasn't vexed even though he was being ignored. He only looked at Huo Yuhao seriously. No one knew what he was thinking.

Sea God's Pavilion third level. The first thing that could be seen on this level was a small hall that was around 20 square meters in area. There was a tunnel on each of the two sides that led somewhere deeper. Elder Xuan walked into the left one and stopped at the fifth door.

The entire space turned golden as their surroundings flashed instantly at this point. Jing Hongchen's hands trembled subconsciously, but he soon calmed down. But the intense yet pure undulation of light left him shocked. A sense of peril rose in his heart. He was knowledgeable, but he knew nothing about the mysterious Sea God's Pavilion. The pure light didn't seem to be unleashed by someone, but emitted from the wood that surrounded them. What exactly was the Sea God's Pavilion built from?

The door in front opened as the golden light flashed. They walked into a quiet chamber one by one.

"Elder sister." Huo Yuhao saw Ma Xiaotao, who lay flat on the Manifold Mysterious Ice Bed. He was so anxious that he wanted to rush over, but he was stopped by Elder Xuan.

Ma Xiaotao looked a little pale, while her originally-red lips were now purplish-black. They carried a sense of evil to them. Her entire body surged with black flames as she was engulfed by the golden light. Although they were repressed by the golden light as soon as they surged slightly, they still appeared to be unyielding.

Elder Xuan shook his head at the anxious Huo Yuhao. Huo Yuhao bit his lips and his fists clenched unwittingly.

It had already been two months since the tournament had ended. He hadn't expected his elder sister's condition to be so disastrous. She could only lie on the ice-cold bed, and had to be sealed by the powers of light. Huo Yuhao's eyes turned red as he looked at Ma Xiaotao's face and reminisced about her usual shrewishness.

Elder Xuan gestured to Jing Hongchen, who stepped forward. He stopped before the light that engulfed Ma Xiaotao and took a careful look at the black flames. After a moment, he said in a deep voice, "Can I get closer to sense the change in her soul power?"

"Yes." Elder Mu's voice resonated. Following that, everyone was shocked as a golden figure appeared beside Jing Hongchen. This figure belonged to Elder Mu, but it was only an illusory projection of him.

Elder Mu's back wasn't bent over now, but straight. His entire body shone a bright gold. Although it was only a projection, it seemed very real. Everything around him turned golden as he stood there calmly. The intense light circulated in the air and caused Wang Dong's light-type martial soul to flow out unwittingly. Even his arms that contained soul bones lit up.

Jing Hongchen couldn't control his emotions, and exclaimed, "What soul skill is this?"

Although he wasn't a Transcendent Douluo, he was still a Rank 93 Titled Douluo! But Elder Mu's current avatar was already beyond the boundaries of his understanding of soul masters. As the best soul engineer in the world, he was certain that this wasn't achievable using soul tools. Elder Mu was more than just a simple light projection. Jing Hongchen was awed by the immense power that he possessed.

A soul master actually possessed such a power? It was an eye-opener for Jing Hongchen. But he was more horrified. He suddenly realized that Elder Mu's claim that he could stop him from unleashing his soul tools wasn't a joke.

Elder Mu lifted his right hand, and a door appeared in the halo that covered Ma Xiaotao's body. It could squeeze in one person. Ma Xiaotao's flames didn't surge violently because of this door either. That was because the entire room was a like a giant light seal that suppressed the black flames in her body.

Jing Hongchen took in a deep breath and tried to compose himself. He walked two steps forward to Ma Xiaotao and used his hands to test the black flames that surged from her. After that, he pressed his hand to Ma Xiaotao's wrist and sensed the condition of her body. He then took two steps back and quickly exited the halo.

No one noticed that when he pressed his hand to Ma Xiaotao's wrist, his fingernails shook slightly. That change wasn't even noticed by Elder Mu.

"I am helpless. This is the backlash of a mutated fire. If I'm not wrong, this young lady already possessed a weird force within her martial soul that affected her. When she was provoked by the Judgement

Sword's dark power, she couldn't suppress this force in time and unleashed it. This mutated fire that's filled with darkness and violence took control of her body, and it couldn't be stopped. It's already close to the strength of Ultimate fire. If it's forcefully suppressed or broken down, her body may collapse. Sealing her is the best solution so far. Unless a gentle force can be found to tackle this mutated fire, she's likely to be controlled by the fire, and her mind will never be clear again once she wakes up."

A cold radiance appeared on Huo Yuhao's face. He detested that he wasn't strong enough. He could help his elder sister if he was strong enough. She wouldn't be in such a state then. There was also the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy. A vicious radiance flashed across his eyes as he looked at Jing Hongchen.

"Since you're helpless too, you don't have to ask us for anything," Elder Mu said gradually, "the tournament was a chance for us to interact and exchange tips. We won't be petty over the damages we suffered during the tournament. Please return to the second level. We can converse there."

After his voice subsided, the surrounding golden light disappeared, and the halo also returned to normal. Elder Mu's golden illusory projection flashed before disappearing. He naturally wouldn't explain where this magical avatar of his appeared from to Jing Hongchen.

The light in Jing Hongchen's eyes faded greatly as they returned to the second level. He only felt his head getting heavier. He always reckoned that he could resist Shrek Academy with his soul tools. But he only now realized that the Sun Moon Empire was still inferior in terms of top abilities after he saw Elder Mu.

Huo Yuhao and the other two returned to Elder Mu's side again. Elder Mu laid there and wasn't any different from before. He still didn't unleash his powerful aura, and just laid there quietly. But he brought great pressure on Jing Hongchen. This caused Jing Hongchen to start perspiring. He only now realized why the Body Sect left so quickly after seeing Elder Mu.

Elder Mu said gradually, "Can you tell me which is better in your opinion – the Illustrious Virtue Hall or Sea God's Pavilion?"

Jing Hongchen was slightly stunned. Elder Mu's question might seem very vague, but he understood immediately. He was asking about the advantages and disadvantages of soul masters and soul engineers, as well as a comparison between the Illustrious Virtue Hall and Shrek Academy.

After pondering for a moment, Jing Hongchen said, "I don't dare to comment, as I don't know much about the Sea God's Pavilion. Let's take Elder Xuan and I as examples. Elder Xuan will beat me within a hundred meters. But I can perish along with him. If the distance between us is expanded to a thousand meters, I can escape. If it's ten thousand meters, I am confident of beating Elder Xuan if he doesn't leave the battlefield of his own accord. In a war, my side will win."

Jing Hongchen sounded very resolute and unhesitant as he got to his last sentence. Elder Mu was even a little moved.

"It seems like you are very confident." Elder Mu laughed slightly.

Jing Hongchen laughed bitterly. "I believe that you can tell that I lack confidence. Soul tools have an advantage in a war, but Shrek's position on the continent can't be shaken in more higher-end battles. Neither the Illustrious Virtue Hall nor the Body Sect can shake Shrek Academy."

Elder Mu stole a glance at him. It was obvious that he could tell the meaning behind his words. If the Illustrious Virtue Hall and Body Sect couldn't do it themselves, what if they combined their power?

"Jing Hongchen, I once went to the Illustrious Virtue Hall. Your development in soul tools is indeed beyond my imagination. I agree with one point of yours. When soul tools no longer rely on soul masters' soul power one day, soul masters will be eliminated. Just like how soul tools replaced the Tang Sect's secret weapons. But I have to add something. Even if that day really comes, soul masters will still be the most powerful. That's because only powerful soul masters can unleash the greatest might of even more powerful soul tools. Do you agree?"

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Jing Hongchen nodded his head and said, "Yes, you're right. The stronger the person using the soul tool, the higher the limit of the soul tool."

"We've yet to develop soul tools that are powerful enough to be used without a soul master apart from stationary soul tools. I can't predict any future developments. But the rise of soul engineers can't be stopped, just like how soul tools replaced cold weapons." He sounded very sincere, but he was actually very baffled in his heart. Had Elder Mu gone to the Illustrious Virtue Hall before? "If such an unpredictable, Transcendent Douluo has gone there before..." He broke out in a cold sweat.

Elder Mu smiled and said, "You can't bring the Judgement Sword with you. You can tell me what you're here for. If you point soul tools towards Shrek City from outside Shrek Academy again, I will pay a visit to the Sun Moon Empire's capital."

Jing Hongchen's expression finally changed. Why was he daring enough to enter Shrek Academy? He didn't only possess Class 9 automatic soul tools. He also had his setup outside. But he didn't expect Elder Mu to know about this. As he recalled Elder Mu's avatar, he became fearful for the first time since he took up the position of Hallmaster of the Illustrious Virtue Hall.

"Elder Mu, you're indeed admirable." He bowed slightly and tried his best to repress the shock that he felt. "I'm here for another reason. Many months ago, Shrek Academy agreed to an exchange between our academy's students. But it was put aside for some reason. Both the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy and Shrek Academy are top-ranked academies in the continent now. I believe that this exchange is necessary, and I feel that it will improve integration and learning between both parties."

Elder Mu answered, "It's fine for us to have an exchange, but can you ensure the safety of my students? In addition, what can my Shrek students learn from your academy?"

Jing Hongchen seemed to have expected this question, and answered without any hesitation, "I can ensure their complete safety, and I'll swear to that by the Illustrious Virtue Hall's honor. During the exchange period, your students will receive the best guidance. If they're capable enough, they can even enter the Illustrious Virtue Hall to learn."

Elder Mu replied, "There's no evidence to prove your words."

Jing Hongchen said, "If you're worried, you can send Shrek Academy's teachers with them. You can even send many of them to tag along."

Elder Mu shook his head and said, "That'll be unnecessary. The exchange is fine. Send Xiao Hongchen and Meng Hongchen to my academy before bringing my students to your academy. I can guarantee that they'll learn in my academy's inner courtyard. You shall personally send my students back and bring your students back to your academy once the exchange is over."

Jing Hongchen shook his head immediately. "That wouldn't be appropriate. Although I believe in your character, I think it's best to be cautious. What if, when I send your students back, Shrek..."

Elder Mu smiled and asked, "What's your proposal then?"

Jing Hongchen replied, "There's no rush to have an exchange now. I suggest that we hold a three year long exchange two years from now. That way, it will be the start of the next Continental Advanced Soul Master Academy Soul Dueling Tournament. You can send your academy's teachers to observe the tournament. When it's over, they can bring your students back. At the same time, they can send my students back too."

Elder Xuan couldn't help but ask, "How will you settle the same problem?" The suggestion that Jing Hongchen gave was similar to Elder Mu's previous proposition. The only difference was in the identity of the host.

Jing Hongchen replied, "The Sun Moon Empire is organizing the tournament, and everyone will be watching us. We'll become a laughingstock if we do anything behind your backs. I'm willing to come to Shrek Academy to act as collateral, and I'll only return once the tournament is over and your students are back safely. However, the Illustrious Virtue Hall shall be blameless if anything happens to them during the tournament."

"Alright. That's a promise. You shall bring them here 2 years from now. I will ask Little Xuan to send my students to the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy, including Huo Yuhao." Elder Mu said.

"That's a promise." Jing Hongchen was also elated. Although he had been demeaning soul masters and elevating the status of soul engineers, he was clearly aware that the development of soul masters was very crucial to the growth of the Illustrious Virtue Hall. Especially since Shrek had been around for years, learning even a little from them was beneficial to the overall enhancement of the Illustrious Virtue Hall. Perhaps Shrek Academy could also gain some knowledge of soul tools from the Illustrious Virtue Hall. But it was pertinent to note that Shrek Academy didn't belong to any empire, while the Illustrious Virtue Hall belonged to the Sun Moon Empire. This difference was bound to benefit the Illustrious Virtue Hall more greatly, and allow them to accumulate more long-term profits.

There was another reason why Jing Hongchen agreed so readily. It was that Elder Mu proposed for Huo Yuhao to go to the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy. He wouldn't have to worry about Xiao Hongchen and Meng Hongchen's safety with Huo Yuhao as an exchange student. The statuses and potential of the students sent out by both academies were equal. In addition, Huo Yuhao had twin martial souls. He had to expend a lot of effort to master his martial souls. Even if he specialized in soul tools too, he wouldn't be able to focus much on them. At least to him right now, Shrek Academy would be sending Huo Yuhao to ensure that the students both academies sent out were of equal standing.

Elder Mu smiled. "Since things are settled, you can leave now."

Jing Hongchen bowed once again and said, "Thank you, elder, for your kind treatment. I want to ask you something before I leave. Can Shrek have an even deeper exchange with the Sun Moon Empire?"

Elder Mu picked his brows, "Shrek Academy is Douluo Continent's Shrek Academy."

"The Sun Moon Empire is also the Douluo Continent's Sun Moon Empire."

Jing Hongchen was slightly moved. "Alright, I understand." He turned around and left after he finished speaking.

"Wait a minute." Elder Mu stopped Jing Hongchen.

Jing Hongchen asked, "Do you have something else for me, elder?"

Elder Mu smiled and said, "You're the first outsider to enter the Sea God's Pavilion in all these years. It's also not a place that one can come in and leave easily. Leave a Class 9 soul tool behind and teach us how to use it. Think of it as your admission ticket into the Sea God's Pavilion."

"Admission ticket..." Jing Hongchen was stunned as he looked at Elder Mu. He didn't expect him to suggest something like this. This was an obviously blackmail! Furthermore, this 'admission ticket' was a little too pricey.

"Elder, you're bullying me!" Jing Hongchen laughed bitterly. He might be a little more headstrong if he hadn't seen Elder Mu's avatar. But he was a little hesitant and fearful in foreign territory and inside the unpredictable Sea God's Pavilion.

Elder Mu smiled without saying anything. He remained calm as he looked at Jing Hongchen. Jing Hongchen discovered to his horror that the walls, floor and ceiling all started to exude a dim golden light. It was as if a formless hand had gripped his throat.

"Elder, you invited me into the Sea God's Pavilion." Jing Hongchen laughed bitterly. He was trying to hint at Elder Mu's lack of scruples for demanding an admission fee.

Elder Mu smiled slightly and said, "I invited you into the Sea God's Pavilion, but I didn't invite you into Shrek Academy. Although it isn't some secret territory, I have to think of the students' safety too. If you're unwilling to pay the admission fee, I won't force you. But you'll have to stay here with me until the exchange 2 years later."

"Remain here for 2 years?" Jing Hongchen's expression stiffened. The Illustrious Virtue Hall and Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy would be a mess if he stayed here for 2 years. Without him holding the fort, the soul engineers under him couldn't be repressed easily by anyone. Elder Mu might seem very friendly, but he exerted great pressure on Jing Hongchen. Although he was confident that he had a fighting chance if he went all-out, there was no doubt that he would remain here.

Jing Hongchen took a deep breath and nodded his head. He said, "Since this is the case, I shall follow your orders. It's my fault that I entered Shrek Academy without permission. I shall leave behind soul tool as a gift."

As he spoke, Jing Hongchen lifted his hand and fumbled around his chest. A metal chip that looked extremely thin appeared in his palm.

This metal chip was circular in shape and very thin. It released a gentle, golden halo. The most special part of it was a carving on its surface. The carving pattern was very fine and neat, but it was filled with a sense of creation and imagination. No undulation of soul power came from it, but it had a special feel like a solid mountain as it appeared on the chip. A dim golden halo flashed across it subtly. The radiance wasn't intense, but it was very distracting.

Jing Hongchen said, "I made this soul tool myself. I call it Hongchen's Blessing. It's an automatic defense-type soul tool. Placing it at the chest area will allow it to stick close to a soul master's body and absorb the soul master's soul power to become a single entity. It will mount a defense when the soul master is under attack. It can be initiated and shut down with the soul master's mind. I'm quite satisfied with a few parts of this Hongchen's Blessing. Firstly, it places no restrictions on its user's cultivation. Even a one-ringed or two-ringed soul master can use it. Its defensive effect is equal to the strongest attack unleashed by the user with all of his soul power without initiating any soul skills. But the soul power depleted is only 1/5th of that strongest attack. It's suitable for all soul masters. In the hands of a Titled Douluo, it has the defensive strength of a Transcendent Douluo."

"Furthermore, it has a unique activation method.

"It can only form an Invincible Barrier capable of lasting a full 15 seconds when its core formation is activated using this method. The defensive strength of this barrier can reach up to three times the user's cultivation. The reason that it's classified as a Class 9 soul tool is because of this Invincible Barrier. However, it can only be activated like this once before it needs to be recharged, but it doesn't have to be manually charged. When the user cultivates, it will naturally charge itself with the required soul power over time—around three days. Of course, the user can also charge it deliberately. Doing so will take an entire day and night of meditation, during which the user will have to inject all of their soul power into the soul tool."

Elder Xuan was shocked when he heard Jing Hongchen's introduction. He realized that Jing Hongchen truly had the ability to get out of almost any dangerous situation with this Class 9 soul tool, despite his cultivation only being Rank 93. No wonder he'd dared to sneak into Shrek Academy.

Elder Mu nodded, and Jing Hongchen felt that the weight in his hands disappear as Hongchen's Blessing appeared in front of Elder Mu. Elder Mu squinted his eyes and lifted it in front of him. He then said, "You're able to adapt well; no wonder the Illustrious Virtue Hall is improving every day under your leadership. You may leave now. However, if you intend on coming here without permission again, I hope that you're fully confident. If you aren't, your entrance fee won't be as simple as just one Class 9 soul tool."

Jing Hongchen revealed a smile on his face. Even though it was bitter, it was also filled with stubbornness. He bowed slightly towards Elder Mu, then turned to leave.

Once he'd left the Sea God's Pavilion, he leapt up into the air, and a pair of dark golden wings opened behind his back. He disappeared almost instantly; he wasn't willing to remain in Shrek Academy even a second longer.

Jing Hongchen had wanted to get back what belonged to him, yet had ended up suffering even more losses. He hadn't managed to get back the Class 8 Judgement Sword, and had even lost a Class 9 soul tool. It's important to know that Shrek Academy hadn't had a Class 9 soul tool prior to this, as Class 9 soul tools were only utilized for strategic purposes even in the Sun Moon empire. Even though the Class 9 soul tool that Jing Hongchen had given Shrek wasn't the best, it wasn't the worst either. He'd chosen Hongchen's Blessing because it wasn't offensive at all; its core formation was very resilient, and wouldn't be overcome easily.

However, Jing Hongchen wasn't exactly returning empty-handed. He'd seen Elder Mu, and had gained an even deeper sense of Shrek's background. This had been his greatest reward. Furthermore, he'd made other arrangements; failure was the mother of success. He wasn't afraid of being repressed for once. Despite how depressed he felt, Jing Hongchen had several other ideas.

However, he almost spat blood when he reached the soul tools that he'd set up beforehand.

Jing Hongchen had set up eight automatic soul tools over a thousand meter distance before he'd entered Shrek Academy. Four of them were Class 9 soul tools, while the other four were Class 8 soul tools. With them in place, he could remotely mount an attack on Shrek Academy and Shrek City with the push of a button. Even the most powerful individuals wouldn't be able to resist an attack of such a magnitude without sufficient preparation. They might be able to escape, but ordinary soul masters and all of the buildings present would be destroyed.

But when he reached the locations where he'd placed these Class 8 soul tools, he realized that only traces of them were left behind—all of them had disappeared. He immediately realized that Elder Mu must've done something to them. He used his remote to test them out, but didn't get a reaction. It was obvious that their receivers had been destroyed.

"Bastard, I knew I should've had that old man equip them with self-destruct devices. Damned Shrek Academy." Jing Hongchen cursed in fury. He didn't act like how he had in the Sea God's Pavilion.

However, his temper disappeared as quickly as it'd come. He turned around to look at Shrek Academy, an evil radiance appearing in his eyes. He snorted coldly, then turned around again and quickly left.

"Elder Mu, we've succeeded." Xian Lin'er and Qian Duoduo reported the good news to Elder Mu.

Where had Jing Hongchen's soul tools disappear to? They'd taken them away of course! Elder Mu had stalled Jing Hongchen in the Sea God's Pavilion in order to buy them enough time.

Elder Mu smiled and said, "I hope that your Soul Tool Department will be able to make some progress this time. However, take due caution; it wouldn't be a good thing if such powerful soul tools were to explode."

Xian Lin'er said, "Elder Mu, please rest assured. We'll only research the core formations for now. We won't take them apart without understanding them. Even when we do, we'll only do so in the academy. Fan Yu's already taken them back to the academy so that we can begin researching them."

Huo Yuhao was stunned as he listened from one side. He only barely managed to piece together that Elder Mu had most likely instructed the two Soul Tool Department deans to gather up some powerful soul tools.

Qian Duoduo looked at Huo Yuhao and couldn't help but laugh. "Little Yuhao, you must be curious. Well, Jing Hongchen snuck into our academy and was discovered by Elder Mu. Elder Mu also sensed what he'd setup outside the academy, and told us to go and gather up his soul tools. Of the soul tools he set up, four are Class 8 and four are Class 9. No matter how deep the Illustrious Virtue Hall's coffers are, this will definitely be enough to make them feel a pinch for some time."

Huo Yuhao was stunned. He clearly remembered the auction prices for the top-ranked soul tools sold at the auction house. The Illustrious Virtue Hall had definitely suffered a heavy loss since they'd relinquished these 8 soul tools alongside the Hongchen's Blessing that Jing Hongchen had left behind for Elder Mu.

Elder Mu passed the Hongchen's Blessing to Xian Lin'er and said, "Study this soul tool too. I tried it out just now; Jing Hongchen wasn't lying when he explained its usage. But don't ruin it—I have other uses in mind for it."

"Yes." Xian Lin'er excitedly received it. Even though she wasn't young anymore, she was still as excited as a little girl right now.

Shrek Academy's Soul Tool Department had been making slow progress all these years; this was a great opportunity for them! Researching the soul tools that they'd obtained today would definitely help Shrek Academy's Soul Tool Department make significant progress. It wasn't easy for one to obtain top-ranked soul tools from the Illustrious Virtue Hall.

Elder Mu gestured and said, "Go on then. Yuhao and Wang Dong, help me up to the third level. Xiao Xiao, follow Little Xuan and learn well from him. Little Xuan, take them to Star Dou Forest first thing tomorrow morning."

"Yes." Elder Xuan acknowledged.

Huo Yuhao and Xiao Xiao's eyes brightened when they heard that they were going to the Star Dou Forest. Their cultivations had already reached the Rank 30 bottleneck, thus heading to the Star Dou Forest could only mean one thing: They were going there to obtain their third soul rings! Becoming a Soul Elder represented a significant step forward in one's cultivation.

Only after one had overcome the barrier at Rank 30 would they be considered to have advanced from the beginner stage to the intermediate stage of cultivation.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong helped Elder Mu up from his chair slowly, then helped him up to the Sea God's Pavilion's third level again. Beneath Elder Mu's guidance, they entered the left tunnel and walked all the way to the room at the end of it.

Golden light shone, and the door to the room opened, after which they entered the room.

The room wasn't big; it was only around 30 square meters in size. There was a simple wooden table, a chair, a bed, and a bookshelf that covered one of the walls. The interior design was very simple, and the natural scenery of Sea God's Island could be seen through the window.

"Eld... Teacher." Huo Yuhao almost addressed Elder Mu incorrectly, as he still wasn't used to the new way he had to address him since he'd just accepted Elder Mu as his teacher. "How's elder sister? Is there

any way to heal her? My second martial soul is Ultimate Ice. I'll do my best to help heal elder sister so long as I'm able to and you tell me how."

Huo Yuhao was more concerned with Ma Xiaotao's condition than becoming a Soul Elder. He'd only just established a relationship with Ma Xiaotao, yet she'd suffered such an enormous injury. It had taken him a great deal of effort to gain kin!

Elder Mu replied, "Don't be too anxious. Xiaotao's condition right now is special. It's not entirely a bad thing for her martial soul to have transformed. Once I sealed her, the Dark Phoenix flames began to lead her body in the direction of Ultimate Fire. It's just that the aura of darkness within her is like a parasite—it can't be neutralized so easily."

Huo Yuhao continued to probe, "How can we make the aura of darkness disappear?"

Elder Mu smiled and replied, "I've thought of a way, but we can't do so now. She needs to remain asleep in my seal for a longer period of time. It might be two, three, or even four to five years. It'll depend on what destiny has in store for her. I'll truly need your strength when the time comes however. For now, just remember what you said."

"I'll save elder sister no matter the price, so long as I'm able." Huo Yuhao answered resiliently.

Elder Mu said, "Yuhao, Wang Dong, let me ask you this: Do the two of you know why I let Jing Hongchen enter the Sea God's Pavilion today?"

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong looked at each other, then Wang Dong said, "Are you trying to stamp your authority on the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy and the Sun Moon Empire? I've heard from Teacher Wang that the Sun Moon Empire's development in soul tools has been extremely rapid. It seems that the beginnings of a war are brewing."

Elder Mu didn't judge Wang Dong's analysis and turned towards Huo Yuhao. He asked, "What do you think?"

Huo Yuhao answered, "I have the same general idea as Wang Dong. However, I also think that you seem to value the exchange and interaction between us and their students that you discussed."

Elder Mu nodded and said, "Both of you are right. Stamping my authority, scaring him, and reaping the benefits. These were some of the reasons that I let him enter. However, the main reason was to fight for time—time for all of you."

"For us?" Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong were stunned.

Elder Mu replied, "My existence is Shrek Academy's greatest secret. Only the elders of the Sea God's Pavilion currently know about me. Yet, I revealed myself in order to fight for more time so that you young people will have time to develop. This is because I can't protect Shrek for much longer."

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"Teacher, you..." Huo Yuhao was shocked.

Elder Mu smiled and said in a carefree manner, "All people will eventually die, unless they manage to overcome that barrier. But doing so is simply too difficult. I've already been alive for over 200 years;

death isn't scary to me. Both Du Bisi and I suffered critical injuries back then, but I managed to ascend to Rank 99 because I overcame my limits in that life and death battle. That's also what has allowed me to stay alive until now. Just this makes me very fortunate compared to Du Bisi."

"I've clearly been able to feel my body's degradation over these past few years; it's irreversible. I'm not exactly sure how long I have left though. At the very least, I have three years, while at the most, I have five to six years. I can't protect Shrek for much longer. That's why I need to use what limited time I have left to do something for Shrek."

"If I were still in good shape, it'd be best for me remain in the dark. In that case, I'd be able to use my power to greatly rock the Sun Moon Empire even if I can't decide the result of the war. However, I can't do so now; my body's on the decline. The only thing I can do is instill fear in them by letting them know of my presence, in order to stall them from doing anything for now."

In fact, the reason that Elder Mu had allowed Jing Hongchen to enter the Sea God's Pavilion wasn't as simple as he'd said. There had also been a deeper meaning behind his actions.

"The next two years will be very important to you all. There won't be any time for you rest. Yuhao, you must go to the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy in two years. Wang Dong, what about you?"

Wang Dong was dazed, and hesitated. "Teacher, I don't really like soul tools. I don't have any talent in them either. However, Yuhao and I..."

Elder Mu nodded slightly and said, "Your martial soul fusion won't disappear simply because you're distanced from one another. You aren't inferior to Yuhao in terms of talent, but your paths of development will still differ in some ways. As such, I hope that you'll remain in the academy in order to further your learning while he goes to the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy."

Wang Dong hesitated, as he was still unwilling to part with Huo Yuhao. Furthermore, it would be an entire three years of separation. However, he didn't say anything against it, as it would still only happen two years from now.

Elder Mu squinted. "Jing Hongchen was right. Soul tools will enter every household in the future as they continue to develop. They'll inevitably replace the cold weapons that we have now. This is also one of the reasons that the war is inevitable. The other three empires are also developing soul tools much slower than the Sun Moon Empire. I'll only be able to fight for up to ten years of time from now. After that, many things will change when the war comes."

Wang Dong asked, "Teacher, why didn't you kill Jing Hongchen today?"

Elder Mu replied, "Killing him would only cause the Sun Moon Empire to go all-out. Furthermore, he wasn't lying. Many of the soul tools on his body were very threatening. Both parties would've suffered if we weren't careful. In addition to this, we couldn't afford to put Shrek's many years of foundation at risk. Jing Hongchen is extremely powerful and adaptable. He's able to make accurate choices decisively when he's forced to; he'll become a huge enemy of Shrek in the future."

.....

Early the next morning.

The weather was a little gloomy, which caused the mist above Sea God's Lake to be more concentrated than usual.

Four figures left Shrek Academy, but stopped after they'd gone through the gate.

Elder Xuan hugged his wine gourd and looked at the two young men and the young lady in front of him. He said intoxicatedly, "It's alright, you three can head forwards on your own. You're all young. If I keep following you, I'll only be a pain in the ass. You should know where Star Dou Forest is. Go and find suitable soul beasts for yourselves. I'll follow all of you secretly. However, you'll be deducted 10 points from your outer courtyard test this semester if I have to intervene while you're getting your soul rings."

"Yes."

The three of them were naturally Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong, and Xiao Xiao. Only Huo Yuhao and Xiao Xiao needed to obtain their third soul rings, but Wang Dong had volunteered to accompany them. His reasoning had been simple: Huo Yuhao would be twice as strong with him around. Their martial soul fusion skills were able to achieve crucial effects at critical times. It wouldn't be a problem for the three of them to deal with a thousand year soul beast if they were to team up. Furthermore, Huo Yuhao and Xiao Xiao only needed to obtain thousand year soul rings.

After Elder Xuan addressed the three of them, his figure flashed, and he disappeared. However, they were still confident despite the fact that Elder Xuan wasn't directly following them. With a Rank 98 Transcendent Douluo secretly protecting them, they were bold enough to even enter the core regions of the Star Dou Forest.

The three of them determined the direction to head, then rushed towards the Star Dou Forest that was located to the south of Shrek Academy.

Shrek Academy was quite close to Star Dou Forest. Otherwise, the wave of soul beasts from the Star Dou Forest wouldn't have swept over Shrek City first back then.

They arrived outside Star Dou Forest in less than two days.

The air along the way had become much fresher, and their breathing had in turn become smoother as they'd neared the forest. The three of them were feeling quite good even though they'd rushed along the road for two days.

They'd been very busy with learning and cultivating ever since they'd entered Shrek Academy; they'd hardly had any time to relax. Once their first year had ended, Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao had managed to return home and rest. However, Huo Yuhao had gone to the Extreme North. Even though he'd managed to obtain the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion, he'd still undergone tough training and many ordeals. He'd then continued to cultivate effortlessly once he returned to the academy, and had competed in the tournament afterwards. His mind hadn't been able to calm down since he'd entered Shrek Academy.

They were extremely excited to finally be getting their their third soul rings. They all felt like they'd changed after their closed-door cultivation, thus they were incredibly confident right now. They were excited to use their skills in the Star Dou Forest.

That was why they weren't fatigued despite rushing for two days straight. They were both thrilled and in their peak conditions.

As they walked, Huo Yuhao asked Xiao Xiao, "Xiao Xiao, what's your plan for your soul ring?"

Xiao Xiao answered, "I have a plan. However, teacher mentioned that a lot of luck is involved when it comes to obtaining a soul ring. If I see a better alternative, I'll take it. I'll even consider fusing with a soul ring that's extremely suitable for my Ninephoenix Worshipping Flute. To be honest, I'm raring to go right now. If I wait for my first martial soul to get all nine soul rings before I start cultivating my second martial soul, the advantage of my twin martial souls will be realized too slowly. I'm planning to add three or four soul rings to my Ninephoenix Worshipping Flute while I cultivate the Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron. If I don't, I won't be able to keep up with the two of you."

Since there were only the three of them present, Xiao Xiao didn't hide what she really thought.

Xiao Xiao could clearly sense the gap between her and both Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong after the tournament. Huo Yuhao had more than caught up with the both of them; he was the one in the lead now. Meanwhile, Wang Dong's Radiant Butterfly Goddess and Clear Sky Hammer were both rather powerful martial souls. Her martial souls were slightly inferior in comparison to theirs, thus she didn't want to lag too far behind them, regardless of whether she chose to be an auxiliary-type battle soul master or to add a soul ring to her second martial soul beforehand. She was intelligent; she sensed that she wouldn't have a chance to catch up to them if she lagged too far behind them now.

Wang Dong asked, "Xiao Xiao, what's your second soul bone?"

Xiao Xiao laughed and replied, "It's a secret; I'm not telling. However, I know that Yuhao's second soul bone is the Ice Jade Scorpion's Left Arm Bone."

Wang Dong laughed. "It's fine if you don't tell us. You'll still have to use it when you hunt soul beasts anyway. You haven't revealed what type of soul ring you want for your Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron though."

Xiao Xiao answered, "I chose to be an auxiliary-type battle soul master. As such, my soul ring naturally needs to have an auxiliary effect and be able to display my special trait. My plan is to use a control-type soul skill as my main soul skill, or to enhance the defensive strength of my Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron. After the tournament, I had the feeling that, so long as my Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron is defensively strong enough, it will achieve unprecedented effects when coupled with its ability to separate itself and my enemies. Furthermore, I still have the Cauldron Quake and Cauldron Sweep."

Huo Yuhao was awed when he heard this. "Xiao Xiao, you've analyzed your martial soul very thoroughly. I also think that a defense-type soul ring suits you. Your Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron is indeed very outstanding in separating your enemies. When we fought Class 2, we wouldn't have won so easily without that skill and control of yours."

"What about you?" Xiao Xiao asked, "What's your plan? It won't be easy to find a soul ring to add to your Spirit Eyes. Spiritual-type soul beasts aren't common. Furthermore, they're good at concealing themselves."

Huo Yuhao concurred and nodded. He replied, "We can only take it step by step and see how our luck plays out. Besides, we're only circling the Star Dou Forest's perimeter. We'll hunt when we find suitable ones. Contrarily, we need to kill as few of them as possible."

Xiao Xiao agreed, "Yes! To a certain extent, soul beasts are resources that soul masters like us need. If we kill too many of the lower-level soul beasts, future generations will find it difficult to obtain soul rings."

Wang Dong creased his brows and said, "You shouldn't put it that way. Soul beasts are also living beings. How could you call them resources? We're already preying on the weak by hunting them."

Xiao Xiao was a little stunned and looked at Wang Dong. She commented, "I never realized that you were actually so kind."

Chapter 137: Re-entering the Great Star Dou Forest!

Wang Dong thought for a moment, then said, "We should avoid hunting and killing soul beasts like Yuhao said. We'll only hunt what we need. However, it's another story altogether if we encounter hostile attacks."

Huo Yuhao smiled. He didn't know what kind of soul ring he was going to get for his third one, but he wasn't worried that he wouldn't be able to find a soul beast suitable for himself. What kind of soul beast would be able to escape the Skydream Iceworm's gaze?

This was his second expedition into the Great Star Dou Forest. However, his mood was entirely different from the first time he'd entered, when he'd been full of negative emotions.

He'd left the Duke's Mansion over a year ago and ventured into the Great Star Dou Forest by himself. He'd been determined to give his life to succeed, and had been ready to die inside of the Great Star Dou Forest if he didn't find a soul ring for himself; he'd been prepared to fertilize the plants inside. The only two emotions in his heart back then had been extreme resolution and a desire for revenge.

His mentality was completely different now. Even though it had only been a year and half, he felt like an eternity had passed. Both his personal abilities and his mindset had undergone drastic transformations.

His miraculous encounters had begun the day that he'd met Skydream, at which point his destiny had been completely changed. During his two months of closed-door cultivation, Huo Yuhao had reminisced on his experiences and the vagaries of his life over the past year-and-a-half, and had used the word "fortunate" to sum up his life.

He was fortunate to have met Skydream, and was also fortunate to have met Teacher Xiao Ya and his eldest senior brother. He was fortunate to be part of Shrek Academy, and to have met his many exemplary teachers and excellent partners. He'd probably experience more over the past year-and-a-half than the ten plus years before combined. It had only been a year-and-a-half, and he wasn't even thirteen years of age, yet he had a conspicuous feeling that he'd somehow matured.

"Don't worry, mother. I will forge a life for myself. I'll accomplish your most cherished desire; the one that you never voiced, and the one that I know you'd rather die than forget about."

Huo Yuhao's eyes were filled with deep longing and nostalgic sentiments when he thought about his mother. If she were alive to witness his accomplishments today, how happy would she be? Huo Yuhao's eyes started to turn red as such thoughts spun around in his head.

Xiao Xiao didn't notice much, but Wang Dong was sensitive enough to notice the changes in Huo Yuhao's emotions. He knew much more about what Huo Yuhao had experienced than Xiao Xiao did, and could vaguely guess what Huo Yuhao was thinking. He reached out and gently grasped Huo Yuhao's hand.

Huo Yuhao turned towards Wang Dong, who flashed a faint smile at him. There was no pity in his eyes, only encouragement.

Huo Yuhao responded with a smile. The tacit understanding and chemistry between them meant that they could understand each other's thoughts without voicing them.

"Hey you two, that's enough. I'm clearly the only girl here; could you guys not make me feel like I'm third-wheeling?"

Huo Yuhao didn't even react to her comment, but Wang Dong's face immediately flushed red as he turned to glare at her. "What, do you like him? Why do I remember that I'm the one you like? Have you fallen for someone else already? Eh, the hearts of women..."

Xiao Xiao's face blushed as she scoffed and replied, "Stop it. The two of you are extraordinary; there are several girls in our grade who like the two of you. Can you still even count the number of girls who've discreetly slipped pieces of paper into your hands? Yet what're you doing? You immediately head back to the dormitory after school if you aren't selling fried fish with Yuhao. Everybody says that you don't even know what the word 'like' means. As for Yuhao, he's simply obsessed with training; I've never seen him interested in anything besides cultivating. The two of you otherworldly beings could've been a match made in heaven, but it's a pity that the two of you are male."

Huo Yuhao rubbed his nose and forced a laugh. "Obsessed with training? Am I that insane? So that's what people think about me."

Xiao Xiao snickered and said, "You didn't know that, did you? The person that we talk about the most in our grade isn't our handsome Wang Dong—it's you. There's a saying about the underdogs' vengeance. I still remember that your soul power was one of the weakest when you first entered the academy. But afterwards? Over the course of a year and a half, you've managed to become Class 1's class monitor, and defeat Dai Huabin, who also happens to be a top-tier fighter. I don't even have to ask anyone to know that you're the most powerful individual in Year 2, especially considering the fact that we destroyed Class 2 in that contest. You've consolidated your status as the outer courtyard's number-one star. Our classmates are all saying that you're the embodiment of how perseverance and determination leads to success, and our classmates have become especially hardworking in their cultivation. There might not be many three-ringed students in our grade right now, but don't worry. My guess is that at least ten people from our class, or that even half of our entire class, will become Soul Elders by the time we graduate from Year 2. And all of this is because of you."

Huo Yuhao was stupefied when he heard this, and his mouth hung agape. "Seriously?! You were with us in the competition for a long time; how do you know so much?"

Xiao Xiao smiled teasingly and said, "The two of you are always living in your own worlds, and never really interact with the others. Meanwhile, I have several good friends—I heard about this from Lan Susu and Lan Luoluo. The two of them look like they're head over heels for you."

Huo Yuhao chuckled and replied, "Seems like I'm quite the popular guy."

Xiao Xiao giggled. "You're popular indeed, but your affinity for love isn't as good as the guy next to you. Even though the two of them admire your abilities, they actually like Wang Dong. They also asked me to probe Wang Dong on his thoughts before we left."

Wang Dong put his hands behind his back and cast his gaze toward the far horizon. His gaze was as if he'd transcended life—as if the academy was all about him even though he wasn't there. However, he really looked like he needed a beating to Huo Yuhao, thus he immediately violently broke his bubble.

"You dare to hit me, Huo Yuhao? Don't you run!"

"Haha!"

The three of them proceeded forwards as they continued to laugh and joke around. Gradually, the Great Star Dou Forest's outer regions appeared before them.

Vestiges of the endlessly dense forest could be seen in the distance, and Huo Yuhao saw the wooden warning sign that he'd seen once before.

He wasn't as afraid the first time around because he'd been ignorant. However, he'd almost met his end at the hands of a mere ten year soul beast, and immediately felt a stifling feeling when the Great Star Dou Forest drifted into view. He subconsciously stopped in his tracks.

Huo Yuhao's relaxed expression became a lot more solemn, and Wang Dong couldn't help but ask, "What's wrong?"

Huo Yuhao lowered his voice and said, "Don't you guys feel that the Great Star Dou Forest is enigmatic and unfathomable?"

Xiao Xiao frowned and replied, "I don't. Maybe you learned a painful lesson the first time you were here, and now you have a psychological barrier."

Wang Dong pondered momentarily, then said, "I do, but only a little, and it's not obvious. Your Spirit Eyes are spiritual-type, and your perception is superior to ours. The Great Star Dou Forest is the number-one habitat for the Continent's soul beasts, so it's normal to feel stifled. Who knows how many powerful soul beasts are hidden inside? If soul beasts weren't necessary for a soul master's cultivation, this enormous forest would've been cleared out by the empires, as it's located on a large flat plain, and takes up a lot of space."

An expression of disbelief appeared on Xiao Xiao's face. "The empires could take down the entire Great Star Dou Forest? There are so many powerful soul beasts inside!"

Wang Dong answered, "Of course, though it couldn't be done instantly. What if several sovereignties formed an alliance? They could start with the outer regions and whittle down the dense vegetation. This would gradually affect the ecological balance, and in turn would eventually grind down the soul beasts' power inside of the Great Star Dou Forest. Humans wouldn't need that many years to make the Great Star Dou Forest a part of history with our intelligence."

Huo Yuhao tilted his head a little and said, "The existence of soul masters and the inability for soul beasts' to get older quickly will become a serious conflict in the future."

Wang Dong nodded and continued, "That's what I'm worried about. How can there be soul masters if soul beasts go extinct?"

Huo Yuhao shook his head. "No. Soul beasts might not be unified, but they'll always retaliate when they're faced with death and annihilation. Who knows—it's possible that the soul beasts will fight back one day, and that humans will face a great calamity."

Wang Dong replied, "That possibility is gradually diminishing as we further develop and advance our knowledge of soul tools."

Huo Yuhao said, "Let's hope that the equilibrium isn't destabilized. It's fortunate that the number of soul masters has always been maintained at a reasonable level, and that many soul masters have also begun to pay attention and stop killing soul beasts for no reason. From now on, the two of you need to stay within five feet of me, and need to be prepared for any unforeseen circumstances. My Spiritual Detection Sharing will be activated for a prolonged period of time. We'll have to keep our guard up at all times while we're inside, and we can only roam about ten kilometers into the forest, give or take; we can't venture too deep. We also need to leave the Great Star Dou Forest every night and sleep outside. Please remind me if I'm not following these rules—safety always comes first."

"Yes." Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao acknowledged at the same time. Huo Yuhao's importance as group leader was put on full display in these sorts of situations.

Huo Yuhao allowed Xiao Xiao to position herself in the center, while both he and Wang Dong stood respectively to her left and right behind her. The three of them maintained this small triangular formation as they finally arrived at the dense and thick Great Star Dou Forest.

The air all around was full of vitality, and was full of moisture. As they walked into the forest, and immediately felt as if their bodies were being nourished by some unique force.

Huo Yuhao immediately activated his Spiritual Detection Sharing, which he could perfectly maintain at two hundred meters in diameter with his current cultivation level. Physical images immediately surfaced in their minds. Everything was as detailed as could be, the only exception being that it was colorless

Several weak soul beasts were watching them discreetly from somewhere nearby. They seemed afraid as the three of them approached, and none of them approached them.

Huo Yuhao smiled. He'd devised many plans and schemes targeted at their movement through the Great Star Dou Forest while they'd been travelling over the past two days.

Huo Yuhao released a low roar, and a concentrated fire-red radiance emanated from his body immediately afterwards. A powerful aura then expanded outwards, and the low-level soul beasts that were secretly observing them instantly scattered in all directions, frightened and terrified.

Huo Yuhao had copied the aura of a thousand year Flame Lion using the power of Imitation. Seeing as most of the soul beasts in the outskirts of the forest were ten year soul beasts, the fearsome aura of a thousand year soul beast left them terrified. This saved the group a lot of time as they ventured deeper into the outer regions of the forest.

Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection Sharing and Imitation were two soul skills that could be considered miraculous tools for expeditions. The three were able to move onwards for about an hour unimpeded with the combined effects of these soul skills.

Huo Yuhao activated his Imitation from time to time, releasing a thousand year Flame Lion's aura. There was a deeper meaning to his actions: The soul rings they were looking for needed to be at least a thousand years old. Of course, only those with at least three thousand years of cultivation were considered suitable. The Flame Lion was considered a powerful thousand year soul beast with incredible offensive capabilities, thus the soul beasts that were afraid of it weren't suitable targets. Soul beasts that weren't afraid, on the other hand, were likely to be close in cultivation to what they needed.

Wang Dong said, "Take a break, Huo Yuhao."

Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao had been fairly relaxed throughout the entire journey, seeing as all they'd had to do was follow Huo Yuhao. Contrarily, Huo Yuhao had had to activate two of his soul skills repeatedly, which had consumed a considerable amount of his energy.

Huo Yuhao knew that he had to maintain his peak condition at all times, thus he immediately nodded.

They found a vantage point on a hill and stopped to rest.

"We'll rest here." Huo Yuhao said, and signaled for Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao to take a break.

Wang Dong came to his side and pressed on Huo Yuhao's shoulder with his left hand. Their Haodong power instantly fused, and radiant light energy flowed from Wang Dong's body. The dense vegetation around them almost seemed to exude an aura of euphoria when it felt the aura coming from them.

Circle after circle of golden light poured forth from Wang Dong's body, pulsed from his shoulder, then traveled down his arm and into Huo Yuhao.

Huo Yuhao glanced at him in shock when he felt his exhaustion being immediately dispelled as the thick light aura enveloped his body, and his soul power being filled with a vigorous liveliness. With the support of their Haodong power, the ten percent of his soul power that he had consumed earlier recuperated in about ten breaths of time.

Wang Dong sounded a little proud. "This is the true essence of my Golden Light spirit bone. I've decided to call this true essence 'Omnipresence'; it's extremely useful for offence, defense, soul power recovery, or even treating others. My Golden Light Left Arm Bone can rival even a hundred thousand year soul bone's effects. The more I learn about its Golden Light skill, the more profound it seems. It's able to accomplish many things with the power of light."

Huo Yuhao chuckled and said, "Are you trying to make me want to cultivate with you more? It seems like our cultivation speed can be even further increased."

"Don't jump to conclusions," Wang Dong replied, "earlier you said that once you break through to Rank 30, your cultivation speed would plummet because of your Ultimate martial soul, right?"

Huo Yuhao grinned and said, "Who knows? We can't be certain." He wasn't an ordinary soul master with an Ultimate martial soul; the Ice Empress' former power was still present in his body, constantly refining

it. This was in addition to the Life Gold's effects, which made Huo Yuhao confident that his cultivation speed wouldn't be affected too much by his Ultimate martial soul if it even was.

"Eh?" Huo Yuhao froze and he immediately shifted his attention without using Imitation.

"Be careful," Huo Yuhao remarked, then stepped forward, his hands turning white.

A tangible ripple of soul power had appeared within Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection Sharing's area of effect, which was also reflected in Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao's minds. This obscure silhouette seemed to have already discovered them, and was bounding towards them at a breakneck speed.

Light flickered in the distance as a green shadow soundlessly appeared atop a tree branch roughly thirty meters away. A wild cat with a small frame came into view; its fur was greenish-black, while its eyes were purplish-red and gleamed with hostility. Its fur had a pattern similar to that of a tiger's, while the hues of the fur were unbalanced.

It was only two feet long, but a considerable amount killing intent weighed down on the three of them.

Only soul beasts could survive inside of the Great Star Dou Forest. One could tell from its speed and aura that it was at least a thousand year soul beast.

Huo Yuhao lowered his voice and said, "That's a Deviltiger Cat. Seeing as its fur is greenish-black, it must have around two thousand years worth of cultivation at the very least. A Deviltiger Cat's fur will turn completely black and show lustrous green glimmering patterns once it reaches ten thousand years worth of cultivation."

The knowledge he'd obtained in the academy was put to good use. Huo Yuhao's quick explanation also helped Xiao Xiao and Wang Dong recall the soul beast.

Shrek Academy taught them about soul beasts in four of their classes per week. The Deviltiger Cat wasn't considered exotic, thus they'd heard of it from their classes before.

If the Deviltiger Cat were to be described from a soul master's perspective, it would be seen as an agility-type soul beast with high lethality.

"I'm afraid we can't avoid this battle. Remember not to kill it," Huo Yuhao reminded everyone with a whisper. As they hadn't encountered a thousand year soul beast so far, he didn't expect to be able to scare this Deviltiger Cat away very easily. Because there were hundred thousand year soul beasts with strong territorial instincts lurking in the depths of Star Dou Great Forest, Huo Yuhao couldn't use his hundred thousand year soul beast's aura, lest he run the risk of attracting a real one to him. Elder Xuan had previously reminded him that he should only do so as a last resort.

The Deviltiger Cat pounced forward like a green lightning bolt the moment that Huo Yuhao had finished speaking. Its target wasn't Huo Yuhao, who was in front, but rather Wang Dong at his side.

The "Devil" in the Deviltiger Cat's name was because it was both wind-type and darkness-type, which in turn was the reason for its ferocious nature and formidable strength.

Its front claws sprung out, while its greenish-black fur exuded a glow that wasn't all that brilliant, but lightly shimmered. It lunged through the air, somehow managing to switch directions, avoiding Huo

Yuhao as it flew straight towards Wang Dong. Wang Dong was a light-type soul master, and it really hated the light attribute.

Small wings protruded from its ribs. However, they were extremely narrow, which meant that it couldn't fly. Maneuvering itself in mid-air however, was still very possible.

Wang Dong had already unleashed his Radiant Butterfly Goddess by this point. He didn't evade the Deviltiger Cat's lunging strike. Instead, he swiftly moved his hands in front of his chest while his wings sparkled with an intense golden light as he activated his second soul skill, the Light of the Butterfly Goddess.

A black cauldron suddenly appeared about three meters away from Wang Dong and blocked the Deviltiger Cat's assault. The Deviltiger Cat was exceedingly agile however, and tapped the surface of the Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron with one claw, intending to leap over it and continue towards Wang Dong. However, the cauldron trembled violently the moment it did so.

The Deviltiger Cat's body was momentarily hindered by the vigorous shaking beneath it which, while it wouldn't hurt the Deviltiger Cat, would certainly slow it down. The moment it was slowed, a streak of purplish-golden light flashed through the sky and struck it, causing the Deviltiger Cat to scream in agony and lose control of its body as it continued to glide through the sky.

Huo Yuhao had employed his Spiritual Shock with the utmost efficiency. Because his ever-growing spiritual power—when channeled through his Spiritual Shock—had a highly synergistic effect with his Purple Demon Eyes, the end result was much more powerful than Huo Yuhao had expected.

The Deviltiger Cat plummeted towards the ground. Some of Wang Dong's Light of the Butterfly Goddess struck the cat's body and detonated, while the rest flew over Xiao Xiao's Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron and exploded when it hit the ground.

"Mmph." The Deviltiger Cat crashed into the ground, black burns present where Wang Dong's Light of the Butterfly Goddess had struck it. When Huo Yuhao used his Spiritual Detection on the Deviltiger Cat, he was surprised to find that the Deviltiger Cat's blood essence and soul power were in a chaotic mess; the cat was effectively incapacitated.

"What happened?" Xiao Xiao glanced at Huo Yuhao doubtfully.

Huo Yuhao was also astonished. "The Deviltiger Cat seems to have fainted from my Spiritual Shock. Take a look—its body is still seizing."

He walked forward once he'd finished speaking and flipped the unconscious Deviltiger Cat over.

The Deviltiger Cat's appearance was a little peculiar; its body was still seizing, and there specks of dark green blood were trickling from its nose. Its eye had rolled back into its head, and it was completely unconscious.

Wang Dong was taken aback. "Since when did your Spiritual Shock become so powerful?"

Huo Yuhao shrugged and replied, "I have no idea. If I'd known it was, I would've used it right from the get-go and saved us some trouble."

He immediately connected the large boost in his Spiritual Shock's power to the growth of his spiritual power. His abilities were always improving, while his cultivation level had constantly grown as well. However, the growth of his spiritual power was much more prominent than the growth of his soul power.

His spiritual sea had been transformed several times, and a second consciousness had been established between his eyebrows once he'd fused with the Life Gold. The fact that the three powerful entities residing within his spiritual sea could no longer directly control his body showed the great progress his spiritual power had made, and was also further indicative of his growth.

The Skydream Iceworm was more than happy that Huo Yuhao had become stronger. He'd been discreetly opening his seal throughout the expansion of Huo Yuhao's spiritual sea and during the consolidation process, and had also been constantly fusing his sealed origin power with Huo Yuhao's spiritual power.

Huo Yuhao could only increase his cultivation bit by bit, and had to gradually grow accustomed to his origin power. However, Huo Yuhao's spiritual power had experienced rapid progress due to a long period of accumulation. This was especially so during his recent closed-door cultivation, where he'd consistently been enlightened, causing his spiritual level to skyrocket. His spiritual sea was now ten times larger than that of most Soul Elders; even Soul Kings couldn't rival him in terms of pure spiritual power—and this was excluding his second one.

The four powerful soul skills that Skydream had bestowed upon Huo Yuhao with his first soul ring had been greatly boosted as well, and now both soul rings on his Spirit Eyes had transcended five thousand years in power.

His spirit-type martial soul directly complemented his spiritual power, and he also had a million year soul beast—the Skydream Iceworm—constantly refining it. Huo Yuhao's spiritual power had therefore reached a relatively astounding level. However, one's spiritual power had more growth limitations than soul power, thus advancing would become harder and harder as time passed. Despite this, if Huo Yuhao managed to completely absorb the Skydream Iceworm's million years' worth of spiritual power one day, he'd become the number one individual in the world in terms of pure spiritual power.

"What do we do now?" Wang Dong stared at Huo Yuhao with a shocked look.

Huo Yuhao answered, "The Deviltiger Cat's injuries aren't severe, its spirit just took a powerful hit. He'll recover after a while. Let's just put it on the tree it launched itself from and keep moving; we'll just avoid it."

He grabbed the Deviltiger Cat's pudgy body once he'd finished speaking, then climbed up the big tree that they were resting beside and placed him on a branch that was relatively high up.

Thousand year soul beasts' recovery abilities were relatively formidable, and Huo Yuhao could feel that the disorganized and scattered soul power inside the Deviltiger Cat was beginning to congregate and stabilize.

He came down from the tree and immediately departed with Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao, and the three of them ventured deeper into the Great Star Dou Forest.

“We’ve traveled about ten kilometers, Yuhao.” Wang Dong whispered to Huo Yuhao in front of him after about fifteen minutes of walking.

“Alright. We’ll proceed along the outer regions from now on.”

The Great Star Dou Forest was vast. Most of the soul beasts that were gathered within ten kilometers of the forest’s outer regions were mostly ten year and hundred year soul beasts. Besides the thousand year Deviltiger Cat that they had just encountered, they weren’t met with any other ambushes in the subsequent two hours. They did come across several thousand year soul beasts, but they were mild and had gentle temperaments. These soul beasts weren’t the kind to actively attack others, and they weren’t what the three of them needed either.

Huo Yuhao glanced at the sky. It was almost evening. “Let’s go back and rest outside the forest. We’ll stop here today.

Xiao Xiao couldn’t resign herself to fate. “It’s still early—the sky hasn’t turned dark yet.”

Huo Yuhao shook his head and replied, “The forest trails aren’t easy to walk. We can’t move too fast either, as we have to maintain the Spiritual Detection’s area of effect, so it’s better if we go back slightly earlier. We can always come back at dawn. Have you already forgotten what I said? We can’t be hasty and impulsive, we have to place our safety before everything.”

“Alright.” Xiao Xiao immediately nodded her head.

They were still young, and their cultivation levels were at a bottleneck. It was natural that they desired another soul ring to boost their abilities, and even Huo Yuhao thought the same way. The only difference was that he was comparatively more patient.

They discerned the right direction and began walking out of the Great Star Dou Forest.

They traveled for about fifteen minutes before Huo Yuhao suddenly stopped in his tracks.

“What’s wrong?” Wang Dong knew that Huo Yuhao’s abrupt halt hadn’t been for no reason. However, his Spiritual Detection’s area of effect didn’t show anything threatening.

Huo Yuhao’s squinted and said, “I don’t know why, but I have a feeling that someone’s watching us—someone dangerous.”

Xiao Xiao giggled and said, “You mean that they’re watching us from over a hundred meters away? With so many plants here, how could he even see us? Maybe you’re feeling our teacher’s aura.”

Even though the three of them hadn’t brought it up, everyone knew that Elder Xuan was definitely following them in the shadows to ensure their safety.

“No, it’s not. This is hostile.” Huo Yuhao spun around, grabbed Wang Dong’s hand this time and immediately stepped in front of Xiao Xiao.

“Meow...” A sharp and shrill sound rang loud, and patches of thick vegetation around them rustled as if a sudden gust of wind had billowed past them.

A powerful and intimidating aura immediately appeared in the next moment, and this intimidating pressure was also charged with the sharpness of metal.

Huo Yuhao raised his Spiritual Detection to the highest possible level in the blink of an eye. The area of effect that was originally one hundred meters instantly expanded to more than three hundred meters. He knew that doing so would greatly consume his soul power, but he also knew that an extra hundred meters of Spiritual Detection could possibly save their lives.

A shadowy figure appeared soundlessly about one hundred meters in front of them. Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection's area of effect was three hundred meters in length and one hundred and fifty meters out to either side, but he didn't feel much when this figure surged fifty meters within his range, and neither was he able to capture its movement – this speed was simply too frightening.

Huo Yuhao's expression changed a little from the immense pressure, and the golden hues in his pupils grew more intense. The sky was starting to dim now that it was sunset, thus his concentration was raised to a maximum.

It was a Deviltiger Cat that was more than a meter long. Emerald-green patterns glowed faintly on the surface of its black fur, its blood-red eyes were filled with acute hostility, and its entire body emanated ferocity. There were subtle and plain greenish-black lights rippling within three meters of its body. There was also a Deviltiger Cat with purplish-red eyes and greenish-black fur on its back – wasn't this the one they had just taken down earlier?

Xiao Xiao mumbled, "We hurt the small one and attracted the old one. Looks like sometimes we just can't be merciful!"

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong's expressions had also become serious. They didn't expect to run into such peril on their first day inside the Great Star Dou Forest, but they had brought this menace upon themselves with their benevolence!

This Deviltiger Cat that was over a meter long was clearly a ten thousand year soul beast. Its fur flickered with a layer of flowing emerald-green light, and one could tell that it wasn't a soul beast that had just entered ten thousand years.

This was their first time encountering a ten thousand year soul beast; how could they not be nervous? The lightning speed that this Deviltiger Cat had just displayed was far superior to that of a normal agility-type Soul King.

Soul beasts were vastly different from soul masters; their visceral capabilities probably trumped those of soul masters, while soul masters held an advantage in intelligence and mutable battle tactics.

This ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat was the greatest danger they had ever encountered in their lives. This wasn't a competition – it was a battle to the death.

This ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat wasn't hasty to attack. Its blood-red eyes were charged with a terrifying aura, and its black vertical pupils contracted from time to time. According to Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection, the Deviltiger Cat's vigorous aura could erupt with explosive power at any time, and they probably wouldn't be able to defend themselves against this force.

Huo Yuhao murmured, "Seems like our opinions were a little wrong,"

Wang Dong said nothing, but pressed his lips tightly together.

These kinds of situations brought out their qualities as Shrek Academy's core disciples. The three of them didn't relax because Elder Xuan was protecting them from the shadows; the only solution they had to deal with this Deviltiger Cat was to rely on their own abilities.

"Meow!" The ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat's shrill roar rang out again and it began to move.

Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection had the right precognition. This time, he was the Deviltiger Cat's target of choice.

This ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat was just too fast—it was almost too fast for the naked eye to follow. It left behind an after-image when it sprung forwards, even though its body was clearly pouncing through the air, which only dissipated once it had arrived in front of Huo Yuhao.

Huo Yuhao didn't retreat. Xiao Xiao was behind him, and Wang Dong was beside him. He was their team leader; he couldn't simply retreat. Furthermore, even if he did, how could he match his opponent's speed?

Wang Dong stepped behind Huo Yuhao at the same moment that the Deviltiger Cat launched its attack, and the two of them moved together as if they were a single entity. The center of Huo Yuhao's left hand curved inwards, while he pushed his right hand outwards, both of which were completely covered in a layer of compact ice as he used the Ice Empress' Pincers.

"Hoot..." The Ninephoenix Worshipping Flute was extremely useful at this point. When the note from the flute rang out, even though the ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat was only slowed for a moment, it still gave Huo Yuhao another moment to adapt.

"Clang—" A series of sparks was created, Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong were thrown sideways. The Radiant Butterfly Goddess' wings opened when this happened so that the two of them didn't slam into a tree.

The Deviltiger Cat's body twisted the moment it clashed against Huo Yuhao, and was flung sideways and spun around as if it had lost its center of gravity, negating its fatal claw.

Huo Yuhao felt a wave of numbness in his arms. His palms throbbed painfully as if they were being torn apart, and a deep white gash appeared on the ice pearls that the Ice Empress' Pincer had given him. Even though he had successfully defended himself against the Deviltiger Cat's assault, his shirt was torn at his chest. One could only imagine how sharp the Deviltiger Cat's attack was.

However, he couldn't be bothered with his trembling and sore palms that had been amplified by the Ice Empress' Pincer and the Mysterious Jade Hands. He hurriedly exclaimed, "Watch out, Xiao Xiao!"

The two of them were flung aside, and that meant the Deviltiger Cat was now closest to Xiao Xiao.

The ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat landed on all fours. It didn't make a sound, as if it were cotton flowers fluttering to the ground, before its body launched explosively in the next moment. It was still going after Huo Yuhao, but it would definitely cross Xiao Xiao's path. It swiped horizontally with its right claw, and a dark green light slashed right toward Xiao Xiao.

Other two-ringed soul masters would have been slashed in half if they faced the Deviltiger Cat's tremendously quick attacks; it just didn't seem like anything else was possible. Two-ringed soul masters attempting to defend against a ten thousand year soul beast's onslaught – wasn't that just foolish?

Chapter 138.1: The Strong Eat the Weak, the Law of the Jungle

Xiao Xiao, however, wasn't a normal two-ringed soul master, as her cultivation had already reached Rank 30. More importantly, she had the experience of participating in the Continental Advanced Soul Master Academy Soul Dueling Tournament, in addition to the consolidation during her previous closed-door cultivation. Furthermore, Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection Sharing was also supporting her.

She had already begun to retreat the moment the Deviltiger Cat pounced forward. She was a Tang Sect disciple, and she knew how to use the Ghost Shadow Perplexing Track. She constantly changed directions as she flew backwards swiftly while the Spiritual Detection determined the light blade's position the moment it was unleashed. Her body arched like a bow as she flew backwards and narrowly evaded the light blade.

A series of crackling sounds could be heard wherever the light blade crossed, and a great many plants met their ends.

Xiao Xiao broke out into a cold sweat even though she managed to dodge this attack. Fortunately, she wasn't the Deviltiger Cat's target, as she wouldn't have avoided its attack so easily otherwise.

At this moment, the ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat had arrived before Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong.

Purplish-golden radiance flickered once more as brilliant light flames poured out from Huo Yuhao's eyes. The Deviltiger Cat's blood-red pupils also sparkled once following this shining outburst. It was apparent that it was aware of Huo Yuhao's formidable spiritual-type abilities from its child, and it wanted to use its own spiritual power to fight against Huo Yuhao.

However, the ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat soon realized its mistake, as Huo Yuhao's target of choice was something else.

The thousand year Deviltiger Cat that was lying prostrate on the ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat's back was overflowing with murderous hostility, and lying eagerly in wait. "Tch –" Its hide suddenly crackled like a melon being smashed open, and blood instantly poured out from the seven apertures of its head. The blood trickled down and flowed all over the ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat's body.

Huo Yuhao didn't show a single ounce of mercy this time. The thousand year Deviltiger Cat had already taken a hit from his Spiritual Shock before this, and its spiritual sea was already severely damaged. It had no preparation at all, and when took another all-out strike from Huo Yuhao, its brain directly turned to mush.

This was the law of the jungle – if my enemy wants to kill me, I have to kill my enemy first. There was only cold light in Huo Yuhao's eyes.

It hadn't been long since they had faced the thousand year Deviltiger Cat, and then the ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat caught up with them shortly afterwards. However, his opinions had transformed drastically, because he realized that the peril they were mired in was because of their

tenderheartedness. Those that weren't of the same species surely thought differently, and these were soul beasts, after all. This was an unchangeable fact.

The ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat was shocked by the thousand year Deviltiger Cat's death. It roared into the sky as it subconsciously turned back towards the thousand year Deviltiger Cat on its back. It had ultimately been alive for ten thousand years, and its innate ability allowed it to turn its body in midair at a time like this as it temporarily avoided Huo Yuhao.

However, both Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong made a move at this moment. Vigorous blue, purple and golden light sparkled on their bodies – The Golden Road Amidst Withering Resplendence.

They were guided by the Spiritual Detection Sharing, and the ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat was also momentarily disoriented. This attack was aimed at a location that the Deviltiger Cat was bound to cross.

The brilliant Golden Road lit up a few hundred meters around them, and slammed directly against the ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat, which was immediately transformed into a golden sculpture, and plummeted downwards with its forward momentum.

This was the first time they had used the Golden Road used against a soul beast, and its effects startled both Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong.

A cat's shadow seemed to depart from the ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat's body as it crashed against the ground, motionless. The shadow quickly lunged towards the body on the ground.

"This is..." Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong exchanged a look, and they both felt a little dumbfounded. This shadow surged into the Deviltiger Cat's body within these two seconds, and the golden color on its body swiftly receded before it leapt to its feet once again.

The ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat seemed a little wretched at this point. The Golden Road carried immense light power, and many charcoal-black spots had appeared all over its fur from the corruption, while its powerful aura was also greatly diminished. It tossed its head from side to side, as if it were struggling against something. The thousand year Deviltiger Cat dropped to the ground by its side, and a purple thousand year soul ring gradually took form.

It was apparent that the Golden Road had a different effect on soul beasts than on soul masters. Huo Yuhao had chosen this martial soul fusion skill because of the Golden Road's ability to control his opponent. However, the ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat exceeded his expectations in the end. It was moving too fast, and it flew out far away with its forward momentum despite taking a direct hit from the Golden Road. It was too far out of range for Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong to chain their onslaught, while what happened afterwards bewildered them.

The ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat was just vigorously shaking its head. It only recovered after a few seconds, and it immediately glanced towards the thousand year Deviltiger Cat's corpse beside it. It roared furiously into the sky, and its blood-red eyes felt as if they were actually dripping with blood while it pounced towards Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong once more. However, its speed was clearly a little slower than before.

The Ninephoenix Worshipping Flute chimed continuously as it worked its slowing effect on the ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat. Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong couldn't be bothered about what exactly had

happened with the changes that had just occurred to this soul beast, as they had to focus all their attention on this air of hostility that was charging towards them.

The Deviltiger Cat's fur suddenly turned emerald-green, and a green radiance immediately expanded outwards. This expansion wasn't forceful, and only reached about a foot from it, but it appeared as if the Deviltiger Cat's entire body was also expanding. It was initially a little more than a meter long, but as its entire sparkled with green light, it grew to the point where it was now more than two meters long. It also looked burlier than before, as if it were an actual fearsome tiger. Even the purring sounds from its mouth became more like a tiger's roar.

The immense pressure made Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong feel a little suffocated, and the enormous gap in their cultivations was apparent at this moment. This Deviltiger Cat was similar in power to a Soul King after all, and its abilities were possibly also superior to those of a Soul King.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong had retreated quickly while the Deviltiger Cat was vigorously tossing its head from side to side. Circle after circle of golden light emanated from Wang Dong's left arm, and both of them appeared to sparkle with golden luster.

Haodong power amplified the Golden Light Left Arm Bone's soul skill, Golden Light, as the soul skill swiftly took effect, and the soul power they had consumed to power their martial soul fusion skill was restored with dazzling speed.

Huo Yuhao raised his left hand and fired a beam of light at the Deviltiger Cat that was lunging towards him. He was pretty much locked onto his target with the Spiritual Detection Sharing, and this beam was the soul paralysis ray.

The soul paralysis ray's light accurately landed on the Deviltiger Cat's body, or it could be said that the Deviltiger Cat willingly collided against this beam. The dense green light around its body flickered, and the soul paralysis ray was actually diverted away from the green light that was protecting its body. The emerald-green hues burst violently, and the Deviltiger Cat's speed exploded once more as it arrived before Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong in a flash.

A sphere of light that was a foot in diameter rose into the sky. Huo Yuhao shifted behind Wang Dong and grabbed onto Wang Dong's shoulders with both hands as they used the Ghost Shadow Perplexing Track at the same time. They moved with blinding speed as the Deviltiger Cat smashed against that sphere of light.

Uncountable rays of light surged in an instant, completely enveloping the Deviltiger Cat's body within them. However, the Deviltiger Cat had unleashed its origin skill, and it was truly fearsome. The golden rays of light seemed to dissipate immediately as they rushed into the layer of emerald-green radiance that was protecting its body. The Deviltiger Cat's body had been impeded in midair, and it couldn't continue its assault, but this moment only lasted about the time needed for two breaths. The rays of light were all dispelled, but the protective radiance on the Deviltiger Cat's body appeared to have thinned a little.

The Deviltiger Cat's soul skill was similar to Dai Yueheng's White Tiger's Shield, except this was just its first soul skill, and it boosted its attack, defense and speed. Wang Dong's Butterfly Goddess Slash was formidable, but he couldn't gain an advantage at all against the Deviltiger Cat.

However, Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong changed their tactics once more with this moment's worth of hindrance to the Deviltiger Cat.

Huo Yuhao was still standing behind Wang Dong as he channeled Haodong power into Wang Dong's body. Wang Dong raised his right arm and pointed his index finger at the Deviltiger Cat, while his entire right arm began to glow.

This was different from the circles displayed by his left arm's Golden Light. The radiance from his right arm was a concentration of sharp energies.

Wang Dong's right arm pressed against the root of his left arm, and his left arm began to flicker with signs of Golden Light. Two powerful soul bone skills were activated at the same time, and they boosted one another.

He hadn't used the Golden Light when he had attacked with the Butterfly Goddess Slash because he was acutely aware that the Butterfly Goddess Slash worked on a single target, but it wasn't concentrated into a single point. The attack that he was unleashing at this moment was his most powerful strike.

"Together, Yuhao!"

Wang Dong exclaimed as a sharp radiance drilled out from his right index finger. This beam was about three inches long, and its tip was pointed, while its root was thick like a finger. The Golden Light's hues were sparkling with lightning speed.

Right before the Butterfly Goddess Slash was completely dispelled, the golden drill surged forth with lightning speed – and it went straight for the Deviltiger Cat's forehead.

Yes, Wang Dong's Broken Devil of Light Right Arm Bone had provided him this soul skill. Wang Dong named it the Broken Devil of Light because he was lazy, and it instantly concentrated the power of light into a single point and launched an attack. It looked like a drill because Wang Dong's cultivation wasn't high enough, but it could become as thin as a needle as he became stronger, to the point where it would eventually become a thread of light.

Wang Dong's cultivation transcended that of a Soul Ancestor with the Haodong power, and this was in addition to the support from his Golden Light. His light power was extremely effective against the dark-type ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat.

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The Deviltiger Cat moved as well when Wang Dong attacked. It had cultivated for ten thousand years, and it was also extremely sensitive towards danger. It expanded its protective layer of green light at the first possible moment as it attempted to evade this strike. However, Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Shock arrived right at this moment.

The purplish-golden light was fired out from over the top of Wang Dong's left shoulder. The Deviltiger Cat's cultivation was impressive, but its spiritual power still couldn't compare to Huo Yuhao's. It grunted once as the purplish-golden beam flickered, and it looked as if the shadow that had been forced out of its body by the Golden Road from before glimmered above its head once again, except it returned to its body instantly this time.

However, this was enough, and the Deviltiger Cat's evasive movement was never completed.

"Tch—"

The Broken Devil of Light drilled ruthlessly into the emerald-green radiance. Wang Dong's most powerful strike was met with an immense defensive force as the emerald-green radiance started to seethe like a layer of boiling oil. The green light congregated at the point where the Deviltiger Cat was being struck, as it no longer maintained its original protective form, and the Deviltiger Cat's body also plummeted to the ground.

The Broken Devil of Light gradually pierced deeper, while the Deviltiger Cat's layer of emerald light became more vigorous. The green radiance was slowly diminishing, but the Golden Light that was infused into the Broken Devil of Light was also gradually withering away.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong couldn't help but be awed at the Deviltiger Cat's powerful soul skill even though it was their opponent. This soul skill amplified its own body, and it could even concentrate its powers when faced with a penetrative attack that was focused onto a single point. The Deviltiger Cat looked like it was having a rough time, and it wasn't able to anything else, but at least it managed to avoid the Broken Devil of Light boring through its brain!

Three pitch-black cauldrons appeared beside the Deviltiger Cat at this crucial moment. Ear-splitting chiming sounds accompanied vigorous ripples as they assaulted the Deviltiger Cat's body – Xiao Xiao gave no quarter.

Huo Yuhao switched positions with Wang Dong after his attack. His golden pupils immediately became emerald-green, and the temperature of the air plunged with him at the very center. His body began to emanate a subtle aura of desolation.

Emerald-green light shimmered from his bones. This time, it extended to his left arm, and every single inch of that green color congregated towards his chest. Terrifying Ultimate power erupted at this very moment.

The Deviltiger Cat was tied down as it defended itself against the lethal power of the Broken Devil of Light. The protective layer of green light dimmed from the Cauldron's Quaking Tremble's effects, and the Broken Devil of Light drilled inwards with increasing speed. This was his best chance at dealing a final blow.

The Heavenly Emperor's Hammer was the optimal choice. However, martial soul fusion skills could only be used once within three days, and today was only their first day inside the Great Star Dou Forest. It was better to conserve their martial soul fusion skills if they could help it. Therefore, Huo Yuhao opted for another of his powerful soul skills. This was a soul skill that he could barely handle after breaking through to Rank 30 during his closed-door cultivation.

An emerald-green pillar of light discharged from his chest. The air all around the beam appeared to solidify wherever it touched, to the point where a white ice pillar glimmered in the space behind the green light pillar before it crashed to the ground and shattered into pieces. This was because the air in the forest was relatively moist and humid, but that extreme coldness was the more substantial reason!

It was also green in color, but it was a different type of energy. The radiance that had resisted the Broken Devil of Light finally crumbled as the emerald beam of light smashed against it. The Broken Devil of Light was left with about thirty percent of its power, and it pierced right through the protective layer. The Deviltiger Cat could only tilt its head to the side so that its forehead didn't take the brunt of the attack. However, the Broken Devil of Light drilled right through. A layer of golden light immediately appeared on its head, and these golden hues continued creeping down its entire body.

However, this ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat didn't scream in agony at all – its body had been completely frozen.

Ice Empress' Wrath, Huo Yuhao's most powerful soul skill. This was one of the two powerful soul skills that came with the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's bones.

It had appeared once during the Continental Advanced Soul Master Academy Soul Dueling Tournament, and it now appeared once more. Still, it consumed the rest of Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong's soul power. If he were the only one using it, and if he activated it when he was at his peak condition, he would have consumed at least ninety percent of his soul power.

The power of the Ice Empress' Wrath was terrifying, and the Deviltiger Cat had been completely frozen into a statue. Chilly air emanated from its body, and every single plant within ten meters of the ice statue transformed into a patch of ice. The scene was rather spectacular, as transparent ice crystals permeated the entire area.

Xiao Xiao withdrew her Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron and shivered. "It's so cold! Your Ultimate Ice is so frightening, Yuhao."

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong sat down on the ground, exhausted. It seemed as if they won the battle without suffering any conspicuous losses, but they had actually given everything they had.

The Golden Road was used, Wang Dong's most powerful soul skill, the Broken Devil of Light, was used along with his Golden Light, and Huo Yuhao activated the Ice Empress' Wrath as well as the Ice Empress' Pincer. This was already excluding his Spiritual Detection Sharing and his Spiritual Shock.

They were one of Shrek Academy's most talented groups, and they barely squeezed out a win after giving everything they had. Furthermore, the Deviltiger Cat that was frozen like a statue wasn't dead yet. However, its blood had been frozen, and it was almost impossible for it to break out of its solid ice prison that resembled the Manifold Mysterious Ice.

If something didn't melt the ice from the outside within an hour, it would eventually lose its life.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong glanced at each other. They weren't elated after defeating the Deviltiger Cat, and their brows were tightly furrowed instead. Huo Yuhao said, "Seems like our original decision was wrong. This world follows the law of the jungle, and mercy will bring even more dangers and perils."

Wang Dong's spirit was even more affected, and he nodded his head lightly but said nothing.

Huo Yuhao grasped his shoulder and said, "Don't be dejected. How would we have known that such a thing would happen if we didn't try? This is probably an important experience in the process of growing up."

Wang Dong snapped his head around and replied, "Did you think about what happened to it when it took a direct hit from our Golden Road?" His left arm's Golden Light began to work its magic as he spoke, and triggered the remaining Haodong power within their bodies to recuperate their soul power.

Huo Yuhao nodded his head faintly. "I thought of something. My Spiritual Detection blanketed the entire battlefield. When the shadow appeared above the Deviltiger Cat's head, I could feel that it had completely lost control of its body, or that it had lost consciousness. We aren't able to hit soul beasts directly with the Golden Road, but it seems like we can strip them of their spirit. This is the reason why it took several seconds to recuperate after the shadow returned to its body, but it was clear that it had been weakened. It was also conspicuously slower, and that's why it unleashed its most powerful soul skill to fight us till the end."

Wang Dong eyed him with an astonished look. "If your guess is correct, I wonder what would have happened if we had attacked its spirit after it appeared?"

Huo Yuhao's body shuddered, and his eyes sparkled with vigorous colors. He slapped himself on the thigh and exclaimed excitedly, "Yes! Why didn't I think of that? If we attacked its spirit when it appeared, we could have blown it into smithereens, and it would have become like a zombie. Any living being, as long as it doesn't practice spiritual skills, will become extremely weak when their spirits leave their body. Even if we can't directly destroy its spirit, it will also severely affect its fighting strength once the spirit returns to its body. Your eyes are clearer, Wang Dong."

Wang Dong shot him a cold look as he listened to Huo Yuhao's enthusiastic analysis. "Take your hand off of my thigh."

"Uh..." Huo Yuhao suddenly realized that he hadn't slapped his own thigh in his fit of excitement – no wonder he didn't feel any pain at all. He laughed sheepishly and said, "Sorry, sorry, that was accidental. We have to try that once we can use the Golden Road again. Others lack the ability to target spirits, but we don't. It's a pity that the Golden Road can only be activated in a linear direction. If it can have a large area of effect like the Spiritual Tempest, and we combine these two soul skills together – heh."

Wang Dong rolled his eyes and said, "Quit dreaming. How can we have everything that's good in the world? Our soul skills are strong enough. However, our cultivation is the limiting factor. If we don't have enough soul power to maintain ourselves, what use are our skills if we can't use them? Quickly restore your soul power, and we should leave this place before it becomes completely dark."

Xiao Xiao's consumption of soul power was the smallest, so she naturally took up the responsibility of protecting everyone. Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong immediately began to cultivate beside the ice statue to restore their soul power.

Huo Yuhao was not worried about the Deviltiger Cat suddenly escaping from its ice prison. Without someone outside melting it, the Deviltiger Cat had no hope of breaking out after it had been frozen in ice. There was nothing it could do after it was frozen unless it used its soul power to resist Huo Yuhao's attack from the beginning.

Wang Dong obtained a greater understanding of his Golden Light than before. Their recovery process was greatly boosted with the Golden Light, and they recovered about thirty to forty percent of their soul power in the blink of an eye.

Elder Xuan was casually drinking wine atop a thick branch about five hundred meters away from where they were, and a sphere of golden light soundlessly entered his body at this moment.

Chapter 138.3: The Strong Eat the Weak, the Law of the Jungle

This was the Star Dou Forest. Elder Xuan was going all-out to protect the three of them. The tragedy that had occurred before served as a warning to him. He had the strength to follow the three of them, but his power was beneath the ground. That's why Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection couldn't detect him.

Elder Xuan was also stunned when discovered the ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat. This Deviltiger Cat's cultivation was nothing to him, but it was able to kill Huo Yuhao and the other two, who were only around Rank 30 on average.

But Elder Xuan wouldn't make his move so easily, having taught in Shrek Academy for years. He wanted to see how the three of them would react when their lives were in danger. He didn't want them to be complacent just because they had protection.

The three of them had displayed astonishing strength. Elder Xuan only expected the three of them to resist the ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat's assault for some time. But who knew that they would take the Deviltiger Cat down successfully, and even capture it alive.

Elder Xuan hadn't expected such an ending. It was also his first time realizing that the three of them couldn't be judged based on their current cultivation. Even Elder Xuan was slightly shocked by the aura of desolation when Huo Yuhao used the Ice Empress' Wrath.

"One makes the greatest improvement in a life and death situation. The three of them are good. I shall let them experience what the laws of the jungle are in this Star Dou Forest. Their luck seems to be really good!"

As Elder Xuan muttered to himself, a ball of yellow light started to rise from his body.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong's soul power was restored faster and faster. From their depleted state, it only took 15 minutes before they reached 50% of their soul power. Huo Yuhao opened his eyes suddenly at this point.

How could he not be wary since he was in Star Dou Forest, where soul beasts were everywhere? He had continued to use his Spiritual Detection even though his soul power was greatly depleted. He had only not used the Spiritual Detection Sharing to save his soul power during the process of cultivating with Wang Dong. Only he could sense the changes around him.

"Another soul beast is coming." His Spiritual Detection Sharing was initiated, and used on Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao.

Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao's expressions changed. They were not in their best condition now. They both tensed up as they were given another warning.

As Huo Yuhao signaled, the three of them walked around the ice-sealed ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat to one side. Huo Yuhao lifted his left hand and pressed it against the Deviltiger Cat. An azure light flashed across subtly. Following that, he waved his hand lightly, initiating his Imitation. But he wasn't

imitating the aura of any soul beast, but the aura of plants. A layer of dim green light covered the three of them, and they walked further into the forest under his guidance. They tried not to make any noise.

The soul beast that Huo Yuhao had discovered was not as quick as the Deviltiger Cat. Rather, it looked a little sluggish.

An huge, entirely pitch-black bear appeared within his Spiritual Detection. Its nose kept on moving, as if it were sniffing something. Huo Yuhao judged that this was a soul beast that was a few thousand years old from its vigorous energy and undulations of soul power, regardless of its species. It wasn't just an ordinary soul beast; its cultivation was at least three thousand years.

The huge bear had managed to use its acute olfactory sense to sniff out the location of their previous fight. Its attention was first caught by the ice-sealed Deviltiger Cat, before it realized the presence of the thousand year old Deviltiger Cat and went towards it.

Huo Yuhao used his Spiritual Detection Sharing to share his thoughts with the other two, "It seems to be attracted by the bloody smell."

This huge bear was more than 3 meters in length. It was very burly, and its black fur seemed to emit a slight golden glow. It didn't seem to be afraid even though it saw the ice-sealed ten thousand year old Deviltiger Cat.

This was the case in the world of soul beasts. While cultivation was important, the species of the soul beast also determined how strong they were. This bear possessed a cultivation between three to five thousand years. But it wasn't afraid when it faced the ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat.

Two ten thousand year soul beasts of different species still possessed great differences in their abilities. If it were a ten thousand year tiger-type soul beast that was present here, this huge bear would have absconded. It would have never gotten close to it.

However, the bear now devoured the thousand year Deviltiger Cat in 2 to 3 bites, but it wasn't full yet. It came before the ice-sealed Deviltiger Cat and tried to claw at the ice.

Its power was extremely frightening. Although Huo Yuhao's cultivation couldn't allow him to use his Ultimate Ice on the ice-sealed Deviltiger Cat for too long, the frozen ice chunk was still very tough. But the bear managed to claw till cracks appeared on the ice. It's important to know that the entire ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat was frozen, including its blood. Its body would crack along with the frozen ice chunk if the bear continued to claw at the ice like that.

Huo Yuhao turned to Xiao Xiao at this point.

"How?"

Xiao Xiao was stunned and asked, "What how?"

Huo Yuhao replied, "Is this bear suitable to be your soul ring?"

Xiao Xiao was stunned. "Why would you think of this now? Its cultivation seems to be suitable. But we've only sensed it using your Spiritual Detection. We haven't seen it. We can't even confirm what soul beast it is. How can we judge whether it's suitable?"

Huo Yuhao smiled slightly. "I know you plan to supplement the Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron with either a defense-type or control-type soul skill. This bear didn't even flinch when it saw the ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat. This means that it's emotionally stable, and therefore tells me that it isn't afraid of the Deviltiger Cat. Coupled with the fact that the Deviltiger Cat is offensively threatening, I can conclude that this bear is defensively strong."

"Furthermore, the Deviltiger Cat's attacks don't seem to threaten it that much. This bear must come from a species that's rather strong."

Xiao Xiao opened her eyes wide and said, "Yes! No wonder you're the class monitor. You can analyze so much even without using your eyes."

Huo Yuhao said, "My main martial soul is both a spiritual and control-type. Observation and analysis are my strengths. Make a decision now, or it'll be too late."

Xiao Xiao said, "Of course I want it. We can't let it go! But can we deal with a soul beast that's unafraid of the Deviltiger Cat?"

Huo Yuhao used his actions to answer Xiao Xiao's doubts.

The bear managed to get the ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat out after clawing at the ice several times. It lifted the Deviltiger Cat up and was about to smash it onto the ground.

At this point, the Deviltiger Cat suddenly turned azure-green. A reverberating boom resonated across the entire Star Dou Forest following that.

A vicious bear roar was heard after this. Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao were a hundred meters away, but they still felt a frightening shockwave coming their way. Many plants and trees were instantly destroyed by this shockwave, while the three of them were sent flying for tens of meters before they landed.

Fortunately, Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection was there to warn them earlier. The three of them had made preparations and took advantage of the situation, thus they were not hurt.

It wasn't only Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao who were shocked. Even Huo Yuhao was stunned for a moment.

The frightening shockwave carried some remnants of ice, and the cool feeling caused a chill to travel down everyone's spine.

The frightening explosion even caused Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection to be scattered. But they didn't need to use it anymore. They could just use their sight now.

A frightening scene was presented before them. A huge crater had appeared, with the ice-sealed Deviltiger Cat at the center. It covered a radius of more than a hundred meters. All the plants within this area had disappeared, as they were blown to ashes by the explosion.

The center of the depression was more than 3 meters deep, and was semicircular in shape. The plants and trees around this depression had also fallen. It seemed as if there was a collapsed plot of wheat.

"What, what situation is this?" Xiao Xiao asked as her eyes opened wide in shock.

Huo Yuhao laughed bitterly, "I didn't expect it to be so ferocious. I used the Ice Explosion Technique on the ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat just now."

Wang Dong was shocked as he asked, "Your Ice Explosive Technique is so powerful?"

Huo Yuhao replied, "Did the both of you forget? During the top-ranked auction at the Starlight Auctionplace, my Ice Jade Empress Scorpion Left Arm Bone was one of the final auction items. It was only inferior to the hundred thousand year old soul beast embryo. That's because the Ice Explosion Technique that it contains is considered a divine skill under the appropriate conditions. But it's useless in certain environments too. Not all ice exploded by this technique will cause such a huge force. Normal ice can be induced to explode by the Ice Explosion Technique, but the explosive force is related to my soul power – it won't be too strong. The real threat of the Ice Explosion Technique is similar to the corpse explosion we saw when we faced that evil soul master. The stronger the corpse being detonated, the greater the explosive force. But two prerequisites must be fulfilled first. First, the entire body must be frozen, and it must be filled with water internally. Second, I must come into contact with it using my left arm and inject the strength of the Ice Explosion Technique into its body. The body's own strength will develop a special reaction with the ice under the guidance of the Ice Explosion Technique, and can be induced to explode at any time. The stronger the target, the more frightening the explosive force."

Chapter 139: Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear

Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao's expressions changed when Huo Yuhao talked about the corpse explosion that had happened back then. An evil soul master who was only a Soul King managed to exterminate almost all of Team Shrek's official team members. Even Ma Xiaotao and Dai Yueheng were heavily injured. In the tournament, they witnessed how powerful these 2 soul emperors were! They even possessed soul bones. They only thought that evil soul masters were too frightening then, but didn't realize that Huo Yuhao possess a similar ability too.

The Ice Explosion Technique and corpse explosion were very similar, but they were also different in their own ways. Corpse explosion was a direct explosion of a corpse, but it required the injection of a poison. The Envoy of the Death God had injected the poison in the cave then, and all the corpses were infected with the poison. They were then induced to explode. The timing of the explosion couldn't be controlled. The Ice Explosion Technique was advanced in this aspect. Not only was the timing of the explosion controllable, but it could even be used as long as the opponent was frozen. That's why the Ice Explosion Technique was highly regarded in the Starlight auction house after it appeared.

Of course, one couldn't bear the Ice Jade Scorpion Left Arm Bone's intensity without Ultimate Ice due to the domineering Ice Explosion Technique. That's why this soul bone eventually landed in Huo Yuhao's hands. This was his first time using it, but its power was beyond what he had expected. The explosive force of a ten thousand year soul beast could rival Ma Xiaotao's strongest attack, and might even be superior to it.

"Are you trying to scare me to death?!" Elder Xuan's voice rang out at this moment.

He had been observing the 3 of them. From afar, he became more relaxed after he saw the 3 of them retreating into the forest and concealing themselves well using Imitation. But he didn't expect an explosion to happen so suddenly.

Elder Xuan's heart almost jumped out of his mouth when the Ice Explosion rang out. He was extremely sensitive now after the last lesson. Furthermore, he was well-aware of what the 3 of them meant to the academy. They all had twin martial souls!

That's why he rushed over instantly. After he saw the three of them who appeared dejected and heard Huo Yuhao's description of the Ice Explosion, he revealed himself and vented his frustration.

"Elder Xuan." The three of them greeted.

Elder Xuan lifted his hand and smashed his wine gourd on Huo Yuhao's head. Huo Yuhao spat out his tongue as his head was struck. "Rascal, be careful of playing with fire. No, playing with ice and causing harm to yourself. If something happens to you, how I can account to Elder Mu? You didn't even try it before you used such an uncontrollable soul skill. What if all of you were blown apart because you were too close? Don't tell me you can control the explosive force."

Huo Yuhao was a little indignant as he retorted, "But I can't find a ten thousand year soul beast in the academy to try this on."

"Uhhh..." That was true, as Shrek Academy did have ten thousand year soul beasts. But they were valuable resources, and couldn't be used for experiments.

The radiance in Elder Xuan's eyes flashed, and he looked to the other side of the area that had exploded.

A burly figure wobbled out. This figure took unsteady steps, as if it could collapse at any time.

It was a huge bear that was huge and tall, but had suffered many injuries. The fur of this huge bear was dark gold, but it was stained with a large amount of dark red blood now.

One of its front limbs had already disappeared, including the shoulder blade. It was bleeding from many places, and its eyes flashed with a dim green light.

On the other side of its body, its claws were extremely long as they reached more than 2 feet in length. It was still bursting with energy although it was covered entirely in blood as it wobbled.

"That's the bear from just now." Xiao Xiao said in shock.

After Huo Yuhao explained the Ice Explosion Technique, they reckoned that the bear must have been blown to pieces. After all, Huo Yuhao was unaware of the Ice Explosion Technique's might beforehand. It was not abnormal to make such a mistake.

However, they hadn't expected that the huge bear would survive the explosion, and only be sent flying by the explosive force.

The three of them could sense the aura of death even at the borders of the area that had exploded. Their ears were still ringing now. And the huge bear had borne the explosion right at the center of it! But only one of its limbs had been blown apart, and it hadn't died yet.

How strong was its defense to survive such a blast? No wonder it wasn't afraid of a ten thousand year Deviltiger Cat with its thousand year cultivation. This was the difference in species. It was just like how the youngest giant dragon was stronger than the most powerful lizard. This huge bear possessed a shocking strength indeed.

The three of them were certain that they couldn't beat this bear even if they teamed up together. Their offense was unlikely to overcome the defense of this bear. Unless Huo Yuhao could freeze its body and use the Ice Explosion Technique, they didn't have any chance at all.

"Oh, a Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear. Why would this soul beast appear around the perimeter of Star Dou Forest?" The bear looked extremely pathetic right now. In addition, the three of them couldn't identify it because it was very rare. But Elder Xuan was very experienced, and could identify it easily.

The 'Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bears'; a soul beast with the title 'Earth Render.' They were the greatest of the most powerful soul beasts, and were belligerents in the Star Dou Forest.

After Huo Yuhao returned to Shrek Academy, he had specially researched the Ten Great Savage Beasts. He seemed to recall the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear being one of them.

Soul beasts generally specialized in certain traits. For example, they could be very speedy, offensively or defensively inclined, etc. The Deviltiger Cat, for example specialized in speed. Its offensive strength relied on its extreme speed.

The Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear was an anomaly. Its specialty was offense and defense, which was conflicting. Its dark golden fur contained powerful defensive strength, while its pair of frightening claws was frightening offensively. The Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear was even rumored to be able to challenge a giant dragon. It was very uncommon for a Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear to appear in the perimeter of Star Dou Forest.

Although this Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear was critically injured, it still maintained its sensitive hearing. It heard Elder Xuan's voice, and released a furious roar that sounded very threatening. But it stopped in its tracks. It didn't continue to advance forward. The painful lesson that it had received earlier had left it extremely wary.

Elder Xuan revealed a slight smile on his face and said, "Fortunately, I wasn't scared for nothing. Your luck is pretty good. Not only is this fellow suitable, but it's even beyond my expectations. Let me do it."

He didn't dare to let the three of them face the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear. It possessed frightening offensive ability. The three of them would definitely be killed if they were struck by it.

Elder Xuan arrived in front of the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear as his figure flashed. The Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear reacted very quickly. It still managed to attack and mount its own defense even though it was critically injured.

A layer of dark golden flowing light surged out from its undamaged fur. This layer of light didn't stick to its fur, but remained slightly above it. Its fur started to stand up like needles. At the same time, it waved its claw and clawed towards Elder Xuan.

Its 2 foot claw already seemed very exaggerated. But the three of them understood the true meaning of a terrorclaw when it waved its claw. Its claw tripled in size, growing to 2 meters in length. Its sharp claw flashed with a dark golden radiance as it clawed towards Elder Xuan. Even a mountain rock would be split into pieces if it were struck by this claw, let alone a human!

However, it's a pity that it was facing Elder Xuan. Even a top-ranked Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear might not fancy meeting Elder Xuan, while this bear only had a thousand year cultivation.

Elder Xuan straightened his expression, and a yellow radiance flashed before disappearing. The thousand year Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear's body remained still without moving. It was clear that its lower limbs had sunk into the ground.

Elder Xuan rose up and slapped his palm on the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear's head. The Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear's bones were shattered.

"Xiao Xiao, come over!" Elder Xuan shouted.

Xiao Xiao knew what Elder Xuan wanted her to do. She rushed over to Elder Xuan's side. Elder Xuan gave her a sharp blade and plucked out a patch of dark gold fur from the back of the bear's neck. Xiao Xiao expended some effort before she managed to stab the blade into the bear's neck. She pierced the nerves of the bear's central nervous system, which caused it to die.

Xiao Xiao was wondering whether she could kill this Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear on her own if Elder Xuan wasn't around.

Its defensive strength was too frightening.

A dazzling, bright purple soul ring surfaced as the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear was killed.

Elder Xuan spoke after making some careful observations. "Its cultivation is around 2000 years. It'll be fine for you to absorb it with your current powers and the enhancements made to your body by the 2 pieces of soul bones. You can begin."

"Thank you, Teacher." Xiao Xiao was excited as she sat cross-legged on the ground. She started to absorb the soul ring. The purplish soul ring turned into a streak of flowing light and fused with her body. Xiao Xiao was suddenly covered by a layer of dim purple light.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong had rushed over by now. They were a little envious as they looked at Xiao Xiao. Although the quality of a soul ring was mainly decided by its age, the species of the soul beast also mattered. A powerful soul beast would naturally bring about a powerful soul skill.

Elder Xuan didn't sit still afterwards. He reached his hand over to the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear, then revealed an excited look. He formed a knife-like stance with his hand, then amputated the bear's right forelimb. He dug through it, unearthing a weird-looking bone.

This bone was dark gold, and intense undulations of soul power emanated from it. It was a soul bone. Xiao Xiao's luck wasn't just simply good—it was tremendously good!

But this soul bone was different from conventional right arm soul bones. To be precise, it was a right palm bone.

The bone wasn't large, but 5 long blades were on top of it. They were akin to a smaller version of the terrorclaws. The blades seemed like a kind of divine weapon as dark golden halos revolved around them.

Elder Xuan was shocked and envious, "You guys are really lucky! It's quite natural for a soul bone to emerge from a rare soul beast like the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear, but I never expected that it would leave behind its most valuable right palm soul bone!"

The three of them were already in the second grade, thus they'd already learned some stuff about soul masters and soul beasts. However, it wasn't possible for them to know everything, thus Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong looked to Elder Xuan with curiosity.

Elder Xuan showed them the right palm bone and said, "The strongest attack at a Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear's disposal comes from its terrorclaws. This bear was a juvenile, thus it couldn't unleash the full potential of their terrorclaws. However, I once came across a hundred thousand year Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear in my youth. I remember that, when it swiped its claws, hundred meter long blades would fly out. Back then, I believed that even giant dragons would be torn to shreds in front of such an attack. In the Sea God's Pavilion there's a memoir of an elder's research on Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bears. It has highly detailed information about Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bears."

"Their terrorclaws may seem the same, but their right claw is in fact stronger.

"In fact, it's far more powerful. The memoir also notes the four Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear soul bones that have appeared in the past. The elder discovered that only the arm bones have offensive capabilities like the terrorclaws, while the rest—while still good—only bolstered one's defensive capabilities. But neither the left nor right arm bones' terrorclaw soul skills were even able to come close to matching the real Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear. Successfully hunting a ten thousand year Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear is very rare, as at that point even a Titled Douluo will find it difficult to win. As such, the terrorclaw soul skills in the arm soul bones have always had their limits, even though they're very powerful."

"Coincidentally that same elder met with a soul master who possessed a Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear soul bone, who became a renowned soul master after only a few years. This elder from our academy was also pretty famous, and was even a Transcendent Douluo. He traded information with that soul master and promised to keep their secret, which in turn allowed him the chance to learn more about the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear's soul bones.

"The rarest soul bone from a Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear is the palm bone as it would turn out, which also has the strongest soul skill. More importantly, the soul skill develops alongside the soul bone just like an actual Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear. That soul master had obtained a left palm bone and was famed for his dark left hand—he even had the title of Darkleft Douluo. This time you managed to obtain a right palm bone! Which is the highest rank soul bone you can get from a Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear. Palm bones are different from arm bones, they're almost considered external soul bones. It's best to find a suitable arm soul bone to go along with it so that the fusion isn't problematic. The only pity is that this Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear only had two thousand years of cultivation, thus this right palm bone needs time to develop."

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong realized just how extraordinary this palm bone was after hearing Elder Xuan's description. It was especially eye-opening for them, as they recalled how this Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear had clawed at Elder Xuan earlier. Their faces grew heated at the same time.

Wang Dong took the lead and asked when he saw Elder Xuan looking at them seriously, "Elder Xuan, I already have both left and right arm bones. Judging from what you said, one should fuse with this palm bone before a right arm bone. As such it's wasted on me; I'll give up on it."

Huo Yuhao said, "Elder Xuan, you know that I'm the leader amongst the three of us. Xiao Xiao is the only girl, and she isn't strong offensively. But if she gets this palm bone, she'll be good at both attacking and

defending. Furthermore, she's fusing with the soul ring of the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear as we speak. As they say, ladies first. I'll leave it to her. I believe that our luck will hold out in the future."

Elder Xuan felt comforted seeing how generous they were. "Kids, I'll have you know that the value of this right palm bone isn't inferior to a hundred thousand year soul bone! Once it fully develops, it'll be even more valuable than an ordinary hundred thousand year soul bone."

Huo Yuhao smiled and said, "Wang Dong can't fuse with it, and I can't be too greedy, since I already have the Ice Jade Scorpion Left Arm Bone! Moreover, it really suits Xiao Xiao. We're all Shrek's Seven Monsters, so we'll share what's needed with those of us that need it. We can maximize our potential better this way, right?"

Elder Xuan looked at him sincerely and nodded slightly. He said, "Then I shall thank you on Xiao Xiao's behalf." He was selfish at heart and really wanted to give this soul bone to Xiao Xiao—she was his personal disciple after all, and he was truly fond of her. He could tell that, in terms of talent, Xiao Xiao lagged behind Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong. But if she could fuse with this soul bone, then she could close the gap between them.

But he couldn't make that decision of his. As an elder and a teacher of the academy, he knew that Huo Yuhao had been the first to attack the thousand year Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear. However, Huo Yuhao hadn't taken the soul ring. If Elder Xuan bluntly gave the soul bone to Xiao Xiao as well, then that would be pushing it. It was beyond his expectations that Xiao Xiao would obtain this soul ring without his interference.

But it was different if Huo Yuhao offered to give up the palm bone. Not only was such a decision much to Elder Xuan's delight, but it also made him respect Huo Yuhao more. It wasn't strange that Elder Mu regarded him so highly; he was very compassionate. Huo Yuhao was bound to become the center of the Shrek's Seven Devils in the future if he developed properly.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong could relax with Elder Xuan around, thus they sat close to Xiao Xiao and began cultivating and restoring their soul power.

Their confidence soared after finding a suitable soul ring for Xiao Xiao on their first day.

Their soul power was fully restored after a while, and the sky had turned dark. Huo Yuhao felt like chuckling as he looked at Elder Xuan.

Elder Xuan had used a thick tree branch to form a fire pit as they were cultivating. He'd then skinned a chunk of Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear meat and washed it clean before skewering it on a tree branch. He'd also prepared firewood and even displayed more than 10 condiments to one side. When he saw Elder Xuan looking at him hopefully, Huo Yuhao immediately understood what he wanted.

"Hehe, little Yuhao! This bear's meat is extremely delicious, especially the palm meat. It's considered one of the top 10 delicacies in the world. I leave the palm meat to you; freeze it for now, and we can find some top quality honey to cook it with when we return.

"It's also very nourishing, so we can let Elder Mu try it too. We'll feast on the rest of the meat. The three of you are still growing, so you can have some more meat."

Wang Dong's eyes also brightened. He swallowed his saliva as he looked at Huo Yuhao. He hadn't tasted the delicacies that Huo Yuhao could make in a long while..

"Elder Xuan, I recall our teachers mentioning that we can't start a fire in a place like this, since soul beasts live here." Huo Yuhao joked.

Elder Xuan chuckled. "That's only the case for you kids. With me here, nothing will happen unless we set the whole forest on fire, so hurry up.."

Huo Yuhao laughed and walked in front of a chunk of Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear meat to check its quality.

Meat of different qualities had to be grilled using different methods. Huo Yuhao had a natural appreciation for cooking, and a sizeable talent at it..

There were some people who made ordinary tasting food even after years of cooking experience, while others had natural talent. Like Huo Yuhao who could use his Spiritual Detection to enhance the quality of cooking this chunk of meat to make it taste better.

The Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear's meat was entirely dark red and very springy. There were streaks of fat spread proportionally on the surface of it in a webbed pattern, usually meaning that the meat was very fresh.

Huo Yuhao retrieved his White Tiger Dagger and cut this chunk of meat, to discover that this chunk of meat came from the bear's back.

Elder Xuan had no opinions on how to grill the meat. He was fine with it as long as it tasted nice.

Huo Yuhao deftly sliced the chunk of meat into small pieces, while Wang Dong was given the task of skewering the meat onto thin tree branches. They teamed up very well when cooking as well it seemed...

After finishing, Huo Yuhao started a bonfire and started to grill the meat.

He grabbed a slice and draped it over the bonfire on a tree branch unadorned, then began to turn the branch repeatedly until the meat started to smoke and let out a golden yellow oil. The aroma of cooked meat spread through the air as the meat's color changed quickly and it shrank just as fast.

Huo Yuhao pulled the meat off the bonfire and sprinkled salt evenly across the surface, then shook the branch a little to help the meat cool. Afterwards, he tasted his new recipe.

Elder Xuan salivated at the sight from the side. He no longer looked like a top class powerhouse, but rather quite pitiful. Of course, there was no question as to why he looked this way: the Taotie Douluo could never resist the allure of good food.

Juice flooded into Huo Yuhao's mouth as he chewed. He quickly polished off the strip of meat in three large bites. Contrary to what one would think because of its defensive capabilities, the Darkgold Terrorclaw Bear's meat was extremely tender, and seemed to simply melt in one's mouth when chewed. Huo Yuhao had doubted his words at first, but just like Elder Xuan had said, the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear's palm meat was definitely one of the top ten delicacies in the world. He smiled brightly as he swallowed the delicacy.

Huo Yuhao could still taste the extraordinary flavor of the meat when the unforgettable delicacy entered his stomach alongside a deluge of juiciness. It was as if a hot gust of air had filled his stomach, which caused all the tension and fatigue from the last day to disappear.

“It was delicious.” Huo Yuhao complimented.

“Rascal, you don’t know how to respect your elders,” Elder Xuan snapped, “you should’ve given me some first!”

Huo Yuhao chortled and replied, “Elder Xuan, please be patient. I was experimenting with the fire when I cooked this bear meat. I couldn’t bear to waste such an ingredient by using inadequate cooking methods. The next slice will be yours elder, don’t fret. Besides, the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear’s meat is extremely fresh and tender, so it won’t take long to cook. However, it’s a pity that we don’t have any eggs. I could make meal this even more delicious if we did.”

Elder Xuan’s eyes snapped open and he said, “What’s so difficult about that? Do you want raw eggs or cooked?”

Huo Yuhao was stunned and replied, “Raw. Don’t tell me…”

Before he even finished speaking, light radiance flashed in Elder Xuan’s hands, and several multi-colored chicken eggs appeared.

“These are Five-Colored Golden Pheasant eggs. Will they suffice?” Elder Xuan said smugly.

Huo Yuhao’s eyes widened and he said, “You brought chicken eggs along?”

Elder Xuan said mysteriously, “Let me tell all of you a secret. There’s one thing that I can’t do without—food. Not only eggs, I also have almost every kind of food on me! I need at least ten cubic meters of food on me when I go out, else I’ll get uneasy. I even asked Qian Duoduo to help me create a storage-type soul tool exclusively for food, so that it would stay fresh!”

Wang Dong laughed, “No wonder you’re called the Taotie Douluo, Elder Xuan!”

Elder Xuan passed all the eggs to Huo Yuhao and said, “Hurry up.”

Huo Yuhao asked, “Did you bring any bowls with you? It’d be for the best if you have a clean brush too.”

The things that he’d requested appeared after a second.

Elder Xuan squatted beside the fire like a small kid. He watched Huo Yuhao curiously as he swallowed his saliva.

Huo Yuhao didn’t dare to make him wait, and started to grill the meat again.

He was much more confident in grilling the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear meat now that he had experience. Such delicacies didn’t require too much cooking or ingredients. Their original taste was already good enough.

That’s why the bear meat was only flipped three times before Huo Yuhao retracted it from the fire and sprinkled salt on it. After that, he brushed the meat with the stirred eggs.

“Elder Xuan, please give it a try and see if it’s to your liking.”

“Just like this? It’s my first time seeing eggs on meat.”

However, he’d already stuffed the meat into his mouth and swallowed it before he’d even finished speaking.

“How is it?” Huo Yuhao asked.

Elder Xuan stared at him stunned, but his eyes brightened. The bright, yellow radiance that he emitted from his eyes was just like the time when he fought Du Busi.

“I regret it.” Elder Xuan said.

Huo Yuhao was puzzled as he asked, “Regret what? Is it not delicious? That can’t be! This bear meat is tender and juicy, while its fat is proportionally separated such that it doesn’t need to be cooked too long. The egg should even make it more tender and fresh. Its aroma will be let out when you chew into it, and the juices should explode in your mouth! It should be extremely delicious. I’ve never even used such awesome ingredients before.”

Elder Xuan, “When I said I regret it, I meant that I regret not snatching you as my disciple! If you were my disciple, I’d bring you across the continent and make you the best chef on the continent, haha.”

Wang Dong couldn’t help but laugh at this and said, “Yuhao, give me some too! If Elder Xuan wants to make you a chef because of it then it must be really delicious!”

They gorged themselves on the food. Huo Yuhao, while busy, was gratified. More than half of the meat entered Elder Xuan’s stomach who, when he discovered that there wasn’t enough meat left, simply cut off another serving from the bear.

Elder Xuan had tried to grill this meat before. However, his talent was a far cry from the likes of Huo Yuhao’s, and his meat tasted far inferior to the delicacy before him.

When the three of them were almost full, Xiao Xiao finally awakened from absorbing her third soul ring.

Her six senses were restored. But it wasn’t her sense of sight that stirred first; it was her sense of smell.

“Wow, it smells good! What is it?” Xiao Xiao opened her eyes to see the bonfire in front of her.

“Xiao Xiao, how did your martial soul fusion with the soul ring go?” Huo Yuhao asked concernedly.

Xiao Xiao didn’t bother to answer as she snatched the freshest Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear meat that he’d just finished grilling, which she immediately devoured with large bites.

“Wow, it’s delicious. It’s really delicious. I want to woo you now. Whoever marries you in the future will be really lucky. Oh no, I can’t speak anymore. I just bit my tongue...”

Xiao Xiao seemed to have become as gluttonous as Elder Xuan after accepting him as her teacher. She was overjoyed to be able to eat so much.

“I’m full, great food.” Xiao Xiao said satisfactorily. She used her sleeves to wipe the oil from her lips, and appeared very pleased.

Elder Xuan was already full, but he didn't idle around. While Xiao Xiao was eating, he dissected the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear into 8 pieces and passed them to Huo Yuhao for him to freeze so that they could be brought back to the academy.

The Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear's meat was very nourishing. It was a delicacy even to Shrek Academy's core disciples. Of course, Elder Xuan wasn't generous enough to give it to them; he would keep these pieces of meat for himself. He only gave the palm meat to Huo Yuhao.

At this point, Huo Yuhao was still unsure as to what the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear's palm meat represented.

"Elder Xuan, are we leaving now, or are we going to wait for Xiao Xiao to absorb her soul bone here too?" Huo Yuhao asked Elder Xuan.

"Let's do it here," Elder Xuan replied, "I'm full right now, and too lazy to move. Since I'm here, no soul beasts will dare to come close." This was indeed the case. Even though they'd started a fire and even grilled meat here, no soul beasts had come to interrupt them. Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong were unsure how Elder Xuan had pulled this off.

Xiao Xiao heard Elder Xuan's explanation on the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear's external soul bone. When she found out she was going to absorb the soul bone, she turned to look at Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong.

"Class Monitor, can I pledge myself to you in exchange for what you're giving up?" Xiao Xiao teared up.

"No." Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong replied at the same time.

"Oh?" Xiao Xiao looked at them suspiciously, "What's with you two's immediate reactions? Is there some sort of illicit affair between the two of you?"

Huo Yuhao snapped, "How old are you? Why're you talking about pledging yourself to someone else? Do you know what that means?"

Xiao Xiao laughed, "Class Monitor, stop it. When we compared our ages earlier, I was fifth, you were sixth and Wang Dong was the youngest. You're younger than me, yet you still dare to lecture me? Why don't you tell me what it means then?"

Huo Yuhao thought of Ma Xiaotao for some reason after she'd asked this. His face turned a little red and he replied, "I don't know either."

Xiao Xiao laughed, "That's right. How dare you lecture me when you don't know what it means either! You know what I meant. Should you want to woo me, you better move fast! I'm very popular. I'll make it easy for you though."

Psht—

Elder Xuan spat out wine from his mouth and stared at Xiao Xiao. He said, "Stop spouting gibberish. Fuse with it quickly, I want to see how mystical this right palm bone is right away." Once he'd finished, he passed the soul bone to Xiao Xiao and signaled for her to begin.

Xiao Xiao lowered her head to look at the soul bone when she received it. After that, she lifted her head up to look at Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong and seriously said, "Thank you." She emphasized these words strongly.

Xiao Xiao held onto the right palm bone and sat down where she was, then began to stimulate her soul power in preparation to fuse with the soul bone.

The right palm bone visibly melted under the effects of her soul power into a dark golden fluid. This dark golden fluid then slowly seeped into her right hand.

Wang Dong said in a deep voice, "We forgot to ask Xiao Xiao to demonstrate her third soul skill to us just now. The soul skill from a Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear must be quite extraordinary. I've got a feeling that the Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron will be completely changed with this new thousand year soul skill."

Chapter 140: There Has To Be an End in a Life

Between the three of them, only Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong had thousand year soul rings. It was a huge increase in power when a two-ringed soul grandmaster became a three-ringed soul elder. Besides the obvious increase in soul power, their soul skills would improve qualitatively. The might of thousand year soul skills were far superior to their hundred year counterparts, and their versatility was likewise greater. This would especially be the case for Xiao Xiao, since her soul ring was far more powerful than their initial projections.

Huo Yuhao said, "I think that it will take quite some time for her to fuse with the soul bone. Let's cultivate while we wait."

Wang Dong and Huo Yuhao had both experienced the soul bone fusing process. They knew it was very tedious to absorb a soul bone. Especially Huo Yuhao, who still shivered when he recalled his unbearable experiences fusing soul bones.

"Okay," replied Wang Dong.

They sat down on the spot, palms clasped together, and a gentle white and gold halo emerged and intersected from them as they started to circulate their Haodong power. Since Elder Xuan was here they didn't need to worry about anything and immediately started cultivating.

Wang Dong's Golden Light Left Arm Bone once more displayed its full capabilities, causing the aura of light around Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong became more intense as rings of golden light silently engulfed them. The circulation speed of their soul power and their absorption rate of the energy of heavens and earth both increased.

Elder Xuan sat below a tree off to the side and watched over them with a benevolent gaze. He thought to himself, No wonder Elder Mu always watches over the freshmen dormitory. Youth is nice!

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong had entered a meditative trance. The positive effect of Haodong Power towards their cultivation only ever increased as their cultivation rose further. Their influence on one another greatly enhanced their soul powers.

Huo Yuhao had reached a bottleneck in soul power, thus he could only start accumulating his soul power now, whereas Wang Dong felt that his own soul power was increasing. Their current cultivation speed was similar to when they individually underwent deep meditation.

Wang Dong believed that reaching Rank 40 would be possible in half a year's time with a speed like this. Don't forget that he was the youngest of the Shrek's Seven Monsters!

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong's situation was going well on one side, but Xiao Xiao had met with troubles on her end.

The fluid converted from the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear's Right Palm Bone was flowing into her palm. At first she felt comfortable, as if a warm liquid had coated her hand. But the warmth soon became scorching. Even though her soul power was being rapidly stimulated, she couldn't interfere with the fusing process in her arm. That scorching feeling was still increasing, and became blazing hot.

Xiao Xiao's entire right hand had visibly turned dark golden colored. It seemed as if something were crawling out of her palm, and the searing heat caused her to sweat profusely. The experience was torturing her, as she felt like her palm was being grilled. At that moment, only Xiao Xiao's right palm felt like this, but slowly the same sensation spread up her entire right arm!

She laughed bitterly in her heart. Was this her retribution for eating grilled bear meat earlier? It was her turn to be grilled this time, and it was even from the inside out.

The intense, burning pain caused Xiao Xiao to shiver slightly. Her slight shivering soon became convulsions, and the dark golden radiance on her right hand became brighter.

Elder Xuan opened his eyes wide and rushed to Xiao Xiao's side. He observed her carefully.

Xiao Xiao was trembling more and more. Elder Xuan could feel a struggling life-force releasing waves of hysteria from her right hand, . It wasn't struggling to resist being assimilated, but was struggling to break free! It was like some kind of embryonic creature trying to escape from its shell. Xiao Xiao looked like she couldn't bear it anymore.

Not good! Elder Xuan exclaimed in his heart. He'd been careless. Indeed the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear's Right Palm Bone was powerful, but this had blinded him to an important difference between soul bones and soul rings; while the strength of soul rings was determined by age, the soul bone was reliant on quality!

While they both came from the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear, and Xiao Xiao had had no problems fusing with the soul ring, it was a different story for the soul bone! The Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear was too overbearing, and its soul bone manifesting as a right palm bone meant it was the of the highest quality. The dominating power of a Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear came from its fierce lineage, and Xiao Xiao was currently suffering precisely from the strength of this overbearing lineage! Afterall, she was only a young soul elder.

Elder Xuan had thought that, once Xiao Xiao's cultivation had increased greatly by obtaining her third ring, it and the fierce aura of her Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear's soul ring—combined with the enhancements to her body from her previous two soul bones—would allow Xiao Xiao to absorb this two

thousand year soul bone without any complications. But reality was cruel; the difficulty of absorbing this soul bone was far beyond his calculations.

“Xiao Xiao, hold on!” Elder Xuan shouted softly. No one could help her at this point; success or failure was in her own hands. Should an outside power intervene, it would simply be sucked in. At that point, unless Elder Xuan could be by her side at all times supplying a steady stream of soul power, the soul bone could explode at any time.

“Teacher, my hand is about to melt. I can’t hold on anymore!” Xiao Xiao screamed in pain and couldn’t maintain her sitting posture anymore, then twisted her body and fell on the ground. Her right hand stabbing into the mud, although this did nothing to alleviate her pain.

The golden radiance had extended from her right hand to her whole arm at this point, which caused Xiao Xiao’s entire body to start spasming tremendously.

“This isn’t good. The soul bone is creating a backlash!” Elder Xuan didn’t care about the ramifications anymore, and rushed to Xiao Xiao’s side before slapping his palm on her right shoulder. This sealed the dark golden radiance in Xiao Xiao’s right arm. However, Xiao Xiao’s right arm started to balloon in size, and the power within was about to break free from its restraint.

A soul bone backlash was the most dire outcome of soul bone absorptions. It could even become a fatal situation should things go wrong. It usually happened because the soul master can’t handle the immense power within the soul bone, which then counterattacks the soul master in retaliation.

Xiao Xiao’s painful screams also jolted Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong awake. Both of them were shocked when they saw Xiao Xiao’s condition.

“Elder Xuan, what’s wrong with Xiao Xiao?!”

Elder Xuan furrowed his brows and said in a somber tone, “The Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear’s Right Palm Bone contains too much domineering strength; Xiao Xiao can’t bear the current pressure its exerting. She’s experiencing soul bone backlash.”

“What can we do?” Huo Yuhao asked anxiously. He could see that Xiao Xiao’s arm had swollen up like a balloon, and that her shirt was just moments away from ripping.

Elder Xuan bitterly replied, “If this continues, I’m afraid that her arm will...”

“What?!” Wang Dong exclaimed. “Elder Xuan, is there nothing we can do? The soul bone can’t even be suppressed with your soul power?”

Elder Xuan shook his head and said, “No. If I try to forcefully suppress it, her arm will burst. She’ll only lose her arm faster if I do that. If I didn’t already have a right arm soul bone, I could try to guide the soul bone out, but since I do I can’t.”

Xiao Xiao looked extremely pale, and the pain from her right arm made her body spasm violently. Without Elder Xuan’s seal, the power of the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear’s soul bone would’ve spread its backlash to her entire body, which would leave her life in danger.

“Elder Xuan, let me do it.” Huo Yuhao said decisively.

Even though he immediately made this decision, you could tell how resolved he was from his tone .

Aside from Xiao Xiao, he was the only one left in the group without a right arm soul bone. Meaning he was the only outlet this frightening power could be siphoned to. Not only that, but he couldn't watch as Xiao Xiao was in danger of losing her right arm.

"You?" Elder Xuan was slightly shocked and said, "Yuhao, your cultivation isn't even at Rank 30 yet. If Xiao Xiao can't bear it, I don't think you can..." Moreover, the soul bone's power had been fully unleashed now, and it was far more brutal than before.

Huo Yuhao laughed bitterly and replied, "Elder Xuan, believe in me. I hold at least 70% confidence in myself to do it. Elder Mu must have told you what has happened to me so far, and my body is extremely strong. While Xiao Xiao did get a chance to practice our Tang Sect's Mysterious Jade Hands, she did so long after me. Her mastery of the Mysterious Jade Hands is inferior to my own. Furthermore, my second martial soul's Ice Empress Pincer increases my palm strength even further. I should be able to bear it better than her."

Elder Xuan took in a deep breath, and his eyes sparkled as he looked at Huo Yuhao. "Kid, I won't waste anymore time. If you get hurt because of this, I will help you recover, even if it costs me my life."

Wang Dong didn't try to talk Huo Yuhao out of it, but he tugged at his shirt from behind.

They were friends, even close to seeming like relatives, Huo Yuhao was undoubtedly the closest person to Wang Dong at Shrek Academy. He wasn't willing to see Huo Yuhao take this risk.

Huo Yuhao didn't seem to understand Wang Dong's intention. As he stepped forward, he shook his left hand behind his back slightly and removed Wang Dong's grip on his shirt, while his right hand also grabbed onto Xiao Xiao's right hand firmly.

Huo Yuhao's body jerked as their hands contacted. He didn't feel a scorching heat at first, but instead a wave of hysterical will that instantly surged from Xiao Xiao's right palm into his body.

However, he wasn't afraid to compete against the thousand year Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear in terms of spiritual power and will, even if it was still alive.

Elder Xuan said in a deep voice, "I'm about to start."

"Okay." Huo Yuhao's reply was very short. He adjusted his breathing, and readied himself.

He was a little stunned that, while the Skydream Iceworm and Ice Empress were awake, they didn't try to stop him. They didn't even warn him, as if they were completely ignorant of current events.

An intense undulation of soul power circulated around his entire body rapidly, as the Mysterious Heaven Technique was focused on his right arm.

Elder Xuan unleashed his pure power to suppress the Darkgolden Terrorclaw's tyrannical strength. Without Huo Yuhao being there, this power would be used to support Xiao Xiao's arm and delay it reaching the limit of what it could bear. But instead it forced the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear's strength into Huo Yuhao's right arm.

Once it entered Huo Yuhao's right arm, he immediately understood the pain that Xiao Xiao was experiencing.

The burning power surged maniacally. Like a raging inferno had transformed into countless tiny blades furiously cutting at his palm. This tyrannical strength caused Huo Yuhao to tremble, but he quickly stabilized himself.

He couldn't bother to think of the consequences earlier. He found it clear that even if he and Xiao Xiao couldn't take it, Elder Xuan was still around. At most his right palm would be crippled, but Xiao Xiao would have her entire right arm crippled. He balanced the repercussions for the both of them. As her team leader and friend, he didn't hesitate to help Xiao Xiao resolve this problem, when he was the only one that could.

He was also confident in himself. He was convinced that the power of the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear soul bone couldn't be compared to the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's soul bone, even after it was sealed. After experiencing such frightful pain once, what was a measly Darkgolden Terrorclaw soul bone to him? Besides, even if he really couldn't take it, the Ice Empress would help him. This was why he was so confident.

It turned out that Huo Yuhao's previous conjectures were absolutely right. His Mysterious Jade Hands' proved far more effective than Xiao Xiao's. When the strength of the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear came into his right palm, his right arm emitted a faint glow, resembling a gem. This glow suppressed the Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear's power in his palm, and kept it from spreading further.

Huo Yuhao also switched his martial soul to the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion. His soul bones also emitted a turquoise radiance. The radiance was so intense that it penetrated outwards from inside his body, and became visible on the outside from beneath his skin.

The aura assaulting him came from a Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear, which, while they are very powerful, they aren't up to the standards of the Ice Jade Scorpions. Let alone the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion that Huo Yuhao possessed. Its aura would not lose out to a simple Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear's. Huo Yuhao also activated his first soul skill, the Ice Empress' Pincer, without any delay.

Xiao Xiao was completely unprepared for the aura's assault, and she didn't have any soul skills to strengthen her palms. Huo Yuhao on the other hand, had such a skill at his disposal. Upon activating the Ice Empress' Pincer, Huo Yuhao could feel an immediate effect on the pressure facing him. So even though his palm was still feeling the full force of the pain, it was solely in his palm, and didn't spread past his wrists. As the dark golden radiance shone, a diamond radiance that belonged to his Ice Empress' Pincer appeared.

The diamond radiance was colorless and transparent. Under the Darkgolden Terrorclaw's radiance, Huo Yuhao's entire palm shone with intense light.

Elder Xuan was very sharp, and his eyes brightened. He thought to himself that there was hope!