

Tang Sect 161

Chapter 161: Arrived, Grilled Meat

Grilled meat, roasted buns, peppered vegetables, chilli, sour plums and stew brewed from beef became a hearty meal for Huo Yuhao and his friends.

In Shrek Academy, Huo Yuhao was rather selective about the food he ate. While he was not picky, he had to admit that Ju Zi's culinary skills were decent. The meal helped the three of them to bond, and reduced the distance between the three new students.

"So? I am right, right? Sister Ju Zi's food is indeed tasty. Let's see if you dare to offend us in the future. If not for Sister Ju Zi's kindness, we would not have given this meal to you," Ke Ke informed him.

Huo Yuhao chuckled and said, "Sister Ke Ke, please don't keep thinking about that incident that day. Why don't you let me cook dinner instead, as a form of apology to you and Sister Ju Zi?"

"You can cook?" Ju Zi and Ke Ke asked simultaneously. While Ju Zi's face brimmed with curiosity, Ke Ke's face was full of doubt.

Huo Yuhao smiled and said, "After I try, you'll know. When I first came to Shrek Academy, I survived by selling grilled fish. If I hadn't done that, how could an orphan like me afford the school fees?"

When they heard the word orphan, the gazes of both girls turned soft. The change in Ju Zi's emotions was natural, but Ke Ke was better at concealing it. However, the change in her eyes could not escape Huo Yuhao's observation.

They were indeed two kind seniors!

"Okay, you are in charge of dinner. However, to preserve their freshness, I did not bring much food. When we arrive at the Jing Yang Mountain Range, we may have to make do with what we find there."

The three of them continued on their journey. This was not Ju Zi and Ke Ke's first time going to the Jing Yang Mountain Range. As they flew, Ju Zi told Huo Yuhao about some of the dos and don'ts.

"The Jing Yang Mountain Range resembles a huge spider. The central mountains occupy a vast space, and they branch out in eight different directions, like the legs of a spider. The branches surround the central mountains, protecting them. There aren't a lot of soul beasts in the branches, which are rich in mineral resources. However, the central mountains are full of soul beasts, and many of them are powerful, particularly around Jingyang Peak."

Huo Yuhao asked curiously, "With the power of the Sun Moon Empire and its progress in soul tool technology, it wouldn't be difficult for them to harness the resources of the Jingyang Peak, right?"

Ju Zi shook her head and said, "Don't underestimate Jingyang Peak. In the continent, the Great Star Dou Forest near Shrek Academy is undoubtedly the top gathering area for soul beasts, but Jingyang Peak is definitely within the top five worldwide. To take advantage of the resources here, one would need to use a long-ranged soul tool to carpet bomb this place. Even so, the soul beasts would retaliate furiously, and there would be many casualties.

“While a huge amount of mineral resources can be found in the Jing Yang Mountain Range, we from the Sun Moon Empire view the soul beasts as valuable resources, too. Since they are valuable resources, we cannot drain the pond to look for fish. After all, in terms of soul beasts, the Sun Moon Empire cannot compare to the three big states of the Douluo Continent. The Jing Yang Mountain Range contains the greatest amount of soul beasts in our country, and we are more keen on preservation. Hence, despite knowing that there are many precious mineral resources, we will only exploit those found in the branches. However, we have stationed a huge army near the Jing Yang Mountain Range...”

Here, Ju Zi suddenly stopped. She looked at Huo Yuhao and smiled. “I can’t tell you more, these are military secrets.”

Huo Yuhao smiled and replied, “I don’t want to know anything military. It has nothing to do with me.”

Ke Ke said, “We have told you so much already, shouldn’t you share a bit about yourself? You have only three soul rings, so why are you so powerful? What power did you use that day?”

Looking at the curious expressions on the faces of the two girls, Huo Yuhao smiled and said, “I am a twin-souled soul master.”

When they heard the four words, ‘twin-souled soul master’, Ju Zi and Ke Ke could not help but open their eyes wide. Ke Ke’s eyes were almost glittering as she said, “Whoa, so twin-souled soul masters aren’t a myth! No wonder you’re so powerful.”

The two girls were more surprised than Huo Yuhao had expected. This made him feel slightly odd. “Are there no twin-souled soul masters in the Sun Moon Empire?”

Ju Zi shook her head and said, “No, I can be sure. In the history of the Sun Moon Empire, there has never been any twin-souled soul masters. Even in the Douluo Continent, it is considered rare.”

Ke Ke was more excited as she said, “Tell us, what are the differences between your two souls? What are your martial souls?”

Huo Yuhao was silent. Perhaps it was because he, Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao were all twin-souled soul masters, but he did not think much of his status as a twin-souled soul master. Furthermore, he was not born with a second soul. Instead, the Skydream Iceworm gave it to him. In the past few years, regardless of whether it was Skydream, the Ice Empress, or Electrolux, they had all been very quiet. Occasionally, when he reached a certain level of cultivation, they would release some of their sealed power for him. However, beyond that, they did not really have a huge impact on him. Instead, it appeared as if they wanted him to improve by himself. However, Huo Yuhao was clear that the Ice Empress, Skydream, and Electrolux were his main sources of support and his true shield. They feared that he would become over-dependent on them, and hence they rarely appeared. In the past two years, they had been happy with his progress.

“My main martial soul is a spiritual type, and my auxiliary martial soul is an ice-type. I have Rank 40 soul power. However, as I could not find an appropriate spiritual-type soul beast, I have yet to add a soul ring.”

“No wonder your three soul rings are so powerful.” Ju Zi said in shock, “Not only do you have two martial souls, but your soul power is also at Rank 40. A spiritual-type martial soul, that’s rare indeed! The school has been searching for a spiritual-type soul master, though I do not know what for.”

Huo Yuhao’s heart missed a beat. He realized that it was the right choice to follow these two girls out. Perhaps Teacher Xuan would be more careful and prevent him from knowing too much about the inner workings of the Soul Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy, but Ju Zi and Ke Ke were much less guarded against him. Anything they said thoughtlessly would be helpful to him.

“So what are your soul skills? Especially the one that distorted the surrounding rays of light which stopped me from taking clear aim at you,” Ke Ke asked curiously.

Ju Zi frowned and said, “Ke Ke.” It was taboo to ask a soul master about his soul skills.

Huo Yuhao, however, answered nonchalantly, “That’s one of my auxiliary soul skills, called Spiritual Interference. Through my spiritual power, I used it to affect you. Anyone within the radius of my Spiritual Interference will have lowered accuracy. Only those whose spiritual power is superior to mine will be less affected.”

Ke Ke followed up with another question, “So what’s the radius of your Spiritual Interference?”

Huo Yuhao smiled and did not reply. He could not answer that. This was his true secret.

Ju Zi glared at Ke Ke, who stuck out her tongue and stopped asking. Evidently, she knew that she had gone overboard too.

When the western skies turned into a beautiful dusk, they finally reached their destination. From far above in the sky, one could tell that the Jing Yang Mountain Range resembled a huge spider, or an octopus, that lay splayed on the ground, majestic and awe-inspiring.

While they were both gathering points for soul beasts, Huo Yuhao sensed that it was different from the Great Star Dou Forest.

The Great Star Dou Forest seemed endless. Here, however, one could sense a raw, fearsome smell. In terms of depth, it could not compare to the Great Star Dou Forest. However, it was clearly more aggressive.

“We shall rest nearby for the night, and tomorrow we will try the soul tool. At the same time, we will try our luck and see if we can find a suitable soul beast for you,” Ju Zi said.

The three of them landed a few hundred kilometers away from the foot of the Jingyan Mountains. They found an elevated piece of land and pitched their tents there. With their storage-type soul tools, they were able to bring enough items for all of them. Three people, three tents. Aided by Huo Yuhao, they were able to quickly set these tents up.

Ke Ke looked at Huo Yuhao, who was hurriedly setting up his own tent, and said with a smile, “I remember someone saying that it’s show time tonight! Don’t disappoint us!”

Huo Yuhao chuckled and said, “Of course, let me prepare. Please wait while I see if there are suitable ingredients nearby. The fresher, the better.”

As he said that, Ke Ke and Ju Zi saw a golden light flashing from his eyes. The moment they saw the golden radiance, their hearts skipped a beat. They could still clearly remember the power he had emitted.

Huo Yuhao looked into the distance and slowly turned around. He expanded his field of view.

Ke Ke asked Ju Zi in a low voice, "The sky is dark, is he using his eyes to search for food?"

Without waiting for Ju Zi to reply, Huo Yuhao's figure shimmered. In the blink of an eye, he disappeared.

Ju Zi replied in a low voice, "He is indeed powerful. Earlier, I thought that a soul master could not compare to a soul engineer of the same rank. However, looking at it now, this notion seems ludicrous. Even now, we have yet to see him use any powerful soul skills. With his own martial prowess, he was able to render us defenseless. I daresay that in the wild, and with sufficient distance, even the four of us would not be his match."

Ke Ke nodded and said, "His Spiritual Interference targets us soul engineers in particular. I just hope that its radius isn't too wide."

Ju Zi laughed and said, "He is not our true enemy. After all, he is just an exchange student from Shrek Academy. Who knows, maybe we can learn something from him? However, are we really going to eat his food?"

Ke Ke sniggered and said, "That brat did insist on cooking for us despite having tasted your food for lunch, which means that he should be relatively skilled, right? If we don't try, how will we know? Who knows, maybe you will even realize your goal of finding a lover who can cook."

Ju Zi coughed, and her face turned red. "Don't spout nonsense. He isn't that old. If you look carefully at his skin, you will see that despite his size, his face is still supple and youthful. The soft hairs at the side of his lips have just started to harden. He should only be about 15 or 16 years old, and is surely much younger than us."

Ke Ke looked at her with oddly and said, "Wow, Sister Ju Zi, you are observant indeed."

Ju Zi said unkindly, "What is going in your head? Know oneself and know your enemy, only then can you win."

As they spoke, Huo Yuhao returned. His right hand appeared to be clutching something. As it was dark already, they couldn't see what it was. Then, he busied himself.

Ju Zi and Ke Ke did not notice what wild beast Huo Yuhao caught. When they took notice, all they could see were strips of meat. Each strip of meat had been sliced evenly. They were the size of a palm, and as thick as two thumbs. Not too thick, not too small.

It was time to start a fire. The moment he thought about fire, a shiver went down Huo Yuhao's heart. He could not help but to look into the distance. Sister, where are you? As he thought about the missing Ma Xiaotao, his mood soured.

However, he did not stop what he was doing. After a while, a fire was burning. He turned his head to look at the two girls who were staring at him and said, "Come, seniors, and prepare to feast. My meat must be eaten as soon as it's ready to preserve its taste."

As he said that, he took out three small bowls. He added something into each of the bowls, which looked like a translucent brown sauce. Then, he distributed forks to the two girls.

“Grill the meat, and then eat it with some sauce. Let’s start.” As he said that, Huo Yuhao used his fork to take a slice of meat off a branch. His wrist twirled, and that meat was cooked over the fire. Then he twirled his hand again, and the meat landed in Ju Zi’s bowl.

Under the light from the fire, both Ju Zi and Ke Ke’s faces were red. They looked rather seductive.

Ju Zi had been noticing Huo Yuhao’s actions. From his skilled actions, it was clear that this was not his first time grilling meat. She looked down and noticed that the sizzling meat was still slightly pink. It was not fully cooked.

“Eat it while it’s hot. It tastes best this way.” As Huo Yuhao said that, a second piece of meat was ready. It dropped into Ke Ke’s bowl.

Ju Zi loved to eat. When she heard that, she did not think on it any further. With the fork, she picked up the slice of meat and gently lathered some sauce over it. Then, she placed it in her mouth.

The sauce was not strong, but was extremely fragrant. The meat was extremely smooth after it had been lathered with sauce. After it entered her mouth, she chewed on it on a while, and it melted and went smoothly down her throat. The fragrance and silky texture almost made Ju Zi bite her tongue.

Chapter 162: The Mysterious Ju Zi

“Wow, it’s so tasty.” Unlike Ju Zi, who ate the meat in a daze, Ke Ke could not help but leap up the moment she tasted the meat. She was extremely excited.

This taste... Ju Zi appeared lost, but she felt an indescribable emotion in her heart. Tears flowed down her cheeks, and she looked at Huo Yuhao in a completely different light.

Huo Yuhao’s attention was completely devoted to the meat. He wanted to maximize his control over the fire, and he even used his Spiritual Detection to help him with that. As he grilled every single piece of meat to perfection, and then delivered them into the hands of the two girls, he himself began to eat too. It tasted good, and he couldn’t help but sigh in admiration. Most importantly, he had been lucky today, as he had caught a deer that was perfect for grilling. If not, no matter how skilled he was, he could not have made a meal as tasty as this.

The deer, which had weighed about five kilos, had about two to two-and-a-half kilos’ worth of good meat. In less than an hour, it was in their stomachs. The tasty juice from the meat made them content in a way that words could not express.

“Is there anything else you want to eat?” Huo Yuhao asked the two girls as he ate the last piece of meat.

Ke Ke patted her slightly bulging belly and said, “It’s so tasty, it really is. It tastes awesome, but I can’t eat anymore. Eh, Sister Ju Zi, why are you crying? Why are your eyes red?”

Huo Yuhao, who had devoted all his attention to cooking, and Ke Ke, who had devoted all her attention to eating, realized that Ju Zi was not in a normal state. Her eyes were puffy and red. Carefully, she inserted the last piece of meat Huo Yuhao gave her into her mouth and chewed softly.

She did not reply to Ke Ke, but instead mumbled to herself, "This taste, it's really this taste. I thought I would never taste it again."

Ke Ke saw her slightly unstable state of mind and rushed to her side. She grabbed her arm and asked worriedly, "Sister Ju Zi, are you alright?"

Ju Zi gently lowered the bowl in her hands and nodded. She looked at Huo Yuhao, and her warm voice croaked as she said, "Thank you, Yuhao, for letting me taste my father's cooking again."

Huo Yuhao did not expect Ju Zi to say something like this. A look of shock crossed his face as he said, "Fa...father?"

Ju Zi nodded. Her eyes were blurry and she appeared to be in her own world as she said softly, "Father was the best cook. I was born in a small border town of the empire. Mother was the prettiest woman in the entire town, and father opened a small restaurant that did very well. Father said that his greatest joy in life was to cook for mother. Your food tasted like my father's. While I haven't tasted it in a decade, I will never forget it."

"A decade?" Huo Yuhao looked at Ju Zi. Her eyes were so warm and sweet. They also brimmed with longing and admiration for her father. This look shocked him greatly. In his memory, he never had a father.

Grief now filled Ju Zi's eyes. Huge teardrops started to roll as she continued, "War, war ruined my family. Father was forcibly conscripted, and he perished in the war against the Star Luo Empire. Mother was grief-stricken and fell deathly ill. Three years later, she passed on too. Hence, like you, I am an orphan, too."

An indescribable feeling engulfed Huo Yuhao. Faced with this girl, who shared the same fate as him, he had a sudden desire to embrace her. She had lost her father and mother, and was an orphan just like him. No wonder she treated him differently after she found that he was an orphan, too.

However, he did not know how to comfort Ju Zi. His heart was filled with an intense sorrow. He thought about his mother, who had raised him with much difficulty, and his father, whom he hated. At this moment, he was wracked by emotions too.

Ke Ke stood up and spoke in a loud voice, with her hands on her hips, "What are you guys doing? Don't be sad. All those things are in the past. The more you think about it, the sadder you will be. Look ahead, and don't wallow in your grief. There are many nicer things waiting for us, no?"

Looking at her, the heavy atmosphere suddenly changed.

Huo Yuhao and Ju Zi were both stunned. Then, they couldn't help but burst out laughing.

Ke Ke was confused as she said, "Am I that funny? Sister Ju Zi, don't you find it embarrassing to be crying and laughing at the same time?"

Ju Zi stood up and tugged her elbow. She said, "It's not early, let's rest. We need to be well-rested should we wish to enter the mountains tomorrow."

As she said that, she pulled Ke Ke toward her tent.

After a few steps, she suddenly stopped and turned around to look at Huo Yuhao. She said, "In the future, you will be responsible for our meals." With that, she flashed him a smile. When he saw that smile, he felt that the tension between them had been reduced. The distance they kept from each other in school was gone.

Her smile is beautiful indeed, Huo Yuhao thought. However, another figure filled his heart. He couldn't help but to mumble to himself, Raiment of light, raiment of light, Wang Dong, that's truly...

It was a quiet night.

In the morning, when Ju Zi and Ke Ke woke up, Huo Yuhao had already made breakfast. Because of his dawn training, he would wake earlier than everyone else. Everyone present was a soul master, and they all felt rejuvenated after a good night's rest.

Ju Zi was especially chirpy. Her smooth face had a tint of pink, making the desire to nibble on her almost irresistible. She was like a sweet and juicy peach.

Huo Yuhao made a simple breakfast. Soup, roasted buns, and some simple meat. He had brought all the ingredients himself. However, despite their simplicity, Ju Zi's heart raced with every bite. She did not say it, but she had dreamt about her father last night. It was almost as if her father had coaxed her to sleep. While she did not train beforehand, it was one of the best nights of sleep she had ever had.

Even Ke Ke felt that something was amiss about Ju Zi. Over breakfast, she stole eight glances at Huo Yuhao. Every time she looked at him, her gaze would become warmer. It was as if she had found her soulmate.

Huo Yuhao noticed this, too. Unlike Ke Ke, he felt that Ju Zi now viewed him as her father. He felt as if he was lying on a bed of nails. Ju Zi was older than him by at least four or five years!

After breakfast, they continued their journey. This time, they did not proceed with flying-type soul tools. The skies above where soul beasts congregated were off-limits. Unless someone had a death wish, or was immensely confident in his or her abilities, no one would attempt to fly.

At this time, Huo Yuhao finally saw the soul tool they planned to experiment with.

It was an extremely odd-looking item. It was shaped like a ball with a diameter of two meters. Inside, there were three seats, one in front and two behind. The ball was sealed shut, but it had windows made of crystal on its front, back and two sides, which one could look out.

At the bottom of the ball, there were six metallic legs. Every leg was split into three segments. The last segments were extremely sharp, and could easily be stuck into the ground. The second segment raised the contraption up, and the first segment connected the leg to the ball. It looked very weird.

"What is this?" Huo Yuhao asked in surprise. It was his first time seeing something like this.

Ju Zi said, "Teacher Xuan named it the all-terrain exploration soul tool. You see its six legs? We can sit inside the ball, and with its formation arrays, we can control it. The ball is formed from high-density metals, and can resist attacks from Grade 6 soul masters and below. At the same time, the ball can let us

release our protective soul tools. Right now, its protective gear is Grade 5. Both Ke Ke and I can control it.

“Furthermore, it can seal off our life energy. As long as we sit inside, we need not fear soul beasts sensing our energy. It can adapt to different scenarios. For example, if we encounter danger on a mountain, it can retract its legs and release a thick layer of rubber, rolling down while protecting us. The ball is sealed, but if necessary, there won’t be an issue if it falls into water. The all-terrain exploration soul tool emphasizes life energy. Hence, its armor is very thick, but it drains soul power quickly, too. With my cultivation, I can control it for an hour before I need to meditate to regain my soul power. However, if the three of us take turns controlling it, it can last much longer.”

Huo Yuhao was stunned. This was the first time he had seen a soul tool a human could fit inside. While it was only an exploratory tool, what if soul cannons were added to it? That wouldn’t be too hard.

Ju Zi’s explanations were very detailed. “Yuhao, don’t underestimate this soul tool. More accurately, it can be said to be an amalgamation of many soul tools. To research it, the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy took thirty years, as we tried to match different formation arrays and further refine it. Only in the last two years have we achieved something significant. The highest level of research in the Illustrious Virtuous Hall concerns ways to weaponize it.”

“Currently, the technology is not fully explored. Research into weaponizing soul tools like it can only get more complex, and they expend huge amounts of soul power. Even a Titled Douluo cannot control it for long, furthermore, its powers cannot compare to that of the Titled Douluo themselves. This is not what we want at all. We hope that with our research, we can even let an ordinary person control the soul tool, till the point where even civilians can use it. This is what Teacher Xuan has been researching.”

Huo Yuhao inhaled deeply. Ju Zi’s exposition changed his perception of the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy’s research. Did they just want civilians to operate their soul tools, or...? Ordinary soldiers would be able to operate these machines. With that, who could resist an invasion from the Sun Moon Empire?

While he had yet to try the all-terrain exploration soul tool for himself, he had the feeling that this item’s success would significantly impact the future of the Douluo Continent.

“Come, you try it.” Saying that, Ju Zi walked over to the all-terrain exploration soul tool and climbed in with the help of the handles by the side.

Ke Ke looked at Ju Zi, speechless. She thought to herself, “Isn’t this top secret information in our school? He can try it out, but why did Sister Ju Zi tell him about its origins, and the research the school is working on? Did his food really loosen her tongue?”

Huo Yuhao didn’t say much. He entered the machine straightaway.

The inside of the all-terrain exploration soul tool was extremely simple, crude even. The three seats were simple and metallic, and they were secured in a small space within the ball, also the seats had seatbelts. There was a metal stick in front of the first seat, but Huo Yuhao didn’t know what it was for. When they entered, Huo Yuhao noticed a few windows. Other than the four main windows, the ball also had a crystal window directly above the seats, and one in the center that seemed to hold the two halves of the ball together.

Before Ke Ke entered the ball, Ju Zi explained to Huo Yuhao, "Our all-terrain exploration soul tool's original objective was to transport and protect soul engineers. When soul engineers need to fight, they can be directly ejected from the seat. The crystal glass above will split in two, and the person will launch out from the ball. Every seat has this function. To the right of your seat, there is a red button. If you hit it, you'll be ejected."

"Such a good design," Huo Yuhao said in admiration.

Ke Ke had climbed in as well, and she sat next to Huo Yuhao. Ju Zi chose a function from the control stick and tugged it gently. Instantly, the window closed, and the three of them were sealed inside a two-meter wide ball.

"Be careful, I'm going to start." As she said that, an orange-red layer of light shone from Ju Zi's body. Two yellow and three purple soul rings appeared. With her left hand, she grabbed the thickest metal bar and injected her soul power into it.

Instantly, the all-terrain exploration soul tool started to move. As its engines purred to life gently, the ball started to rise. Huo Yuhao activated his Spiritual Detection. He could sense that its six legs started to lift the ball up, allowing him to see through the windows clearly.

"Ke Ke, you take charge of the soul barrier." As she said that, she pressed down on a button to her left. Then a metal stick appeared before Ke Ke as well, who grabbed it tightly and prepared to channel her soul power into it.

"Let's go!" Ju Zi shouted excitedly. She pushed the metal bar in her left hand forward a little, and in turn, the six thick metal legs started to move forward slowly. The entire all-terrain exploration soul tool began vibrating.

Huo Yuhao fully activated his Spiritual Detection. He could clearly sense that, all throughout the all-terrain exploration soul tool, at least thirty formation arrays were operating. The soul tool was completely propelled by Ju Zi's soul power. Hence, a great deal of her soul power was being siphoned, particularly when she first started the machine. When that happened, Ju Zi's face turned pale from the exertion.

As its speed increased, Huo Yuhao took the time to quickly record the inner structure of this soul tool. The all-terrain exploration soul tool had too many formation arrays, and he could not remember all of them at present. But it was far more important for him to remember its structure instead, something which took the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy thousands of tests and trials to come up with.

In a short time, Huo Yuhao had gauged the soul tool's abilities. However, from one perspective, this soul tool did not appear to have much usefulness. While its defensive powers were decent, it would extort a huge amount of soul power for a Class 5 soul master. Once attacked, its huge size meant that it was just a massive target. While it was moving faster and faster, it still couldn't compare to a flying-type soul tool. Its six metallic legs would not let it become faster than this.

One could say that this soul tool was full of deficiencies, but Huo Yuhao was completely certain that Shrek Academy absolutely could not make a soul tool like it. In other words, the Star Luo Empire, the Heavenly Soul Empire, and the Dou Ling Empire had yet to make any soul tools with its ability. The

technology required to make this soul tool was too advanced. The inter-connected formation arrays and its inherent concealment technique prevented him from fully understanding the soul tool, even with his Spiritual Detection.

Looking at it now, the soul tool appeared to have very little use. With its huge soul power consumption, it was less useful than a Class 5 soul engineer. Even he could easily destroy this machine should he wish to. However, what if one day the Sun Moon Empire found a replacement for the soul power source? What if the new source could support a soul cannon? What would the situation be then? It was hard to imagine, but what if it became the main weapon of all wars? How useless would ordinary soldiers be next to it?

In just a short while countless thoughts and possibilities flashed through Huo Yuhao's mind. The impact of this soul tool was indeed extraordinary.

He implicitly understood that while Xuan Ziwen did not have any well-defined teaching syllabus, that he wasn't too guarded against Huo Yuhao, as he allowed him to partake in this experiment with Ju Zi and Ke Ke. However, he understood Xuan Ziwen's intentions too. If he could combine the Zhuge Divine Crossbow with the all-terrain exploration soul tool, then it would possess offensive potential! While it would require complex preparational procedures, it could at least bestow it attacking capabilities. This research would significantly improve this soul tool.

While a stationary soul tool could be placed on it, from Huo Yuhao's understanding of a stationary tool, almost all the projectiles fired by a stationary soul tool were propelled by the formation array. While the energy-gathering formations could definitely gather a certain amount of energy, it still required soul energy to operate. Compared to the Zhuge Divine Crossbow, which was mechanical, a concentrated soul tool was vastly different.

Simply speaking, should the internal workings of the Zhuge Divine Crossbow be implanted into the all-terrain exploration soul tool, it would reduce its overall energy consumption. This was what Xuan Ziwen wanted the most.

Naturally, Huo Yuhao would not give him the mechanical secrets of the Zhuge Divine Crossbow. With the current technological level and research behind the Sun Moon Empire, if he helped them by divulging any of the secrets of the Zhuge Divine Crossbow, then the three other countries would be in deep trouble!

Ju Zi did not know what Huo Yuhao was thinking, partly because she was giving all her attention to controlling the all-terrain exploration soul tool. As she expended her soul power, she also had to adjust according to the type of terrain.

Inside the sealed ball, it was indeed uncomfortable. The main problem was its shakiness. While the all-terrain exploration soul tool was relatively shock-proof, the path wasn't smooth at all. In the hard seat, the motions were extremely uncomfortable. After fifteen minutes, Ju Zi had to stop to rest. At last, they had arrived at one of the outlying branches of the Jing Yang Mountain Range. Moving forward, they would be climbing the mountains.

Huo Yuhao made some quick calculations, and he realized that since the all-terrain exploration soul tool started operations, its speed was almost as fast as his highest running speed.

“Yuhao, share your feelings.” Ju Zi, who was visibly pale, turned her head to look at Huo Yuhao. She’d switched positions with Ke Ke, who was piloting now.

Huo Yuhao thought about it for a while and said, “Clumsy and lacking agility. I feel that what we see now is the result of its materials. For such a huge contraption, it’s amazing enough that you can make it move at such high speeds just with your soul power. When compared to ordinary soul tools, which can only attack or only defend, it is already extremely complicated. I would say that it’s a Class 8 soul tool in terms of complexity, but in terms of usefulness it’s ordinary.”

Ju Zi nodded and said, “That’s right, it’s still full of problems, and all we can do is continually improve it. With our current progress, it will be awhile before we refine it any further. Right now, there are some people in the empire who believe that we should devote more energy to the stationary soul tools. After all, they can already be operated by lower level soul masters, and they have very powerful offensive abilities. Furthermore, the expenses put into the production of a soul tool like this are extreme...”

“You don’t know this, but even though this machine appears clumsy, every single one of its joints holds a different formation array. Several researchers have been involved in its creation, and many different materials have been tried. The workload is immense. I think it’ll take a few thousand years to weaponize.”

Huo Yuhao flatly asked, “Sister Ju Zi, do you think there was a point to doing such research?”

Ju Zi replied without missing a beat, “Of course there was a point. Research into soul machines will have a monumental impact on both our society and era. However...”

She frowned, then continued, “Looking at things right now, soul machines seem to be too advanced, which is why continuing to research them has become so hard. If we spent more time on fundamental research, soul machines would surely become a thing of the future. In my opinion, we need to focus on researching a replacement for soul power. If we don’t, only soul masters will be able to use this sort of soul tool. This massive limitation will surely affect the development of soul tools.”

Huo Yuhao hadn’t expected Ju Zi to be so open about it. With respect in his heart, he gently nodded, but chose not to express his own opinion.

“Why haven’t you said anything? Is it because you’re afraid that we’ll use it to attack your country?” Ju Zi seemed to understand what Huo Yuhao was thinking.

Huo Yuhao didn’t try to hide his thoughts. He nodded again and then said, “Many technological advancements are made to fuel the war engine. Once war breaks out, civilians are the ones who suffer the most.”

Ju Zi looked at him in the eye and said, “I understand this point perfectly. Hence, rapid technological advancement might not be a good thing. Regardless of whether it’s me or Teacher Xuan, we all share this sentiment. You don’t know this, but Teacher Xuan is considered the best researcher of his generation in the Illustrious Virtuous Hall. He could be considered one of the top researchers in the entire Sun Moon Empire, but he’s never once revealed his full ability. This is because he doesn’t want his research to be used for war, and is why I respect him.”

Huo Yuhao was shocked and said, “You mean to say that Teacher Xuan doesn’t submit his research?”

Ju Zi nodded. “That’s right. When you came to the Sun Moon Empire, didn’t you feel that our soul tool research progress was much faster than the other three countries?”

Huo Yuhao nodded.

Ju Zi said, “In reality, our research has reached a bottleneck—in all directions. We haven’t made any improvements in the last decade. This is also why we have yet to see a Class 10 soul engineer emerge in the past few years. Coupled with the constant turmoil in the imperial family, which results in the ruling class not having a proper direction, our research into soul tools has naturally stopped.

“Many years ago, the Sun Moon Empire was defeated by the other three countries of the Douluo Continent, which caused the Sun Moon Continent to be stripped of its name. Because of this, the empire devoted all of its energy to developing soul tools for a period of time. Our progress was the fastest back then; in just a thousand years, our progress in soul tools and all aspects of technology surpassed that of the other empires. However, the presence of soul masters kept us in check, thus we didn’t dare to act carelessly.

“However, following the development of soul tools, the country progressed well too. Thus, the imperial family started to believe that our country’s defences were adequate, and that we were powerful enough to compete for supremacy on the continent. Hence, the official policy of the imperial family started to change; hedonism reigned, and income inequality throughout the empire widened. Conflicts began to erupt between the rich and poor, especially in the past few decades. The common people have rioted several times now. Do you know what the best option for the ruling class is now?”

Had Ju Zi asked Huo Yuhao the same question two years ago, he would’ve only been able to show her an expression of confusion. However, the Ultimate Soldier Plan had let him gain quite a bit of knowledge over the past two years, including knowledge pertaining to politics and history of the continent.

“A war would be able to resolve all of the empire’s conflicts. Following an invasion, the empire could resolve all sources of conflict. War would let the country gain more land, which would in turn enrich more people. The lower class could become rich and aristocratic through war, while societal conflicts would be partially resolved because of it. At the very least, there wouldn’t be any large-scale riots.”

Ke Ke appeared completely confused, but Ju Zi looked at Huo Yuhao and smiled slightly. She then said something that caused the hairs on Huo Yuhao’s back to immediately stand on end. “You seem more and more like a spy, albeit one who’s not fully qualified.”

A startled expression crossed Huo Yuhao’s eyes, but he soon returned to normal and said plainly, “As an exchange student from Shrek Academy, I wasn’t welcome from the very start, right? But don’t worry, I’m not a spy, nor am I serving any country. However, if possible, I want to prevent a war from happening.”

Ju Zi smiled and said, “Yuhao, do you know what my life’s goal is?”

Huo Yuhao shook his head.

Ju Zi’s eyes narrowed into slits as she looked out of one of the windows and mumbled, “I hate war; I despise it. However, I have to avenge my father—to trample the Star Luo Empire under my feet. That’s

the reason for my existence.” Right now, her normally-warm eyes held an ice-cold gaze. It was as if she’d put a pair of glasses over her heart.

Huo Yuhao was shocked. He’d thought that Ju Zi was a pacifist in his heart. He’d never expected Ju Zi to say something like this.

Ju Zi turned her head and smiled at him. “It’s not a comfortable thing to hear, right? I know that you’re a citizen of the Star Luo Empire, thus I hope I don’t see you on the battlefield in the future. Let’s go, Ke Ke.”

Following Ju Zi’s words, the atmosphere within the all-terrain exploration soul tool became solemn. The ball began to move forwards, while Ju Zi had already closed her eyes and appeared to be meditating.

Huo Yuhao sat there and stared at her quietly. His heart was heavy. Ju Zi made him uncomfortable. Even though she was only a Class 5 soul engineer, Huo Yuhao had heard several different things from her words that weren’t something a soul engineer—engaged only in research—could think of. What was she hiding in her heart?

Kill her!

Suddenly, an unknown sense of danger flashed through Huo Yuhao’s heart and manifested itself into a desire to kill. He suddenly felt that, in the future, the warm and pretty young girl in front of him would become a powerful and threatening enemy. He’d only seen a small portion of her heart, but it was enough to shock him. This girl was better at concealing herself than he was!

However, could he really do it?

No, he couldn’t.

He couldn’t forget the sorrow her eyes had held when she’d uttered the word ‘father.’ He couldn’t bear to do so.

“If you have this sort of mentality, why are you telling me so much?” Huo Yuhao finally asked.

A warm light suddenly spread from her, separating Ke Ke from them. It was from a soundproofing soul tool. Surprisingly, Ke Ke didn’t seem to realize. Ju Zi turned her head, smiled and said to Huo Yuhao, “Your heart is still young; you don’t have the capability to be my opponent. If I’m to die in battle one day, I hope to die by your hands. Like this, I’ll be able to taste my father when I die. Wouldn’t that be wonderful?”

Huo Yuhao’s heart trembled. He could see the very same expression he’d had when he first left the Duke’s Mansion in her eyes. However, she hid it very well. Furthermore, she’d cloaked herself in a layer of warmth. It was only because he’d cooked for them last night that the deepest thoughts in her mind had been triggered.

“So how are you going to lead the Sun Moon Empire into war?” Huo Yuhao asked in a low voice. Even though Ju Zi was a Soul King and Class 5 soul engineer, her powers didn’t appear to surpass Huo Yuhao’s.

Ju Zi smiled and said, “Guess. All I can say is that martial prowess isn’t the only determinant.” She appeared to have given a lot of thought to this. Naturally, she wouldn’t tell Huo Yuhao.

“I’ve told you all of this today purely because I had the urge to do so. There’s nothing I truly cherish in this world, as there’s nothing that’s worth cherishing to me. However, I have to avenge my father and mother. I can still clearly remember the look of desperation in my mother’s eyes when she heard that my father had died, as well as my own desperation. At that moment, the entire world seemed to become black and white. Oh well, I know that you think I can’t do much. Just treat it as a story then.” Once she’d finished speaking, she deactivated the soundproofing soul tool.

Is it really only a story? Huo Yuhao didn’t know. However, the Eye of Destiny on his forehead appeared to be telling him something. But when he tried to focus on it, the feeling disappeared.

Huo Yuhao looked deeply at Ju Zi and then sank into deep thought.

Ke Ke hadn’t sensed the conversation that had just taken place. As she had to constantly channel her soul power, her attention was completely focused in front of her. Currently, they’d just started to ascend a branch of the Jing Yang Mountain Range. The ball’s multiple legs proved their usefulness here. While it was still vibrating, it wasn’t slowed down at all. Under Ke Ke’s control, the metallic ball continued to move forwards. Since it had six legs, there were always at least three support points. Furthermore, they were made from firm metal that could easily be inserted into both the mud and granite around them. After a while, they managed to ascend a mountain.

Ju Zi didn’t say anything else to Huo Yuhao. Instead, she took out a pen and paper and started to take notes. Evidently, she was recording notes on the all-terrain exploration soul tool.

“Ke Ke, if you’re tired, just tell us,” Ju Zi reminded Ke Ke.

“Yup,” Ke Ke replied. Her face was pale from continually channelling her soul power into the all-terrain exploration vehicle.

Chapter 163: The Hexa-Elemental Silverwolf

Huo Yuhao kept his Spiritual Detection activated and an eye on their surroundings. He also used it to observe the two ladies in front of him, and slowly realized that they’d used medicine and some special methods to increase their soul power to their current levels. However, their soul power lacked tenacity and didn’t circulate well. It wasn’t even comparable to a normal soul master who’d just reached Rank 40. This wasn’t something that would happen in Shrek Academy.

This was a side effect of impatiently chasing success! They’d increased their soul power quickly, but their foundations were lacking. They hadn’t even fully experienced the changes that had occurred as their soul power increased. Whether it was the they gathered soul power at or their control of it, they definitely couldn’t compare to an orthodox soul king.

Would soul masters be replaced by soul engineers in the future? Huo Yuhao had never thought of this question before. Even if such a thing were to happen, he probably wouldn’t live to see it.

Ke Ke was completely spent once she got the machine over the mountain, thus she left the main control seat. Rather than take over, Ju Zi gestured for Huo Yuhao to take her place.

Huo Yuhao didn’t decline. He sat down in the main control seat and listened to Ju Zi’s explanation of how to control the vehicle.

Sitting in the main control pod felt quite different. The window in front of him wasn't very fine, but it had been specially designed to allow him a 180-degree view of the outside terrain.

There were four control joysticks in front of him. One was for injecting soul power into the vehicle, while the other three joysticks were used to advance, retreat, and jump. The joystick used to inject soul power also had the ability to rotate which direction the vehicle was going. All in all, the controls seemed very easy to use.

However, Huo Yuhao discovered some problems the moment he started to control the vehicle; he couldn't coordinate its controls well. In order to properly control this all-terrain exploration vehicle, he needed to learn the rhythm that the six mechanical legs moved in. It was only through this that he'd be able to change directions at the appropriate time, as well as control the speed of his advancement and retreat.

Others might take some time to adapt and familiarize to this, but Huo Yuhao held an advantage because of his Spiritual Detection. He was able to control the soul tool after about ten minutes of testing, and after almost a third of his soul power had been depleted.

He pushed the joystick to advance forwards, injected his soul power into the directional joystick, and then excitedly said, "We're about to move. Sit tight."

The soul tool then began to move under his control. Although it was a little slow when he started, the burden on his soul power had also become greater.

Huo Yuhao's advantage over the other two was displayed at this point. While he was only Rank 40, his foundation was extremely solid. His cultivation had been greatly influenced by the Ultimate Ice between Rank 30 and Rank 40, thus his accumulation of soul power had increased greatly. Currently, his soul power was restored a little but every time he simply took a breath, and was also aided by the Mysterious Heaven Technique. This was an aspect that the two ladies couldn't compare to him in.

Ju Zi observed Huo Yuhao seriously, only to reveal a stunned look. Ke Ke was equally appalled, and her reaction was even greater than Ju Zi's.

Huo Yuhao had seemed a bit rusty when he'd started to use the all-terrain exploration vehicle, but that had only lasted for the first ten minutes. After some minor adjustments, he managed to control the speed of the all-terrain exploration vehicle pretty well.

This huge metal ball seemed quite imperious from the outside. Its speed gradually increased, and its direction continuously adjusted. When the metal ball encountered any barriers, it always managed to jump up at just the right time.

It could jump up to twelve meters into the air, the amount that it did being completely controlled by the joystick. As such, Huo Yuhao was able to have the vehicle jump to the appropriate height at the appropriate time without wasting any energy at all every time.

As time passed, Huo Yuhao's control over the vehicle became better and better. The all-terrain exploration vehicle seemed to have come alive as it burst forwards. It was extremely rapid, and its traits were greatly exhibited.

Ke Ke mumbled, "Is this really the first time he's controlled this all-terrain exploration vehicle?"

Ju Zi nodded slightly and said, "It should be."

"But..." Ke Ke was doubtful.

Ju Zi smiled. "Sometimes you have to admit that there are geniuses in the world. Isn't he a good example?"

Ke Ke shook her head speechlessly and said, "I don't believe it. Even if he is a genius, he'd still need some time to grasp the controls. Sister Ju Zi, do you know how he did it?"

Ju Zi nodded and said, "If I'm not wrong, it's because of his spiritual-type martial soul. Think about it: If he can judge the geography of our location and accurately pinpoint the condition of the all-terrain exploration vehicle, wouldn't controlling it to be much simpler? After a period of training and adapting, he'll be able to control this soul tool better than both of us."

Ke Ke asked, "But wouldn't that require a lot of calculations?"

Ju Zi rolled her eyes and said, "Do you honestly think that this guy lacks the ability to do such a thing? I finally understand why the academy has been searching for spiritual-type soul masters. Spiritual-type soul masters have a unique advantage when it comes to controlling and creating soul tools! No wonder Teacher Xuan thinks so highly of him."

Huo Yuhao could hear what the two of them were saying, but he was immersed in controlling the soul tool. His soul power continued to deplete, but he realized that he didn't need to continuously inject his soul power to keep the vehicle moving.

There were six cumulative formation arrays inside of the vehicle. These formation arrays would gather the soul power he injected before they absorbed it. Following this, his soul power would then be transferred to the other formation arrays. If he continued to inject his soul power, a small portion of his soul power would be wasted in the process of being transferred between the formation arrays. He was able to tell that this was happening through his Spiritual Detection, which in turn allowed him to conserve his soul power. Furthermore, his regenerative abilities were superior to those of most ordinary soul masters, which was why he still had some soul power left despite controlling it for nearly 30 minutes.

Right as Huo Yuhao was exploring the magical effects of the vehicle, his Spiritual Detection sent him a warning. The all-terrain exploration vehicle suddenly stopped, and its six mechanical legs descended into a half-squatting stance. Huo Yuhao then scanned one direction in particular with his Spiritual Detection.

A two meter tall, wolf-like soul beast appeared and gazed at the all-terrain exploration vehicle warily. It then let out a deep hooting sound, as if it were trying to demonstrate its might.

It was Huo Yuhao's first time seeing this wolf. Its was silvery-white, while its fur appeared metallic. An intense radiance was reflected off of it, which made it seem as if it were glowing under the sun.

Huo Yuhao couldn't tell what the soul beast's cultivation was from its appearance.

"It's a rare soul beast, a Silverwolf! Based on its size, it should have a cultivation of around three thousand years. Yuhao, beware."

Huo Yuhao nodded, then asked, "What kind of soul beast is this Silverwolf? How come I'm not familiar with it?"

Ju Zi replied, "The Silverwolf is a special soul beast in the Sun Moon Empire. It's a metal element soul beast, but it's not any ordinary soul beast. It's very difficult to deal with, and it feeds on Mithril. The Silverwolf needs to consume massive amounts of Mithril to break through its own bottleneck like humans need a soul ring when they reach a bottleneck. There's a rumor that a Silverwolf King appeared in the past with cultivation of ten thousand years. It managed to resist two Soul Douluo before escaping with injuries. A Silverwolf Emperor with a hundred thousand year cultivation and above has never appeared before. A Silverwolf's fur and bones are extremely useful materials for making soul tools with, while their meat is quite delicious, and can strengthen the body of a soul master."

Ke Ke eagerly said "Let me go out. I have a way to deal with it."

Huo Yuhao said, "Let me go instead."

"Be careful."

The Silverwolf had already launched an attack while they were speaking. It was evidently unhappy with the metal ball in front of it, as its silver fur started to shine, and it spat out a silver ball of light towards it.

The silver ball of light didn't make any sound as it shot through the air. However, the silver light transformed the moment it neared the all-terrain exploration vehicle. It became a diameter-wide fireball, then sped towards the all-terrain exploration vehicle.

Huo Yuhao was also shocked. He rushed to make the all terrain exploration soul tool jump, barely managing to evade the fireball. Even so, two of the vehicle's mechanical legs were struck, which caused the balance of the all-terrain exploration vehicle to be affected. Huo Yuhao quickly corrected the all-terrain exploration vehicle to prevent it from collapsing.

The Silverwolf unleashed a second silver ball of light at that moment. Huo Yuhao thought that it would turn into another fireball, but the silver light turned into ten wind-blades that surrounded the all-terrain exploration vehicle this time. The blades then swung towards the all-terrain exploration vehicle maniacally.

Fortunately, Ju Zi unleashed a Class 5 soul tool barrier and blocked the wind blades.

Huo Yuhao was stunned, and asked, "What element does this fellow have?"

Ke Ke replied, "The Silverwolf is so strong because it possesses the six elements of water, fire, earth, wind, light and darkness. It's able to unleash the powers of any element depending on its will. That's why it's so difficult to deal with. There's practically no element that can curb it. It's said that once it becomes a Silverwolf King after ten thousand years, another rare and advanced element will be added to it. At the hundred thousandth year, it will gain yet another element. The only fortunate thing is that it can only unleash the most basic attacks of each element, even though it possesses many elements."

Before Ke Ke even finished speaking, a third ball of silver light had already turned into a cone-shaped ice attack shooting at them. Although it couldn't overcome the barrier, it depleted Ju Zi's soul power rapidly.

Ke Ke wanted to press the eject button beside her seat, but she was stopped by Ju Zi. "Let Yuhao do it. Your fighting style creates too much commotion. I didn't expect to meet such a rare soul beast after just entering the Jing Yang Mountain Range."

Huo Yuhao didn't say anything after he heard her words. He slammed his right hand beside his seat, and the window above him opened to either side. His body was ejected like a cannonball.

The Silverwolf couldn't overcome the Class 5 soul tool barrier easily. It was even shocked as Huo Yuhao suddenly appeared. As the Silverwolf lifted its head, it spat out a silver ball of light.

It was yet another wind-type attack. Many wind blades covered the entire area, and Huo Yuhao couldn't possibly dodge.

Diamond ice crystals appeared and shone extremely brightly under the sun. They were even more dazzling than the silver light on the Silverwolf's body. The wind blades couldn't penetrate Huo Yuhao's Ice Empress' Armor.

Six metal barrels appeared on Huo Yuhao's body at this point, and were fired in the direction of the Silverwolf. Six streaks of light instantly shot out. The Silverwolf was extremely quick, and spat out a few more silver light balls as it leapt backwards. They formed layers of water curtains in the air, which weakened the soul rays. By the time the soul rays reached it, it managed to dodge them easily.

Huo Yuhao landed on the ground following this strike and started to lope towards the Silverwolf like a panther.

The Silverwolf was evidently more adept at long-range attacks. As it retreated, it continued to spit out balls of silver light towards Huo Yuhao.

However, Huo Yuhao had a deeper understanding of the Silverwolf after Ju Zi and Ke Ke introduced it to him. The element contained within the Silverwolf's silver light balls couldn't be concealed from him, he used his Spiritual Detection to detect it.

Three white soul rings rose from Huo Yuhao's legs, and started to shine brightly. The two ladies who were watching him were shocked. What was happening?

Huo Yuhao didn't dare to reveal too many of his abilities since Ju Zi had threatened him. Right now, he was using all three of his soul skills at the same time.

A purplish-golden radiance flashed across his eyes before disappearing. The Silverwolf screamed pathetically before falling into convulsions on the ground. It writhed around in pain for a few seconds before staggering back to its feet. However, it didn't appear to be clear-headed anymore. Mass Enfeeblement and Spiritual Interference had struck it at the same time.

Huo Yuhao was the one most surprised at this point. He thought that the Silverwolf was merely a few thousand years old, and thus its spiritual power should be inferior to him by a lot. Even if it didn't die from his Spiritual Shock, it should be almost half-dead. However, it was able to crawl up.

This was beyond what Huo Yuhao had expected. Was this Silverwolf a spiritual-type soul beast? However, it only had three thousand years of cultivation. It wasn't suitable enough for him!

He did not slow down even though he was thinking in his head. When the Spiritual Shock was unleashed, he had already charged forward. The intense radiance from a Class 5 soul thruster lit up behind his back. He increased his speed to the limit instantly and reached the Silverwolf just as it stood up.

He struck with his right hand. The purplish-golden radiance flashed from Huo Yuhao's eyes again. He didn't give the Silverwolf any chance to catch its breath. He unleashed the Spiritual Shock once again, causing the Silverwolf's seven apertures to spurt blood. His Darkgolden Terrorclaws stabbed into the back of the Silverwolf's neck and tore into its central nerves.

The entire fighting process was very simple. The three thousand year old Silverwolf was repressed so heavily by Huo Yuhao that it couldn't resist at all.

Ju Zi looked at the wide-eyed Ke Ke with an amused expression. "Do you still think we can beat him in the wild?"

Ke Ke muttered, "He's too scary when he engages in close-combat. That's a three thousand year Silverwolf! However, it was completely helpless against him. Since when did a Silverwolf become so weak? I've heard that such soul beasts are very strong!"

Ju Zi sighed, "The Silverwolf isn't weak. He's just too strong. Before his last strike, the Silverwolf had already lost its ability to resist after being struck by his soul skills. His twin martial souls are indeed scary! I think even a Class 6 or 7 soul engineer wouldn't be able to resist him if he gets close."

Ke Ke was a little indignant as she said, "Then don't let him come close."

Ju Zi shook her head helplessly and said, "You say it like it's so simple. Didn't you see what he used to increase his speed? That was a Class 5 soul thruster. Even a Class 7 soul engineer wouldn't dare to use it so easily. Aren't you aware of its impact on one's body? With our physical strength, we wouldn't even be able to use a Class 3 soul thruster a few times. He only has three rings. Although his soul power has reached Rank 40, he is still considered brave to attempt the use of a Class 5 soul thruster. Furthermore, he was still able to attack after using it. What does that mean?"

Ke Ke didn't speak. She naturally knew what it meant. It meant that Huo Yuhao was much stronger than they had imagined. How strong must his body be to withstand such an immense, instantaneous thrusting force? With their current abilities, they could only manage to sustain it for somewhere between fifty and two hundred meters. Beyond that range, they needed stationary soul tools to maintain sufficient offensive strength. A Class 5 soul tool increased Huo Yuhao's speed such that he moved one hundred meters in a second. This meant that he moved two hundred meters every time he inhaled. How would they stand a chance against him with his physical strength and impressive close-combat abilities?

"He must be quite extraordinary in Shrek Academy, too," Ke Ke said softly.

Ju Zi nodded lightly, "Perhaps, the seemingly weakest out of the exchange students is actually the core of everything. Alright, this doesn't really concern us. Don't talk of this matter when you return either. After all, we enjoyed his delicacies."

Huo Yuhao had already returned with the Silverwolf as they spoke. A flashing purple soul ring rose from it.

“Brother Skydream, wake up!” Huo Yuhao slowed down intentionally. He called for the Skydream Iceworm, as he needed answers to his questions. He was actually tempted by this Silverwolf’s soul ring. For most soul masters, their fourth soul ring should come from a thousand year soul beast. If he had no choice, he could accept this three thousand year soul ring.

“Little Yuhao, you haven’t disturbed me in a long time!” The Skydream Iceworm answered lazily. It didn’t sound fully awake yet. However, it was still very happy that Huo Yuhao woke him up.

“Brother Skydream, I met a special soul beast found only in the Sun Moon Empire. Help me see if it’s a spiritual-type. I can’t be sure.” He quickly described the Silverwolf’s abilities.

“Oh?” The Skydream Iceworm used the projection in his Spiritual Sea to observe the Silverwolf as he heard Huo Yuhao’s description. When Huo Yuhao reached the all terrain exploration soul tool, it gave him a definite answer.

“This soul beast is supposed to be a mix of elements that doesn’t possess all the elemental powers? That is not possible for a soul beast. It’s only tapping into its affinity with the various elements and its own immense spiritual power to control the elemental powers. The metal that it consumes is probably only effective in increasing its affinity toward the different elements. Otherwise, it would be able to exhibit more than just the basic elemental powers. Yes, you can adopt it as your fourth soul ring. However, this Silverwolf is too weak, and isn’t suitable for you. I didn’t expect to see such a fun soul beast. If you meet another one of the same species with a cultivation of at least ten thousand years, you must not let it go. I believe that its soul skill should be rather good. Although it may not be an offensive-type soul skill, it can enhance your overall abilities, as well as your Mass Enfeeblement.”

“Alright, thanks.” Huo Yuhao put the Silverwolf’s corpse away in his storage-type soul tool before re-entering the all-terrain exploration soul tool.

Ju Zi gave him a thumbs-up as a compliment. Huo Yuhao only smiled and asked, “How do you plan to deal with this Silverwolf?”

Ju Zi said, “If you’re willing to sell it, I can help you. It should fetch a good price. You can keep it for now, the Silverwolf’s fur will prevent its corpse from rotting. We’ll deal with it once we return to the academy. I believe that the Silverwolf isn’t a spiritual-type soul beast, but its spiritual powers should be quite strong. Otherwise, it shouldn’t be able to control the elements to attack. Aren’t you going to try it? Also, why did your soul rings turn white just now?”

Huo Yuhao shook his head slightly and said, “It’s not what I want yet. As for the color of my soul rings, can’t I have three ten-year soul rings?” As he spoke, he also laughed. This was an answer that no one would believe.

Ju Zi pursed her lips. She had already returned to her gentle persona, and managed to conceal her thoughts well.

Huo Yuhao pondered for a moment and said, “Wolves are usually very sensitive in terms of their sense of smell. Does this Silverwolf also have such a characteristic?”

Ju Zi thought for a moment before replying, "It should. After all, it's a wolf."

Huo Yuhao said, "Seniors, I may have to separate from the two of you for some time."

Ju Zi was stunned. "Where are you going?"

Huo Yuhao replied, "I'm going to find a suitable soul beast. This Silverwolf is indeed suitable for me, but its cultivation is too low. It's too easy for me to fuse with it. That's why I'm going to find a stronger Silverwolf, or some other spiritual-type soul beast. It should be a dangerous journey. That's why it's better for me to work alone. Continue with your experiments. I will meet the both of you back at the place we camped last night. If I'm not back in half a month's time, the two of you must return first."

"No, how can we leave you alone?" Ke Ke asserted righteously. "We have to go together. Don't forget that we're soul kings. Three is always better than one in terms of safety. Although your close-combat skills are outstanding, our soul tools are rather powerful too. Our survival skills are equally as good as yours."

Huo Yuhao was stunned. He didn't expect that this young lady who continuously clashed with him was actually offering help to him at this critical moment. Huo Yuhao could see the sincerity in her eyes.

Ju Zi also nodded and said, "Ke Ke is right. We can't let you take the risk alone. It's always safer with three rather than one. Furthermore, we're the ones who are familiar with the Jing Yang Mountain Range. Let's go together. Are you scared that we'll drag you down? I know what you're going to do. You're going to scatter the Silverwolf's blood on the all-terrain exploration vehicle to threaten the lower-level soul beasts not to come close to us. It's also a good way to test the survival capabilities of the all-terrain exploration vehicle."

Huo Yuhao glanced at Ke Ke before turning to look at Ju Zi. He said seriously, "However, that is very dangerous. The Silverwolf's blood may attract other types of soul beasts, which can be very strong. Think about it carefully. This all-terrain exploration vehicle can't ensure our absolute safety."

Ke Ke was a little impatient as she said, "Are you a girl? Why are you so pushy? Let's go. If your soul power is gone, I can take the controls."

Huo Yuhao nodded at the two of them as he glanced over them. Although Ju Zi had revealed her internal thoughts before, Huo Yuhao had a feeling that it was because he was like a father figure to her. That was why she wouldn't hurt him.

"Alright, I will protect the both of you as long as I'm alive."

Ju Zi sat lazily in her seat and replied him, "It's still too early to tell who'll be protecting who. Just remember that you need to feed us."

Huo Yuhao's face stiffened, and he shook his head in annoyance. He couldn't help but think, Are they following me because they want me to cook for them?

Huo Yuhao didn't set off immediately. He made some minor adjustments, and only moved off after his soul power had been restored to about half.

He controlled the all-terrain exploration vehicle with ease, following the experience that he had already accumulated. He would only slow down if they had to pass through a dense forest. He passed mountain after mountain, but didn't rush to scatter the Silverwolf's blood.

They also met a few soul beasts along the way, but they were all below a thousand years in cultivation. Huo Yuhao used the simplest method to deal with them: he ran them over. This all-terrain exploration vehicle had used a lot of the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy's resources, and the materials used to construct it were very tough. Soul beasts below a thousand years' cultivation couldn't cause any damage to it.

The quality of soul beasts in the Jing Yang Mountain Range was evidently lower than that of soul beasts in the Great Star Dou Forest. As they followed the branching trails to get closer to the main trail in the forest, they didn't bump into a single ten-thousand year soul beast. Including the Silverwolf, only three soul beasts attacked them. The other two perished at Huo Yuhao's hands and became food.

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Huo Yuhao didn't mind setting up a fire in the Jing Yang Mountain Range. Lunch was yet another feast. However, it was different from the grilling the night before. He made soup this time using Silverwolf meat.

The Silverwolf's bones and fur were preserved, and its blood was smeared on the all-terrain exploration vehicle. Its meat became their delicacy.

Huo Yuhao only decided on his cooking style after examining the quality of the Silverwolf's meat. The Silverwolf's meat was quite tough, not tender enough for grilling, which would make it difficult to chew. After a period of cooking, it would taste nicer when it was softer.

He indeed had the sense of a father, just like Ju Zi had said. His delicious meat soup left Ju Zi and Ke Ke pleased. They revealed a greater trust and reliance on Huo Yuhao in their eyes.

"Huo Yuhao, I'm going to stick to you from today onwards. As long as you're in the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy, you have to cook for me!" Ke Ke exclaimed.

Ju Zi teased, "You made him your chef, but what're you going to offer? Your body?"

"Err..." Ke Ke's face turned red. However, she threw a threatening look at Huo Yuhao and said, "Do you dare to demand anything from me?!"

"No, I don't," Huo Yuhao answered smoothly.

Ke Ke wanted to scare him, but she didn't expect him to answer so readily. She said dismally, "I'm smart, intelligent, and cute. What expression is this? Why don't you dare to make a demand?"

Huo Yuhao chortled and answered, "Even if I said I wanted something, you wouldn't budge! I'm only saying what you want to hear. I'm really maligned! Do you want me to beg you to be my girlfriend before you'll dump me to one side?"

Ke Ke nodded her head forcefully and said, "That should be the case. However, I may give you a chance if you continue your cooking. It's a pity you're a little young. Tell me, how old are you?"

Huo Yuhao smiled and said, "Fourteen, going on fifteen."

Silence! Turned heads! Eye contact!

"Ah....!"

Ke Ke and Ju Zi screamed at the same time, shocking Huo Yuhao. Even a few weak soul beasts that were observing them were startled, and fled in fear.

"You're only fourteen? How're you only fourteen? You look more like eighteen. Furthermore, you're already at Rank 40 at fourteen years old, and possess twin martial souls. You're inhuman!" Ke Ke exclaimed in disbelief.

Huo Yuhao rubbed his nose and said, "I grew a little faster. You don't have to be so appalled. As for cultivation, the two of you are only three or four years older than me, but you're soul kings already. I may not even be a soul king at your ages."

Ke Ke shook her head forcefully and replied, "Although I look young, I must say that I'm already nineteen years old. Sister Ju Zi is almost twenty. We're five years older than you! Generation gap, there's definitely a generation gap."

Ju Zi chuckled and said, "It's fine. An older wife can be as loving as a mom. You still have a chance."

"You're the mom. It's a pity that I don't have a sister. Otherwise, I could introduce him to her."

After interacting for a day, the three of them had become completely familiar with one another. Their relationship also became closer after what they had gone through together.

Ju Zi and Ke Ke had trained with Wang Shaojie and Zimu in the past, but they seemed to be more secure with Huo Yuhao now.

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After lunch, the three of them took a short break. They only continued after their soul power was restored to their peak levels.

Huo Yuhao remained seated in the main control pod. Before he moved off, he turned to the two ladies and said, "I've already smeared the Silverwolf's blood on the all-terrain exploration vehicle. It's too late for regrets now."

Ke Ke snapped, "Enough with the crap. Let's go."

Huo Yuhao wasn't impatient as he said, "If the two of you insist on following me, I must insist on being the team leader from this point on. Although I'm not fully aware of your abilities, you must listen to my instructions. I am definitely more experienced in dealing with soul beasts than the two of you. I can guarantee our safety if we don't meet a hundred-thousand year soul beast or many ten-thousand year soul beasts."

Ju Zi offered her position to him easily. "Alright, you can be the team leader."

Huo Yuhao said, "Then let's move off. Seniors, remember not to leave the all-terrain exploration vehicle easily no matter what. This soul tool is able to withstand more damage than you described earlier. It can

unleash your soul tools through the windows, too. If there's a fight, leave it to me. The two of you just need to reinforce me with firepower."

Ke Ke snapped, "Why do I feel more like trash the more I listen to you? Stop spouting gibberish and let's go!"

Chapter 164: Silvermoon Wolf King

Huo Yuhao put his soul power into the all-terrain exploration vehicle, and its six mechanical legs began moving. It followed this branch of the trail, until they passed a narrow downslope finally entering the main trail of the Jing Yang Mountain Range.

Huo Yuhao currently was observing the geography of the Jing Yang Mountain Range from above. The main trail of the Jing Yang Mountain Range was oval. Although it was his first time here, he could roughly discern the distribution of soul beasts, referencing his experiences with the Great Star Dou Forest.

The weaker and smaller soul beasts lived near the outermost perimeter of the mountain range, while the stronger ones lived somewhat deeper in. As long as they didn't venture in too deep, they shouldn't be in much trouble.

After all, the Silverwolf's scent could only spread outwards a certain distance, and shouldn't be able to reach all the way to the core of the mountain range.

The Silverwolf's profuse bleeding hadn't caused any trouble for them, or at least not yet. Most soul beasts would flee after detecting the scent of the Silverwolf's blood. This was very evident when Huo Yuhao used his Spiritual Detection. He discovered that even some of the thousand year soul beasts would escape after catching a whiff of the Silverwolf's blood. Just like this, they were advancing faster and faster along the path.

Huo Yuhao quickly controlled the all-terrain exploration vehicle to ascend a nearby mountain peak within the outer boundaries of the Jing Yang Mountain Range.

He didn't dare expend too much of his soul power as they ventured into the habitats of these soul beasts. After restoring part of his abilities from the mountain peak, he looked into the distance.

Like most mountain ranges, the Jing Yang Mountain Range's mountain peaks were higher the closer to the center you got. However, not all of them were steep inclines, and there were some with quite gentle inclines.

The quantity of soul beasts near the main trail was much greater. They were easily comparable to the soul beasts at the edge of the Great Star Dou Forest. However, they didn't reveal themselves because of the Silverwolf's blood.

Huo Yuhao sat cross-legged on the ground and allowed the wind to blow against him softly. He wasn't being adventurous, when he leaned on the all-terrain exploration vehicle, the two ladies couldn't see his face. A streak of golden light flashed across his forehead, and the Eye of Destiny quietly opened.

Huo Yuhao's spiritual world had experienced earth-shaking changes after he had received the Eye of Destiny. Neither the Skydream Iceworm, the Ice Empress nor Electrolux could control his body anymore

because of the Eye of Destiny, unless he allowed it. Even so, he could instantly regain control of his own body with his will even if he invited them to control his body.

Him using the Eye of Destiny right now wasn't to enhance his Spirit Eyes' visual acuity. When he opened them, the aura of destiny appeared in Huo Yuhao's mind. His sensitivity also increased greatly, allowing him to predict the future to a certain extent, and be warned of trouble or anything good that was about to happen.

"Oh?" The Eye of Destiny shut. But even when Huo Yuhao opened his normal eyes, he was shocked. He didn't expect to come across something like this when he used the Eye of Destiny to search for the paths of destiny.

Danger! Opportunity!

It was a little unclear, but he could definitely sense the presence of both danger and opportunity. This was new, surprising him.

What was going on? Huo Yuhao tensed up. Although the Eye of Destiny only gave unclear answers, he did sense that the dangers came before the opportunities. It seemed as if some countless dangers were waiting for him in the mountains faraway. This was a very ominous sign.

However, he wouldn't back off when he was already here. Moreover, the Eye of Destiny didn't give him any sense of fatal danger.

Proceed with caution. Huo Yuhao set himself this careful strategy.

Huo Yuhao slowed down as they continued once more. He stopped almost every fifteen minutes to make adjustments, while they offered, the two ladies were rejected by him to take control the all-terrain exploration vehicle. He only required them to be at their optimal fighting conditions at all time.

Them seeing Huo Yuhao so cautious, they didn't dare to say anything. It was always good to be more cautious. Even Ke Ke didn't appear to be annoyed anymore.

After two hours, they were on the way to the top of the third mountain. This was the final destination set by Huo Yuhao for the day. They would be spending their night on the mountain peak.

They finally ran into some problems earlier. Two golden tigers with three thousand years of cultivation had stopped them from advancing.

The golden tigers in the Jing Yang Mountain Range were very strong. Huo Yuhao had only been able to penetrate an inch into their tough skulls, even when using the Darkgolden Terrorclaws. They still died, but a lot of time had been wasted killing them. It wasn't simple to best their resilient bodies.

After a day's worth of observation, Huo Yuhao discovered that the metal-type soul beasts in the Jing Yang Mountain Range were stronger than average soul beasts. However, the other types of soul beasts weren't much weaker. They'd ran into a wind-type Noble Roc with ten thousand years of cultivation as well, which was also the strongest soul beast they saw today. But it was still scared off by the two golden tigers! This showed how dominant the metal-type soul beasts were in the Jing Yang Mountain Range.

However, Huo Yuhao couldn't hear a peep from the soul beasts that he really wanted to meet. No more spiritual-type soul beasts appeared. Spiritual-type soul beasts were indeed very rare, no matter which part of the continent you look for them. Fortunately, this was only the first day, Huo Yuhao still had patience to spare.

He decided to venture inwards up to the fifth mountain peak as the limit based on his Eye of Destiny's prediction. He wouldn't venture any further in past that. He would then proceed to move perpendicularly to conduct his search. If he didn't make progress in the next five days, he would retreat. After all, his safety was paramount.

They finally reached the top of the mountain.

There was an important reason for choosing to rest at the top of the mountain—the all-terrain exploration vehicle was most adept at escaping from a high ground. As a ball-shaped entity, it could roll down a moderately low slope. It wouldn't be easy for a soul beast to chase them down. Of course, the soul masters inside the all-terrain exploration vehicle wouldn't find it very comfortable.

Huo Yuhao didn't start up a fire, but he still whipped up a delicious meal for the ladies. Earlier Huo Yuhao had retrieved the tastiest loin from the golden tiger, then, using the White Tiger Dagger, he cut out thin strips of meat.

Tiger meat was generally a tinge sour. Usually speaking, it wouldn't taste nice without appropriate cooking methods. Fresh tiger meat tasted better than normal meats, but how many people had a chance to eat it?

Before Huo Yuhao cut the fresh tiger meat into pieces, he had already prepared a condiment. It was a new slightly spicy sauce, but it was very refreshing. After the tiger's meat was marinated, it became very tender. Not only did the sour and fishy taste disappear, somehow it developed a wild taste.

However, Huo Yuhao didn't let them eat too much of it. He knew it wasn't easy to digest raw tiger meat, even though it's very nutritious. He came up with another sauce and used it to make a salad. He added some dried foods to the salad, which tasted pretty addictive themselves.

Ke Ke and Ju Zi discovered that their sisterly affections for Huo Yuhao increased every time they tasted his cooking.

"What will we do at night?" After having dinner, the three of them formed a circle. The mountain breeze was chilly at night, and gusts of mist floated by, causing their outerwear to be wet.

However, it wasn't a good idea to pitch a tent here, because they might meet a soul beast anytime.

Huo Yuhao pointed at the metal ball behind him and said, "We can only sleep in it. The two of you can rest. I'll stand guard outside. If there's any movement, I'll inform you immediately."

Ju Zi said, "Let me relieve you at midnight."

Ke Ke added, "Let's make it four hours per person."

Huo Yuhao smiled and replied, "Alright, don't worry and go to sleep. I'll call for you when your time comes."

The ladies returned to the all-terrain exploration vehicle and shut the crystal door, completely isolating themselves from the chill outside.

Huo Yuhao leaned against the metal ball and sat down. Although the mountain breeze was very chilly, it meant nothing to him. He was someone with Ultimate Ice, this was a suitable place for him to cultivate, rather than harmful.

He shut his eyes and sat cross-legged. His Spiritual Detection spread out, and his soul power circulated in his meditative state.

This was a major benefit of using Huo Yuhao's second mental sea. He could leave a shred of consciousness in his second mental sea and adjust his soul power to use his Spiritual Detection to sense the conditions around him. He could also rest part of his mind in primary Spiritual Sea. It was like sleeping with one eye open. If he discovered something, his mind could be activated quickly. Which was why he had no intention of asking them to relieve him.

The sky was getting darker, and the starlight dimmed. Gusts of thick fog blew past, and visibility became very poor.

The chill had no effect on Huo Yuhao though. His body temperature was even lower than the temperature outside. The Ultimate Ice caused his soul power cultivation to proceed at a snail's pace, but his foundation was very solid. No soul master at the same level could compare with him in this aspect.

Water was the foundation of ice. The water element in the air was very beneficial to Huo Yuhao's cultivation. Furthermore, the natural qi of heaven and earth was providing nourishment amidst the mountains of the outside world. His cultivation would accelerate here.

There was a great feeling to cultivating deep in the mountains. Huo Yuhao could sense everything that changed within a 500 meter radius, and he sighed to himself. No wonder soul beasts would rather live in the deep mountains, swamps or a forest. The spiritual energy was just so very nourishing.

"Oh?" Huo Yuhao shivered. Although he hadn't discovered anything with his Spiritual Detection, his hairs still stood on end.

What's going on? Huo Yuhao stopped meditating, stunned. He trusted in his own instincts, these sudden warnings and his intense reactions signified that the impending danger was terrifying.

He knocked on the crystal door twice. It wasn't loud, but the ladies were jolted awake.

"We may be in trouble. Don't come out, but be prepared to attack. Ju Zi, remain in the main control pod. If things get out of hand, don't bother with me and just roll down the mountain. I'll find a way to escape." Huo Yuhao said softly. The composure and tension in his voice completely woke Ju Zi and Ke Ke up.

"What did you discover?" Ju Zi opened a glass window and asked softly. As she spoke, some metal clanging sounds could already be heard from her and Ke Ke's body. They were preparing their offensive soul tools for battle.

Huo Yuhao shook his head slightly and said, "I'm still unsure. But I'm far more sensitive than most people. I believe that a huge problem is coming."

Huo Yuhao took a deep breath and tried to calm himself down. Although he had made significant improvements over the last two years, he was still only at Rank 40 at the moment. He couldn't compare with truly powerful figures.

His Spiritual Detection changed from an radial detection to a one-directional detection as Huo Yuhao scanned his surroundings.

The one-directional detection could stretch out to a kilometer if he didn't use the Eye of Destiny. This wasn't the time to conserve soul power, so he initiated his Spiritual Detection to the fullest and scanned downslope.

The two windows of the all-terrain exploration vehicle were open, two black cannons poking out from them. Each cannons' caliber was greater than 100 millimeters, both operated by Ke Ke, who was carrying a cannon on each shoulder. Ju Zi sat in the main control pod, ready to move the all-terrain exploration vehicle at a moment's notice.

Huo Yuhao didn't unleash any soul tools, but he watched his surroundings very sharply. When his entire body made a full revolution, his expression was extremely dismal before he finished.

Silent figures were already gathering towards the top of the mountain from all directions. They didn't make a sound, but the invisible threats clenched at Huo Yuhao's heart.

"A pack of wolves. It's a pack of golden wolves. We're surrounded. There are at least three ten thousand year golden wolves leading more than one hundred hundred year to a thousand year wolves. They'll be here in less than three minutes. Be prepared to escape. I believe they won't be able to resist the all-terrain exploration vehicle if it rolls over them."

Ju Zi and Ke Ke were stunned. These golden wolves were in fact metal-type wolves. They were actually soul beasts under the metal element. Although they weren't as powerful as the golden lion, tiger, panther or bear metal-type soul beasts, they were much quicker, and they moved in packs. In the Jing Yang Mountain Range, all metal-type soul beasts show more ability in fighting than the other soul beasts by at least thirty percent. In addition, there were even three ten thousand year soul beasts leading this pack. This spelled trouble. Even if Huo Yuhao and the girls couldn't be killed so easily, their energy would be depleted rapidly.

"Yuhao, get in."

"Let's roll them down together." Ju Zi called anxiously.

Huo Yuhao shook his head in refusal. "No, I can't leave. These golden wolves were sent by a Silverwolf. I can sense the Silverwolf's aura. If I'm not wrong, this Silverwolf's soul ring should be suitable for my fourth soul ring. Leave first. Don't worry about me. I'll find a way out."

"No, it's too dangerous. There's more than a hundred golden wolves out there!" Ju Zi wanted to come out as she spoke.

Huo Yuhao pressed against the door and said, "I know how I can get out. But if I'm really stuck, I can just use a flying-type soul tool to escape. Be careful now. I'm sending the both of you off." As he spoke, his palms were covered in diamond crystals. His arms exerted an immense force, and the Controlling Crane

Capturing Dragon fully unleashed the Mysterious Heaven Technique, in cohesion with Huo Yuhao's physical strength. He lifted two of the metal ball's legs and pushed them forward.

At the same time, the heavy all-terrain exploration vehicle shifted backwards. Ju Zi and Ke Ke cried out in exclamation simultaneously. Huo Yuhao's voice rang in their ears, "Don't bother worrying about me. Let's meet at our rendezvous point later. I'll be fine. Don't turn back. Just keep rolling."

The top of this mountain wasn't very wide, so the all-terrain exploration vehicle immediately lost its balance and nearly rolled off the side.

Ju Zi's decisiveness was displayed at this moment. While Ke Ke was still very displeased with Huo Yuhao and wanted to question his decisions, Ju Zi had already shut the two open windows. The six mechanical legs shrank, and a huge amount of rubber spewed out of the all-terrain exploration vehicle. This caused the surface of the all-terrain exploration vehicle to become very springy, its scent was concealed by the rubber as well. The all-terrain exploration vehicle rolled down the mountain, and the two ladies inside rolled around interior of the all-terrain exploration vehicle. The protective mechanism in the all-terrain exploration vehicle finally took effect. The internal area was separated from the outer surface layer, which let the central springs rapidly reduce its bouncing, and increased the stability inside the soul tool.

Huo Yuhao was relieved as he watched the metal ball roll down the mountain. He couldn't let them see some of his abilities. It was less strenuous on him if they were around yes, but he also couldn't unleash his full power. He wasn't lying when he said he had felt a ten thousand year Silverwolf's presence earlier. As a spiritual-type soul master, Huo Yuhao knew the importance of a suitable spiritual-type soul ring, and he couldn't let go of such a great opportunity. Otherwise, it would prove to be very difficult to find this ten thousand year Silverwolf later, given its ingenuity.

Ever since he started training for the Ultimate Soldier Plan, he'd never once burst forth with his full abilities. Even he himself didn't know the limit of his current cultivation's might. However, today was as good an opportunity as any to test out his abilities. Only in the face of a true threat could his potential truly be unlocked. He wasn't afraid of a ten thousand year soul beast, even if it was of the metal element, he already specialized in fighting many opponents. Moreover, he thrived in situations where he was outnumbered! Otherwise, what was the point of the Ultimate Soldier Plan?

His hands drooped down beside his body, and Huo Yuhao's eyes emitted a dim golden glow. The gentle gold contained a thick aura of austerity.

"Come." Huo Yuhao's mind and energy were at their peak.

His Spiritual Detection told him that the all-terrain exploration vehicle had attracted a few golden wolves as it rolled down, they had chased after it. This was also a small part of his plan. Right now, his plan was to distract these wolves. Making the wolves run around was bound to cause confusion and mess up their formation.

Huo Yuhao threw a silver figure into the air. Following that, a reverberating boom resounded in mid-air. A subtle azure-blue radiance appeared on Huo Yuhao's left arm, which was a trace of his Ice Explosion Technique.

The Silverwolf's corpse turned into powder in mid-air and scattered. A thick, bloody scent diffused across the mountain top.

If one wasn't merciless enough in the world of soul beasts, where survival of the fittest was the rule, one wouldn't be able to survive. At this point, Huo Yuhao had retracted the little hint of compassion hiding in his heart and made himself more cold-blooded.

Pathetic wolf howls could be heard from the midway point up the mountain. The pack of wolves evidently realized that Huo Yuhao already discovered them. The all-terrain exploration vehicle that rolled off the mountain lost the Silverwolf's scent and no longer captured their attention. The pack of wolves didn't bother with concealing themselves anymore, and burst forth with the fastest speeds they had towards the peak.

Crisp, clanging sounds rang on Huo Yuhao's body, and metal cases started appearing. They emitted an eerie, dark golden color.

The metal cases were stacked on his shoulders, arms, chest and back, the sides of his legs, his waist etc. There were eighteen of them. Every metal case seemed to be rather heavy, and made Huo Yuhao's person seem to tower high.

The first golden wolf finally drifted into Huo Yuhao's view. It was indeed different from the golden wolves found in other places. Its muscles protruded underneath glowing fur, and made it seem very burly. A bloodthirsty gaze from it was instantly fixed on Huo Yuhao's body.

It roared furiously and leapt towards Huo Yuhao. It lifted its blade sharp front claws and slashed towards Huo Yuhao.

Huo Yuhao estimated that this golden wolf should be among the strongest for its cultivation.

Huo Yuhao took half a step back, only a series of clanging noises resonating could be heard. A layer of white flashed on one of the metal cases on his left wrist before disappearing. That golden wolf's figure froze in the air. Although it was still in a leaping stance, it started to howl pathetically.

Sixteen transparent holes appeared in its fur, which was supposed to be defensively sound.

This was part of the frightening penetrative ability belonging to the Zhuge Divine Crossbow. Which instantly pierced through the golden wolf's body.

The crossbows on Huo Yuhao's body were completely charged beforehand. They had to be recharged once every three days. Huo Yuhao had already prepared them long before he'd entered the Jing Yang Mountain Range. This golden wolf became the first victim of his Zhuge Divine Crossbow.

Huo Yuhao reached out with his left hand and grabbed the golden wolf's corpse. He sealed its wounds with ice and then threw the corpse to one side with a flick of his wrist as he opted not to use the Ice Explosion Technique on its body

The Zhuge Divine Crossbows he was currently using were different from the ones that he'd created in front of Xuan Ziwen. They were made from better materials, and more meticulous craftsmanship. They could be fired three times, and were top-grade Class 5 soul tools. This meant that the eighteen slots in the Zhuge Divine Crossbow could fire fifty-four times in total, which was the reason that Huo Yuhao was so confident. It's pertinent to note that the Zhuge Divine Crossbow could also be fired extremely easily—he only needed to use a tinge of his soul power to initiate the cumulative formation arrays

within them. The rest of the firing mechanism was completed by the soul tool itself, the end result being that the charged power would fire the arrows. Their destructive ability was also extremely great.

Another seven golden wolves had already reached the mountaintop by the time the first golden wolf was thrown to the side. All of them rushed towards Huo Yuhao. Their cultivations varied from three hundred to two thousand years, which was evident from their size and muscle density.

Huo Yuhao initiated his Spiritual Detection and moved extremely quickly. He used the Ghost Shadow Perplexing Track to burst towards the smallest golden wolf, and then lifted both of his arms, causing a crisp, clanging sound to resonate. He'd fired the Zhuge Divine Crossbows, causing several sharp arrows to pierce into the golden wolves' flesh and for them to howl in pain. He didn't even need to use his Spiritual Detection to know that two of the golden wolves had collapsed.

Huo Yuhao had reached the smallest golden wolf at this point, his figure flashing to the side as he dodged its attack. At the same time, he used his Darkgolden Terrorclaws to sever the wolf's spinal cord through its neck, instantly killing it.

Huo Yuhao lifted his toes off the ground, but his entire body froze in place for a moment. He transferred the golden wolf's corpse to his left hand and then made a turned the upper half of his body as he threw the corpse towards three golden wolves who'd just reached the top of the mountain.

The Zhuge Divine Crossbow was unleashed once again when he turned around instantly taking down the golden wolves that had intended to attack him from behind.

Boom!

The Ice Explosion Technique was initiated, causing the three hundred year golden wolf's corpse to become an incredibly effective bomb that flipped the three golden wolves leaping towards Huo Yuhao. Huo Yuhao quickly turned and grabbed another golden wolf corpse with his left hand. He injected the Ice Explosion Technique into it, then flung the corpse out as he lifted his right foot off the ground.

The advantage his Spiritual Detection gave him was clearly demonstrated at this point: The corpse he'd thrown landed at the edge of the mountain at the same time as when the majority of the pack of golden wolves reached the top of the mountain.

Blood and flesh scattered amidst an explosion; several golden wolves had been blown apart.

Huo Yuhao continued to grab wolf corpses with his left hand, causing the golden wolves that perished under his crossbows to continuously be turned into bombs from his Ice Explosion Technique one by one, then be flung out. As explosions continued to resound, it soon felt like the entire Jing Yang Mountain Range was shaking. Sonorous echoes could be heard from between the mountains.

Over thirty golden wolves had been killed, just like that. Huo Yuhao had only wasted half of his Zhuge Divine Crossbow's arrows, while the majority of the golden wolves had been killed with his Ice Explosion Technique.

Huo Yuhao's Ice Explosion Technique achieved an effect similar to the Envoy of the Death God's corpse explosion. The difference was that the Envoy of the Death God's corpse explosion was a soul skill similar to a lethal poison, in that it needed some time to transform a corpse. On the other hand, Huo Yuhao couldn't use his technique on a large group of corpses at the same time, but his Ice Explosion Technique

could be unleashed faster. The only problem was that he needed to manually inject the Ice Explosion Technique into the corpse. However, the benefit lay in that it had a negligible impact on Huo Yuhao's soul power.

A Class 6 Milk Bottle appeared in Huo Yuhao's hands, and he quickly restored his depleted soul power. Meanwhile, the pack of golden wolves had stopped rushing to the top of the mountain; the string of deaths had evidently left them fearful. They were all waiting for their leader to appear.

Huo Yuhao was also waiting; it would be a good idea for him to escape right now, as the golden wolves wouldn't be able to stop him. However, his target wasn't this pack of golden wolves. He was still waiting for his target to appear.

He put the Zhuge Divine Crossbows on his arms away, as they'd been completely expended. This freed up his arms, after which he lightly flexed his Darkgolden Terrorclaws, causing dark golden light to ripple through the air. They weren't stained with blood even though Huo Yuhao had used them to kill a golden wolf earlier.

Huo Yuhao's eyes suddenly brightened, and he turned to face a certain direction. Three figures jumped up and lined themselves up in front of him.

They were three unusually large golden wolves, each of which was more than four meters long. Their thick bodies resembled huge bears, and they stood on their hind limbs, which were especially developed. Their four claws also looked just as sharp and ferocious as Huo Yuhao's Darkgolden Terrorclaws.

Their eyes were also blood-red rather than the common brown. Bloodthirsty auras were continuously released from their bodies.

They were ten thousand year golden wolves and were the leaders of the pack. Based on their auras and soul power undulations, their cultivations lay somewhere between ten thousand and twenty thousand years. However, their practical fighting strength should be beyond twenty thousand years. This was the first time that Huo Yuhao had seen such strong soul beasts. Although he was confident in himself, he wasn't completely confident that he could deal with these golden wolves. However, he didn't have a choice, as a slim silver figure had also appeared behind the wolves when they revealed themselves.

This Silverwolf was three meters long, and wasn't as developed as the golden wolves. However, it was more slender and still well-built, and a crescent shaped patch of silverish-white fur lay on its forehead. Its silver eyes looked as if they were about to spurt fire as they stared at Huo Yuhao. They were filled with hatred and resentment.

Both parties appeared very restrained and quiet at this point. Normal strategy dictated that the three golden wolves should've surrounded Huo Yuhao in a triangular formation. However, they hadn't adopted this formation. Instead, they were facing him from one direction. It was obvious that the Silverwolf's safety was a higher priority to them.

The Silverwolf was a Silvermoon Wolf King—a ten thousand year soul beast, and the same soul beast that Huo Yuhao was looking for. Huo Yuhao wasn't afraid at all now. Instead, he was a little excited. Fear had completely vanished from his head, and had been replaced with composure.

He didn't need to clash with the golden wolves; his only objective was to kill the Silvermoon Wolf King behind them and bring its soul ring away successfully. However, this would be a difficult task.

The rest of the golden wolves didn't attempt to rush to the top of the mountain. As the top of the mountain wasn't very large, if too many of them were to gather, it wouldn't be advantageous for their leaders. Huo Yuhao's use of the wolves' corpses to unleash his Ice Explosion Technique was also another important reason for them being afraid of coming to the top of the mountain.

Huo Yuhao suddenly made his move: He leapt forwards like an arrow, actively launching an attack. The moment his body moved, a golden vertical eye opened on his forehead. A mighty aura that seemed to be in control of destiny was suddenly released.

The three golden wolves and the Silvermoon Wolf King that had already prepared their own strategy were stunned by this, and an indescribable fear filled their hearts.

At that point, a streak of purplish light shot out from the Eye of Destiny, its target being the Silvermoon Wolf King.

Yes! This was the strongest spiritual-type strike that Huo Yuhao could currently unleash—the Staring Soul of Destiny.

The Silvermoon Wolf King was a soul beast with with extremely great amount of spiritual power, but its body began to shake tremendously, and it screamed ferociously when its gaze met Huo Yuhao's Eye of Destiny.

A light suddenly shot out from its head as it tried to resist destiny, and Huo Yuhao's Staring Soul of Destiny!

This light was blue, red, yellow, green, gold, black, and purple. When it appeared, the air around the Silvermoon Wolf King began to distort. It distorted so greatly that even the Silvermoon Wolf King's body began to become indistinguishable.

When the purplish-golden light that was filled with the might of destiny struck the seven-colored light, it caused it to distort furiously. It turned into a huge whirlpool that wanted to crush Huo Yuhao's Staring Soul of Destiny!

A white projection appeared behind Huo Yuhao. This projection had a swollen, extremely plump body, but ten golden patterns surfaced on its body. The entire projection flashed once before disappearing. However, the Staring Soul of Destiny's radiance became even brighter.

The seven-colored whirlpool was then crushed, and the Silvermoon Wolf King roared pitifully. Its silver eyes burst, and fresh blood flowed out of them. Its body also rolled across the ground before it managed to stop itself and force itself to stand back up.

It was extremely powerful! Huo Yuhao wasn't excited now; he was shocked.

The Staring Soul of Destiny was his strongest spiritual attack. He was capable of threatening a seven-ringed soul sage with it. When he'd unleashed his attack, the Eye of Destiny had already increased the intensity of his attack to its highest point, and had sucked out almost all of the spiritual power in his

second mental sea. It had even borrowed the Skydream Iceworm's spiritual power to complete the attack. It was an attack that he could only use once a day.

Huo Yuhao had once unleashed this strike against a two thousand year soul beast during a test in the Ultimate Soldier Plan. That soul beast had instantly died, its head exploding.

The Silvermoon Wolf King should've only just reached the ten thousand year level. However, it had still managed to withstand Huo Yuhao's attack. Huo Yuhao had even borrowed the Skydream Iceworm's strength and spiritual power to increase his own power in order to make it unbearable for the Silvermoon Wolf King. Yet the Silvermoon Wolf King hadn't died, even though its eyes had burst. This had put a little dent in Huo Yuhao's plan.

Everything seemed to have happened very slowly, but all of this actually occurred extremely quickly.

Chapter 165: Fourth Soul Ring

At this point, Huo Yuhao relied on his explosive strength. Once the three golden wolves began to attack him, it would be very difficult for him to escape.

When he unleashed his strongest strike, his Imitation also exhibited a great effect. The mighty Ice Empress Aura spread out, and the blood-red soul ring started to shine extremely brightly.

The three golden wolves that were about to leap towards him stopped in their tracks. Among the surrounding pack of golden wolves, those that had less than a thousand years of cultivation all collapsed to the ground.

Huo Yuhao exploited this opportunity, and his third soul skill, Enfeeblement, turned into a patch of white light that scattered. The Silvermoon Wolf King, the three golden wolves and the rest of the golden wolves were all struck by this white light.

The Zhuge Divine Crossbows fired at this moment. Huo Yuhao's Class 5 soul thruster behind his back was also activated with full force, propelling his body forward like a shooting star.

Although his plan had deviated, he didn't retreat. He still needed to complete it. Even if he couldn't kill the Silvermoon Wolf King, he had to burst forward. Otherwise, he wouldn't have any chance left.

Spiritual Interference was unleashed following the Enfeeblement. The three golden wolves weren't affected that much, but the rest of the golden wolves weren't so fortunate. That was also key to ensuring Huo Yuhao's escape.

The Silvermoon Wolf King let out a vicious howl. Although it had already lost both its eyes, it still relied on its immense spiritual power to predict Huo Yuhao's actions. Its howl also jolted the three golden wolves, who were still reeling in shock from Huo Yuhao's Imitation. The three huge wolves blocked Huo Yuhao and prevented him from proceeding forward.

The Zhuge Divine Crossbows' arrows could pierce through thousand year golden wolves' bodies, but they only created sparks when they struck the three golden wolves. The three golden wolves shut their eyes and lifted their claws. They kept on clawing towards the arrows. Although they felt pain, they weren't really harmed.

Huo Yuhao collided with the three golden wolves in front of him at this moment.

His speed was frightening under the effect of the Class 5 soul tool. Huo Yuhao hugged his knees to his chest and used his hands to hug his legs as he lowered his head. This was to reduce the surface area of his collision.

The Ice Empress' Armor covered his entire body. He was currently like an enormous ice ball.

The three golden wolves reacted quickly. The burliest golden wolf in the center stood up straight, and its two claws pierced towards Huo Yuhao as it let out an ear-piercing roar. The golden wolf on the left retreated rapidly and protected the Silvermoon Wolf King. The golden wolf on the right teamed up with the central golden wolf to attack Huo Yuhao.

Indeed, the higher the cultivation of a soul beast, the more intelligent it was. The three golden wolves complemented each other very well, and worked together efficiently.

Although the Enfeeblement had taken effect on them, their offensive strength didn't dip by a lot. After all, Huo Yuhao was still some way off from their abilities. That was why Huo Yuhao's soul skill didn't affect them too much.

Under normal circumstances, Huo Yuhao's best choice was to use his Spiritual Detection to try and avoid the golden wolves' attacks. However, this would make it impossible for him to burst past them.

Huo Yuhao looked very calm now. It was as if it wasn't his body that was about to be struck.

There was no resistance or attack. He chose to take the strikes of the two golden wolves forcefully!

A scarlet-golden radiance suddenly shone from Huo Yuhao's body. In the pitch-dark night, another sun seemed to rise from the mountaintop.

The strikes of the two golden wolves landed on the scarlet-golden light barrier that appeared, and a miraculous scene occurred. The scarlet-golden light barrier's surface seemed to ripple, and the strikes of the golden wolves slid off. They couldn't penetrate it.

Huo Yuhao groaned, and his Class 5 soul thruster propelled him forward at maximum speed. He collided with the golden wolves and pushed them aside.

The Ice Empress' Pincer restrained the claws of the golden wolf that was originally in front of Huo Yuhao. However, he was still struck in the back by the golden wolf that was originally at his left side. The scarlet-golden barrier weakened a little. But Huo Yuhao managed to lift his legs, and two balls of light were shot out from the balls of his feet. It was yet another soul thruster. Although it was only a Class 3 soul thruster, it managed to propel him forward extremely rapidly. He burst past the two golden wolves instantly.

An intense azure light now shone from Huo Yuhao's body. A weird golden light also flashed across his Eye of Destiny before landing on the Silvermoon Wolf King, which was spitting out a huge silver ball of light.

The intense azure light spread and carried a chill with a desolate aura that filled the entire top of the mountain. Everything within a 10 meter radius was engulfed by this azure light. It was the Domain of Perpetual Ice.

The silver ball of light spat out by the Silvermoon Wolf King had already been converted into a huge fireball. However, it was instantly extinguished by the azure-green Domain of Perpetual Ice. Not even a single spark was left.

Huo Yuhao was in a delicate position now. Behind him were the two golden wolves that had tried to block him earlier. To his front left was the golden wolf that was protecting the Silvermoon Wolf King, whereas the Silvermoon Wolf King itself was less than five meters from him, and bursting forward.

The Domain of Perpetual Ice was indeed very powerful. The four wolves instantly slowed down tremendously as their bodies were coated with a layer of frost. However, they were all too powerful for Huo Yuhao. Huo Yuhao's current cultivation was insufficient to freeze them completely. Even so, Huo Yuhao still earned himself a great opportunity by slowing them down.

The golden wolf that was protecting the Silvermoon Wolf King became much slower. Huo Yuhao's body twisted in the air, and he avoided its claws. He came before the Silvermoon Wolf King. At this point, the three golden wolves were behind him, while the Silvermoon Wolf King was in front of him. He was surrounded by the four wolves now.

A cold look appeared in Huo Yuhao's eyes. He didn't even bother with the three golden wolves behind him. The Domain of Perpetual Ice could at least ensure that they couldn't attack within the next three seconds. What he had to do now was deal with the Silvermoon Wolf King before the three golden wolves recovered.

He unleashed everything that he was holding in earlier. The Silvermoon Wolf King was also affected by the Domain of Perpetual Ice, and its movement were slowed. However, its resistance was superior to the three golden wolves, so it was recovering faster. However, Huo Yuhao wouldn't grant it the opportunity to fully recover.

An azure-blue light flashed in his left hand before disappearing. A compressed boom sounded right in front of the Silvermoon Wolf King's face. The frozen bloodstains on its fur that were left by the Domain of Perpetual Ice exploded.

When the Silvermoon Wolf King was struck by the Destiny Soul Gaze, its eyeballs had been blown apart as it neutralized the impact of Spiritual Shock, and its crushed eyeballs had left a pile of fluid.

Although its body wasn't frozen by the Domain of Perpetual Ice, it couldn't prevent these fluids from flowing out. And now, Huo Yuhao used the Ice Explosion Technique to blow that frozen fluid apart.

The explosive force of this direct explosion was naturally incomparable to the explosive force when the Ice Explosion Technique was injected into a corpse. However, a portion of the ice exploded inside the Silvermoon Wolf King's eye sockets! In addition, it happened very suddenly.

The Silvermoon Wolf King's body suddenly rose up as it screamed in pain. The intense pain caused it to lose its cool and judgement.

The Darkgolden Terrorclaws turned into four meter-long blades of light that stabbed into the Silvermoon Wolf King's body.

This ten thousand year Silvermoon Wolf King was very powerful. It seemed to possess something like an automatic defensive soul tool when the Darkgolden Terrorclaws stabbed into its body. The seven-

colored radiance that had once appeared from it flashed again. It was different from the time it tried to resist Huo Yuhao's spiritual power. This time, Huo Yuhao only felt that his Darkgolden Terrorclaws had stopped seven times. After seven roars were heard, he finally managed to strike the Silvermoon Wolf King.

As these seven roars were released, seven different forms – water ripples, flames, tough ramparts, a rapid whirlwind, a light shield, a dark barrier and a lightning web – were adopted. These seven forms represented the seven elements, and greatly diminished the effect of the Darkgolden Terrorclaws.

Huo Yuhao didn't manage to kill the Silvermoon Wolf King even though he had stabbed his claws into the vital area between its chest and belly.

The three golden wolves behind Huo Yuhao had recovered by now, and they burst towards him.

Huo Yuhao took in a deep breath and his entire body seemed to swell. His gaze remained calm. It was as if he had predicted this. His left hand drummed against his chest, and a blinding golden light started to spread from his body. It turned into a golden barrier two meters in diameter. The three golden wolves couldn't penetrate this golden barrier with their attacks.

Huo Yuhao's entire spine had already turned a blinding azure-green. This was the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's skeleton's strongest attack, the Ice Empress' Wrath!

From Rank 30 to Rank 40, the greatest transformation that had occurred was that he no longer had to rely on the Haodong Power to support his strongest few soul skills.

Although Huo Yuhao was now spent, and his soul power was almost completely depleted, he still appeared very ferocious as the Ice Empress' Wrath was unleashed. The four hundred thousand year soul ring caused Huo Yuhao's strongest strike to make a clean sweep through the Silvermoon Wolf King.

His Destiny Soul Gaze had destroyed the Silvermoon Wolf King's eyes, and his Darkgolden Terrorclaws had torn its seven-elements defense apart. The Ice Empress' Wrath now dealt the fatal blow. This was the power of Huo Yuhao, the Eyes of Asura.

Huo Yuhao jumped forward, and his right hand's Darkgolden Terrorclaws stabbed into the frozen Silvermoon Wolf King's neck. He flung the Silvermoon Wolf King into the air forcefully after that, then leapt forward and used the Class 5 soul thruster behind his back to increase his speed. He chased after the frozen Silvermoon Wolf King and brought it to an abyss at the bottom of a cliff. The golden wolves that lay in ambush at the sides of the cliff were still affected by Huo Yuhao's Enfeeblement, and could only watch helplessly as that ball of golden light shot away.

Even at this point, the three golden wolves still couldn't penetrate the golden light barrier.

A pair of wings from a flying-type soul tool flapped open, and Huo Yuhao's body stopped falling, before rapidly flying into the distance.

No matter how strong metal-type soul beasts were in the Jing Yang Mountain Range, they couldn't change the fact that they couldn't fly. They watched helplessly as Huo Yuhao turned into a ball of golden light and disappeared into the horizon. The layer of golden light around him also diminished, and a dim mistsurged out from him. The vapor engulfed his entire body, and his aura disappeared as it did so.

The three golden wolves roared furiously, and burst out running towards the foot of the mountain. However, it was impossible for them to chase Huo Yuhao. After a few minutes, the trail of mist had already disappeared into the clouds between the mountains.

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Huo Yuhao finally let out a long breath of relief after he finished nourishing his soul power with a Class 6 Milk Bottle.

Everything had seemed to be under his control. However, he had spent more than ten seconds gliding through the air after activating his flying soul tool.. He had done that so he could use all his remaining soul power to support his Imitation as a means of concealing himself.

Even though he had now restored almost half of his soul power using the Milk Bottle, he still felt fatigued.

While this battle was a little risky for Huo Yuhao, it was still within his projections. It was only the Silvermoon Wolf King's abilities that were beyond his expectations. However, he used his immense explosive strength to counteract the slight deviation in his plan.

It was very difficult to find a suitable spiritual-type soul beast for himself. Since he had found one, he couldn't let it go. He had asked Ju Zi and Ke Ke to leave first so that he could unleash his full abilities. Two facts had let him keep his life. The first was his location. Since he was high on a mountain, it gave him an opportunity to fly into the air to shake off his enemies.

If he had stayed the ground, he would have needed to gain some altitude after using a flight soul tool. With the golden wolves' leaping abilities, they would have been able to attack him three times each. That was equivalent to nine strikes, since there were three golden wolves!

However, he had been on top of the mountain. When he jumped from the top of the mountain, the golden wolves lost their ability to pursue him. Time was very precious at that point. After Huo Yuhao used all his strength to kill the Silvermoon Wolf King, every second was very critical.

The other reason was that he had another soul tool on his chest, which was there before he left Shrek Academy.

This soul tool was related to Jing Hongchen's trip to Shrek Academy. Jing Hongchen had been forced to leave behind a soul tool when threatened by Elder Mu. Eventually, he left a Class 9 soul tool behind, Hongchen's Blessing.

Hongchen's Blessing could do two things. First, it had a defensive capability that could be automatically initiated. The scarlet-golden light barrier that Huo Yuhao had used to defend against the golden wolves' attacks earlier was a sign that Hongchen's Yearning had been initiated. The other thing it could do was the bright golden light barrier that Huo Yuhao had activated at the end, an Invincible Barrier that lasted fifteen seconds. This Invincible Barrier could withstand an offensive force three times Huo Yuhao's strength.

While the three golden wolves were very strong, they weren't three times stronger than Huo Yuhao. This allowed him to escape after he killed the Silvermoon Wolf King. Without this Class 9 soul tool, Huo

Yuhao would've been torn apart by the four wolves. The best result he could've achieved was to kill one of them.

Huo Yuhao had kept his cool and stayed behind because he had the Hongchen's Blessing. He eventually achieved his goal, too. He wasn't afraid of being discovered by soul beasts as he flew through the sky with his Imitation skill in place.

In addition, it was very late at night. If it were daytime, he would have been more likely to show some flaws.

Although the battle had ended very quickly, Huo Yuhao was spent. Not only was his soul power greatly depleted, but his own spiritual power and energy were also mostly expended. Huo Yuhao was certain that he wouldn't have been calm enough to win this fight without the tough training that he had gone through in the Ultimate Soldier Plan.

He was even sweating profusely at this moment. The conditions in the Jing Yang Mountain Range couldn't be judged based on his experience in the Great Star Dou Forest. He needed to be more cautious in the future.

Of course, he wasn't being too bold, either. He could have escaped, even though he might not have killed the Silvermoon Wolf King, since he had the fifteen seconds of protection from the Hongchen's Blessing's Invincible Barrier. His life was never in danger. Huo Yuhao still treasured his life.

Huo Yuhao managed to direct his flying-type soul tool out of the main branch of the Jing Yang Mountain Range as he nourished his soul power with the Milk Bottle. However, he was getting more and more exhausted. More importantly, a black soul ring started to surface from the Silvermoon Wolf King's body.

The soul ring that surfaced after a soul beast perished only remained for a certain period of time. If there was too much of a delay, the soul ring would dissipate on its own.

Huo Yuhao had expended a lot of effort to get this soul ring, so he couldn't waste it. He controlled the flying-type soul tool and slowly descended towards the branched trail beneath him. He needed to find a place to absorb his fourth soul ring. At the same time, he needed to regain some of his energy.

The tremendous depletion of his second mental sea meant he had lost his ability to use the Eye of Destiny temporarily. He needed at least a day to fully recover.

Huo Yuhao was still in a good mood after all that had happened. He had obtained his fourth soul ring, which meant that his abilities could be enhanced further. He had been unable to improve recently because of the bottleneck in his cultivation. After absorbing this soul ring, he could reach Rank 41, and Rank 42 was not out of the question. He could become an official Soul Ancestor!

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Huo Yuhao found a secluded area along the branched trail of the mountain range, and used his Spiritual Detection to scan his surroundings. After he confirmed that there was nothing that could threaten him within a two-kilometer radius, he quietly sat down on a large mountain rock.

As a golden light flashed, he first flung out a golden wolf's corpse. This golden wolf was killed by him previously. It had had a cultivation of around a thousand years.

Huo Yuhao pressed his right hand against the golden wolf's corpse and muttered something under his breath. He was speaking in a weird language, but his body started to shine with weird streaks of light.

The light then changed, starting from his eyes. Huo Yuhao's Spirit Eyes turned grey, and were filled with a sense of death.

The greyish light circulated, and his right hand was slowly coated in a layer of blurry, greyish light. The greyish color was slowly injected into the head of the golden wolf's corpse, and a weird scene appeared.

The dead golden wolf started to tremble slightly. Its fur gradually stood on end, and its huge body slowly crawled to its feet. However, its brownish-yellow eyes had turned grey, just like Huo Yuhao's. It was a terrifying scene to watch.

Huo Yuhao lifted his right hand, and his index finger touched the golden wolf's forehead lightly. The golden wolf's body trembled a little, and the greyish color in its eyes turned into jumping, greyish flames.

"Protect me and you won't come to harm." Huo Yuhao's voice was deep and captivating. The golden wolf nodded its head in a very human manner after hearing his words. After that, it jumped away and disappeared into the forest.

Huo Yuhao breathed out and revealed a delighted look. This was his real secret. Even in Shrek Academy, no one knew about it. It was necromancy that came from the Divine Law of Necromancy, taught to him by Calamity Necromancer Electrolux.

When Huo Yuhao's soul power cultivation broke the Rank 40 barrier, Electrolux told him that he could start cultivating necromancy.

Huo Yuhao was a little doubtful about necromancy at the start, but he soon accepted it under Electrolux's guidance.

Electrolux told Huo Yuhao that he had a story that belonged to him. However, this story was very long, and he was unwilling to tell it to Huo Yuhao at that point in time. His memory had only been partially restored, and he needed it to be complete before he could be clearer about things.

However, he was certain about one thing. Necromancy would never affect Huo Yuhao's will. Any skill could be used for good or bad purposes. Necromancy was very powerful and magical, and was completely different from the soul rings, soul power, soul skills, and soul bones in this world. It was an independent yet immense force. However, it could be practiced through a combination of soul power and incantations. This was a profound skill that had been derived by Electrolux after being fused with Huo Yuhao's body for many years.

Huo Yuhao decided to accept Electrolux's teachings after a period of consideration. As he entered the world of necromancy, he slowly felt the charm of it.

True necromancy was far superior to the evil soul skills that the Envoy of the Death God had used. Necromancy involved research on souls, especially those after death.

Electrolux told Huo Yuhao that the first necromancer in his original world learned the art for the sake of reviving his dead wife. Although he wasn't able to revive his wife, her soul was resurrected, and he managed to live with his wife's soul until he himself perished.

Huo Yuhao could only grasp very little, as his cultivation was too low. However, he had managed to develop his foundation in necromancy over the past two years. Right now, he had used necromancy to make the golden wolf his bodyguard temporarily. Although it wouldn't be for long, it would be long enough for him to absorb his fourth soul ring.

Huo Yuhao revealed a determined look as he placed the Silvermoon Wolf King's corpse on the ground. He was certain that even an eight-ringed Soul Douluo couldn't deal with a Silvermoon Wolf King easily under normal conditions. The Silvermoon Wolf King's fighting strength was immense, and its spiritual power was also greater than that of most ordinary soul beasts. More frighteningly, it could enslave other wolf-type soul beasts. If Huo Yuhao hadn't unleashed his explosive killing power at the very start, along with his powerful soul skills, he wouldn't have stood a chance against the Silvermoon Wolf King.

Huo Yuhao was very certain that the Ice Empress' Armor was unable to resist the golden wolves' attacks, and that he truly needed Hongchen's Blessing to protect himself. He wasn't capable of dealing with three golden wolves at his current cultivation level.

And the Silvermoon Wolf King was even stronger than them. It had a seven-elements defense that made it very resolute. If he hadn't used the Destiny Soul Gaze at the start to critically injure the Silvermoon Wolf King and affect its spiritual powers, the battle wouldn't have ended so easily.

However, all that was in the past. Huo Yuhao had succeeded, and the most important thing that he had to do now was absorb his fourth soul ring.

His gentle soul power rose, and the Mysterious Heaven Technique circulated normally. Huo Yuhao's spiritual power gradually guided the black soul ring hovering over the Silvermoon Wolf King's corpse towards him.

It was a ten-thousand year soul ring, but this soul ring wasn't just an ordinary black. Seven types of light subtly flashed within it, and Huo Yuhao could clearly sense the undulations of the seven elements.

Back when he was absorbing his third soul ring from the Purplespirit Wolf, Huo Yuhao had been quite embarrassed, although he wasn't afraid at all. That was because Elder Mu had been guarding out in front of the Sea God's Pavilion for him.

Right now, he was absorbing a ten-thousand year soul ring again. However, he was doing it by a trail out in the Jing Yang Mountain Range.

As the black soul ring entered his body, there were only two words to describe Huo Yuhao's feelings – blown away.

When the black soul ring fused with his body, Huo Yuhao felt as if his entire body was about to blow apart. His entire person shook tremendously, and a layer of seven-colored light shone from his body to a diameter of three meters before dimming. Huo Yuhao's face also turned pale.

He never expected the Silvermoon Wolf King's aura to be so domineering. This might did not come from the immense spiritual power at the core of the soul ring, but from the strength of the elements within it.

Water, fire, earth, wind, light, darkness and thunder, which were only achieved after ten thousand years of cultivation. The seven elements contained their own abilities, but they were all unleashed in Huo Yuhao's body in that instant.

Huo Yuhao's will was already very strong. However, he felt as if his entire body was about to explode when the frightening force blew apart. It wasn't a comfortable feeling at all!

However, he could only endure!

While enduring it was pure torment to Huo Yuhao, he could reap great benefits if he managed to successfully pass this test

His soul power circulated fully, and started to accept the soul ring. At the same time, two waves of force were released inside Huo Yuhao's body.

The Silvermoon Wolf King was infringing on the territory of the Ice Empress. The Ice Empress was going to retaliate!

Huo Yuhao's body turned azure-green at this instant, a color that originated from the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's skeleton.

An intense azure light spread to every corner of his body. A chilly aura instantly repressed the manic explosive force. The Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's aura was also released at this moment, and repressed the Silvermoon Wolf King's soul ring.

While the Silvermoon Wolf King was very powerful, how could it compare to a four-hundred thousand year soul beast that was one of the Ten Great Savage Beasts and Three Heavenly Kings of the Extreme North, the Ice Empress?

The all-engulfing, frightening will and desolate aura of the Ice Empress instantly repressed the manic struggle.

However, the Silvermoon Wolf King was an arrogant creature. It wouldn't submit even under such circumstances. Since it couldn't match up in terms of soul power, it activated its dominant spiritual power. However, once it did so, it collided with a spiritual barrier.

The Skydream Iceworm was not as hot-tempered as the Ice Empress, but the Silvermoon Wolf King had crossed its bottom line.

Huo Yuhao had expended a lot of effort to kill this soul beast. He was fatigued now and couldn't be counted on to absorb the soul ring. After remaining silent for so long, the Skydream Iceworm decided that it had to do something... and so the Silvermoon Wolf King's spiritual power didn't work.

In terms of species, the Iceworms couldn't compare to the Silverwolves. They weren't even on the same level. However, the Silvermoon Wolf King wasn't anywhere near as old as the Skydream Iceworm!

Even in the Great Star Dou Forest, Skydream Iceworms were treated as treasures by the other hundred-thousand year soul beasts. No soul beasts in the world could compare to Skydream Iceworms in terms of spiritual power. The only weakness of the Skydream Iceworms was that they didn't have any offensive abilities.

However, they were immensely strong in terms of defense.

The fusion process became much easier with the help of the Ice Empress and Skydream Iceworm. The black fourth soul ring was slowly imprinted onto Huo Yuhao's soul and body after a brief period of torment.

Not only this, but the Skydream Iceworm and Ice Empress also took this opportunity to further fuse their powers into Huo Yuhao's body.

The origin power released by the Ice Empress' skeleton slowly combined with Huo Yuhao's body. Not only did this enhance his soul power, it also made his body tougher.

The Skydream Iceworm used his own spiritual power to restore Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Sea and second mental sea. At the same time, it expanded the size of Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Sea.

The leap from a soul elder to a soul ancestor was very important for every soul master. This signified that they had progressed from the beginner stage to the intermediate stage. Even though such an appraisal couldn't be used on someone as talented as Huo Yuhao, his abilities did indeed improve by another level. Perhaps it was because the Silvermoon Wolf King's soul ring was strong enough, or the Ice Empress and Skydream's powers were too great, but after fusing with his fourth soul ring, Huo Yuhao's soul power crossed Rank 41 and reached Rank 42. This was a delightful surprise for Huo Yuhao, whose cultivation speed had slowed down greatly.

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It was already daybreak when he opened his eyes. The trail was foggy, and he was unable to see the sunrise, so he couldn't cultivate his Purple Demon Eyes today.

Huo Yuhao jumped up and stretched. An immense force surged through his entire body, which was a very refreshing feeling. His body also became much more flexible. The increase in his soul power caused his overall abilities to jump by twenty percent. While he still couldn't use the Ice Empress' Wrath twice with his current abilities, he could at least unleash the Domain of Perpetual Ice another time.

"I wonder how much time has passed." With his previous experience of how long it took him to absorb soul rings, Huo Yuhao was uncertain whether it was the second, third, or even the fourth morning.

His mind wavered, and a golden light shone from his eyes. One white, one purple, and two black soul rings rose from his feet. His Spiritual Detection was unleashed, and Huo Yuhao was delighted to feel that it had been enhanced once again. He was now able to increase his detection to a six-hundred meter radius. If he changed his detection to make it unidirectional, he could double the distance!

The Silvermoon Wolf King's corpse was as stiff as ever. The ice imbuing it couldn't be melted so easily.

Huo Yuhao put the corpse away in his storage-type soul tool, and his four soul rings also disappeared. His trip to the Jing Yang Mountain Range wasn't a waste after all. He wondered what his fourth soul ring's ability was.

As he thought about it, the four soul rings that had disappeared earlier surfaced once again. The black fourth soul ring lit up brightly, and a soul skill activated.

Huo Yuhao was stunned after it was displayed. He wasn't sure whether he should be happy or worried.

He naturally expected the seven-colored, seven-elements defense of the Silvermoon Wolf King. It was an impressive defensive skill!

However, that was not what he had obtained. It wasn't a defensive-type soul skill. Rather, it was...

Chapter 166: Fatal Injury!

Huo Yuhao stood still, dazed momentarily. He shook his head and laughed uncontrollably. Forget it, it wasn't really a bad thing, anyways he could still continue to cultivate with this fourth soul skill.

Huo Yuhao's condition had been almost fully restored by this point, and his second mental sea could once again unleash the immense power of the Destiny Soul Gaze.

He wondered how Ju Zi and Ke Ke were doing. He had to meet up with them soon.

Huo Yuhao looked at the sky while thinking. He wanted to proceed towards the outside of these branching mountains. He could tell that this branching trail wasn't the same one they'd passed when they entered the main trail. It should be a neighboring trail.

A loud boom suddenly sounded and Huo Yuhao stopped in his tracks as he heard it.

He looked in the direction the sound came from with a puzzled expression. It seemed to be from the main trail, but the loud boom wasn't unleashed by a soul beast's soul skill. The explosive, metallic smell seemed to be reminiscent of a soul engineer.

Were they...?

Huo Yuhao immediately changed directions without thinking. He didn't even use a flying-type soul tool, instead running in the direction of the sound. As he burst forward, he pointed his finger outwards, and a golden figure caught up to him. Huo Yuhao lifted his hand to pat the necromantic golden wolf. Huo Yuhao extinguished its preserved soul, and put its corpse away in his storage-type soul tool.

Ju Zi and Ke Ke were in a very awkward situation right now. Since they lost contact with Huo Yuhao, they hadn't been doing too well.

When Huo Yuhao threw the mechanical legs of the all-terrain exploration soul tool, Ju Zi already knew that she didn't have a choice. Huo Yuhao was bound to turn the soul tool over. Hence she could only passively control the soul tool to ensure their safety.

The golden wolves were not as quick as the soul tool when it rolled down the mountain. When it finally stopped rolling, there were no longer any golden wolves chasing after them.

Ju Zi and Ke Ke rushed out of the all-terrain exploration soul tool at the first possible moment to vomit. How could they feel good after rolling almost a kilometer down a mountain in five minutes?

Then they passed out, they didn't even crawl back into the all-terrain exploration soul tool

They were in rather good luck though. No soul beasts found them while they were unconscious. They regained consciousness slowly on the second morning as the sun shone upon them. Next the two of them decided to return to find Huo Yuhao, just after resting for a moment.

The two of them were in different states of mind, but they remained silent, and didn't interact with one another. This was especially so for Ju Zi, who experienced the large spectrum of emotions. At times, she was panicked and anxious, at others, she was sad and hot-tempered.

This was Ke Ke's first time seeing her display so many emotions in one go.

Ke Ke was more straightforward compared to her. She only thought of Huo Yuhao's resolute expression and confidence when they were separating.

Ke Ke could still recall a reverberating sound from the top of the mountain when they were rolling down. Without a doubt, this sound came from the pack of golden wolves Huo Yuhao had attracted! At that moment, she knew that she would never forget Huo Yuhao. They might have only been friends, or she could have developed feelings for him. Regardless, Huo Yuhao left a deep impression on her young heart.

Although they didn't interact with each other much, they still silently acknowledged that they had to rescue Huo Yuhao!

Which was why they rested for only a short while. After their bodies recovered, they immediately controlled the battered all-terrain exploration soul tool to venture deep back into the Jing Yang Mountain Range. They tried to find Huo Yuhao, and had spent the last two days doing so.

They met many soul beasts over the last two days. However, they were never in real danger since they were Class 5 soul engineers, and even had the all-terrain exploration soul tool to protect them.

But, when they reached the top of the mountain, all they could find was traces of his battle, they couldn't find Huo Yuhao.

They also tried to search for him in the nearby mountains. They refused to believe that Huo Yuhao was dead. Despite this, they didn't make any progress.

When they were finally prepared to leave and proceed towards the old rendezvous point, they were attacked by some powerful soul beasts.

Enemies often crossed each other's path. They met the same pack of golden wolves that Huo Yuhao shook off the other day.

Through the death of the Silvermoon Wolf King the three golden wolves were dealt a vicious blow. The Silvermoon Wolf King had been extremely sensitive to the raw materials most suitable for the metal-type wolves' cultivation. Under its guidance the abilities of the entire wolf pack increased by about twenty percent. This was a staggering figure! This meant that a golden wolf could have a hundred and twenty years of cultivation even if it had only cultivated for a hundred years.

However, the Silvermoon Wolf King was slain by Huo Yuhao just like that. They didn't even know that the Silvermoon Wolf King was dead yet. Over the past two days, the three golden wolves frantically led the rest of the wolf pack to search for the Silvermoon Wolf King. Even when they met other soul beasts, they would kill them mercilessly. Around the main trail, there were no other soul beasts that could compete with this wolf pack.

The three golden wolves were highly intelligent. Upon seeing the damaged metal ball, they didn't hesitate, and immediately had the whole wolf pack attack. Ju Zi and Ke Ke were quickly embroiled in a tough battle.

They had many soul tools as they were Class 5 soul engineers, so they still managed to kill many low-level golden wolves.

However, their soul power was limited! They didn't dare to use flying-type soul tools in broad daylight either. They also didn't possess an Imitation-like soul skill that Huo Yuhao had. If they entered the air, they were bound to be attacked by soul beasts from all directions. Moreover, the three golden wolves could leap more than ten meters high, and they certainly wouldn't give them an opportunity to escape.

"Boom—" The huge cannon in Ke Ke's hands fired at a leaping golden wolf king, sparks flashed on the golden wolf's king body, and it was sent flying away more than ten meters, temporarily incapacitated.

This was Ke Ke's Wind Lightning Cannon. Possessing the speed of wind and the crackle of thunder, it was extremely powerful. It was especially useful against these metal-type soul beasts.

However, it also greatly depleted Ke Ke's soul power. These golden wolves were just too defensively overbearing. Even the ordinary wolves were only critically injured when struck. As for the golden wolf kings, they were only numbed temporarily.

The more advanced students from the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy all had their own specializations in weaponized soul tool research. Like how Ke Ke chose heavy cannons and Ju Zi chose tangerines. They used completely different types of soul tools

Ju Zi flung countless tangerines at the wolf pack. Intense balls of light would suddenly shine before piercing screams sounded. The lights touched the golden wolves' bodies, and tremendous explosions followed.

There were many Class 5 soul tools. However, Ju Zi's problem was with her body. She wasn't nearly as physically tough as Huo Yuhao. Even Ke Ke was far inferior to Huo Yuhao. But that's why Ju Zi chased the advantage of quantity over quality.

The two of them worked in cohesion. One was responsible for resisting the wolf pack, while the other one focused on attacking them. This managed to put them in a relatively comfortable position against the wolf pack. However, they weren't hopeful for their chances.

This wolf pack was very strong, even without the Silvermoon Wolf King. How did Huo Yuhao manage to resist them? More importantly, how were they going to escape now?

"Ke Ke, we can't go on like this much longer. Our soul power won't last!" Ju Zi shouted as she resisted the wolf pack. Her eyes still revealed a sense of composure.

"What should we do?" Ke Ke asked anxiously.

Ju Zi replied decisively, "We'll break out of this trap. Then we return to the all-terrain exploration soul tool. I'll control it while you'll set up the cannons to open a path for us, and we'll force our way out."

Ke Ke hesitated. "Can we run faster than the wolf pack?"

Ju Zi said in a deep voice, "Did you forget how we escaped the last time? We can still use that trick if we make it to the top of the mountain in front of us."

Ke Ke's eyes brightened. "Alright, let's go." They erupted with force and made the wolf pack retreat. They both looked extremely spent. At this point, Ju Zi's fifth soul ring shone and released two tangerines with purple skins. She threw one towards Ke Ke, and stuffed the other in her mouth. Then they squeezed their way into the all-terrain soul tool.

Ju Zi scattered many tangerine soul bombs, keeping the golden wolves at bay. Ju Zi had already started controlling the all-terrain exploration soul tool to move at its fastest speeds.

The six mechanical legs stood up and supported the distorted metal ball. The legs took big steps as they rushed up the closest mountain.

Ke Ke's heavy cannons were positioned in the front windows. She couldn't be bothered with conserving her soul power now. While the purple tangerine Ju Zi gave her was very sour, it managed to restore her soul power by about thirty percent. It was the strongest ability of Ju Zi's food-type martial soul.

Three blasts fired from the Wind Lightning Cannon towards the wolf pack, and a piercing hum loosed from the all-terrain exploration soul tool as Ju Zi filled it with her soul power. Its six mechanical legs began moving rapidly, bursting out towards the front.

Ju Zi made the right choice. The sudden changes left the Golden Wolves shocked, and unable to react in time. Two of the three Golden Wolf Kings were stunned already, and they managed to brush past them easily.

However, the last Golden Wolf King was still in peak condition, and its pressure erupted forth.

The hair on its back stood on end, and flashed with an intense golden glow. It faced the sky and roared furiously then its body swelled, and its muscles bulged in an exaggerated manner. It started to chase after the all-terrain exploration soul tool like a bolt of lightning.

The all-terrain exploration soul tool was extremely swift with its top speeds engaged. However, it still needed some time to accelerate to full speed.

The Golden Wolves might have lost their long-range offensive abilities, but their strength, speed and defense were still fearsome.

The Golden Wolf King hurtled forward. It lowered its head and rammed it into the all-terrain exploration soul tool.

If Huo Yuhao were around, he could use his Spiritual Detection to sense the changes in their surroundings and react quickly by attacking behind them. However, Ju Zi and Ke Ke weren't Huo Yuhao, let alone the fact that they were exhausted. In addition, Ke Ke had also depleted a lot of her energy trying to carve out an escape route just now. Ju Zi still activated a defensive barrier, but the Golden Wolf King also still crashed against it.

The all-terrain exploration soul tool could definitely withstand one all-out strike from a Class 6 soul engineer. However, its defensive barrier was only Class 5 right now, since it was dependent on the user's cultivation.

The Golden Wolf King's fierce attack overcame the Class 5 soul tool barrier instantly. Its claws grazed against the metal ball maniacally, and its head struck the side of the all-terrain exploration soul tool heavily.

The all-terrain exploration soul tool was indeed durable. Although struck off balance, the Golden Wolf King's attack only left a dent, and couldn't put a hole in the soul tool.

However, this was still fatal for Ju Zi and Ke Ke.

The imbalanced all-terrain exploration soul tool fell forward, its forward acceleration dropping significantly. When Ju Zi managed to stabilize it, the wolf pack had already caught up. Their method of attacking was very simple. They followed the Golden Wolf King's example and knocked against the soul tool heavily. However, they were aiming for the six mechanical legs instead.

The legs of this soul tool were constructed using special materials, and were rather durable. However, they had still been slightly damaged over the past few days, most notably on the day when they rolled down a mountain. Although they could still go without breaking, they couldn't ensure balance anymore!

The soul tool collapsed and started rolling, much to Ke Ke and Ju Zi's dismay. The Golden Wolves rushed up to claw at the soul tool. Their bodies engulfed the whole soul tool, and their teeth and claws made annoying, scratching noises as they grazed against the metal soul tool. Dents and scratches started appearing all over the surface of the soul tool.

Although the Golden Wolves were temporarily delayed by the highly resistant metal exterior, Ju Zi and Ke Ke couldn't make the all-terrain exploration soul tool stand anymore.

"Bang—" A huge claw print suddenly appeared on the all-terrain exploration soul tool, visible even from the inside.

The frightening strength behind it and reverberating bang revealed that this was the work of the Golden Wolf King. To make matters worse, the other Golden Wolf Kings were also rushing over. It was only a matter of time before the all-terrain exploration soul tool was torn to pieces.

Ju Zi and Ke Ke looked at one another. They could see the desolation in the other's eyes, and face.

They no longer had a chance. They didn't dare to open the crystal glass door anymore either, as the Golden Wolves would certainly exploit the opportunity to force their way into the soul tool.

If death happened instantly, they might perish before they felt afraid. Looking at it like that, it wasn't too scary. The truly frightening thing was waiting for death when they looked at the scene of carnage around them. The scratching sounds made by the sharp claws grazing against the metal surface of the soul tool caused Ju Zi and Ke Ke to shudder in fear.

"I didn't expect that we'd die here today." Ju Zi sighed. Her eyes weren't filled with fear, but indignation.

"Daddy, your little Ju Zi can't avenge you anymore. Our plan can never be fulfilled. I've always prided myself on my intelligence, but I'm meeting with such a gruesome end. Daddy, can I still taste your cooking when I reach the other world? Daddy, mommy, I've missed you. I'm coming."

As she spoke, Ju Zi shut her eyes. Two streams of tears rolling down her cheeks.

She was different from Ke Ke. Ke Ke didn't despair, and instead revealed her unyielding spirit. Many soul tools rapidly appeared in front of her. She took their formation arrays apart before connecting them in a special way.

"Come at me bastards! I'll risk it all to fight it out with you. If you want to eat my flesh, I'll blow you apart!" She connected the formation arrays, and used an energy-gathering formation at the core. She slowly formed a special structure that may have looked messy, but still released a frightening aura.

Ju Zi heard Ke Ke's words and knew what she was doing right now, but she didn't stop her. At the end of their lives, perishing alongside the Golden Wolves wasn't such a bad ending after all.

However, the situation outside the all-terrain exploration soul tool seemed to change instantly. A Golden Wolf leapt towards the soul tool, but its eyes were blank, and its body rigid. Unfortunately, none of the Golden Wolves noticed it, they were all too busy frantically attacking the all-terrain exploration soul tool.

"Bang." The stiff Golden Wolf struck another Golden Wolf, which in turn made that wolf roar in fury. Before it could react further, a terrifying explosion occurred.

The booming explosion made ice scatter, and at least twenty Golden Wolves were caught in the crossfire. The six or seven closest to the epicenter Golden Wolves were completely blown apart. Those struck by the ensuing shockwave were also critically injured.

A figure exploited this opportunity to strike. This figure moved briskly. As it flashed, it moved behind a Golden Wolf that had been caught in the explosion and stabbed his dark golden claws into the wolf's neck. Then it flung the Golden Wolf to its left hand.

Four soul rings—one white, one purple and two black—shone. The last black soul ring in particular shone extremely brightly.

This figure was none other than Huo Yuhao, who rushed over and managed to reach them at this most critical moment.

His eyes had turned bright silver. His fourth soul ring flashed, and in his eyes a seven-colored whirlpool seemed to appear. He levelled his gaze at one of the three Golden Wolf Kings.

That Golden Wolf King lowered its head subconsciously and stared at him. A weird scene suddenly came about.

A one foot high, seven-colored whirlpool surfaced above the Golden Wolf King. It revolved in an awkward manner before penetrating through the Golden Wolf's skull into its body. The Golden Wolf King's body stiffened up instantly, becoming motionless. Its blood-red eyes turned a silver shade like Huo Yuhao's, so too did the whirlpool-like radiance coming from its body.

Huo Yuhao's eyes became normal again a moment later. A strong killing aura exuding from his body. Huo Yuhao carried a deep enmity with this pack of Golden Wolves that had threatened his life earlier. Now they were even threatening Ke Ke and Ju Zi's lives.

His Eye of Destiny opened, and a purplish-golden light flashed before disappearing. Another Golden Wolf King's body stiffened up instantly. It didn't nearly possess the same spiritual powers the

Silvermoon Wolf King did. It couldn't even resist when faced against the might of the Destiny Soul Gaze. It blew apart after its body turned rigid, and fresh blood scattered everywhere. It was killed instantaneously.

One Golden Wolf King was controlled by Huo Yuhao's fourth soul skill, and another Golden Wolf King was killed by the Destiny Soul Gaze. Apart from them, one Golden Wolf King remained. The remainder of the Golden Wolves were mostly blown away during the previous explosion.

Huo Yuhao threw the Golden Wolf's corpse in his hand away, and the Ice Explosion Technique revealed its might. Once more a terrifying explosive force shook the entire area.

The previous Golden Wolf's corpse was maintained by Huo Yuhao. Generally speaking, a soul beast's soul power would dissipate within an hour after death, past that it wouldn't be a good bomb for the Ice Explosion Technique. However, Huo Yuhao used necromancy to control that Golden Wolf corpse, and thus retained its soul power. This soul power was only released after Huo Yuhao extinguished its soul, which made it useful in the present situation.

There were only forty Golden Wolves still capable of fighting now. The last of the Golden Wolf Kings howled, bearing a hateful look in its eyes. It leapt towards Huo Yuhao.

Unexpectedly, a pair of wolf claws forcefully struck its body as it leapt forward. These frightening wolf claws stabbed into its body through its flanks before they eventually pulled back. The front of the Golden Wolf King was torn to shreds. Its internal organs and fresh blood scattered everywhere.

It was the Golden Wolf King controlled by Huo Yuhao's fourth soul skill that unleashed the attack. Appearing to have gone mad, it attacked the rest of the Golden Wolves after it killed this Golden Wolf King.

Yes! This was the soul skill Huo Yuhao had obtained from the Silvermoon Wolf King, Spiritual Confusion.

This was an ability that the Silvermoon Wolf King didn't even possess. Huo Yuhao was a spiritual-type soul master, but the Silvermoon Wolf King wasn't exactly considered a spirit-type soul beast. It only used its spiritual power to control different elements for its own purposes. It was more of a multi-elemental soul beast that couldn't use too powerful soul skills.

That was why its soul ring transformed when it combined with Huo Yuhao's Spirit Eyes. The eventual result of that transformation was this soul skill. Huo Yuhao had named it Spiritual Confusion.

It could only be used on one target at a time, but as long as the target's spiritual power wasn't at least a third of the user, it was guaranteed to descend into confusion. While confused, it would go mad and attack everything around it. However, if its spiritual power was greater than a third of Huo Yuhao's spiritual power then the target would be spiritually attacked. The effectiveness would vary according to the target's spiritual cultivation, but its spiritual power would undoubtedly fall, and it would be struck by vertigo for while.

If Mass Enfeeblement was Huo Yuhao's crowd control soul skill, then this Spiritual Confusion could be considered a single target spiritual control skill.

This was his first time using Spiritual Confusion, and it achieved unparalleled effects immediately.

The last remaining Golden Wolf King went crazy and started killing its own species. This diminished the fighting will and morale of the remaining Golden Wolves, hence they all fled in fear.

Huo Yuhao couldn't be bothered to deal with the insane Golden Wolf King. He turned around and dashed towards the all-terrain exploration soul tool. He was unsure how Ju Zi and Ke Ke were holding up.

At this point, the door of the all-terrain exploration soul tool opened, and the ladies crawled out in fear and confusion.

Ju Zi shouted, "Yuhao, run! Ke Ke used all her soul tools to create a self-detonation device."

Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection covered the scene. He clearly sensed an internal, terrifying force within the all-terrain exploration soul tool, rising quickly.

At this terrifying prospect, he only showed his manliness even further. He didn't turn to escape, but rushed towards Ju Zi and Ke Ke. He could tell that they were completely spent in terms of soul power and couldn't escape the imminent blast radius.

Seeing them all the way out here, Huo Yuhao knew they came to find him. How could he leave them in danger when they hadn't given up on him?

He burst towards them, uncaring of any repercussions. He huddled them in his embrace before activating his Class 5 soul thruster. Then, he picked a direction and charged.

Less than two seconds after he charged out, the all-terrain exploration soul tool behind him turned scarlet-red. Following this change, a reverberating explosion boomed within the Jing Yang Mountain Range.

"Boom boom boom..."

Huo Yuhao still had the help of his Spiritual Detection, with it he could manage to grasp the exact timing of the explosion. He tugged his arms inwards and pulled Ju Zi and Ke Ke towards his body, sheltering them. Hongchen's Blessing was activated, and the Ice Empress' Armor was unleashed, instantly increasing his defensive ability to the greatest level.

Huo Yuhao only felt a wave of heat sweeping him up from behind. He felt his body and everything else seemed to flip suddenly. A sweet and fishy taste rose up from his throat as the Hongchen's Blessing and Ice Empress' Armor were crushed.

Everything before his eyes turned black, and he lost consciousness.

The frightening explosion Ke Ke created was too powerful. She had used all the formation arrays in her soul tool arsenal. She truly wanted to drag as many Golden Wolves to the grave along with them.

It was too late to reverse the explosion when she and Ju Zi figured out that the situation outside changed.

Everyone thirsted for survival. When they realized that the danger outside was vanquished, they frantically tried to escape.

Ke Ke and Ju Zi weren't struck directly by the explosive force, and thus they could still see what was going on. They could tell that the surrounding air had been visibly distorted. Next, a stifling force swept past them. However, it was nothing compared to the shockwave that Huo Yuhao protected them from.

The Golden Wolf King still in a confused state was instantly obliterated by the explosive force, even its corpse ceased to exist.

The Class 5 soul thruster had propelled Huo Yuhao and the girls more than a hundred meters in two seconds. That was why they were only struck by a shockwave from the explosion.

Huo Yuhao vomited blood all over the two ladies.

Just after, the three of them collapsed to the ground together.

Ju Zi and Ke Ke almost fainted from this, but they hung on and opened their eyes wide.

They were certain that Huo Yuhao would have escaped unscathed if he had only just listened to Ju Zi's words and fled immediately.

Ju Zi was still fine mentally. She was only worried and concerned for Huo Yuhao's safety. However, Ke Ke was filled with regret. If she wasn't so impulsive and observed the situation outside, none of this would've happened! The Golden Wolves did nothing to her, but she was almost killed by her own bomb in the end...

As she thought this, Ke Ke felt like her heart had been stabbed with a blade.

Fresh blood flowed from Huo Yuhao's nose. He'd turned extremely pale.

Ju Zi and Ke Ke struggled as they climbed out of his embrace. When they looked back into the distance, they were stunned.

Nothing was left of the all-terrain exploration soul tool. It was the ground-zero of an explosion more than five hundred meters in diameter. A huge hole fifteen meters deep had formed where it used to be. Even the corpses of the Golden Wolves had all disappeared. A mist of soil and flesh descended, carrying a bloody smell, landing only tens of meters away from the center of the explosion.

After a momentary daze, they turned their attention to Huo Yuhao—unconscious on the ground.

They were distraught at the sight.

Huo Yuhao was completely covered in blood. His back, thighs and calves were gushing blood. There was shrapnel stuck in his muscles everywhere.

"Oh no! How did it end up like this, why did it end up this way...?" Ke Ke exclaimed, completely frantic.

Ju Zi raged at her. "Calm down and shut up! We need to calm ourselves." As she spoke, she quickly squatted beside Huo Yuhao to check his breathing and whether or not he was alive. After that, she went to measure his pulse.

While Huo Yuhao's pulse was very weak, it was still rhythmic.

Ju Zi took in a deep breath. She knew she had to be cool headed now to save Huo Yuhao's life.

“Ke Ke, protect us. I’ll save him.” While she spoke, she had already retrieved her storage-type soul tool—an orange-red bracelet—and gave it to Ke Ke. Inside this bracelet were many soul tools, all of which were created by Ju Zi herself.

“Alright.” Ke Ke had also finally calmed down by now, and received the bracelet from Ju Zi. Then she took out a Milk Bottle, and restored her soul power. She also took out the soul tools from Ju Zi’s storage-type soul tool and set up a defensive formation.

Ju Zi had no energy to bother with Ke Ke or her surroundings. Although Huo Yuhao was still alive, his life power was diminishing quickly. He could be in fatal peril any second now.

She didn’t care about all the shrapnel still in his body. They couldn’t be pulled out yet, because that would lead to greater blood loss. She had to stabilize Huo Yuhao’s condition first.

As she thought of what to do, Ju Zi took out a needle and string from another storage bracelet on her other hand. She couldn’t be bothered with anything else, only Huo Yuhao’s life mattered now.

Ju Zi’s hands were trembling as she attempted to thread the needle. Her mental energy and soul power were greatly exhausted, also adding her anxiety to the mix, and she could conclude she was unstable.

She suddenly lifted her left hand and bit down on her own wrist forcefully. She left a deep wound, and used the intense pain to stabilize her mindset before quickly threading the needle successfully this time. After that, she started to stitch up Huo Yuhao’s wounds.

Her stitching started from his ruptured capillaries before she proceeded to his muscles and skin. To reduce Huo Yuhao’s blood loss, she could only keep pressure on his wounds with her body-weight. Her clothes were quickly stained with Huo Yuhao’s blood.

Stitching up wounds required meticulous care. For someone like Ju Zi whose forte was carving detailed formations, this wasn’t hard to pull off. Huo Yuhao’s blood loss was finally being stoppered.

Even so, he still looked very weak and pale.

Ju Zi felt heat coming from the places stained with Huo Yuhao’s blood. Concentrated bursts of warmth entered her body, and left her feeling very comfortable. This also let her restore her energy quickly.

Ju Zi immediately recognized this as a problem. She couldn’t let him waste his blood’s power because of her. Just... what power does he have in his blood?

Chapter 167: Bite

Ju Zi removed Huo Yuhao’s torn clothing as Ke Ke watched her from afar. After that, she lifted him up and leaned him against a huge tree. She rubbed Huo Yuhao’s blood onto the parts of his body that weren’t injured.

Ju Zi was already breathing heavily at this point. The depletion of her energy left her extremely fatigued, and she felt she might faint at anytime. However, she was closely monitoring Huo Yuhao’s heartbeat at this moment. Although Huo Yuhao’s heartbeat was very slow, it was still beating. This was also her last shred of hope.

Ju Zi judged that Huo Yuhao had lost almost half of his blood from his injuries. This would be fatal for a normal person, but she could also sense that Huo Yuhao's life power was very strong. Even though he was critically injured, his heart was still beating resolutely.

"How is he?" Ke Ke walked over and asked after her soul power had been restored by the Milk Bottle. She passed a Milk Bottle to Ju Zi as well.

Ju Zi laughed bitterly and replied, "I don't know. A normal person should have caved in under such injuries. But he's still alive. I've stitched his wounds, but the shrapnel is still not out. Let's see whether he can survive beyond today. I'm only scared that he'll suffer from an infection. The shrapnel should be unclean. However, he's lost too much blood; everything depends on him now."

Ke Ke stripped off her outerwear and covered Huo Yuhao's blood-stained body. She looked at Ju Zi and laughed bitterly, "Sister Ju Zi, are you repaying your benefactor with your own body?"

Ju Zi turned red, and her cheeks turned rosy. "Don't talk nonsense. His blood has a special strength that is very beneficial for one's body. I'm returning the blood that stained me to heal his body."

Ke Ke squatted down and looked at Huo Yuhao. She said, "We both owe him our lives. Especially me. If I hadn't been so reckless, he wouldn't be in this state."

Ju Zi shook her head and said, "How can you be blamed? We were both in danger. I didn't even realize that he had arrived. But you're right. We owe him our lives."

Ke Ke focused and stood up. She said, "Sister Ju Zi, take a rest. I'll protect the both of you."

"Alright." Ju Zi acceded to her request and sat down close to Huo Yuhao.

Although Huo Yuhao's back was covered in blood, he wasn't hurt in front. There wasn't a single piece of fat on Huo Yuhao's well-developed body. Hongchen's Yearning had been reabsorbed into his chest as well.

If not for this Class 9 soul tool that produced an Invincible Barrier that was almost three times stronger than his own body, the three of them would have been blown to pieces.

Huo Yuhao's body was a little cold, Ju Zi was using her body to warm him up. When her eyes shut, she fell asleep almost instantly. However, she wore a peaceful look on her face.

Only one man had held a place in her heart ever since she was young – her father. Her father had filled her childhood with fantastic memories, but had perished in war. Right now, someone else had unwittingly entered her heart. Even though he was injured, Ju Zi felt at ease as she hugged him. It was as if she had found a shelter to hide away from all her trials and tribulations.

After her close brush with death, she was in a weird state of mind. This weird state of mind was also extremely immersive.

Ju Zi was right. If Huo Yuhao's injuries were inflicted on someone else, that person would have been dead by now. The shrapnel wasn't from the all terrain exploration soul tool. The powerful shockwave was kept out by the Hongchen's Blessing. What really tore his skin and muscles were the soul tools on his body that blew apart in the explosion.

His life hung by a thread as he was protected by the Hongchen's Blessing and the Ice Empress' Armor. Ju Zi was right when she had tried to limit his blood loss. What she didn't know was that he wasn't destined to die once she stabilized his injuries.

How would Huo Yuhao, who had fused with the immense life power of Life Gold, die so easily? The strength within his blood came from the life power of Life Gold! This immense life power wasn't just in his blood, but was spread out all through his body, from his bones to his internal organs.

Huo Yuhao's life power started to return as he healed. The immense life power started to stimulate his bone marrow and increase the rate at which he created new blood. His energy was slowly restored, and his internal organs were being healed. It was treatment from the inside out.

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Ke Ke didn't dare to sleep. Although she was exhausted, she had to hold on for their safety.

The sun in the sky rose higher and higher. The warm sunlight shone down on her and left her slightly hazy. After taking a small bite of some food, she restored her energy and chased away a few soul beasts who didn't have high cultivations.

She also came to check on Huo Yuhao and Ju Zi from time to time. She discovered that Huo Yuhao's body was slowly getting hotter and hotter, as if he had developed a fever. However, his temperature was still within an acceptable range. His pulse wasn't any weaker, either.

Ke Ke was completely clueless about healing. She didn't know what to do, and thus could only wait.

Ke Ke was on the verge of collapse when Ju Zi awoke from her sleep. Although her soul power had recovered, her mental energy was almost depleted since she had to be wary of soul beasts the whole time.

"Ke Ke, take a break. Let me take over for you," Ju Zi said to Ke Ke, who was muddle-headed by now.

Ke Ke stood up and rushed over to them, asking, "How is he?"

Ju Zi furrowed her brow and revealed a stunned look in her eyes. "His pulse is vibrant, and not as weak as before. Although his body temperature is higher than average, it's not too high. His breathing is also stable. He doesn't even seem like he was critically injured."

Ke Ke looked at Ju Zi in a daze. "Are you saying he's in a much better condition now?"

Ju Zi nodded her head, "It's unbelievable! How is this possible? He lost almost half his blood, and even sustained critical injuries. There's still shrapnel in his body. However, his pulse is beating normally. It's only been ten to twelve hours."

Ke Ke said, "Take a look at his back."

Ju Zi and Ke Ke carefully placed Huo Yuhao on a blanket that they set out. She also changed into clean clothing before taking off the outerwear Ke Ke had put on Huo Yuhao.

The pieces of shrapnel were still very horrifying, as if Huo Yuhao had grown spikes on his back. However, Ju Zi and Ke Ke were more shocked that none of his wounds had been infected. Although Ju Zi had rubbed some medicine on him, that had just been medicine for the treatment of common injuries.

“Is he human?” Ke Ke couldn’t help but ask.

Ju Zi laughed bitterly. “I thought of a quote. Shrek only accept monsters, and not ordinary people. It seems like he really is a monster. Even a soul beast can’t compare to his self-healing ability.”

Ke Ke asked, “Should we remove the shrapnel?”

Ju Zi shook her head and said, “No, let’s allow him to recover more. With his current healing speed, he should be awake soon. We can help him remove the shrapnel then.”

As they spoke till here, the two of them looked at each other before heaving sighs of relief.

Ju Zi said, “It seems like we will have to spend the night here. Ke Ke, hold on for a while more. Let’s pitch a tent to keep out the wind and rain. The mountains will also be colder at night. Let’s take turns to keep watch at night.”

Ke Ke hesitated for a while. “The tent is for one person. So I’m going to be with him in one tent?”

Ju Zi snapped, “I didn’t even care when I tried to save him just now. What’re you scared of? Furthermore, we can also watch him at a close distance. Don’t worry, I won’t reveal this to anyone. You must also keep this secret for me.”

Ke Ke took a look at her and replied after a moment, “Alright, I’ll take it as if he’s my younger brother.”

Ju Zi suddenly thought of something. “He’s not that young either...”

The two of them were efficient. After Ju Zi had ten to twelve hours of rest, her body had already recovered. After she pitched the tent, Ke Ke went inside with Huo Yuhao and laid down beside him. She was so exhausted that she passed out instantly.

Ju Zi was the one on guard duty now. She was feeling much better now. She adjusted her soul tool defense line before adding some chemical items that had the effect of chasing soul beasts away.

Ju Zi discovered that her body felt much better, and even more vibrant. Not only was her fatigue gone, but she was filled with energy. Even her soul power seemed to have been enhanced.

Ju Zi couldn’t help but wonder if it was her reward for being nice.

That was exactly the case. The Life Gold’s life power helped Huo Yuhao heal. There was also some external flow of the immense life aura when Ju Zi was stained with some of Huo Yuhao’s fresh blood. This allowed the Life’s Gold’s aura to nourish her body and let her feel more refreshed. Ke Ke was also likely to benefit as she lay beside Huo Yuhao now.

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The sky was slowly turning dark. Ju Zi sat in front of the tent and watched her surroundings. Her emotions started to rise as she sat there on guard duty.

“Daddy, is he your reincarnation, sent here to lessen my pain?” Ju Zi sighed slightly. She had always been concealing her inner thoughts with her innocent look. However, she was actually someone who was icy-cold at heart.

She only thought of revenge. For this, she didn’t mind being pretentious, and became a young lady that no one would be wary of.

She was aware that Zimu had always been chasing her. However, she didn’t give him a straight answer all this while because her plan didn’t allow her to date. She had a goal, and this goal was an important part of her plan for revenge.

However, the calm in her heart changed when she tasted Huo Yuhao’s cooking. It was a change that caused her to panic inside.

Ju Zi had never expected to eat something that was as delicious as her father’s cooking. But Huo Yuhao had managed to whip up food that resembled her father’s cooking. Her cold heart opened slightly at that moment.

She was an orphan, like him. She had no other yearnings in her life. It was revenge that kept her going.

However, his appearance caused a change in her heart. Her ideals didn’t change, but someone had managed to creep into her heart. Could she still not be bothered by everything and face her future with a calm attitude with this person around?

Ju Zi didn’t know. She didn’t know at all.

“Huo Yuhao, why did you have to come into my world?” Ju Zi sighed.

.....

When Huo Yuhao woke up from his sleep, it was already light again.

“I’m alive?” That was his first thought. He subconsciously initiated the circulation of his soul power.

His soul power had already been restored, but the circulation of it wasn’t very smooth. His passageways and back were filled with a piercing pain.

“Ah!” he groaned slightly, and opened his eyes.

The first thing he saw was a beautiful face. The smooth and tender complexion of that face gave a refreshing feeling even though the tent was slightly dim. He had never seen such a refreshing beauty.

Her eyes were shut as she lay beside him. Huo Yuhao immediately realized that he wasn’t wearing anything except for a blanket.

“Ju Zi,” Huo Yuhao whispered.

Ju Zi was jolted awake. She had only just fallen asleep after Ke Ke took over her guard duty.

Her large eyes opened, and her eyelashes perked up. Huo Yuhao was rather swept away by her appearance.

“You’re awake?” Ju Zi asked, surprised.

Huo Yuhao tried to prop himself up, but he felt an intense pain in his back. He groaned, and laid back down.

“Don’t move, your injuries are very serious,” Ju Zi said hurriedly.

“What happened to me?” Huo Yuhao asked.

Ju Zi related what had happened after the explosion, except for the part where she carried him naked.

“The explosion was too powerful. Ke Ke’s soul tools are indeed very powerful!” Huo Yuhao laughed bitterly.

Ju Zi said, “Ke Ke has suffered great losses this time. Her soul tools took two years to create and assemble, with their formation arrays joined together. They were also extremely valuable. How could the explosion not be strong? No one else could bear to do that. The amount of resources that were wasted was too much.”

Huo Yuhao asked, “How am I now? The shrapnel on my back has to be removed eventually.”

Ju Zi said, “I was afraid that you’d lost too much blood and didn’t dare to act recklessly. If you think you’re fine now, I’ll help you remove the shrapnel. However, you must do it slowly at the start. Try to minimize your blood loss. After all, you’re critically injured.”

“I’m fine.” Huo Yuhao had sensed his own body condition earlier. Apart from some blockages in his passageways, he wasn’t in too much trouble.

Ju Zi stared at him as if he were a freak, then nodded slightly. She said, “Alright. I’m going to start then. It’ll be painful, but you’ll have to bear the pain.”

Huo Yuhao smiled and replied, “Come on.” What kind of pain had he not endured before? Pain? How could it compare to the fusion of the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion’s skeleton? How could it compare to his fusion with the Darkgolden Terrorclaws?

...

Ju Zi was very careful with her actions. She didn’t pull the shrapnel out forcefully. She retrieved an orange-red carving blade and slowly opened his wounds. After that, she tried to pluck the pieces of shrapnel out.

She soon discovered that it was much more relaxing helping Huo Yuhao treat his injuries when he was awake.

When she helped Huo Yuhao to pluck out the first piece of shrapnel, he immediately used his soul power to seal the blood vessels in that location. After she stitched his wound, Huo Yuhao relaxed his control over that location and stopped the bleeding.

Ju Zi managed to remove most of the shrapnel quickly as they worked together.

“Rest for a while.” Huo Yuhao retrieved a clean towel from his storage-type soul tool and passed it to Ju Zi.

Ju Zi's forehead was already brimming with perspiration. She let out a fragrance that was very characteristic of a young lady.

Ju Zi couldn't help but laugh bitterly. "Your willpower is too scary. I don't think making you my opponent in the future is a good thing. You're fine, but I'm the one who's not okay."

Huo Yuhao had had to bear a lot of pain as the many pieces of shrapnel were plucked from his body. However, he appeared fine to her. He never once screamed. Ju Zi was even more impressed with him among the mix of emotions that she felt.

Ju Zi said, "Although your will is strong, your wounds will still take some time to heal. Sleep for a while more. I also need to take a rest. When my energy is restored, I'll help you remove the rest of the shrapnel." As she spoke, she took a glance at the largest piece of shrapnel.

This piece of shrapnel was triangular, and was close to Huo Yuhao's heart, below his left shoulder. It was very deep into his muscles. Ju Zi was not sure how to handle it. She couldn't use a carving blade to guide the piece of shrapnel out; she would need to pluck it out directly.

Huo Yuhao nodded and closed his eyes. The Mysterious Heaven Technique kept on circulating. It had a good healing effect, and his wounds slowly healed with its help. Huo Yuhao also managed to unblock some of his passageways, and his body began to recover at an even faster speed.

After resting for two hours, Ju Zi helped Huo Yuhao remove the remaining pieces of shrapnel. Soon, most of the shrapnel had been removed, with the exception of one final piece.

Ju Zi looked at Huo Yuhao and was even more impressed with him. His forehead was also perspiring, but he still wore a smile. She had never seen someone as resolute as him.

"Rest a while more before the last piece," Ju Zi told him.

Huo Yuhao shook his head and said, "Since it's the last piece, let's take it out. I also want to relax, otherwise I'll keep thinking of it. Don't worry, I can take it. It's better to suffer now than later."

This piece cut into at least three of his passageways. Although it wasn't the main passageway, it greatly affected the circulation of the Mysterious Heaven Technique. In addition, the wound brought him great pain if he moved even slightly.

Ju Zi hesitated for a while before nodding her head as she grit her teeth.

"This piece is deep. If it's too painful, just bite my arm." As she spoke, she pulled up the sleeve covering her left arm and extended her slender arm in front of Huo Yuhao.

Huo Yuhao only grabbed her wrist after hesitating for a moment. Her wrist was soft and tender. The Raiment of Light's projection was undoubtedly the most ravishing beauty that Huo Yuhao had ever seen, but Ju Zi had the best complexion. Although she wasn't as pretty as the Raiment of Light's projection, and was even slightly inferior to Jiang Nannan, she was still a beauty like Ma Xiaotao. Ma Xiaotao had the best figure, while Ju Zi had the best complexion.

There was a sense of gentleness as he felt her tender skin. It was an indescribable feeling.

“I’m about to start.” Ju Zi didn’t know that Huo Yuhao’s heart had fluttered slightly. Her right hand held onto the exposed part of the piece of shrapnel, and she looked nervous.

Huo Yuhao nodded slightly and relaxed his back muscles. It would be much easier if he wasn’t tense.

Ju Zi took in a deep breath and stuffed her left hand into Huo Yuhao’s mouth. “You saved my life. Let me bear this pain with you!” she shouted softly, and plucked the piece of shrapnel out forcefully.

Fresh blood shot out as the shrapnel was pulled out. Huo Yuhao’s whole body tensed up, and he bit Ju Zi’s arm under the intense pain.

When he first met her Huo Yuhao didn’t expect that his desire to bite Ju Zi’s smooth skin would be fulfilled under these circumstances.

Panting heavily, Ju Zi pressed a clean towel against Huo Yuhao’s wounds.

Compared to the pains she felt in her heart, the pain in her hand was nothing. She actually felt like she was going to let Huo Yuhao die.

Although reluctant to do so, Huo Yuhao ceased biting into her hand. A bite mark was left behind, along with some redness on her skin, but only some redness as the skin wasn’t pierced.

Ju Zi retracted her arm and started speaking rapidly, “Quick seal your blood vessels! How are you feeling? Are your passageways damaged?”

Huo Yuhao spoke while circulating his soul power, “Don’t worry, I’m fine. I can just use my soul power to recover. However, a few passageways are completely damaged, and I need time to heal them.

Ju Zi let out a sigh of relief. “That’s good. At least it’s not too serious. You somehow managed to drag yourself back from the dead, you freak. It only took you a day and night to recover this far from your critical injuries.”

Huo Yuhao laughed bitterly. “Don’t compliment me like that when I’m in such unbearable pain.”

Ju Zi laughed. “Pain? I can’t tell from your expression.”

Huo Yuhao immediately displayed an exaggerated expression, “I’m tolerating the pain! Think about it. My entire back is stitched up right now. Why wouldn’t I feel pain?”

Ju Zi shuddered a little. That’s right! Huo Yuhao’s back was almost entirely full of stitches. With a little more than a hundred wounds his back was almost entirely covered in stitches by now. The same for his legs, really just his entire body seemed to have been ravaged by injuries. Only some of the parts not carrying soul tools appeared much better off.

Huo Yuhao smiled as Ju Zi fell silent, “I’m fine actually. I’ve experienced more painful things than this before. Let’s leave the mountain range after I rest a bit. The all-terrain exploration soul tool has been destroyed, so we have to end our experiments here. What about you though, is your hand in pain from my bite?”

Ju Zi retorted, “Am I that weak to you?”

Huo Yuhao chortled, “Yeah. It seems like your skin will tear the moment I touch it.”

Ju Zi's face turned red. She took out a tangerine to stuff in his mouth, "Go and rest. I'll leave you to it." As she spoke, she escaped from the tent. The age gap between her and Huo Yuhao seemed non-existent when confronted with his maturity which exceeded the norms for his age.

The lingering fragrance left Huo Yuhao in a trance, but he soon recovered from it. His heart was occupied by someone else already. Although Ju Zi was a ravishing, attractive beauty, she definitely couldn't compare to the Raiment of Light's projection so deeply imprinted in his heart.

With the pieces of shrapnel removed from his back, and a period of rest, he could prop himself up.

His back wasn't just simply in pain now. It was miserable and numb, the blood circulation in his back didn't seem to be running smoothly either. Fortunately, most of his injuries were concentrated on his muscles. The circulation blockages in his passageways were mainly caused by some blood clots.

Huo Yuhao had lied about being in such a dire situation before. In fact, he was very afraid right now. If he was just a little slower or didn't have the Hongchen's Blessing would have died! Furthermore, the impact almost wreaked havoc on his spiritual sea. Skydream, the Ice Empress and Electrolux combined their strengths to unleash a spiritual barrier that protected his head. That explained why his back and legs were injured, but his head wasn't.

His body's damage could be easily healed by the Life's Gold life power, not to mention that the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's skeleton would protect his internal organs. However, a blow to his head could kill him. Huo Yuhao wouldn't have survived this time with luck alone.

He struggled to sit cross-legged, and even perspired from the constant pain. He focused, and circulated his power. The Mysterious Heaven Technique slowly circulating.

After his reaching Rank 40 soul power, Huo Yuhao didn't fully experience the transformations to his body. This was especially so with the advancements in his soul skills and the enhancement of his spiritual power. It was important to know that almost all of his soul skills would improve as his cultivation increased. That being the case, his soul power would skyrocket after each new added soul ring. Over the past two years, his foundation remained untouched while his cultivation speed dipped considerably. His cultivation so far could be described as slow but steady.

The Mysterious Heaven Technique overcame all obstructions and slowly filled his body, nourishing him. It stimulated the Life's Gold life power to heal his body as well. Afterwards, Huo Yuhao divided part of his soul power to start removing the blood clots in his passageways. Then he used soul power to adjust his damaged passageways, moving them back into position and reconnecting them.

He'd entered a fairly stable state to recover quickly.

The trio was rather fortunate. They stayed in this place for two days, but the strongest soul beast they had encountered was only a thousand year soul beast.

Huo Yuhao recovered at an alarming rate. On the third morning, he walked out of the tent. He faced the rising sun in the east and started to cultivate.

Ke Ke smiled as she said, "Yuhao, I'm going to call you a monster in the future. You're more of a soul beast than real soul beasts!" There was a sense of affection in her tone.

Huo Yuhao laughed and said, "Don't call me that. That'll reveal my background as a student from Shrek Academy, and I hope you haven't forgotten that we're a strong competitor to the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy. If you push me to the metaphorical wolves, I may end up dead."

Ke Ke rolled her eyes and said, "Forget it. You're a Soul Elder, and you're unphased by Soul Kings like us. You're afraid?"

Huo Yuhao corrected, "I'm an official Soul Ancestor now!"

Ju Zi put the tent away into her storage-type soul tool and said, "Alright, stop bickering. Let's leave quickly. I'm more concerned about when this freak will be able to cook for us again."

Huo Yuhao was still quite far from a complete recovery. However, since he could move freely, it was best to leave the Jing Yang Mountain Range as quickly as possible. Otherwise, if they ran into any strong soul beasts again, they would end up in danger.

Huo Yuhao laughed again and replied, "I can cook anytime. Let's go."

They could only rely on themselves to leave since the all-terrain exploration soul tool was destroyed. Although Huo Yuhao told them he could walk all by himself, Ju Zi and Ke Ke still put his hands around their shoulders as they dragged him out of the mountains.

Ke Ke wore a gloomy expression while they walked, "Blegh, Ju Zi. Will I be held accountable for destroying official academy property? The academy will spare me from paying for the soul tools, right? My savings will evaporate! You should know that I exchanged my scholarship money all for precious metals. But now I'm broke! Isn't it tragic for a Class 5 soul engineer not to have any soul tools?"

Ju Zi snapped, "You still have the cheek to mention this? Just be poor. It's better to be poor than to be a walking debt time bomb."

Ke Ke revealed a dismal look. "Sister Ju Zi, lend me some money. Sister~"

As she spoke, she couldn't help but turn to Huo Yuhao. Huo Yuhao started to break out in a sweat as he saw Ke Ke's suddenly gentle gaze. "Don't look at me! I don't have any money. I was working while studying when I was at Shrek Academy. My soul tools all belong to Shrek Academy. I owe the academy a lot of money right now too."

Ju Zi pursed her lips and said, "Shrek is so cunning. They have no intention of making you repay your debts. They're doing everything possible to tie you down. Am I right?"

Huo Yuhao smiled and said, "I'm willing to be tied down. I'll let you know that I'm an orphan. In my darkest hour, eldest senior brother and Teacher Xiao Ya brought me to Shrek Academy. Everything that I own now was given to me by the academy and the Tang Sect. My life naturally belongs to them, and this will never change."

Ju Zi looked at Huo Yuhao and said seriously, "What if... I tell you that I can make the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy do even more for you than Shrek Academy ever did, would you stay here? You can list whatever conditions you want."

Huo Yuhao was stunned, but he turned serious. Saying in a deep voice, "Senior Ju Zi, please don't speak of such things again. I don't want to lose a friend like you."

Ju Zi laughed bitterly. "Although I expected this, it was still worth a try. But you were right. You're from Shrek. It's better if you keep a lower profile in the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy."

Huo Yuhao nodded slightly. He previously felt a sense of crisis from Ju Zi, but was relieved to feel it vanish. He could subtly feel that this was because Ju Zi's mentality changed.

They successfully managed to leave the Jing Yang Mountain Range. This mountain range wasn't comparable to the Great Star Dou Forest. Showcasing this, when they reached the branching trail again, the concentration of soul beasts dropped significantly. Ju Zi used some soul tools to scare most of the remainder away, and they managed to leave the mountain range rather easily.

In an area unlikely to be threatened by soul beasts, they found a suitable place to set up a campsite. They rested here.

Chapter 168: Return, Captured

Huo Yuhao served as their chef, just as Ju Zi requested. Ke Ke was responsible for hunting, while Ju Zi took care of them. Apart from cooking, Huo Yuhao only used his time to cultivate and recover.

Three days passed in a flash.

Huo Yuhao's potentially fatal injuries managed to completely heal within six days. Even his cultivation increased slightly. The soul power increase was negligible, but his overall abilities and soul skills were enhanced considerably, including his spiritual power.

Dawn.

The moist morning dew made the day especially refreshing as one breathed in nature. Huo Yuhao exhaled, and white gases revolved around his body before entering through his nostrils. He felt especially refreshed.

His back injury had completely recovered now. More shockingly, the scars on his back had started to vanish. His skin was getting smoother and smoother by the day. After some time, all his scars would likely disappear, which only made Ju Zi and Ke Ke more intrigued.

Huo Yuhao couldn't possibly tell them that he'd absorbed Life Gold before. He acted foolish and ignorant in the face of their suspicions.

Huo Yuhao lifted his right arm and a light flashed in his eyes. He mimicked a grabbing motion, and a gust of chilly air spread out. Gigantic Darkgolden Terrorclaws appeared, an estimated six meter-long claw projection swept through the air. A piercing sound was heard, and black tears were created, as if the air had been slit open.

A dark-golden radiance flashed before disappearing. Huo Yuhao looked at his right hand, satisfied.

His Darkgolden Terrorclaws had been enhanced when he had become a Soul Ancestor. Not only had his Terrorclaws become larger, but now they were more tangible. The pain he'd experienced absorbing the Darkgolden Terrorclaws wasn't for nothing! The Darkgolden Terrorclaws became Huo Yuhao's favorite skill. The Ice Empress' Pincer, when paired with the Darkgolden Terrorclaws, allowed him immense close-combat abilities as a control-type soul master.

His Eye of Destiny also evolved. Huo Yuhao wasn't sure how much it evolved, but the sealed spiritual power left in his body by the Skydream Iceworm had been substantially absorbed again. His Spiritual Sea and second mental sea also expanded. His Spiritual Detection could now scan a radius of up to seven hundred meters, and his one-directional detection now reached more than a thousand two hundred meters.

The greater his cultivation, the more Huo Yuhao could sense the dominance of the million year soul ring given to him by the Skydream Iceworm. It possessed four soul skills, which were the best of the best, and became the foundation for his Spirit Eyes. Although the subsequent three soul rings gave him Imitation, Enfeeblement and Spiritual Confusion, the practicality of these three skills couldn't hold a candle to Skydream's million year soul ring.

His soul skills experienced a change in quality as his soul power reached Rank 40. Huo Yuhao simply possessed too many powerful soul skills, but if not for the fact that some of his soul skills could only be unleashed using his spiritual power, he wouldn't even be able to unleash half them using his soul power before he reached this stage. After his soul power increased, he managed to get some relief in this aspect.

Huo Yuhao wished that Wang Dong was here. He only realized how important Wang Dong was after leaving Shrek Academy. Wang Dong already passed Rank 50 and become a soul king. His twin martial souls made his soul power extremely vigorous, and if the two of them used their Haodong Power and four martial soul fusion skills, Huo Yuhao had confidence they could face off against a seven-ringed soul sage.

Huo Yuhao started missing Wang Dong as he thought of him. He looked in the direction of Shrek Academy and seemed a little out of sorts.

"What's wrong? You miss Shrek?" Ju Zi's voice sounded.

Huo Yuhao twisted his head to look at her and smiled. "A little. I miss my partner."

"A girl?" Ju Zi asked a sensitive question.

Huo Yuhao shook his head.

Ju Zi walked beside him and looked in the direction of Shrek too. She said slowly, "Yuhao, I don't want to meet you in battle in the future."

Huo Yuhao spoke in a dreary tone, "You're a girl. Must you go to war?"

Ju Zi replied, "What's war got to do with gender? Don't tell me that the enemy will be merciful just because I'm a female? I've told you before that avenging my parents is my only motivation."

Huo Yuhao furrowed his brows. "Is there only hatred in your life?"

Ju Zi hesitated for a while before shifting her gaze away from his body. However, she was still confident when she said, "Yes."

Huo Yuhao was silent. He revealed a pensive look of regret on his face, "I'm not able to change your mentality, and I may not be qualified to even attempt to do so. Because I have the same hatred in my heart."

Ju Zi's voice turned a little weird, "What if we meet on the battlefield?"

Huo Yuhao was silent for a while before he replied, "I'll spare you three times before killing you."

Ju Zi smiled. Her smile was very bright. "Are you that confident? How do you know that I won't be the one sparing you?"

Huo Yuhao smiled too. "You want me to beg for mercy?"

Ju Zi shook her head. "If you try to beg for mercy, I'll kill you immediately. I don't want you to bend your knees. That's not the Huo Yuhao that I know."

Huo Yuhao answered, "Such a day won't come."

"I know that." Ju Zi smiled. "If we meet on the battlefield and you land in my hands, I'll spare you four times before killing you. I even gave you one more chance than you gave me. Aren't I magnanimous?"

Huo Yuhao laughed and said, "You want to compete in this too? We don't even know what's going to happen. Let's return to the academy. I came here to learn how to make soul tools, this is wasting too much time!"

As he spoke, he turned and walked towards the tent to pack his stuff.

Ju Zi revealed a dreary look in her eyes as she watched his back. She muttered to herself, "Will it really not happen soon? Battlefield, battlefield!"

She suddenly shouted, "Yuhao, prepare a meal for us!"

Huo Yuhao regained his composure and revealed a smile. "Alright."

.....

Xuan Ziwen didn't know what to say when he looked at the three students in front of him.

"Not even some shattered pieces were left behind?"

Ju Zi lowered her head and said, "No..."

They had only returned an hour earlier. But the all-terrain exploration soul

tool had been completely destroyed. Thus, they didn't even bother to neaten themselves up and they came to find Xuan Ziwen.

Xuan Ziwen was silent for a while. He became depressed as he said, "Do you know how valuable that all-terrain exploration soul tool was? The academy spent a lot of time money and effort on it. If not for the fact that more than one-third of its formation arrays were created by me, do you think the three of you would have had the chance to experiment with it? Are you sure that nothing, especially the formation arrays, was left in the mountain range?"

Ju Zi was certain as she replied, "Teacher, nothing was left. Everything was blown to pieces. The huge crater is still there."

Xuan Ziwen scratched his forehead and glanced at Huo Yuhao. He snapped, "Huo Yuhao! Tell me why I'm facing so much trouble since you came."

Huo Yuhao was a little embarrassed as he replied, "I don't know!"

Ke Ke puffed out her chest and said, "Teacher Xuan, you can't blame them for this matter. I caused all the problems this time. I will stand up for my mistakes. If I didn't connect the formation arrays together out of desperation, all this wouldn't have happened. But if not for Yuhao, both Sister Ju Zi and I would've perished. If you want to punish someone, punish me. Regardless, I'm broke, so there's nothing much I can be punished for."

Xuan Ziwen couldn't help but laugh in the face of Ke Ke's petulance and determination.

"Enough, enough. Don't try to team up together against me. Go wash yourselves up before changing into clean clothes. I smell the stink on your bodies. Scram."

Ke Ke laughed impishly and leapt towards Xuan Ziwen. She grabbed his neck and gave him a kiss on the cheek. "Teacher Xuan, you're really nice." After she finished speaking, she grabbed Ju Zi and ran off.

Huo Yuhao was stunned as he realized that Xuan Ziwen's face turned red. He was even blushing!

"Teacher Xuan, are you okay?" Huo Yuhao asked.

Xuan Ziwen lifted his leg and kicked his butt. He said embarrassedly, "Get lost."

Ju Zi and Ke Ke were waiting outside. Ju Zi continued to say, "Teacher Xuan is really nice."

Huo Yuhao was puzzled as he asked, "What do you mean?"

Ju Zi lowered her voice and said, "With his attitude it shows that he's going to tank this matter for us. The all-terrain exploration soul tool was completely destroyed! He's really too nice taking responsibility for such a serious matter like this."

Ke Ke laughed, "Why do you think I rewarded him with a kiss? Teacher Xuan is really cute when his face turns red like that. While he looks quite old, I think he's still a virgin. I've never heard any gossip about him."

Huo Yuhao was speechless. He thought to himself, "That was a reward? She was clearly seducing Teacher Xuan!"

"Alright ladies, you two should rest. I'm going to shower. I think that there's some lice on my body. I'll see the both of you tomorrow."

After speaking, Huo Yuhao returned to his dormitory with haste.

He took a shower and changed his clothes, after his shower he felt really refreshed. Then he sat cross-legged on his bed. He unleashed his Spiritual Detection, and he started to cultivate.

After leaving for so many days, he should pay a visit to his second senior brother now that he'd returned. He also wondered what He Caitou had been learning all this while.

However, Huo Yuhao was surprised to find out that He Caitou still hadn't returned even though it was very late in the afternoon. Anxious, he rushed to ask some of the other Shrek students learning at the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy with them. Through them, he found out that He Caitou managed to make his way into the Illustrious Virtue Hall and earned his right to cultivate while learning there.

Huo Yuhao was delighted and surprised. His mastery of soul tools had been increasing over the past two years, but he knew that he was still inferior to his second senior brother. After all, he too had much to learn and a dedicated focus on researching and creating soul tools like He Caitou. However, He Caitou had identified his direction from the beginning, which was to research stationary soul tools. Furthermore, Huo Yuhao shared his research findings with He Caitou. He Caitou was even catching up to Fan Yu in terms of his knowledge and research on stationary soul tools.

Teacher Fan Yu appeared to have gotten into the Illustrious Virtue Hall as well, and was learning there with He Caitou.

Huo Yuhao suddenly felt pressure after his surprise faded away. His second senior brother had already entered the Illustrious Virtue Hall, but he'd only just discovered his path.

However, his experience in the Jing Yang Mountain Range did allow him to reflect on his progress in the Ultimate Soldier Plan over the past two years. He detected some problems, and needed to rectify them right now. At the same time, he needed to modify his soul tools.

His fatigue disappeared after a night of rest.

Huo Yuhao walked out of his dorm room after his routine morning cultivation. He was mentally prepared to reach the laboratory early and try to create the soul tools he had in mind.

He was very cheerful after figuring out that he wanted to pursue a close-combat route. He believed that he would improve even faster with this newfound sense of direction.

However, he stopped once he walked out of his dorm room.

"It's him. Capture him." A pale Wang Shaojie was standing not far away. He was pointing his finger at Huo Yuhao. With him were six middle-aged men who looked to be somewhere between thirty to forty years old. They all wore the same vest. They immediately unleashed their martial souls—Two Soul Emperors and four Soul Kings.

The leader walked up to Huo Yuhao and revealed a writ to him. He said coldly, "Royal Stewards. You're Huo Yuhao?"

Huo Yuhao knew that he was in trouble. Although he was unafraid of them, it was impossible to conceal his full powers if he wanted to deal with them. He would also need to kill some or all of them to escape. His mind moved quickly as he calculated the pros and cons of retaliating.

Their leader said coldly, "You stand accused of assaulting a member of the imperial family. You need to come with us to assist in our investigation." He revealed golden handcuffs as he spoke. His soul power was very strong. Should he dare to resist, the six Royal Stewards would team up to attack him.

He didn't expect that he would have to face Wang Shaojie after being gone for so long. While he looked strong and developed, he was actually a petty person at heart.

Huo Yuhao smiled and extended his hands. "I'm an exchange student from Shrek Academy. Please help me inform my teachers. Otherwise, I don't think you'll be able to bear the responsibility of your actions."

Chapter 169: The Crown Prince

"Kacha, kacha." Golden handcuffs closed around Huo Yuhao's wrists. A strong restraining force came from the handcuffs. It was obvious that the handcuffs were also a soul tool, and Huo Yuhao immediately felt that his soul power had been sealed.

Wang Shaojie walked in front of Huo Yuhao, his eyes held a blatant viciousness. He grabbed Huo Yuhao's head and punched his stomach hard.

Huo Yuhao bent at the waist. The intense pain combined with cramps caused him to furrow his brows. A cold light flashed in his eyes.

If he wasn't considering the bigger picture he would've turned violent. Did they really think these Class 6 handcuffs could stop him?

"Aren't you great at fighting? I'll let you taste the pleasure of Sun Moon's Ten Great Tortures. Take him away." Wang Shaojie revealed a delighted look on his face. He finally got his revenge.

He awakened only three days prior, but he still vividly recalled the pain that Huo Yuhao had inflicted on him. Fortunately, he didn't sustain heavy injuries apart from an occasional trance that he would fall into.

After recuperating for two days, he felt much better. Only now he heard that Huo Yuhao, Ju Zi and Ke Ke had returned.

Xuan Ziwen had settled this matter already, and the imperial family willingly dropped the matter. They didn't care much since Wang Shaojie wasn't critically injured. However, Xuan Ziwen didn't expect Wang Shaojie himself to be so vengeful, and not heed his advice. He still summoned the Royal Stewards over. They didn't dare to make a move in his dormitory, instead waiting for Huo Yuhao to leave the room before capturing him.

Wang Shaojie hoped that Huo Yuhao would resist, because if he dared to attack the Royal Stewards no one would say anything if they killed him. However, Huo Yuhao didn't act rashly. His wise choice left Wang Shaojie greatly disappointed.

Their leader stopped Wang Shaojie from hitting Huo Yuhao further. He said in a deep voice, "You can't do this here. I'll bring him back and deal with him. Don't forget where we are."

Wang Shaojie rubbed his palms together as he said, "Yes, elder cousin. You must be harsh on him, allow me to accompany you in this."

The leader shook his head and replied, "No, you can't. It's better if you remain in the academy. In this way, you can deny any involvement in this matter. You're not young anymore, why can't you use your brain? Xuan Ziwen already pleaded for this guy's case, and the matter was settled. Do you really want to get in trouble for getting involved? Just act like you don't know what's going on. We know what to do."

“Alright.” Wang Shaojie was a little unconvinced, but he still agreed. After all, he wasn’t actually that dumb. After scanning his surroundings and ascertaining that no one was around, he scurried off.

Their leader came in front of Huo Yuhao and said, “I’m sorry, you can only blame your bad luck. You dared to touch a member of the imperial family? You’re from Shrek, aren’t you? We’ll have a nice little talk when we get back.”

Huo Yuhao could clearly sense his ill intentions from the tone of his voice. He knew that this person was much more powerful than Wang Shaojie. In his hands, he would probably suffer. But he had no urge to resist what may come.

“I just hope that you won’t regret doing this.”

One of the soul kings slapped Huo Yuhao’s face and said coldly, “You dare to be rude in front of the Royal Stewards? I guess you’re sick of living. Captain, you can just hand him to me when we get back.”

The leader waved him off and said, “Let’s go. We’ll talk when we get back.”

Two soul kings roughly pushed Huo Yuhao forward, and he cooperated with them, following along obediently. While he appeared indifferent, he wasn’t panicked at all.

The Royal Stewards were primarily in charge of supervising the members of the imperial family, and everything that happened in the imperial palace. Normally they didn’t interfere with matters outside of the imperial affairs. They were directly accountable to the Sun Moon Empire’s imperial clan after all. This captain of the Royal Stewards was called Xu Mochen. His father was a prince that controlled part of the imperial clan. Xu Mochen possessed a great deal of authority, and was also a direct descendant of the imperial family. Wang Shaojie was from a branch family of the imperial family, and he was only able to invite Xu Mochen to handle this, because he had ties with him.

Xu Mochen didn’t just become the captain of the Royal Stewards with his family connections, as his cultivation was rather good. Furthermore, he was a soul master who specialized in soul tools, but he wasn’t a soul engineer. His cultivation was strong because he possessed a very powerful martial soul inherited through the bloodline of direct descendants to the imperial family. He was one of the best among the Royal Stewards.

Xu Mochen was cautious when he realized that Huo Yuhao was very calm. After all, Huo Yuhao came from Shrek Academy.

When Wang Shaojie had found him, he had said that he was ambushed by a youth from Shrek Academy. He claimed that the youth was a spiritual-type soul master, and that he couldn’t unleash his powers since he was ambushed. He also mentioned that Huo Yuhao only had three soul rings.

Shrek Academy’s reputation was very influential in every empire. Xu Mochen had merely been curious when he made this trip. He wanted to see how outstanding a Shrek Academy student was. If not, he wouldn’t have bothered with Wang Shaojie’s matter.

Huo Yuhao appeared very young indeed. However, Xu Mochen could sense that he wasn’t that simple. He didn’t panic, not even in front of so many people. Although he did make some threats, he didn’t curse after he was hit by Wang Shaojie. He was very calm and composed. This surely meant that he had some form of backer.

As he thought till here, he developed another idea. He instructed one of his subordinates, "Go and inform the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy that we have a student called Huo Yuhao assisting us with an investigation."

His subordinate was a little puzzled. However, he didn't dare to question his orders, and went about doing what he was told.

Huo Yuhao smiled and said, "It's always nice to make friends with intellectuals. How should I address you?"

Xu Mochen laughed. "Young man, it seems like you're not anxious at all! However, you don't belong to the Sun Moon Empire. No matter who your backer is, I can't return empty-handed this time. You touched a member of the imperial family, and I must teach you a lesson for doing so. Let's see whether your backer will get here quickly enough. If your backer arrives late though, don't blame me if things get out of hand."

Huo Yuhao continued to wear a smile on his face. "I can tell that you're not that close to Wang Shaojie. It seems he's not that important to the imperial family either. Why should you seek trouble for yourself? I'm not from the Sun Moon Empire, but I'm a very hot potato. It's not too late to turn back."

Xu Mochen's expression turned abysmal, and a vicious look flashed in his eyes. "I don't need you to tell me what to do. Take him away. I want to see what kind of trouble I'll get into."

Huo Yuhao didn't speak out further, and listened to Xu Mochen. He walked out of the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy and got onto a luxurious horse-drawn cart. Then they proceeded towards the city center.

"What? Huo Yuhao was taken by the Royal Stewards?" Lin Jiayi was anxious when he heard the news.

"Bang!" He smashed his table. "Nonsense! The Royal Stewards dare to make an arrest in the academy without consulting us? What nonsense is this?"

The member of the Royal Stewards was unbothered by Lin Jiayi's rage, like Wang Shaojie or Xu Mochen he was also a direct descendant or from a branch family of the imperial family. He snorted, "If you dare, you can talk to our captain. Anyway, I've already consulted with you, as ordered." After he finished speaking, he turned around and left.

Lin Jiayi didn't stop him. Huo Yuhao had already been captured; thus, there there was no point in messing with the messenger. He stood behind his desk and pondered for a brief moment. After that, he walked out of his office.

Jing Hongchen had once told him how important Huo Yuhao was. Informing him not to allow Huo Yuhao to suffer from any indignation or harm, apart from preventing him to learn anything substantial in the academy. It hasn't been easy for him. He was a little enraged when he found out that Xuan Ziwen had sent Huo Yuhao out for training without informing him. Fortunately, Huo Yuhao returned safely.

But who knew that he would be captured the day after he returned? Wang Shaojie must be fooling around!

Lin Jiayi was a Class 8 soul engineer, but he couldn't offend the Royal Stewards. After all, the Royal Stewards members all had complicated backgrounds. That was why he quickly rushed to the Illustrious Virtue Hall. He had to report this to Jing Hongchen right away. He knew that Jing Hongchen's precious grandchildren were involved in this exchange.

"What? Huo Yuhao has been captured by the Royal Stewards?" Ju Zi exclaimed.

Ke Ke nodded and revealed a fearful expression. "It must be Wang Shaojie's doing. I heard about it from an imperial family member in a lower grade. It's true. Ju Zi, what do we do?"

Ju Zi's eyes flashed with a cold light, "Royal Stewards? It would be Xu Mochen. Hmph, just a Xu Mochen. I'm going to make a trip." As she spoke, she had already rushed out like a gust of wind. She immediately unleashed her flying-type soul tool and flew into the sky, leaving the dormitory. She flew towards the central area of the academy.

Illustrious Virtue Hall.

Jing Hongchen was admiring the hundred thousand year soul embryo quietly. He already had nine rings, and didn't need it for himself, but his grandson needed it! Xiao Hongchen and Meng Hongchen were extremely precious to him. He had even organized the exchange so that they could learn something from Shrek Academy. After all, the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy couldn't compare to Shrek Academy in terms of nurturing soul masters.

"Hallmaster." Lin Jiayi rushed in hurriedly.

"Rascal! Why didn't you knock!?" Jing Hongchen was furious.

Lin Jiayi knelt down on one knee frantically. "Hallmaster, Huo Yuhao has been captured by the Royal Stewards."

"What?" Jing Hongchen's eyes widened in shock. "Royal Stewards? What's going on?"

Lin Jiayi was aware of the conflict between Huo Yuhao and Wang Shaojie. He was aware that Huo Yuhao had knocked Wang Shaojie out for several days with his spiritual-type soul skill. Xuan Ziwen had approached him regarding this matter.

Lin Jiayi recounted everything to Jing Hongchen immediately.

Jing Hongchen's expression turned extremely dismal after hearing his words. "Are the Royal Stewards trying to rebel? How dare they arrest someone in the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy! Who's backing them? I will deal with them on behalf of His Majesty. Let's go!" He walked out of the room as he finished speaking..

Lin Jiayi warned him, "Hallmaster, I'm afraid that you must hurry. The Royal Stewards have resorted to underhanded methods. I fear that Huo Yuhao might already..."

"Alright." A cold light flashed in Jing Hongchen's eyes. He was obviously furious. He wasn't concerned about Huo Yuhao's life, but it was imperative that nothing happen to a Shrek exchange student in the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy. This would most certainly get his grandchildren into trouble. He didn't think that Huo Yuhao was a brilliant soul engineer. He only insisted that Huo Yuhao

join the exchange because he needed someone as collateral against his grandchildren here in the academy.

At the same time, he was well-aware of Huo Yuhao's significance to Shrek Academy. He had an Ultimate martial soul, and twin martial souls on top of that! Jing Hongchen coveted him. However, he had learned that he couldn't buy Huo Yuhao when he first met Huo Yuhao beside Elder Mu.

"If something really happens to Huo Yuhao..." Jing Hongchen was afraid to imagine any further. It wasn't just a matter of whether his grandchildren would return. He was afraid that all of Shrek Academy might turn violent and clash with the Sun Moon Empire. They might even attack the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy!

He had been to Shrek Academy before. There was an abundance of powerful individuals there! Even the Body Sect had been forced to retreat, and he had been forced to leave a Class 9 soul tool behind before he was allowed to return.

On the surface, he wasn't willing to admit his fear of Shrek Academy. However, he was truly terrified of them. Shrek Academy had a long history! They didn't earn their name as the top academy on the continent for nothing. Shrek Academy possessed great sway within the three empires of the Douluo Continent, and even the Sun Moon Empire didn't dare to act recklessly when it came to them.

.....

Sun Moon Empire's Imperial Palace..

Ju Zi retracted her wings and descended around a thousand meters away from the imperial palace. She had no choice but to do so, as flying above the Radiant City was prohibited, especially in the central region. The Soul Engineer Guards stopped her in the air and demanded that she land immediately.

Ju Zi retrieved a dark gold writ. There was a flaming dragon carved onto it.

The Soul Engineer Guards immediately knelt when they saw this writ and bowed respectfully.

Ju Zi ignored them, and quickly ran towards the imperial palace.

"Nothing must happen to him. Nothing must happen to him."

She was well-aware of the Royal Stewards' underhanded tactics. Even though he had just been arrested, Huo Yuhao was unlikely to come out unharmed.

She held the flaming dragon writ in her hand as she ran. When she reached the gates of the imperial palace, no one dared to stop her. All the guards knelt and bowed to her, showing how powerful her writ was.

This eight-clawed flaming dragon writ had great significance. She was allowed free access to practically the entire imperial palace.

She passed the main pavilion of the imperial palace and started to run towards the internal regions of the imperial palace with the speed of great familiarity. She kept on holding the writ so that she wouldn't be stopped or questioned, moving as fast as possible.

She reached a certain pavilion after running for almost ten minutes. Her pace only slowed when she reached this pavilion.

The guards at the door didn't kneel upon seeing her. One of them smiled as he approached her, saying, "Miss Ju Zi, you're here. His Highness is reading in the study room."

"Okay, thanks. I need to see His Highness."

"Alright, follow me." The guard didn't dare to delay her, and immediately guided Ju Zi inside. Ju Zi also put the eight-clawed flaming dragon writ away.

The guard brought her to a study room in a side pavilion to the left, immediately reporting news of her arrival.

Ju Zi took in a deep breath and tried her best to calm down. She knew that she was about to meet someone as intelligent as herself. If she wasn't prudent, she was bound to give herself away.

"Ju Zi is here? Ask her to come in. Didn't I instruct you to let her in when she comes? There's no need to inform me at all."

The gate of the side pavilion opened, and an attendant rushed out frantically. He bowed towards Ju Zi respectfully, and gestured for her to enter the pavilion.

Ju Zi took small steps into this side pavilion.

The pavilion was elegantly decorated, but didn't lose its sense of simplicity. There were many eight-clawed flaming dragon patterns on the decorations and furniture. There was a young man in white seated behind the study table. He looked at her with a gentle gaze.

This young man seemed to be in his late twenties.

His attire was very simple, and his eyes were full of energy. Although he wasn't very handsome, he had the aura of an authoritative figure. His tanned skin revealed a healthy glow.

"Greetings to Your Highness." Ju Zi hurried a few steps forward and knelt.

The youth in white waved her off, and a gentle strand of soul power lifted her. "Alright, you don't have to be so formal in front of me. Your heartbeat is irregular. Did something happen?"

Ju Zi had been anxious before she entered, but was much calmer now. She said in a deep voice, "Your Highness, an opportunity has arisen. We need to seize it."

"Oh?" The youth in white was curious as he asked, "What opportunity?"

Ju Zi answered, "It's like this: one of my fellow students under Teacher Xuan is Wang Shaojie, a young man from a branch family of the imperial family. He was involved in a fight with a Shrek Academy exchange student several days ago.. Not long ago, Teacher Xuan sent me and Ke Ke to experiment on the all-terrain exploration soul tool with this exchange student. From my observations, this Shrek student is extraordinary."

The prince appeared to be interested. "What do you mean?"

Ju Zi answered, "This person has twin martial souls. There's never been anyone with twin martial souls in the Sun Moon Empire."

"Interesting." The young man in white gestured for Ju Zi to continue.

Ju Zi said, "From what I know, Xiao Hongchen and Meng Hongchen are also involved in the exchange of students with Shrek. You should know their importance to the Hallmaster. This exchange student also holds a similarly important position in Shrek. Wang Shaojie called for the Royal Stewards this morning, and arrested this exchange student. If the Hallmaster is to learn of this..."

The prince immediately comprehended what she was saying. "It's not a simple matter if the Hallmaster is involved. And your idea is?"

Ju Zi replied, "The Hallmaster holds an important position in the Sun Moon Empire. Many imperial family members want to get close to him, but His Majesty once ordered that no imperial family member should have any contact with the Illustrious Virtue Hall. No one dares to go against this edict."

The prince nodded and said, "I am under the same restrictions."

Ju Zi continued to speak, "The Royal Stewards have been too brazen over these past few years. Regardless of the fact that a Shrek Academy exchange student is involved, they should've informed us before making an arrest. The Hallmaster should be enraged. While it's not convenient for you to pay a visit to the Hallmaster, I believe that the Hallmaster will remember you if you can settle this matter before it blows up."

The prince revealed a look of approval. "Very good, Ju Zi. You're getting smarter and smarter. Your observation is very keen this time around. Come on, follow me to find the Royal Stewards. Their captain is Xu Mochen, am I right? This rascal is getting too arrogant. It's time to deal with him."

Ju Zi quickly walked behind the prince. The sound of wheels rotating could be heard, and the young man was pushed out.

Yes, this young man was seated in a wheelchair. He had practically no legs at all.

While he might be a cripple, he was the Sun Moon Empire's Crown Prince, the heir apparent of the Sun Moon Empire.

Ju Zi met Xu Tianran after her parents died and she became a vagabond. Xu Tianran wasn't crippled back then. He adopted her and sent her to the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy to study.

Ju Zi didn't let Xu Tianran down. Her cultivation grew quickly as she cultivated tirelessly. Xu Tianran trusted her a lot due to their special relationship, while Ju Zi was also very loyal towards him.

When Xu Tianran was ambushed, Ju Zi took two stabs in her back to protect him, and was almost killed. Although it was a huge blow to Xu Tianran, Ju Zi became his confidante. He trusted Ju Zi completely, and was also aware of Ju Zi's deep hatred towards the Star Luo Empire. He had always admired Ju Zi's composure and decisiveness.

Xu Tianran's position in the Sun Moon Empire's imperial family was very stable. It was almost a certainty that he would succeed the throne. However, he became a cripple after that surprise ambush, which

caused his status in the imperial family to fall. After all, such a thing would have a great impact on any ruler of an empire.

However, Xu Tianran remained resolute and bore the pain, using all sorts of methods to dispel everyone's doubts. He even tracked down the mastermind behind the ambush, who turned out to be one of his brothers.

No one knew how Xu Tianran managed to track him down, but this brother of his was cut to pieces in his own palace. That entire palace was washed with blood.

From then on, no one dared to doubt him because of his condition. He managed to preserve his position of Crown Prince.

Over the past few years, the emperor's physical condition had been deteriorating, and he was often bedridden. The brothers of Xu Tianran who were qualified to become the Sun Moon Emperor's successor started to make their moves. They even brought up the issue of his disability.

However, Xu Tianran was very calm, and never acted against them. No one dared to underestimate him, however. He was still the favorite to succeed the throne.

Ju Zi wheeled Xu Tianran out of his pavilion, and his guards quickly followed.

The Royal Stewards' headquarters was in the imperial palace. Although it was merely in a corner of the palace, the location demonstrated its pertinence to the imperial family.

"Ju Zi, how's your cultivation?" Xu Tianran asked gently.

Ju Zi replied, "My progress has been slow. After I became a Class 5 soul engineer, my mastery seems to have reached a bottleneck. My soul power increases very slowly, and taking medicine doesn't seem to help. Although my research of soul tools continues to see improvements, my soul power has stagnated. I'm confident of making it into the Illustrious Virtue Hall, but I'm afraid I'll need three to five years before I can become a Class 6 soul engineer. It will take even longer as I progress."

Xu Tianran smiled and said, "It's okay, Ju Zi. Do you know something? I like your honesty. There's hardly anyone who's as honest as you around me, no matter how close they are to me."

Ju Zi lowered her head and said, "You gave me my life, and everything that I have. I..."

Xu Tianran shrugged and said, "Let's not bring that up. You repaid the favor when you took two knives meant me. Ju Zi, my father's condition has been deteriorating. I don't think he has much longer to live. If you think that your development as a soul engineer is too slow, I hope that you can consider leaving the academy to help me. Didn't you always want revenge? I'll let you join the military. I'll slowly transfer the trump card I have in the military to you and let you strut your stuff."

"What? You can't do that. Your Highness, I'm... I'm not up to it," Ju Zi said hurriedly. An anxious look appeared in her eyes. However, a tinge of happiness also flashed through the depths of her eyes in that instant.

Xu Tianran patted the hand that she had placed on the wheelchair and sighed. "How can I lead the military in this condition? The military is a force that every emperor must be able to control. You're the person I trust the most. I'd be relieved to hand the military to you."

“Your Highness...”

Xu Tianran said, “You’re only lacking in terms of your aura. But your intelligence and military knowledge are great. You’re also well-versed in soul tools. I trust you completely. I’ll gradually let you enter the core circle of my military forces. I’ll tell them that you’ll be my wife, the wife of the Crown Prince, as well as the future Empress.”

“Your Highness!” Ju Zi exclaimed and stopped pushing the wheelchair. Although she was anxious to save Huo Yuhao, she couldn’t reveal her intention.

She knelt down in front of the wheelchair. “Your Highness, I’m not worthy!”

Xu Tianran smiled and caressed her head. He said, “How are you not fit? In my heart, this has nothing to do with the bigger picture or to enable me to succeed the throne. I need to have a wife. But this person must be someone I can trust. You are aware of my condition, and you’re also the only person I trust completely. I’ll give you a proper status and authority. Your only role is to help me stabilize my throne. I’ll give you the strength to seek your vengeance, and the encouragement to go ahead with your revenge. I’ve no intentions other than to rule the entire continent. I’ll make the Sun Moon Empire glorious, and the continent will depend on us once again.” As he spoke these words, his calm gaze became passionate.

Ju Zi bit her lower lip lightly. She was probably the only one who understood Xu Tianran in this world. The injuries he had sustained hadn’t just effected his legs; his manly capabilities were affected too. Ju Zi had waited for a long time for this day. Without Xu Tianran, how could she exact revenge? However, she was truly loyal to Xu Tianran, too.

It was just that Xu Tianran didn’t know that someone else had appeared in Ju Zi’s heart over the past half month.

“Alright, let’s rush over. Otherwise, the Royal Stewards will really cause a huge headache for everyone.” Xu Tianran extended his hand to lift Ju Zi up. Ju Zi was grateful, and moved behind him again. She pushed his wheelchair along quickly.

...

The Royal Stewards’ office was in the imperial city. Although it was in a corner, it was quite large.

Those who could become Royal Stewards were basically related to the imperial family. However, not many of them were direct descendants of the imperial family. Direct descendants usually had better options, especially the sons of the current emperor. Besides Xu Tianran, the rest were also given titles as princes. Even those who didn’t qualify to fight for the throne had their own land, and those who were qualified had their private mansions in the Radiant City.

Xu Mochen’s background was one of the best of the Royal Stewards. He controlled the entire organization.

...

“Go in.” One of the Soul Kings pushed Huo Yuhao. Huo Yuhao stumbled and almost fell, but he managed to enter the office.

The place was nicely and elegantly decorated. It was constructed like a palace hall.

Xu Mochen shot some looks at his subordinates and said, "Bring him to the interrogation room. Grill him about how he harmed a member of the imperial family."

One of Xu Mochen's subordinates rubbed his palms together and said, "Captain, leave it to me." He dragged Huo Yuhao to the back, accompanied by the others.

Huo Yuhao was still handcuffed, and didn't resist. He didn't utter a word, and let them push him.

The interrogation room naturally wasn't a good place to be. It was in the backyard and, appeared to be a simple room. But when the door opened, a bloody smell wafted out.

Huo Yuhao was pushed into this room. There were all types of torture equipment in the interrogation room. Huo Yuhao didn't even recognize many of them.

"Tie him to the Dragoncarving Pillar." One of the soul emperors gestured, and two soul kings immediately brought Huo Yuhao in front of a steel rack.

This steel rack looked a little weird. It had the shape of a cross, with many holes in it. Huo Yuhao's handcuffs were separated, but this didn't affect the restraint on his soul power. The two Soul Kings tied him to the cross directly.

The rack was extremely cold, and reeked of blood.

Huo Yuhao's pupils started to shrink.

Although the handcuffs could restrain his soul power, they couldn't restrain his spiritual power. His Spiritual Detection might be more difficult to use without the support of his soul power, but he was still able to detect up to a certain range.

He instantly understood what this rack was supposed to do. There were metal spikes in each of the holes. These spikes were three inches long, and were positioned at very precise spots. These spots weren't located at a person's vital areas. It meant that the person controlling this rack could nail Huo Yuhao's entire body to the rack without killing him instantly.

"Young fellow, I suggest that you be honest. Tell us everything you need to tell us." The soul emperor who had issued the order sat behind a table and looked at Huo Yuhao apathetically. The rest also stood to the side. Someone took a pen and paper and was about to record the details of the interrogation. Xu Mochen didn't enter the interrogation room. No one knew where he had gone.

Huo Yuhao answered, "I don't know what you're talking about."

The soul emperor said coldly, "You don't know? Tell us how you harmed Wang Shaojie and caused him to sustain critical injuries. If you deny it, don't blame us for torturing you."

Huo Yuhao laughed, and wore a mocking look on his face. "If I tell you what you demand just like this, wouldn't that just give you a better reason to torture me? Since you're going to torture me anyway, why do I have to give you a better reason to do so? I'm going to give you a suggestion: don't touch me. Otherwise, you'll suffer."

Huo Yuhao wasn't anxious or afraid of these people. He just didn't want to make things any worse. He had heard Xu Mochen instructing his subordinate to inform the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy of his arrest. He believed that the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy and Illustrious Virtue Hall had to protect him. Otherwise, they couldn't bear the results.

"It seems like you won't open your mouth unless we show you what we're capable of. Number Four, show him the might of the Dragoncarving Pillar. Let him feel what it's like to have your skin torn and repeatedly cut."

The youngest soul king came up to the Dragoncarving Pillar and laughed creepily.

"Second brother, is it time to start? I've not heard someone screaming on this rack for a long time. The splattering of blood is a beautiful sight, indeed. Eighty-one spikes piercing different parts of the body before turning and moving in place. It's beautiful."

Huo Yuhao clenched his fists tightly and said coldly, "Have you really considered it carefully?"

The soul king was hostile. "Young fellow, you still dare to threaten us in the interrogation room?"

Number four laughed viciously, and his right hand grabbed hold of the switch behind him. He pressed it down, and a piercing, rumbling sound filled the room. The spikes started to extend from the holes on the Dragoncarving Pillar.

Chapter 170: Injury! Death! A Human Heart

The Dragoncarving Pillar was a vicious tool. The spikes didn't pierce out instantly. Rather, they poked out slowly, penetrating one's skin bit by bit. It was a torture tool designed to prolong the victim's suffering.

However, they didn't hear Huo Yuhao screaming. A layer of golden-red light shot out from Huo Yuhao's body the moment the spikes touched him. The spikes were stopped and prevented from piercing his skin.

The sudden appearance of the golden-red light caused the Royal Stewards to be shocked. They unleashed their martial souls immediately.

"Impossible. How can he still use a soul skill even after he's been cuffed by the Dragonbinding Seal? Wait, it's a soul tool."

Second Brother revealed an appalled look on his face.

Although he wasn't a soul engineer, he was still familiar with soul tools since he was a member of the Sun Moon Empire's imperial family. The Dragonbinding Seal was very effective in restraining a soul master. If Huo Yuhao was able to activate his soul tool even though his soul power was restrained by the Dragonbinding Seal, this meant that his soul tool's class was higher than the Dragonbinding Seal. The Dragonbinding Seal was already a Class 6 soul tool. What class was Huo Yuhao's defensive soul tool?

Even at this point, these arrogant Royal Stewards didn't realize anything was amiss. Their eyes brightened, and greed started to fill them.

Even if Huo Yuhao only possessed a Class 7 defensive soul tool, it would be worth a huge price on the market. If they divided the money, they would still benefit greatly. While they were Royal Stewards,

their salary wasn't that high. In addition, they weren't direct descendants of the imperial family, which made their statuses very awkward in the imperial city. They obtained all their money through ill-gotten gains as Royal Stewards.

"You still dare to resist." Second Brother snorted, "Even if your defensive soul tool is superior than the Dragonbinding Seal in terms of class, your soul power is limited. I want to see how long you can hold on. When your soul power is depleted, the spikes will pierce through your body forcefully. You'll be torn apart instantly."

Huo Yuhao sighed in his heart. One could be spared because of Heaven's misdoings, but one couldn't live because of his own sins! Huo Yuhao didn't want to cause any trouble, but they were too underhanded. If he allowed them to torture him, he might not survive until help arrived. It seemed like he had to take care of them first.

Huo Yuhao's eyes had already turned golden as he pondered in his mind.

As a spiritual-type soul master, how could he be so easily controlled by others? Hongchen's Blessing completely restrained the Dragonbinding Seal. This meant that this Class 6 soul tool could restrict him even less. Furthermore, the main skills of his Spirit Eyes were realized through spiritual power. In this way, it was completely possible for him to use the soul skills of his Spirit Eyes. It was even easier for him to break free from the Dragoncarving Pillar.

Huo Yuhao unleashed his immense physical strength. He couldn't allow his soul power to continue depleting. With the Imitation skill, the Royal Stewards couldn't tell that Huo Yuhao's soul rings were shining. His fourth soul ring had already lit up now.

Just as he was about to use the Spiritual Confusion to create an opportunity for himself, the golden light in his eyes disappeared. Even the golden-red light barrier around him was retracted.

He groaned, and the spikes pierced through his body. Blood splattered immediately. Not only this, but Huo Yuhao's struggle caused the healing wounds on his back to tear apart once again. He was instantly covered in blood.

Second Brother was stunned for a moment, while Old Four couldn't help but laugh out loud. "I thought you were very tough. It seems like you're as useless as we initially thought you were! We've done you in."

Huo Yuhao tolerated the intense pain that came from his back. There was a look of jocularly in his eyes right now.

"Who's going to stop me?" A deep, furious roar sounded at this point, causing the entire place to shake from the echoes.

The few people in the interrogation room were stunned. Following this, a loud boom sounded, and the door was kicked open.

The gloomy-looking Jing Hongchen barged in with Lin Jiayi.

When Jing Hongchen saw Huo Yuhao, his pupils shrank.

“Old fellow, who do you think you are? How dare you cause trouble here.” Old Four was too arrogant, and didn’t bother to think about who it was that had just barged in.

However, Jing Hongchen’s eyes were already filled with killing intent before he had even finished speaking. He made a pulling motion with his right hand, and a powerful suction force dragged Old Four over.

Seeing that things weren't going right, Second Brother leapt towards Jing Hongchen along with the other Royal Stewards.

“Scram!” Jing Hongchen roared, and a gust of milky-white gas blew the five of them away. His nine soul rings also appeared at this point.

“Titled Douluo.” Second Brother exclaimed. Although he was in physical pain, as he hit a corner of the wall, he was more affected by the shock that he had just experienced.

The Sun Moon Empire couldn’t compare to the Star Luo Empire in terms of the quantity of their Titled Douluo. Titled Douluo were highly-regarded in every empire. No matter how arrogant the Royal Stewards were, they didn’t dare to offend a Titled Douluo!

Lin Jiayi had rushed to Huo Yuhao by now and stopped the Dragoncarving Pillar immediately. He was shocked as he saw Huo Yuhao’s bloody body. He quickly retrieved a small white jade vase from his storage-type soul tool. After a moment of hesitation, he took out an azure-green pill and stuffed it into Huo Yuhao’s mouth. After that, he released Huo Yuhao from the Dragoncarving Pillar.

Jing Hongchen furrowed his brow. If their statuses were different, he would’ve killed them all. However, they were Royal Stewards, and had close ties with the imperial family. He couldn’t go all-out against them.

He took up a few steps towards Huo Yuhao and asked, “How are you?”

Huo Yuhao looked a little pale, but his calm demeanor left Jing Hongchen uncomfortable. Jing Hongchen wished he would kicked up a fuss. A chill rose in Jing Hongchen’s heart as he watched Huo Yuhao.

“I just didn’t think that the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy would be unable to protect its own students.” While Huo Yuhao didn’t sound very forceful, his words struck right at Jing Hongchen’s heart.

Jing Hongchen’s wrath was stirred, and he unwittingly clenched his fist tightly. His obstinate and self-opinionated personality had always been his weak point. This wasn’t a conclusion derived by Huo Yuhao. Rather, this was the verdict of Shrek Academy after they had studied him for years.

“Let’s return before we speak. The academy will give you a satisfactory explanation regarding this matter.” Jing Hongchen suppressed his fury before turning away. Lin Jiayi hurriedly slung Huo Yuhao’s arm over his shoulder and led him out of the interrogation room.

The pill Lin Jiayi had fed Huo Yuhao was indeed extraordinary. A warm feeling quickly engulfed Huo Yuhao’s entire body. He could clearly sense the reduction in pain as the warmth circulated his body. The wounds that were bleeding quickly healed, and even his soul power was restored.

However, a voice sounded from outside before Jing Hongchen could walk out of the interrogation room. "The Crown Prince arrives."

Jing Hongchen was stunned. He was confused as he stopped in his tracks. Although he wasn't involved in court politics, he was still aware of the princes' powers. The Royal Stewards weren't under the Crown Prince, but were supported by the Third Prince. The prince that controlled the imperial clan, who was also Xu Mochen's father, was the Third Prince's strongest supporter.

"Go back into the interrogation room." Xu Tianran said slowly.

"Greetings to Your Highness." Xu Mochen couldn't remain silent anymore.

Xu Mochen knew that things had gone wrong when Jing Hongchen had barged in. How could he not recognize the Hallmaster of the Illustrious Virtue Hall? Huo Yuhao didn't exaggerate his importance. Xu Mochen could roughly guess what it meant for Jing Hongchen to come here personally.

However, he didn't reveal himself. He didn't enter the interrogation room because he wanted to leave a way out for himself. Jing Hongchen had come too suddenly, and he couldn't count on his subordinates to have recorded anything substantial. He just hoped that Huo Yuhao wasn't harmed too badly. Otherwise, it would be very troublesome for him. He was just going to act like he was ignorant. Without enough of a handle on him, Jing Hongchen couldn't touch him easily. After all, he believed he was standing on the side of reason.

But who knew that the Crown Prince Xu Tianran would arrive before Jing Hongchen had even left.

He could ignore Jing Hongchen, but he definitely couldn't ignore Xu Tianran.

Xu Tianran looked at Xu Mochen with a gentle gaze in his eyes and said, "Mochen, rise. We're all from the same family. You don't have to be so ceremonious. I heard from Ju Zi that you arrested her classmate. Can you give me some face and let him go?"

Xu Mochen would never underestimate Xu Tianran because he was being so courteous. On the contrary, he was aware of Xu Tianran's methods. When the Second Prince had tried to assassinate Xu Tianran, he had failed, and only left him with a disability.

After Xu Tianran returned, he erupted in fury after enduring for a while. He had captured the Second Prince and his charges in one fell swoop. Eventually, the Second Prince had died a horrible death, and Xu Tianran reaffirmed his position as the Crown Prince even though he was disabled. This showed how frightening Xu Tianran was.

"It won't be a problem." Xu Mochen wasn't qualified to bicker with Xu Tianran. Even his master, the Third Prince, wouldn't dare to do so. Unless his father was around, Xu Tianran would never bow down to anyone.

Xu Mochen was cursing Wang Shaojie in his heart now. Not only did the arrest attract the attention of the Hallmaster of the Illustrious Virtue Hall, it drove the Crown Prince to pay a visit in person! This wasn't looking likely to be resolved easily.

The door of the interrogation room opened. A gloomy-looking Jing Hongchen walked out, with Lin Jiayi and Huo Yuhao following behind him.

When Ju Zi saw Huo Yuhao covered in blood, her footsteps stiffened slightly and her expression tensed up. However, she tried her best to restrain her emotions. She understood Xu Tianran. If she came off as overly passionate towards Huo Yuhao, then Huo Yuhao was likely to get in trouble. Ju Zi was more than well-aware that in Xu Tianran's mind, she belonged to him.

"Greetings to Your Highness," Jing Hongchen called out, but only nodded his head. What was his status? In the Sun Moon Empire, he was equivalent to a Grand Advisor. Even the current emperor treated him with respect, and wouldn't demand that he stick to formalities.

Xu Tianran bowed slightly seated in his wheelchair, "Greetings, Hallmaster. I'm disabled, and it's slightly inconvenient for me to fully pay my respects. Please forgive me for this."

Jing Hongchen didn't expect Xu Tianran to be so formal. He knew a little about Xu Tianran, and regarded him very highly. Not only was he ambitious, but he had ways to get things done too. If he succeeded the throne, he was bound to bring prosperity to the Sun Moon Empire.

However, a surprise attack left the Crown Prince disabled. This made Jing Hongchen a little hesitant. Even with his prominent position in the Sun Moon Empire, the price to pay for supporting the wrong side was very hefty. That was why he decided to watch from the sidelines. Whoever succeeded the throne in the end would need his support regardless. All he needed to do was wait.

"Crown Prince, you don't have to be so ceremonious." Jing Hongchen gestured.

Xu Tianran was concerned as he looked at Huo Yuhao. He said, "Hallmaster, I heard from Ju Zi that her classmate was arrested by the Royal Stewards. Which was why I rushed over. The Royal Stewards have become too brazen. They even dare to arrest a student from the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy. From your expression, I can tell that they didn't even inform you before doing so."

Although Xu Tianran's words sounded very peaceful, they caused Xu Mochen to curse in his heart. The back of his shirt was drenched in perspiration from stress.

Jing Hongchen had already been provoked once by Huo Yuhao earlier. Now hearing the Crown Prince's words, his expression turned even gloomier.

He answered coldly, "You're right. No one seems to respect the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy nowadays. Your Highness, I shouldn't comment on such matters since I don't belong in the imperial palace. However, I think that there might be an overdue reorganization of the Royal Stewards in order."

While he was speaking, Second Brother, Old Four and the rest had walked out from the interrogation room. When they saw Xu Tianran, and listened to how he addressed Jing Hongchen, they realized that they were in big trouble. They didn't dare to speak out, just from the sheer terror.

Xu Tianran nodded his head slightly. "Hallmaster, I've not been strict enough on them. I'll give you an answer for this now." As he spoke, he pointed at Second Brother and the rest, then he said, "Kill them."

Two very simple words, but they carried a strong murderous intent and aura. A figure appeared from behind Xu Tianran. It rushed towards Second Brother and the others like a specter.

Even Jing Hongchen flinched at the strong killing intent being exuded. In the next moment, that figure had already returned behind Xu Tianran.

The figure belonged to a very feeble seeming elder. He only wore the standard attire of a palace attendant. Initially no one had noticed him. His thin figure looked as if he could collapse at any time.

Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang. Five groans sounded, starting from Second Brother. One Soul Emperor and four Soul Kings collapsed. A stream of blood flowing from each of their foreheads, like their foreheads had been struck.

“Shadow Douluo, Xue Chen?” Jing Hongchen was stunned as he looked towards the feeble elder in disbelief.

Xu Mochen was stunned as well. He didn’t expect that the Crown Prince was so merciless. Before giving him a chance to explain, his five competent subordinates were killed.

It’s important to know that Soul Kings were crucial to an empire. It wasn’t a small matter to kill five of them in one go, as it was likely to cause a commotion in the imperial court. But this Crown Prince did it like it was nothing. A chill ran down Xu Mochen’s spine. In addition, he only now found out that there was a Titled Douluo under the Crown Prince!

The elder slowly lifted his head and smiled at Jing Hongchen, “Hallmaster, it’s been a while. I didn’t expect that you would remember me.”

Jing Hongchen’s shock had already disappeared by then. He smiled and replied, “How can I not remember you? When you became a Titled Douluo, I was still stagnant at the Soul Douluo level. I didn’t expect that after more than ten years you’d enter the imperial city.”

Xue Chen answered him, “This is not the place to speak. I’ll pay you a visit when we return. We can catch up then.” After he finished speaking, he lowered his head behind Xu Tianran again. He looked just like a loyal servant.

The ground was long since stained red with fresh blood. However, Xu Tianran didn’t even glance at the mess. He smiled at Jing Hongchen. “Hallmaster, are you satisfied with this answer?”

Jing Hongchen furrowed his brow and bowed to him slightly. He said, “This is an internal matter. I don’t dare to comment. My student is gravely injured, so if Your Highness has no other instructions for me, I shall return first.”

Xu Tianran nodded his head slightly and said, “Please do, Hallmaster. In my eyes, you’ll always be a respected elder. You don’t have to be so formal with me.”

Jing Hongchen nodded and walked out. Lin Jiayi followed behind him, supporting Huo Yuhao.

Xu Tianran turned his head to look at Xu Mochen now. He said, “Mochen! At times, you will have to pay the price for standing on the wrong side. Please tell uncle that. Let’s go.” After he finished, he gestured behind him, and Ju Zi immediately pushed his wheelchair to the exit. His servants followed. After what Xue Chen had done earlier, who dared to underestimate the servants of Xu Tianran?

Ju Zi heaved a sigh of relief. Although Huo Yuhao’s grave injuries broke her heart, given Jing Hongchen’s reaction, she reckoned that he should be fine.

Jing Hongchen would've gone berserk if Huo Yuhao had died at the hands of the Royal Stewards. No one in the Sun Moon Empire would have been able to stop him, not that anyone was likely to interfere in this matter.

However, Ju Zi was secretly impressed with the Crown Prince. He'd settled the matter decisively, and exploited Jing Hongchen's presence to get rid of five competent cronies under the Third Prince. He even dealt a harsh blow to Xu Mochen. He sold Jing Hongchen a favor and dragged him into the situation.

It didn't matter whether Jing Hongchen admitted or denied anything. Things would still sound the same when this matter spread. Everyone would believe that the Crown Prince had killed a few people because he wanted to appease the Hallmaster of the Illustrious Virtue Hall.

Ju Zi was relieved that Xu Tianran didn't pay too much attention to Huo Yuhao. It might've been because of his injuries, but this was what Ju Zi wanted. Otherwise, Huo Yuhao might be at risk in the Sun Moon Empire.

Huo Yuhao was clear-headed throughout the whole ordeal. He had stopped using Hongchen's Blessing because he could sense Jing Hongchen coming.

He made a judgment call in that instant, considering his options. Right now, there was no one to prove that he'd done some tampering on his own. What was this level of physical pain to him anyway? With the Life's Gold protection, he didn't perish even with those injuries in the Jing Yang Mountain Range. These bodily injuries were nothing to him. They may seem horrible, but they really weren't that serious. He would only need a day or two to recover.

However, this matter wouldn't be resolved so easily. Jing Hongchen had to give him an explanation, since he was an exchange student and more importantly, the closed-door disciple of Elder Mu.

Jing Hongchen was in low spirits now. He felt like he'd been set up. Of course, he thought this had nothing to do with Huo Yuhao. It was the Crown Prince's trap.

If not for the fact that he knew that the Royal Stewards weren't under the Crown Prince's management, he might've thought that all of this was a scheme set up by Xu Tianran, baiting him into this matter.

He had no choice but to appear given Huo Yuhao's importance to Shrek Academy. But he immediately ran into a conundrum after acting.

Huo Yuhao was fine. He hadn't sustained internal injuries even though he was mutilated on the outside. But Jing Hongchen was still dragged down. He was clearly aware of the Crown Prince's intentions.

The Third Prince was the closest competitor to the Crown Prince, since he had the support of the prince that controlled the imperial clan. After this matter, the Third Prince was likely to have been angered even though he didn't dare to say anything. What a Xu Tianran! It was no wonder that Jing Hongchen had regarded highly him in the past. Even while he was disabled, he remained a determined person. He didn't lose his sharpness due to his disability.

Jing Hongchen turned back to look at Huo Yuhao, and he became even more depressed. Huo Yuhao was quite an actor, and Jing Hongchen still had to settle his matter. Even as the Dean of the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy and the Hallmaster of the Illustrious Virtue Hall, Jing Hongchen

didn't think it was wise to use underhanded methods to deal this. However, it wasn't that easy to give a proper explanation either.

Huo Yuhao was soon sent to the academy's infirmary, and Jing Hongchen called for Fan Yu.

Come to think of it, Fan Yu hadn't seen Huo Yuhao for a long time. When he saw Huo Yuhao lying on a bed in the infirmary covered in blood, his heart was about to jump out of his chest. He was dumbstruck, and his blood boiled. He was about to turn violent.

"Teacher Fan Yu, don't be agitated. Huo Yuhao is fine. He's only sustained superficial wounds. Jiayi, explain the situation to Teacher Fan Yu," Jing Hongchen said gently.

Fan Yu's eyes burned with fury and he interrupted, "There's no need to explain anything. Hallmaster, I only want to ask you one thing. If Xiao Hongchen and Meng Hongchen were to sustain such injuries in Shrek Academy, how would you react? I won't say anymore. You should know what to do." After he finished speaking, he turned and left. He didn't even look at Huo Yuhao again.

Jing Hongchen was stunned as he watched Fan Yu walking away. He was puzzled – Fan Yu was leaving just like that? He didn't even bother to listen to an explanation or check up on Huo Yuhao. What was going on?

He didn't know that Huo Yuhao had used his Spiritual Detection to share what he thought with Fan Yu just as Fan Yu was about to erupt. Huo Yuhao also told Fan Yu that he was fine.

Fan Yu's fury wasn't a pretense. However, he had already calmed down when he spoke to Jing Hongchen.

"Hallmaster, what do we do?" Lin Jiayi asked anxiously.

Jing Hongchen's expression was extremely grim now, "It's all Wang Shaojie's fault. How dare he lead an outsider to make an arrest in the academy. Expel him immediately, and kick him out of the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy."

Lin Jiayi hesitated. "But we don't have proof that he was the one who did it..."

Jing Hongchen was a little vulgar as he interrupted, "Why do I need any proof to expel a student? Follow my instructions."

"Okay." Lin Jiayi was petrified. He was an intelligent person, since he was able to become the teaching director. He could subtly sense something from Jing Hongchen's words. It seemed like Jing Hongchen had made a decision on the empire's current situation!

Huo Yuhao's wounds were quickly dealt with. When Jing Hongchen came to him, it was undeniable that Huo Yuhao was gravely injured. He didn't seem to be putting on a show. Jing Hongchen also didn't know that Huo Yuhao had torn the wounds on his back deliberately, which made him appear to be in a worse state. However, Huo Yuhao had controlled his soul power well, and only torn the skin on the surface of his wounds. His muscles had still managed to heal. Besides some loss of blood, he wasn't in much danger.

The few healing-type soul masters from the academy helped him stitch his wounds and used healing-type soul skills to aid his recovery. His injuries stabilized very quickly.

“How’s his condition?” Jing Hongchen asked a doctor.

“He’s not too hurt. He just lost too much blood. It’s just that I don’t know what caused such injuries. It’s very complicated, and it’s impossible for it to have been inflicted by any type of weapon or tool that I know of. We gave him some medicine that boosts blood production. This young man is very fit. I think he’ll recover within ten to fifteen days.”

Jing Hongchen nodded, and he couldn’t help but think of what Fan Yu had said before he had left. If his grandchildren were in this state, what would he do?

“Wake him up. I have something to say to him.” Jing Hongchen instructed.

“Yes.” The doctor took out a small bottle and placed it under Huo Yuhao’s nose.

Huo Yuhao was already awake. But as he inhaled, a burning yet refreshing feeling surged through his nose. He was jolted completely awake. He sneezed before opening his eyes.

“Yuhao, I’m Jing Hongchen.” Jing Hongchen stepped beside the bed where someone had already placed a chair for him. Right now, he wore a friendly look as he watched Huo Yuhao.

“Greetings, Hallmaster.” Huo Yuhao’s voice was a little hoarse, and he sounded slightly weak too. It was like he was out of breath.

Jing Hongchen pondered for a moment before he said, “I’m sorry for what happened today. The academy didn’t do our job well to protect you. The perpetrators who arrested and tortured you have already been punished. The academy will also toughen up our management, and we’ll not let anyone harm you again. I hope that you can forgive us. I extend my apologies to you on behalf of the academy.”

What a man! No wonder Elder Mu always commented that he was an adaptable person, though he was one who had a hot temper.

Huo Yuhao shook his head slightly and said, “Hallmaster, you’re not the one who harmed me. You don’t have to apologize for this. In addition, the mastermind of the perpetrators was the one who appeared outside the interrogation room after the incident. He instructed those five guys to torture me. I didn’t expect this to happen either. With the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy’s current status, I didn’t think that anyone would be brazen enough to arrest someone in the academy. My injuries are nothing. They’re nothing for a soul master like me.”

“However, I hope to learn something from this exchange. I’ve been in the academy for some time, but I’ve learned nothing apart from some basic theories. I’ll lose more time because of this delay.”

Jing Hongchen was secretly hateful. Huo Yuhao might be young, but he was scheming. He was using words to corner Jing Hongchen. However, Jing Hongchen had no choice but to bear it if he wanted his grandchildren to be safe at Shrek Academy.

After pondering for a moment, Jing Hongchen said, “The captain of the Royal Stewards, Xu Mochen, is the son of a prince in the imperial clan. I have no authority over him, but I’ll make him apologize to you personally. The academy has to bear some of the responsibility for this incident too. From now onwards, you can bring back all the materials you use for creating soul tools from the academy. However, this doesn’t include blueprints or formation arrays. You don’t have to be tested either. When you recover,

ask Xuan Ziwen to bring you into the Illustrious Virtue Hall. This will help you in your progress and increase your knowledge. Although Elder Mu has passed away, he's always been the elder that I've respected the most. If anyone dares to provoke you in the academy, you must tell me."

Huo Yuhao revealed a look of gratitude as he realized that his target was about to be fulfilled. "Thank you Hallmaster for granting me this opportunity. I won't let you down. I'll be studious."

Jing Hongchen was irked by Huo Yuhao's sincere expression. He squeezed out a smile and stood up before saying, "Alright, rest well then. I'll ask them to give you the best medicine for your treatment."

"Okay." Huo Yuhao nodded his head respectfully.

Alas, he didn't suffer for nothing. Hehe.

After his wounds were taken care of, Huo Yuhao was sent to a ward in the infirmary to rest. He was given the best care due to Jing Hongchen's concern over his condition. Even his meals were much better. Although they weren't as good as Shrek Academy's meals, he was well-nourished.

Although he didn't lose as much blood as the previous time, Huo Yuhao was still tired, as he had tried to make the act as real as possible. The stinging pain in his back was greatly relieved with the help of medicine, but he became groggy from it.

At this point, the door opened slowly, and someone walked in.

Huo Yuhao was very alert, and he unleashed his Spiritual Detection. However, he became relieved once again. It was Ke Ke.

"Yuhao, Yuhao." Ke Ke came to his bedside and called to him.

Huo Yuhao was very fatigued at this point. He didn't want to scam Ke Ke either, thus he decided to pretend that he was sleeping.

Ke Ke was furious as she muttered to herself, "The bastards from the Royal Stewards are too vicious. He's covered in so many bandage. He must be critically injured! His old injuries haven't even recovered. I really want to teach them a lesson. I want to castrate all of them and make them eunuchs."

Huo Yuhao was amused, but he held in his laughter. Ke Ke was a very direct person, and wasn't scheming at all. She was a good lady.

Ke Ke lowered her head and place her face in front of Huo Yuhao to look at him. She blew a gust of air towards Huo Yuhao's face, and he almost couldn't hold it in anymore.

Ke Ke lifted her hand to touch Huo Yuhao's head. She sighed, "It's a little small. Otherwise, I'd be interested in you." As she spoke, she even pinched his face.

Huo Yuhao's heart pumped faster! What did she mean when she said she might be interested in him...?

Ke Ke was in a momentary daze. Seeing that Huo Yuhao was not about to wake up, she silently left.

Huo Yuhao heaved a sigh of relief. He was afraid she'd continue to wait. He was almost on the verge of sleeping, but was jolted awake by her words.

The door opened again at this moment.

Why was she back? Huo Yuhao was a little annoyed.

However, he soon realized that something was amiss. The choking voice that he heard didn't belong to Ke Ke.

A figure came to his side and caressed his hair. Huo Yuhao was annoyed as he thought, "Why do they like to touch my hair? How can they violate a man's hair so easily?"

"Yuhao, I'm sorry. I implicated you. If I didn't bring them to deal with you, you wouldn't have conflicted with Wang Shaojie. You're injured again, even though you just recovered. It's my fault."

Warm tears fell onto Huo Yuhao's face, but they were soon wiped off by a tender and smooth hand. Huo Yuhao's heart fluttered a little.

His bed wasn't huge. There wasn't any excess space after he laid on the bed. However, Ju Zi still laid beside him on her side and placed her head on his shoulders. She sobbed gently.

Huo Yuhao was even more afraid to move at this point. Ju Zi was a mystery to him. It was only now that he realized everything after he saw Ju Zi with the Crown Prince. While her background was pitiful, she had someone to back her. No wonder she had mentioned meeting him in battle in the future.