

Tang Sect 21

Chapter 21.1: Fusion of the Three Innate Martial Souls

The Skydream Iceworm indifferently said, "Idiot. That's obvious. Haven't you ever thought to yourself about this? Even someone possessing twin martial souls wouldn't be able to withstand the suppressive strength of a thousand-year soul ring when he is at the level you humans call 'Rank 20'. The reason why he can do it is exactly because he has three martial souls. Each and every one of his martial souls has improved his physique, so that's how he's able to possess a thousand-year soul ring when he's only at Rank 20. Using the descriptions you humans use, this fellow you're hugging is a super-genius that's hard to see even in ten thousand years."

Huo Yuhao would absolutely never have thought that Wang Dong would actually possess three martial souls. No wonder, no wonder he told Xiao Xiao that she'd absolutely never be his match in a 1v1 situation. No wonder he possessed such strong self-confidence. He was only a two-ringed Soul Grandmaster, but he had never displayed any feelings of admiration towards anyone. Huo Yuhao had never thought that Wang Dong's talent was THIS high.

"Foolish kid, what do you have to be stunned about? In a sense, you're someone who has triple martial souls as well! Furthermore, don't forget this: your first soul ring is an unprecedented million-year soul ring. I can guarantee that you absolutely won't find a second million-year soul beast on the Douluo Continent. Therefore, even though he's an exceptional genius, you're unique and unmatched. Have some confidence in yourself. For example, now. With your Brother as an unprecedented intelligent soul ring, I'll let you take the initiative when you two undergo martial soul fusion. Relax your body and allow me to do everything."

As he spoke, a refreshing feeling instantly spread from Huo Yuhao's brain to his entire body, causing his awareness towards his surroundings to dramatically increase.

It was as if he'd used his Mental Detection; everything in the room appeared as a three-dimensional figure. Not only that, but there seemed to be various colors interchanging in the room. Huo Yuhao finally saw the colour changes on Wang Dong's body. Gold, bluish-gold, dark gold—the three colors flickered alternately. On the other hand, the three colors on his body were white, ice-blue, and grey; the three colors transformed unceasingly.

It was just as the Skydream Iceworm had said, the compatibility between their martial souls was simply too high. Whenever the color on Huo Yuhao's body became white, the color on Wang Dong's body would turn gold. Then, the ice-blue on Huo Yuhao's body would be matched with Wang Dong's bluish-gold; grey was matched with dark-gold.

The three pairs of colours were extremely harmonized.

However, after the Skydream Iceworm started to move, the colour of Huo Yuhao's pupil quietly turned a faintly ice-blue color, which was different from the time when it had helped Huo Yuhao fight against Ma Xiaotao's terrifying Phoenix Flame. This time, the Skydream Iceworm only poured a trace of its strength into Huo Yuhao's spiritual sea; it didn't control his body. He only guided Huo Yuhao's aura, causing it to start producing various transformations.

Gradually, it could be seen that the aura on Huo Yuhao's body had quietly strengthened by quite a bit. During this kind of process whereby martial soul fusion was occurring involuntarily, a transformation in the aura of one party would inevitably cause a subsequent transformation in the aura of the other party.

Consequently, Wang Dong's aura immediately strengthened by quite a bit as well, and at this moment, a strong spiritual undulation was released from Huo Yuhao's body, simultaneously jolting the two. The two then fainted in what was practically the same instant, causing their bodies to fall onto Wang Dong's fur-covered bed.

The Skydream Iceworm's cunning voice then rang out, "Next, just watch this Brother. There's also a distinction between the main user and the secondary user during a martial soul fusion, so let's take the dominant position and take a few advantages. Eeh, this fella called Wang Dong is actually... since that's the case, I'll take a few less advantages from him."

Strands of icy-blue thread started to slowly appear on Huo Yuhao's fingertips, rapidly enveloping his and Wang Dong's bodies. If you examined them closely, you would realise that these threads were actually completely made from soul power; this was absolutely not Huo Yuhao's soul power. With his current cultivation, he was simply too far from wanting to materialise his soul power.

Gradually, the two who were embracing each other had already turned into an enormous cocoon. n.-
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After all, the Skydream Iceworm was a silkworm, and forming cocoons was a natural abilities that belonged to silkworms. Currently, their respective auras were completely concentrated within that blue cocoon, unceasingly wandering about their bodies while transforming.

The Skydream Iceworm's pleased voice rang out, "Done. I'll just let them continue for now. It was a perfect fusion, their compatibility rate was 100%. With the fusion between three martial souls, I don't believe that grey tortoise won't be forced out. If you have the ability, come out from your shell and fight three hundred rounds with this Bro. Hmph."

The dormitory quieted back down after that. Only the large icy-blue cocoon remained, flickering with a mysterious light. There were no soul power undulations outside the cocoon, and the two people within the cocoon were in a deep, deep sleep.

Time slowly passed. Today was the only day Huo Yuhao didn't sell his roasted fish.

Xiao Xiao waited for the two for a long while, but she didn't see them exit the dorms. Just like how male students couldn't casually enter the girls dorms, female students couldn't enter the male dorms as they wished! After a moment of helplessness, she could only return to her room to rest.

On the other hand, Tang Ya had dragged Bei Bei to the entrance of Shrek Academy in order to wait for Huo Yuhao's roasted fish. However, they didn't find Huo Yuhao's absence strange. After all, they had heard of the freshmen assessment's system. The assessment system changed every year, and this year's system was especially fierce! The two even asked around about the trio's situation within the assessment. Since Huo Yuhao didn't set up his stall, they naturally assumed that he was too tired from the assessment. Thus, they didn't think much of it, and decided to go back to their rooms after waiting for a while.

They weren't the only ones who were disappointed by Huo Yuhao's absence. Today, Jiang Nannan had also queued up early. Unfortunately, she could only return disappointed today.

However, nobody knew how important this was for Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong. After being schoolmates for three months, the relationship between the two started to have a qualitative change from today onwards.

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Sea God's Lake, centre island, lakeside.

Teacher Wang Yan, who had just carried out the freshmen assessment not long ago, was standing here. Only, he had an exceptionally respectful expression on his face.

An old man with disheveled hair was sitting not far away from him, his figure somewhat messy. His originally-white changpao had already been changed into a greyish-brown one which had many holes on it. His naked feet were currently immersed in the cool water of the Sea God's Lake while his right hand held a massive bottle gourd.

The bottle gourd was red-purple in color, and nobody knew what it was made out of. He occasionally took a gulp from it, immediately causing a strong smell of alcohol to spread. His other hand held a fried chicken, ignoring the grease on it. The way he was eating and drinking made one feel that it was extremely joyful.

"Xuan Lao, this is what happened. These students are still young; they're freshmen. Even though that's the case, they're truly deserving of our attention."

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"Oh..." The sloppy elder who was called Xuan Lao swallowed a mouthful of chicken before glancing back at Wang Yan. In all other aspects, he looked like a very old man. However, his unexpectedly scarlet eyes were extraordinarily bright; they seemed as if they could steal one's soul away. But his gaze was slightly disorderly, so much so that he even appeared vacant; it was as if he wasn't seriously paying attention to Wang Yan's words.

"A Body Soul, interesting." Xuan Lao mumbled to himself, his voice somewhat rough and aged.

Wang Yan asked, "Xuan Lao, can a hair martial soul be considered a Body Soul?"

Xuan Lao spoke as he ate, "It could be connected to it."

Wang Yan replied, "Since that's the case, Lan Susu and Lan Luoluo should deserve your attention; they can even release a fusion skill. If they can even be connected to a Body Soul, their future potential should be quite large."

Xuan Lao shook his head and said, "Hair? Impossible. You're known as a person whose research and theoretical skills are very strong, so how could your knowledge of Body Souls be so weak?"

Wang Yan smiled bitterly. "There's simply no one I can perform research on! Also, the information related to Body Souls is simply too limited. The Body Sect hasn't entered the world for a long time."

Xuan Lao chuckled and stood up, his wet feet stepping on the grassy floor. He appeared very casual and relaxed as he said, "Then let me teach you something. To tell how strong a Body Soul is, you have to see how important it is to the body. If the body part used in a Body Soul is more important to the human body, the better it'll be. Because of that, I'm quite interested in that youth who has the Spirit Eyes. If your hair falls off, it can still be grown back. But what if you lose your eyes? Furthermore, he even possesses a spiritual-type martial soul. In other words, his martial soul actually consists of his eyes and his brain. To be able to see a Body Soul that stands at the peak of all Body Souls within your lifetime, you're quite lucky. However, I believe that his Body Soul hasn't been completely stimulated yet. Otherwise, why would he be reduced to using a ten-year soul ring? Go tell Little Ning I'll be watching the freshmen assessment's ranking tournament. Ask him to leave a space for me."

"Yes."

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Night gradually descended. However, the ice-blue halo in Wang Dong's and Huo Yuhao's room continued to quietly flicker.

Time gradually passed as evening became night. The aura surrounding Huo Yuhao's and Wang Dong's body had secretly undergone mysterious changes; the colors of their respective auras had further coiled around each other, fusing. Furthermore, their respective soul power had even travelled in a strange cycle after entering each other's bodies. In addition to that, each differently colored aura was followed by a different circulation path.

If it were anyone else who had entered a martial fusion, they would need at least three days to complete their fusion. However, the Skydream Iceworm's help managed to help them directly complete the soul power circulation paths during their fusion by utilising the interactions between their auras, allowing them to save an extremely large amount of time.

After a wordless night, day gradually arrived.

The ice-blue cocoon gradually melted, revealing the situation within. Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong were still tightly hugging each other, but the differently colored auras surrounding them had already disappeared. Their faces were right next to each other, and they could even smell each other's breath. They were sleeping very, very soundly.

After coming to Shrek Academy, this was the first time that Huo Yuhao hadn't woken up early to cultivate, as well as the first time he hadn't eaten breakfast.

The outside of the dormitory quickly became lively. The other students living in the dorms had already woken up, and they were rushing about to clean themselves.

The noisy sounds gradually affected the two who were sleeping soundly, causing Wang Dong to wake first.

"Ugh." Wang Dong's soft groan sounded somewhat lethargic, yet also seemed slightly delicate. As he slowly opened his eyes, he saw Huo Yuhao right next to him.

He was left stunned for a moment. After moving his body for a moment, he realised that he'd been tightly hugged by Huo Yuhao; their chests were stuck to one another's tightly. Huo Yuhao's body even seemed to be giving off a warm feeling.

Wang Dong only knew that he had slept for a very, very long time. He had never felt something like this before, so at this moment, besides a slight sense of peculiarity in his heart, he actually felt panicked.

"Huo Yuhao, wake up." He struggled lightly against Huo Yuhao's embrace, wanting to free himself from Huo Yuhao's hands. However, staying in that position for too long a time had caused the two's bodies to slightly stiffen up. Without even talking about Huo Yuhao's hand, even his own hand felt slightly numb as he tried to pull them back to himself.

"Ah?" Huo Yuhao finally woke up from his sleep, discovering Wang Dong, who was in front of him, with a glance. The two were simply too close to each other; the only reason why their noses weren't stuck together was because Wang Dong had deliberately raised his head. But, Huo Yuhao felt the sensation of a long pair of eyelashes as Wang Dong blinked.

"Why're you so close to me?" Huo Yuhao spoke subconsciously. As he spoke, his warm breath covered Wang Dong's face.

"You..." Wang Dong flew into a rage. He suddenly started struggling, finally withdrawing his arms. Then, he used his hands to grab Huo Yuhao's shoulders, pulling himself backwards while raising his soft legs and shoving them between him and Huo Yuhao, creating a gap between the two of them.

When Huo Yuhao woke up, he subconsciously loosened his grip on Wang Dong's hands. But after being separated from Wang Dong by his legs, he finally woke up from his sleep. However, Wang Dong woke him up even more in the next moment...

Within the dorm room, the two each had a single bed to themselves. The sudden strength released by Wang Dong's long legs immediately kicked Huo Yuhao away, causing him to land on the ground with a "putong".

"Aiya, Wang Dong, what're you doing?" Huo Yuhao was in agony due to being fiercely kicked to the ground by Wang Dong while he'd been completely defenceless. This immediately caused an indignant expression to appear on his face.

Wang Dong was slightly breathless as he sat up. After straightening his messy clothes, he angrily said, "You're asking me what I was doing? Why were you sleeping on my bed last night?"

"Uh..." Only then did Huo Yuhao discover that he'd been kicked off Wang Dong's bed. He remained silent for a brief moment, thinking to himself, "Bro, oh Bro, you've doomed me. Don't you know how mysophobic that guy is? Why would you make me sleep together with him?"

Although he thought this in his heart, he still argued, "You can't blame me for this. Look, didn't you sleep with me as well?"

Wang Dong snorted angrily. Just as he was about to reply to Huo Yuhao, a piercing ring suddenly rang out, jolting both of them.

"I forgot, it's time for class. Crap, we're late. Quick." Huo Yuhao instantly jumped up, directly running outside with Wang Dong in tow.

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Wang Dong didn't have the time to be angry with Huo Yuhao, as he was also aware of the trouble they had gotten themselves into. Thus, he ran alongside Huo Yuhao.

The two didn't have time to eat breakfast, nor did they have the time to shower. Instead, they quickly ran towards the teaching blocks. They were extremely clear about Zhou Yi's temper; was there any difference between being late for class and committing suicide?

Their appearances were truly somewhat wretched. Wang Dong was still fine. At the very least, he had still managed to straighten his clothes when he'd kicked Huo Yuhao earlier. Huo Yuhao, on the other hand, was in an even more sorry situation. His school shirt was half tucked into his pants. Not only that, his hair was also messy, and two of his shirt buttons were unbuttoned, exposing his bronze chest. As he ran, the wind blew his clothes around.

However, they didn't have the time to worry about that. Right now, all they wanted to do was to rush to the classroom with the utmost haste and extinguish the flames of Zhou Yi's anger; they were already late!

After a minute, they arrived at Class One's entrance.

"Reporting in." Huo Yuhao shouted out, full of energy.

"Reporting in." Wang Dong's voice was softer than his, so much so that it seemed like he didn't have any energy at all. He stole a glance at Huo Yuhao, a somewhat complicated expression in his eyes. Then, he ruthlessly raised his hand and pinched Huo Yuhao's back.

Huo Yuhao's expression immediately changed, but seeing that Zhou Yi had already walked over to them, he forcefully held in the scream that almost left his mouth.

The other students were already present. Seeing Huo Yuhao's sloppy appearance, a smile unexpectedly flashed through Zhou Yi's eyes. However, the always meticulous Huo Yuhao didn't manage to notice it as a result of the severe pain from his back.

"You two, what happened? Come in first." Zhou Yi waved over to the two.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong hurriedly walked into the class, and Wang Dong even shut the door considerately.

Xiao Xiao, who had already arrived earlier, couldn't help but widen her eyes as she saw their wretched appearances. Her mouth moved, but she didn't say anything. It looked as if she was asking, "Heavens! What were the two of you doing last night?"

The gazes of the entire class were focused on the two, especially on the monitor whose clothes were untidy.

Zhou Yi used her ever-cold voice to ask, "My dear class monitor, tell me. What were you two doing?"

“Uh... sorry, Teacher Zhou. We overslept.” Huo Yuhao replied with an embarrassed look on his face. Now, all they could do was to take the initiative to apologize for their mistakes. Furthermore, they could only receive whatever punishment Zhou Yi gave them without complaining.

“Who slept with who? You actually managed to oversleep?” Zhou Yi made a rare joke.

Huo Yuhao was stunned, while Wang Dong’s face instantly reddened. This was because she’d hit upon the truth.

The whole class continued to remain silent, but this silence only lasted for three seconds. Right after that, the class burst into laughter.

Wang Dong lowered his head, wishing he could find a hole to jump into. This was embarrassing, simply too embarrassing! Having just noticed Huo Yuhao’s untidy clothes, he just wanted to slap him to death! This bastard, he made me lose all my face.

Unexpectedly, Zhou Yi smiled as well. Although the smile on her face looked even uglier than someone crying, Huo Yuhao was certain, certain that she was smiling.

Zhou Yi raised her hand, and her authority as a super-teacher undoubtedly manifested itself, causing the entire class to quieten immediately. However, Zhou Yi ignored the smiling expressions in their eyes.

“Enough. Return to your seats.” Zhou Yi waved her hands, forgiving the two in a completely unprecedented manner.

“Ah?” Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong subconsciously raised their heads, thinking they had heard wrongly.

Zhou Yi glared at them, “What? You’ve overslept to the point where you don’t know what I’m saying?”

Only then did Huo Yuhao understand what she had said. Pulling Wang Dong’s sleeve, the two gloomily walked over to their usual seats. However, they didn’t feel like raising their heads after feeling the surrounding looks of ridicule.

However, it was fortunate that they were still freshmen, where everyone was only eleven or twelve-year-old students. They only treated the issue of two people sleeping together as a joke; they didn’t think too much of it. But if this reached the ears of the outer courtyard’s upperclassmen, and was distorted by the words of a few fujoshis, it could become an even bigger scandal.

After walking back to the teaching podium, Zhou Yi indifferently said, “After three days, the freshmen assessment has finally ended. The final results were already tallied last night.”

After hearing her words, the students of Class 1 were filled with energy; not every group was as absolutely confident they had passed the assessment like Huo Yuhao’s group.

A smile that nobody dared to compliment unexpectedly appeared on Zhou Yi’s face for the second time today. “I have no choice but to admit that you’ve worked very hard. You’ve given me face. Out of our twenty-two teams from Class 1, all of you have passed the freshmen assessment. I’m very happy about this.”

“Bang——” The entire class was filled with boiling excitement; cheering sounds filled every corner of the classroom. This time, Zhou Yi didn’t stop them. She smiled as she watched the excited cheering of the kids in front of her.

They truly had the qualifications to start cheering! Last night, all of the proctors as well as the teachers in charge of the ten classes had worked together to tally the results of the assessment.

Practically all the proctors stated that the students from Class 1 were much more resilient than the students from the other classes. During the intensive assessment competition, they had all displayed a frightening amount of willpower and combat strength; out of all the classes, they were the class that had turned the tides the most times during the assessment. Most outstandingly, the students from Class 1 practically won all the matches that involved opponents who were evenly matched with them.

Ever since she had become a teacher at Shrek Academy, this was the first time Zhou Yi had received public praise. Originally, the students in Class 1 had been the fewest in number among the ten classes. But after the round-robin tournament, over half of the students who had participated in the assessment had been eliminated. As a result of this, Class 1 was now the class who had the greatest number of students in Year 1.

No matter how strict Zhou Yi was, everyone was feeling very happy today. This was also the main reason why Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong had been forgiven even though they had turned up late to class.

“Okay, quiet down.” After letting the class cheer for a long time, Zhou Yi motioned for them to quiet down.

“The only way for you to guarantee that you’ll stay in the academy is to pass the assessment. At the very least, you won’t be easily eliminated for another year. However, it’s only one more year. If you become lazy in the future, I’m afraid that I won’t be able to continue seeing you after your second year here. Furthermore, it’s not such a big deal to be able to pass the freshmen assessment. Out of the twenty-two teams here, fourteen teams haven’t finished their freshman assessment yet, because you’ve entered the top 64. You’ll still have to go through the knock-out competition, which is where you can truly prove how outstanding you are.”

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After hearing Zhou Yi’s words, the two raised their heads, exposing a trace of amazement in their eyes. There was no need to mention the fact that all twenty-two teams from their class had passed the assessment, but there were actually fourteen teams that had entered the top 64. In other words, their class alone occupied over 20% of the top 64 spots; the percentage of students from Class 1 who managed to enter the knockout round was double that of the other classes. With a result like this, they truly deserved to be arrogant!

Zhou Yi continued speaking. “During the round-robin tournament, a total of six teams managed to win every single match they participated in. Our class only has one such team. Originally, I was planning to give them a reward, but unfortunately, they turned up late to class. Hence, their merits are equal to their demerits, so I won’t reward them or punish them.”

Once again, Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong became the center of attention of the entire class. The two of them truly felt depressed! They then looked each other in the eye. Their gazes looked normal, but both of them were stunned.

When they looked at each other, they clearly sensed the soul power in their bodies undulate for a moment. This caused a sense of intimacy that was hard to describe to involuntarily arise, so much so that they felt like hugging each other again.

At this moment, the two simultaneously thought of the reason why they had ended up on Wang Dong's bed after hugging each other.

Wang Dong muttered, "Could we have succeeded?"

Huo Yuhao was more certain of the answer than Wang Dong. After all, he had talked to the Skydream Iceworm! He naturally couldn't appear too certain, but he couldn't help but expose a fervent look in his eyes.

"It could be. Shall we try it out after class?"

"Yep."

The two nodded at each other at what seemed to be the same instant. A hard-to-describe sense of understanding involuntarily arose between the two, and although Huo Yuhao's Mental Detection hadn't been activated, the two of them seemed to be able to predict their counterpart's next move. This feeling made them feel as if they were twins; it felt wonderful, yet extraordinarily peculiar.

"Thump——" A loud sound jolted the two from that peculiar feeling. The two simultaneously raised their heads, just in time for them to see Zhou Yi's angry face.

Oops... their absent-mindedness during class had been caught.

"You two, go outside and start running with chainmail on you. You're not allowed to stop until the bell rings. You two just achieved something, but you're already so satisfied with yourselves!"

This isn't fair! The two simultaneously cried out in their hearts. However, they knew that as long as Teacher Zhou decided on something, there was no way she would change her mind. Helplessly, they could only leave the classroom with a bitter look on their faces and return to their dorms to get their chainmail.

As she saw the two leave dejectedly, Zhou Yi snorted, "All of you, remember this. No matter how successful you are, you must always have a humble and cautious heart. Not only can arrogance cause you to deteriorate, it can also take your life. The knockout round will start tomorrow, so I'll give you a simple explanation regarding its main parts."

The two of them were doomed to not listen to Zhou Yi's explanation, but it was fortunate that Xiao Xiao was still there. Although she didn't explicitly state it, Zhou Yi intended Xiao Xiao to pass the information on to them.

"I'm blaming you for this." Once they left the teaching block, Wang Dong exploded, speaking angrily to Huo Yuhao.

Huo Yuhao had a wronged expression on his face as he said, "How can you blame me for this? You were the one who insisted on me hugging you yesterday."

"What did you say?" A cold light appeared in Wang Dong's eyes as he looked at Huo Yuhao with clenched teeth.

"Uh... we're a team, we should be united." Huo Yuhao solemnly looked towards Wang Dong, who already had his fists clenched.

"Unity my ass. You're the reason why I got punished, so you tell me what you're going to do about it." Wang Dong said angrily, "Also, you slept on my bed last night. What're you going to do about that?"

Huo Yuhao patted Wang Dong's shoulder while putting his hand around his neck, "Okay, okay. We're all brothers, so we shouldn't bicker over a small matter like this. Okay? We should just quickly finish Teacher Zhou's task, just in case she flips out on us."

In the instant Huo Yuhao placed his hand around Wang Dong's neck, Wang Dong was immediately stunned. Huo Yuhao's voice had also become softer. After speaking, the two completely stopped moving. Huo Yuhao subconsciously looked towards his hands; Wang Dong did as well.

"Why would this happen?" The two spoke in unison.

Correct, a strange thing had happened to the two. When Huo Yuhao's hand touched Wang Dong's neck, it seemed like the two had been connected. Huo Yuhao's soul power had flowed into Wang Dong's body in a very natural manner, while Wang Dong's soul power had slowly flowed back. It was as if the two had formed a complete whole. Although the connection was only formed from Wang Dong's neck and Huo Yuhao's hand, that feeling was very clear.

"That's not right, let's try it again."

Huo Yuhao first pulled back the hand he was holding Wang Dong with, before gripping Wang Dong's two hands with his own hands.

Wang Dong's hands were unusually soft, and they were extremely smooth; it was very comfortable to hold them. However, the present Huo Yuhao didn't have the time to fully experience this feeling.

In the instant the two held hands, the soul power from Huo Yuhao's Mysterious Heaven Technique started moving. It flowed rapidly from his right hand into Wang Dong's left hand. Then, his left hand generated what seemed to be an absorption force that absorbed Wang Dong's soul power into his body. The soul power of the two rapidly circulated, and the speed of this circulation was at least double the speed of Huo Yuhao's previous circulation speed.

Wang Dong was a genius among geniuses in the first place, so he immediately realised what had happened. "Try controlling it for a bit. Try and pour it into your body." As he spoke, he pulled back his left hand. This way, only his soul power was being transferred to Huo Yuhao's body.

Immediately, Huo Yuhao felt that his soul power was explosively increasing at a astonishing rate; an unprecedented feeling of power filled his entire body.

As a result of being remoulded by the Mysterious Water Pill and nourished by the Mysterious Heaven Technique, the endurance of his passageways had already reached the apex of what could be achieved by his peers. Although a large amount of soul power had entered his body, he didn't feel bloated at all.

An imperceptible sense of understanding had already appeared between the two of them. Huo Yuhao immediately activated his Mental Detection, enveloping Wang Dong within it.

For the sake of immersing himself in this bizarre feeling, Wang Dong shut his eyes. Immediately, he discovered that the range of Huo Yuhao's Mental Detection was increasing at an astonishing rate.

Originally, Huo Yuhao's Mental Detection could exceed a range of sixty metres when it was activated in a spherical manner; it could reach a hundred metres or so when it was focused in one direction. However, his Mental Detection quickly reached a radius of a hundred metres as a result of Wang Dong's additional soul power.

As the two stared stupefied at each other, Huo Yuhao's voice trembled slightly, "Wang Dong, have you heard of soul masters who can share their soul power with another person who they fused their martial soul with?"

Wang Dong blankly shook his head and muttered, "Why would this happen? Don't tell me that our attempt yesterday actually succeeded?"

Huo Yuhao had an excited expression as he said, "Shall we find a place to try it out?"

Right at this moment, an angry voice rang out from the window of the nearby teaching block: "Why aren't you two wearing your chainmail and running? Why're you holding hands and courting each other?"

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"Why aren't you two wearing your chainmail and running? Why're you two holding hands and romancing one another?"

Startled, the two hurriedly let go of each other, then ran back towards their dorm rooms. Their hearts were currently beating extremely quickly, and it naturally wasn't because of Zhou Yi's shout, but because of the strange change that had occurred to their martial souls!

The two rushed back to their dorms. As they looked at each other, they could see the trace of astonishment that was present in their eyes. Right, the matter that had just occurred was simply too unusual. Regardless of whether it was Huo Yuhao, who had studied a large amount of info with regards to soul masters after entering Shrek Academy, or Wang Dong, whose knowledge was expansive, this was the first time they had learnt of anything like this; this clearly exceeded the territory of ordinary soul masters.

Huo Yuhao couldn't help but say, "It seems like our nap last night wasn't for nothing!"

"Pah." Wang Dong glared at him. But then, he quickly raised his soft, slender hands and said, "Let's try again."

Huo Yuhao was also anxious to verify the matter that had just occurred to them. Hence, he hurriedly held hands with Wang Dong.

As the four hands joined together, the flow of soul power immediately restarted. Their soul power were completely different; The soul power that came from Huo Yuhao's Mysterious Heaven Technique was honest, moderate, gentle, and unconstrained, while Wang Dong's soul power was much more overbearing; it had a threatening and noble aura to it.

If Huo Yuhao's soul power could be compared to a gentle and honest youth, Wang Dong's soul power was a noble, aloof, and overbearing young mistress.

However, these two soul power with completely different temperaments had currently formed a cycle, flowing perfectly through their bodies. Furthermore, these two soul power were actually fusing quietly throughout this process, intimately sharing everything with each other. During this process, there were no conflicts during this process; it was just as if they had originally belonged to a single body.

Huo Yuhao was left in a slightly better state; after all, the soul power that came from his Mysterious Heaven Technique was extremely gentle in the first place. On the other hand, Wang Dong was filled with astonishment. He was fully aware of how domineering and fierce his soul power was, as well as how strongly it excluded other things from itself. But, his current situation had vastly exceeded his scope of knowledge.

During the brief moment where the circulation occurred, the two felt extremely relaxed and refreshed. Clearly, it would be much faster for them to cultivate in this state rather than cultivating individually. Furthermore, they clearly knew that this was just the beginning. Their soul power had fused so perfectly, so how could the benefits that arose from this be as simple as allowing them to cultivate together?

"Let's go, we should go run first. We can study this further after we get back tonight." Huo Yuhao took the initiative to let go of Wang Dong's hands. Then, he put his chainmail on and ran outside.

After listening to his words, Wang Dong was slightly startled, and his mouth slightly twitched for a moment. Huo Yuhao's words, in addition to how he had mysteriously hugged him for an entire night, caused a few traces of ambiguity to reluctantly appear in his heart. After making a fist behind his back, he put his chainmail on and caught up to him

They had already been running with chainmail for three months, so doing it now was a walk in the park for them. The two diligently ran till the bell rang, and only when Xiao Xiao came to the field to find them did they stop. When she arrived, Xiao Xiao informed them that Teacher Zhou had already left.

Huo Yuhao's entire body was covered with sweat, while Wang Dong, who had a higher cultivation, deliberately made it so that he wasn't sweating at all.

"How was it? Did Teacher Zhou say anything?" Huo Yuhao asked as he panted.

Xiao Xiao shrugged her shoulders. "Nothing much, really. She just cheered everyone up and gave us some encouragement. After that, she analysed the situation of our opponents. It's going to be extremely difficult for us to become champions. It seems like the round-robin tournament was only a rehearsal. On the other hand, our Shrek Academy's never lacked geniuses!"

As he looked at her somewhat worried expression, Wang Dong said, "What? Even our twin martial soul genius doesn't have any confidence in herself?"

Xiao Xiao curled her lips and said, "Confidence is something I naturally have, but I have to say that there are some people who're more talented than us. Teacher Zhou told us that out of the five teams which achieved complete victories, three had three-ringed Soul Elders. How confident are you againsts three-ringed soul masters?"

"Soul Elders?" The two simultaneously cried out with a look of inconceivability on their faces.

Xiao Xiao smiled bitterly. "Exactly. Why else would I be so unconfident?"

"What did Teacher Zhou say?" Huo Yuhao asked.

"When she was talking about those three teams, Teacher Zhou didn't seem to be too happy about them. It looked like she had just obtained that piece of information. Previously, those three classes had never told anyone that they had students who were Soul Elders. Also, those three students are just like you; they're specially invited students." Xiao Xiao replied.

Hearing this, Wang Dong laughed and looked towards Huo Yuhao. "See, you're all specially invited students, so why is there such a large gap between you and them?"

Huo Yuhao was speechless for a moment before saying, "There's no use talking about this now, the key thing we need to do now is to think of how we can beat them."

"Right now, all we can do is to do our best and let destiny settle everything for us. Those three are the respective team leaders of their own teams, so it's obvious that they won't be easy to deal with. Think about it: they were able to break into the three-ringed realm before the age of twelve. Just how strong are their martial souls? Also, there's definitely a clan that's fully supporting them from behind, so their soul rings are definitely at their limit. Even if they aren't as perverted as Wang Dong, who got a thousand-year soul ring as his second soul ring, they shouldn't be too far off. In my opinion, even Teacher Zhou doesn't think it's looking too good for us. I think that we can only aim for fourth place," Xiao Xiao said.

Wang Dong snorted. "What if they have three rings? Are Soul Elders unbeatable? We have our advantages as well; You have your twin martial souls, and I haven't used all of my strength yet. In addition to Huo Yuhao's spiritual martial soul, the three of us might not lose to anyone else if we team up together."

Xiao Xiao said, "Do you think that I don't want us to become champions! Only the top three get a substantial reward; fourth place doesn't get any good rewards. However, our combined strength truly isn't as good as theirs. Think about it, the teammates of a Soul Elder-level student will at least be at the Soul Grandmaster level, just like us. We do have our own strong points, but the only way for us to have a chance is for the class monitor to break into Rank 20 and get another strong spiritual-type soul skill."

Chapter 22.2: Fusion of the Three Innate Martial Souls

Huo Yuhao looked at Xiao Xiao, glanced at Wang Dong, then said seriously, "Don't be too worried for now. True, we might be weaker than our opponents, but if we lose all confidence now, we won't have any chance at all. Xiao Xiao, think about it. When we were facing the Lan sisters' fusion skill, weren't we put in a very difficult situation? But we still managed to achieve victory in the end. The fusion skill they used might not be weaker than a Soul Elder's soul skill; it could even exceed it in power. However, we

still managed to overcome it. Different people have their own specialties, and likewise, we have our own. Our advantage lies in the fact that we haven't used all our strength, and we only have one objective. That is, to become champions."

Huo Yuhao's words seemed to have rekindled Xiao Xiao's confidence. She nodded her head lightly. "Fight! No matter where we get to, that'll be whatever we get. Let's do this!"

Huo Yuhao extended his right hand, and Wang Dong quickly placed it above his before Xiao Xiao could. Lastly, Xiao Xiao placed her hand on Wang Dong's hand.

"We'll definitely be champions."

Huo Yuhao said, "Xiao Xiao, it seems like I'll have to owe you roasted fish for a few more days. The coming knock-out round is simply too important to us, so no matter what, we have to do our best and use these few days to increase our cultivations. Even if we can only increase it by a strand, it'll increase our chances of victory by a large amount. Once the knock-out tournament is over, I'll take care of the roasted fish. I won't be setting up my store for these few days, so let's first concentrate on cultivating before talking about it."

Xiao Xiao giggled. "You'll have to pay interest for an owed debt. Class monitor, I'm blaming this on you anyway, so I won't pay you when I eat your roasted fish in the future."

Huo Yuhao chuckled. "No problem, I'll treat you to some fish."

Xiao Xiao said, "Teacher Zhou said that we'll have to gather at the Assessment Area before the bell rings tomorrow. Also, she told me to tell you that you're not allowed to be late. The first thing we need to do is to pray for luck. However, Teacher Zhou said that teams who achieved a clean sweep during the round-robin tournament will have some preferential treatment during the first two rounds of the knock-out tournament; we won't meet each other. This is the only good thing we got from the round-robin tournament. As long as we do what we usually do, there should be no problem for us to enter the top sixteen. After that, it'll just depend on us."

Huo Yuhao said, "This is actually some good news. Right, before we do anything else, I'm sweaty, so I'm going back to shower before grabbing a meal."

Xiao Xiao said, "Then, I won't wait for you two. I'll go to the canteen first, see you tomorrow." After speaking, she waved towards the two of them and left.

Huo Yuhao turned towards Wang Dong, slightly furrowing his brows. "Seems like it won't be easy to get a good result in the knock-out tournament. Let's go back to the dorms, and after I shower and change, we can go eat. Then, we can go think about this issue regarding our martial soul fusion."

"Yup." Wang Dong nodded. However, he clearly seemed somewhat taciturn, to the point where he looked blank and lifeless; nobody knew what he was thinking. After returning to their dorm room, Huo Yuhao took a clean set of clothes as well as a towel and went to shower, while Wang Dong sat by himself on his bed.

"Thump." The door shut. Wang Dong subconsciously looked towards the door, gradually exposing a slightly complicated look in his blank eyes.

Earlier, he hadn't had any time to settle his debts with Huo Yuhao regarding the issue of sleeping together with him due to them turning up late for class. Now, Huo Yuhao had already seemed to have disregarded it as an unimportant issue, but Wang Dong was feeling completely differently.

I, I actually slept with him for an entire night. Moreover, it even seems like we've completed a martial soul fusion, and not a normal one at that.

Wang Dong himself didn't know how he was currently feeling; he felt that he was slightly confused, confused to the point where he didn't know what to do.

Time always flies by when one is distracted. Not long after he left, Huo Yuhao returned after a refreshing shower. As he entered, he brought a faintly fragrant smell with him that came after his shower. As he raised his head, Wang Dong saw his unusually bright pupils. nove-1b-1n

Huo Yuhao still hadn't noticed the change in Wang Dong's psyche. He beckoned, "Let's quickly go for a meal and study our martial soul fusion after coming back. Perhaps we'll have to rely on it if we want to get a good result in the end." The current him was completely focused on the freshmen assessment's knock-out tournament.

Wang Dong's somewhat perplexed emotions seemed to have found an objective. Nodding his head, he said, "Okay." Since the matter had already occurred, there was no use in thinking too deeply about it. He would first work hard during this assessment and get a good ranking before talking about it. When Xiao Xiao spoke about the appearances of the few Soul Elders, Wang Dong's fighting spirit had also been aroused.

He firmly believed that his talent wasn't lacking compared to those Soul Elder-levelled students. Only, he had been extremely lazy during his youth, and had been completely unwilling to cultivate, which was the reason why he was only at his current level. In his opinion, ranks didn't mean everything; by beating them, he could prove that he was the most outstanding student in Shrek Academy.

After thinking about this, his heart untangled itself. Following Huo Yuhao to the canteen, he immediately ate a gargantuan meal. Because they went to the canteen relatively late, there was practically no one left when they finished eating.

After returning to their room, Huo Yuhao locked the door, preventing anyone from disturbing them while they were cultivating. At the same time, he placed a 'Do Not Disturb' sign on the outside of the door. Every dorm room had this sign; and as long as a student hung it up, even teachers wouldn't easily disturb them, as this sign signified that the students inside were cultivating.

However, Huo Yuhao's formerly normal behaviour seemed to make the current Wang Dong somewhat embarrassed. But he quickly adjusted himself, and by the time Huo Yuhao turned around, he had already regained his composure.

"How're we going to start?" Wang Dong asked him.

Huo Yuhao replied, "We'll try to cultivate while holding our hands for a while first. This way, we can increase the effects and be more familiar with the fusion between our soul power. Then, we'll try to use the fused soul power to strengthen each and every one of our soul skills. Later at night, we'll leave the academy and test out our fusion skill there."

Wang Dong curled his lips. "You're actually quite orderly with your plans."

Huo Yuhao laughed. "Naturally. Don't forget, I'm the class monitor. Isn't being orderly something that should be extremely normal for me? Come." As he spoke, he walked over to Wang Dong's bed, intending to sit on it.

"What're you doing?" Wang Dong pushed his body away.

Huo Yuhao suspiciously asked, "I'm trying to cultivate! How are we going to cultivate if we don't sit cross-legged?"

However, Wang Dong stood up and pointed at Huo Yuhao's bed. "We'll cultivate on your bed."

Huo Yuhao was speechless. "If you're not afraid of a sore butt, I have nothing to say."

Wang Dong clearly saw that Huo Yuhao's expression had turned somewhat unsightly. At this moment, Huo Yuhao was truly somewhat unhappy. In his opinion, the two of them had already been friends for a long time, but Wang Dong still continued to bicker and bicker on; this was very petty-minded to him.

Chapter 22.3: Fusion of the Three Innate Martial Souls

However, Wang Dong insisted on doing it his way, so the two sat on Huo Yuhao's bed. The instant he sat down, Wang Dong felt somewhat gloomy; when compared to his fur mattress, this completely hard wooden board couldn't be considered comfortable in the least! However, he could only endure it. They had accidentally slept on his bed last night, and Wang Dong didn't want to let Huo Yuhao on his bed again.

Huo Yuhao was still a very magnanimous person. After feeling dissatisfied for a short period of time, he had already regained his composure. In his heart, he thought, "Whatever. Different people have their own habits, but I should nevertheless respect everyone." Thinking this, the small trace of resentment in his heart disappeared.

As Wang Dong looked at Huo Yuhao, he noticed that Huo Yuhao was also looking at him, and his heart unknowingly felt somewhat hurried and apologetic. He hurriedly raised his palms. "Let's start. We'll follow your plan. We'll cultivate until dinnertime and see what happens."

Huo Yuhao had raised his palms as well, placing them opposite Wang Dong's. Once the two touched each other, their soul power were immediately attracted, causing them to fuse together. After a mere single circulation in their bodies, the two soul power completed the fusion process. Following that, a fused dual-attribute soul power was now flowing through their bodies.

Since discovering this odd matter in the morning, they hadn't had enough time to study it carefully. As they cultivated calmly now, a different feeling gradually appeared.

Just as they had previously felt, the increase in their soul power when the two cultivated with their hands held together was extremely quick. Simply put, their individual soul power were increasing at a rate that was equivalent to that of two people put together.

In other words, if the amount of soul power Huo Yuhao gained after cultivating for two hours was represented by one unit, and the amount of soul power Wang Dong gained after cultivating for the

same time was represented by 1.2 units, when the two cultivated together, the mixture of their two soul power would be strengthened together, and not only would it increase the circulation speed of their soul power, but the amount of soul power they would each gain within two hours would be represented by 2.2 units.

This way, Huo Yuhao's cultivation speed would more than double, while Wang Dong's cultivation speed would nearly double. The person who benefitted more from this was undoubtedly Huo Yuhao, as Wang Dong's cultivation was higher than his. However, as their cultivation levels started getting closer to each other, the individual benefits they gained would be much more similar as well.

A doubling in cultivating speed to soul masters was completely astonishing! Huo Yuhao's original plan had been to try and get to Rank 20 before graduating his first year, but following his current rate of cultivation, there was a possibility of him getting to Rank 20 within three or four months. On the other hand, if Wang Dong cultivated with this speed all the way until the end of the year, getting to Rank 30 wasn't an impossibility.

After nearly six hours of cultivating, when the sky outside had gradually begun to darken, the two woke up from their meditative state. Their soul power returned to their own bodies, and the originally entwined soul power immediately separated. The two could clearly feel that their cultivations had increased at a much faster pace than they usually did.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong simultaneously opened their eyes, immediately noticing the surprise in the other's eyes. Regardless of where this martial soul fusion had come from, it was an extremely good thing for them! This was especially so for Huo Yuhao, as the increase in his cultivation speed was much greater than the increase to Wang Dong's; it could be said that he'd taken a small advantage from Wang Dong.

The two couldn't wait to start trying out their strengthened soul skills, and this time, they discovered a mystery within their martial soul fusion.

Every single one of their soul skills would be strengthened by an extremely large amount following the fusion, and it wasn't just as simple as '1+1=2'. Whenever they worked together to unleash a soul skill, not only would its might double, but the consumption of soul power it required would decrease by a half. In other words, the drain in soul power after the two types of soul power fused was extremely small. This was equivalent to an all-new type of high-level soul power after they fused.

Because of this, their current state couldn't be considered a martial soul fusion. It would be more accurate to call it a soul power fusion. However, Wang Dong made was speechless by the fact that it wasn't him, who had a stronger cultivation, who took the initiative after they fused.

When their bodies touched and their soul power fused, Huo Yuhao was unexpectedly left in the dominant position. As long as he willed it, the fusion would go ahead once he touched Wang Dong's body, regardless of whether Wang Dong cooperated or not. Also, the person who could use the fused soul power to activate the strengthened soul skills was Huo Yuhao. But if Wang Dong wanted to use this fused soul power, he would need Huo Yuhao's approval before doing so. The difference in who was dominant in this fusion was clear.

"Why would this happen? It's too unfair." Wang Dong said indignantly.

Huo Yuhao, speechless, said, "I don't know either! Don't worry, I'll definitely try my best to help you out when you need to use it."

Although he didn't say anything, Huo Yuhao was faintly aware that this had something to do with the Skydream Iceworm. Otherwise, why would he, who had a weaker cultivation, take the dominant position after the fusion occurred?

"Wang Dong, don't feel so upset. This new soul power of ours should also have a name, so let's just use your name to name it."

Wang Dong giggled. "Whatever. You wanna call it the Winterking Power? That sounds really bad. Why don't we use a word from each of our names? Let's call it the Haodong Power."

Huo Yuhao scratched his head. "It does kinda sound better."

Wang Dong stood up, rubbing his buttocks as he unhappily said, "This broken mattress of yours is too hard, let's cultivate on my bed later tonight. Since you've taken such a large advantage from me, you're treating me to dinner tonight." He raised his head slightly as he spoke. Then, he rested his head against his hands and walked out.

Huo Yuhao couldn't help but smile as he looked at Wang Dong's seemingly indifferent expression. This fella never admits his mistakes and always acts arrogant, but in reality, he has a good heart.

"So be it. In any case, I earned all my money from selling roasted fishes, so I'll eat your food if I run out of money." He started to chase after Wang Dong while talking.

Regardless of whether it was Huo Yuhao or Wang Dong, they both clearly felt a change in their relationship after the creation of the Haodong Power. Wang Dong was no longer a simple friend or classmate to him, he was a brother. He believed that Wang Dong thought so as well. As for whether that was true or not, only Wang Dong knew the answer to that... n(/O.(V-.e/(ℓ))b.(1)(n

While eating dinner, a trace of suspicion arose in Huo Yuhao's heart. This suspicion came from his understanding of the Skydream Iceworm; it previously said that it would give more of its Origin Energy to him once his body was able to endure it, which would allow his soul skills to reach their maximum levels as his soul rings increased in rank.

Chapter 22.4: Fusion of the Three Innate Martial Souls

However, the strength of all his soul skills had increased after working together with Wang Dong to generate the Haodong Power, and although he could sense that he was near his body's limit, he was still able to endure. Since this was the case, why didn't the Skydream Iceworm strengthen his soul skills to this point?

"You idiot." Just as suspicion arose in Huo Yuhao's heart, the Skydream Iceworm's voice rang out in his mind.

"Bro, you weren't sleeping?" Surprised, Huo Yuhao immediately asked in his mind.

The Skydream Iceworm snorted. "I'm obviously awake. Do you think I like to sleep that much?" nove-ℓb-1n

Huo Yuhao secretly cursed to himself. If you don't like sleeping, how did you sleep for a million years?

The Skydream Iceworm said, "The answer to your worries is extremely simple. It's true that I didn't raise the rank of your soul ring to its limit, but that's because I can't allow you to become an inflated balloon. Let me give you an example. There's a type of fish called the Tiger Blowfish. Its body is filled with spines, and whenever it's in danger, it'll instantly inflate itself, expanding its body and releasing all of its spines. This makes it so that its predators are unable to eat it. It could be said that it allows its body to expand to its limit in a situation like that."

"Indeed, the attack power of the blowfish's spines is raised to its limits in a situation like this, but what if a needle stabs it? What would happen then? Likewise, you're the same. If I raised the strength of your soul rings to the maximum amount that you can endure, you'd be just like that balloon once you encounter a mishap during a battle or cultivation; you'd explode with a bang. Because of that, the 'maximum limit you can endure' I'm referring to is the limit at which you can completely endure it without any side effects. When your soul power fused with Wang Dong's earlier, the fused energy instantly improved your physiques. This is another great benefit that I helped you obtain when you two achieved a 100% fusion and thoroughly fused your two types of soul powers last night."

"In other words, whenever you soul powers fuse, the endurance of your bodies will also increase as a result of this fused soul power. And when you can sustain a stronger soul power, the strength of your soul skills will increase accordingly. This in itself is the secret behind a martial soul fusion. However, your martial soul fusion differs from that of ordinary cultivators, and you'll receive different benefits. During your fusion, your bodies will be constantly improving as a result of your fused soul power, so as long as you continue to cultivate together, there'll be a day when your physiques and cultivation speeds are the best in the human world."

"Naturally, this process in improvement is rather agonizingly slow. If you two can achieve a True Fusion in the future, then it's effects will be even better.?"

Puzzled, Huo Yuhao asked, "What's a 'True Fusion'?"

The Skydream Iceworm seemed to turn blank for a moment before uttering, "Aih, I don't know. I've never tried it either. Okay, just continue trying things out with him. You'll receive enormous benefits from both your soul power fusion and your martial soul fusion. In the future, you'll slowly understand what I mean."

As he finished his sentence, the Skydream Iceworm stopped bothering to talk and disappeared.

"Oi, has your food gotten into your nose?" After looking at Huo Yuhao's daydreaming face for a long time, Wang Dong waved his hand in front of his face.

"Eh..." Huo Yuhao hurriedly rubbed his nose, but he then noticed that Wang Dong was smiling naughtily.

"What're thinking about? You looked like you were in a trance." Wang Dong said laughingly. He noticed that Huo Yuhao's blank expression was very funny to look at.

Huo Yuhao said, "I'm obviously thinking about our Haodong Power. I'm thinking about why our soul powers would fuse, and after some thought, there's only one possibility. That is, when our martial souls fused last night, our compatibility rate was extremely high; that's why something like this happened.

Wang Dong's eyes lit up, "Right! You make some sense. If that wasn't the case, why would something unique like this happen? Quickly eat, and we can go see whether we can release a fusion skill once we're done. But do you know how a fusion skill is activated?"

Speechless, Huo Yuhao said, "How would I know? Doesn't it just naturally come to you?"

Their two small eyes couldn't help but expose a trace of speechlessness and a bitter smile. Right, although the teachers did talk about fusion skills in their lectures, it was an ability that belonged to only an extremely small number of the population, so their teachers had just glanced over it, and never explained how it could be activated. After all, the number of people who could truly release a fusion skill was truly too small.

Wang Dong said, "Whatever, we'll go try it out tonight. If that doesn't work, we'll go find Teacher Zhou and see whether she knows of any ways we can go about this."

"Yup." While answering, Huo Yuhao kept crying out to the Skydream Iceworm in his mind. He believed that the Skydream Iceworm, with his million years of experience, would definitely know the answer to this question.

"Idiot, why are you disturbing me over a small matter like this? Just do whatever you did last night! You idiot." The Skydream Iceworm seemed to be just on the verge of sleeping, so it was very unhappy when Huo Yuhao woke it up. After mumbling for a bit, it disappeared again.

Just do whatever we did last night? After thinking blankly for a moment, he quickly understood what the Skydream Iceworm meant. Hugging?

After speeding through dinner, Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong quickly left the college with an excited and curious feeling in their hearts. Huo Yuhao hadn't sold any roasted fishes today, so as the two left through the academy's entrance, they bumped into many regulars who started to complain. Apologizing profusely was the only thing he could do, and he used the excuse of preparing for the ranking tournament to make his way through the crowd.

"We should speed up." Wang Dong softly shouted out, and once his feet touched the ground, he suddenly sped up, causing his body to fly out like an arrow that had left a bow.

If this had been three months ago, Huo Yuhao might not even have been able to see his shadow, but his three months of bitter training wasn't wasted on Huo Yuhao. After exerting strength in his legs, Huo Yuhao's speed similarly soared, and although he didn't look as graceful as Wang Dong, he absolutely wasn't slow. He rushed towards Wang Dong, and whenever he landed, he would leave a footprint in the ground

The explosiveness from his muscles flowed endlessly to his legs, and the flow of his internal soul power unceasingly replenished his lost physical strength.

The evening air was very relaxing and refreshing, and the two of them currently felt like they were travelling in the wind. Without the constraints of the chainmail, the refreshing feeling all over their bodies allowed their speeds to reach their maximum levels.

In the end, Wang Dong's foundation was still much better than Huo Yuhao's, and thus he quickly widened the distance between them. When this distance exceeded 300 meters, he slowed down and waited for Huo Yuhao to catch up.

"Okay. As a control system soul master who doesn't specialise in front line combat, your speed is still passable." Wang Dong spoke with a haughty air as he looked at Huo Yuhao.

Huo Yuhao chuckled. "We're almost there. Let's go into the forest."

"Okay." Wang Dong nodded. After the two made sure there was no one around them, they simultaneously ran into the forest by the roadside. They only stopped after they were several hundred metres into the forest.

"Let's do it here. How are we gonna try it out?" Wang Dong asked.

Huo Yuhao replied, "Let's first test the recovery speed of our Haodong Power." He raised his hands as he spoke.

Wang Dong then joined his hands with Huo Yuhao's. After their practice in the afternoon, they were extremely familiar with the circulation of the Haodong Power. Just as they predicted, the Haodong Power they generated after fusing their soul powers increased the recovery speed of their physical strength, as well as their soul power, by a certain amount. However, this increase wasn't as significant when compared to the increase in their cultivation speeds.

"It's ordinary! However, it has its uses." After a brief moment, Wang Dong fully replenished his lost physical strength.

Huo Yuhao nodded before spreading his arms wide. "Come."

Wang Dong was stunned. His gaze towards Huo Yuhao immediately turned vigilant. "What're you doing?"

Huo Yuhao replied in a very natural manner, "Let's hug!"

"You..." Wang Dong's expression immediately changed. His face turned green before paling. "Huo Yuhao, I never thought you'd be someone like this. Do you actually think that I won't beat you to the point where you can't even take care of yourself?"

Huo Yuhao didn't know whether he should laugh or cry. "What're you even thinking about? You idiot, have you forgotten how we caused the martial soul fusion in the first place? Since we can already fuse our soul powers now, the simplest way for us to activate our fusion is to repeat what happened yesterday!"

Only then did Wang Dong understand what he had meant. He was immediately embarrassed to the point where his face turned bright red. Although it was already quite dark, Huo Yuhao's Spirit Eyes were able to clearly see things even if it was midnight; naturally, he saw Wang Dong's reaction clearly.

"You didn't even explain anything before you asked me to hug you. Are you purposely trying to embarrass me?" Wang Dong used his anger to disguise his embarrassment and awkwardness.

Speechless, Huo Yuhao replied, "I didn't know that your thoughts were this unhealthy. We're both guys, so what can we even do? Hurry up. Let's get this done early so we can continue cultivating later."

Wang Dong hesitated for a moment. "We're outside the city now, are you sure that we won't just fall asleep like yesterday?"

Huo Yuhao speechlessly replied, "It won't. Today's situation is different from yesterday's. Why are you acting so overly careful like a woman? I'm going to start now." As he spoke, he quickly took a step forward and hugged Wang Dong in a single movement.

Wang Dong's body stiffened. In the instant he was hugged by Huo Yuhao, he felt his mind go somewhat blank. Huo Yuhao's body was slightly sweaty due to his previous sprint, causing the faint smell of sweat to assault Wang Dong's nose.

Wang Dong's body was very soft, so hugging him was still as comfortable as last night. However, the current Huo Yuhao didn't have any thoughts of enjoying this feeling. In the instant he hugged Wang Dong, he immediately circulated his own soul power, activating his Spirit Eyes; in that same instant, Wang Dong came to his senses as well.

The large area of contact between the two of them caused the soul powers within their bodies to be quickly converted into Haodong Power. Huo Yuhao's eyes were especially bright due to the dim evening, and a faint golden light flickered within them.

After a brief moment of sluggishness, Wang Dong hurriedly activated his martial soul.

In that instant, a strange feeling came over the two of them. As they hugged each other, their released martial souls felt completely different to the soul skills they'd activated with the previous assistance of the Haodong Power.

Right as Wang Dong's ice-blue wings unfurled, both of their minds blanked out briefly.

Chapter 23.1: The Golden Road Amidst Withering Resplendence

On the one hand, you had the golden-eyed Huo Yuhao;

On the other hand, you had the dazzling winged Wang Dong, who'd released his Radiant Butterfly Goddess. *no ve) lb*. In

In the instant that they released their martial souls, everything within ten meters of them lit up. An extraordinary light suddenly blossomed outwards from their bodies.

That light was very peculiar; it was a bizarre light that alternated between the colors blue, purple, and gold. Its core consisted of a dense aura of light, and it was even fused together with a few different mysterious soul power undulations.

An enormous shadow appeared behind Wang Dong's back. It was a complete and magnificent Radiant Butterfly Goddess.

On the other hand, an enormous eye with a vertical pupil appeared behind Huo Yuhao. This eye was light-gold in color, but its pupil was faintly purple.

After blanking out for a brief moment, the two of them came back to their senses. However, they immediately noticed that everything around them was filled with an intense light.

The two enormous shadows slowly approached each other in midair; as they approached each other, they began to transform. The color of the eye that represented Huo Yuhao's Spirit Eye gradually turned deeper, and its entire body turned bluish-purple. However, its golden component had vanished completely.

The shadow that represented Wang Dong's Radiant Butterfly Goddess started to violently combust as it neared Huo Yuhao's Spirit Eye; it burned with a bluish-golden flame.

In the end, after crossing what seemed to be an entire world, the two martial soul shadows finally touched each other above Huo Yuhao's and Wang Dong's heads.

In that instant, their bodies simultaneously shook violently. The Haodong Power that had formed as a result of their fusion erupted like a geyser, draining all of their energy in what seemed to be an instant.

The flaming Radiant Butterfly Goddess spread its dazzling wings, slowly hugging the shadow of Huo Yuhao's Spirit Eye. In that instant, the shadow of the Radiant Butterfly Goddess disappeared, but the bluish-purple Spirit Eye continued to release a stream of light.

The dazzling bluish-golden flame erupted from the shadow of the Spirit Eye, which slowly descended to protect the two of them.

The enormous Spirit Eye seemed extremely arcane. If one were to look carefully, it would seem as though there was a boundless world contained within it. In an instant, a tri-colored beam of blue, purple, and gold shot out.

This illusion-like ray of light shot forth in a straight line, and everything in its path turned into nothingness. The resplendence contained within that single instant seemed to last forever. The halos of light created wherever the tri-colored beam of light passed didn't disperse; instead, it left a blurry and distorted brilliance in its wake.

However, Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong weren't able to witness this scene. In the instant that ray of light was released, the Haodong Power within their bodies was instantly drained. The intense feeling of weakness that resulted from this instantly caused them to collapse and faint...

Martial soul fusion skills were always skills that released an extremely large amount of power. This was also their first time trying it out, so they had to undergo the process of two martial souls fusing. Thus, the drain on their soul power and mental energies was extremely large. Furthermore, they had never adapted to a situation like this in the past, so it was no wonder they fainted.

They directly collapsed onto the ground, even though they were still hugging each other...

A speechless night passed...

Daytime gradually arrived...

He didn't know whether he'd fainted or fallen asleep, but when Wang Dong woke up, he truly felt like dying.

It was fortunate that they had been on Wang Dong's bed last night. But today, the two of them were still tightly hugging each other, but they were covered in dust, dirt, and dew. They had directly fallen asleep in the forest. Was this the fabled one night stand?

"Huo Yuhao, get up right now!" As Wang Dong struggled to climb out of Huo Yuhao's embrace, his expression turned somewhat hysterical.

Huo Yuhao drowsily opened his eyes. After discovering that the sun was already up, he was startled and quickly got up. However, the next thing he saw was Wang Dong, who was standing over him and looked as if he were about to beat him up violently.

Clenching his teeth, Wang Dong glared at him. "Didn't you say that we wouldn't fall asleep while hugging each other?"

"Did, did I say that?" Huo Yuhao replied blankly.

"You... I'm gonna beat you up." Wang Dong suddenly pounced, straddling Huo Yuhao. He then started to rain blows down on him.

Huo Yuhao hurriedly caught his hands and looked to the side with a blank look in his eyes, "L-look..."

"What am I supposed to look at..." Once he spoke, Wang Dong subconsciously glanced toward the direction where Huo Yuhao was looking; he couldn't remain calm after seeing what Huo Yuhao saw.

To their astonishment, a mysterious trench had appeared in a direction forty-five degrees away from them.

This trench was roughly 1.5 metres wide, 30 centimetres deep, and stretched 50 or so meters in a straight line into the distance before quietly disappearing.

If it were just an ordinary trench, the two of them absolutely wouldn't be this surprised. After all, the fusion skill they had unleashed had completely drained them of their soul power and knocked them out for an entire night. Thus, it was normal for it to be this strong.

However, the most terrifying thing about it was the fact that a layer of light-gold had covered the soil in the trench; this light-gold was actually identical to the light-gold that appeared whenever Huo Yuhao activated his Spirit Eyes.

It wasn't just the soil. Because there were a few trees in the path of the trench, a semicircular hole had appeared on a tree which was at the edge of the trench. Furthermore, the inside of that hole was covered in a layer of light-gold as well. In addition to that, every plant near both sides of the trench was covered in a layer of light-gold as well.

At this very moment under the sun's radiance, that dazzling layer of light-gold looked like a golden road that had appeared in front of Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong. How could they not be astonished?

"This, was this created by your Radiant Butterfly Goddess?" Huo Yuhao asked blankly.

Wang Dong was currently still atop Huo Yuhao's body. He subconsciously shook his head. "No, absolutely not. Although my martial soul's gold, it's either bright gold or bluish-golden. It'd never be a light-gold color like this. This, this looks identical to the color of your Spirit Eyes!"

Huo Yuhao slapped his thigh and said, "Quickly, get up. Let's go and take a look."

"Okay." At this moment, Wang Dong was fascinated by the golden road; he didn't notice that the area Huo Yuhao had slapped was near his buttocks. After getting up, Huo Yuhao hurriedly got up as well, and the two of them quickly walked over to the golden road before squatting down to take a look.

Wang Dong was just about to touch the golden road, but Huo Yuhao grabbed his hand. "You said that this is just like the color of my Spirit Eyes, so I should do this." As he spoke, he stretched his hand into the trench and touched its golden surface.

Chapter 23.2: The Golden Road Amidst Withering Resplendence

Touching the ground didn't seem like a very dangerous action, but Huo Yuhao instantly retracted his hand after doing so. Furthermore, an astonished expression appeared on his face. In the instant he touched the golden soil, he felt as if his mind had been thrown into disarray. His Spiritual Sea shook violently; it felt as if he'd been struck by his Spirit Shock.

"This, this is only the aftereffects of our fusion skill? Try it out." Huo Yuhao hurriedly looked towards Wang Dong.

Wang Dong was extremely curious. As a result of this, he quickly stretched his hand out to touch the golden trench.

His reaction to it was much greater than Huo Yuhao's. His entire body turned sluggish, and it took a long time for him to come back to his senses.

The two looked at each other and saw the astonishment in one another's eyes.

"This, isn't this too awesome? This is just the aftereffects of our fusion skill, but it felt like I had been struck by your all-out Spirit Shock. Can you imagine what'd happen if we were hit its full power?" Wang Dong's voice was trembling slightly due to his excitement. There were no soul masters who didn't wish to possess a strong soul skill.

Huo Yuhao said, "Look, the range of this soul skill should be around fifty meters or so in a straight line, but I'm not sure about whether or not it can single someone out or not. It's extremely strong—I believe that it might even have both mental and destruction attributes, making it a double-attribute attack. Only, I'm not sure how many times it increases our attack power by. If someone were to be struck by it at full power, its power would..."

Wang Dong nodded excitedly. "Moreover, the strength of this fusion skill will increase as our cultivation increases! This fusion skill of ours is truly tyrannical. If we were to meet the Lan Sister's Emyreal Net again, we'd definitely be able to destroy it in an instant!"

Huo Yuhao was similarly excited, but he was slightly calmer than Wang Dong, "Wang Dong, do you think we can use this fusion skill in the assessment? I doubt that a Soul Elder can withstand the amount of power it contains!"

Wang Dong's face stiffened. "That's a good question. An extremely strong skill like this is actually quite problematic. Furthermore, we can only use it once, so we can't even use it to intimidate the others. We'd faint after using it once."

Huo Yuhao replied, "This is the first time we used it, so we were too inexperienced. I don't think it'd be this draining when we try using it next time, but we should only be able to use it once. However, having a strong skill is always a good thing. Once we practice it a few more times and get used to it, it'll be much better."

Wang Dong said, "If that Ma Xiaotao wants to bully us again, we'll let her taste this. It shouldn't kill her with her cultivation, so we can use it to show how awesome we are."

Huo Yuhao replied, "A strong fusion skill like this should always have a name. Since I was wrong earlier, I'll let you name it."

Wang Dong didn't decline this responsibility. "Fine, I'll consider you tactful. What would sound nice? Gaze of Death, how about that?"

Without even waiting for Huo Yuhao's opinion, he immediately rejected that name himself. "No, that won't do. It's a fusion skill that's activated by the both of us, so how can it not contain anything that's related to my martial soul? Let's call it the 'Gaze of the Radiant Goddess'. That sounds cool."

Huo Yuhao had a speechless look on his face as he stared at him, "How the heck is your Radiant Butterfly Goddess a Radiant Goddess? The 'Radiant Goddess' in your martial soul's name clearly refers to how it illuminates light, as well as the fact that it's a butterfly that's as beautiful as a goddess. Let's not even bother discussing the existence of a Radiant Goddess; even if it did exist, it wouldn't be related to us at all."

Wang Dong frowned. "Can't you admit that it sounds quite nice? Don't tell me you want to call it 'Gaze of the Butterfly'? Wouldn't that sound even worse?"

Suddenly, his eyes lit up. "I've got it. Why do we even need to add the names of our martial souls to it? That doesn't sound special at all. Considering the fact that it's such a magnificent golden color, and that it releases such a resplendent light for an instant, why don't we call it: A Golden Road Amidst Withering Resplendence. How about that?"

Huo Yuhao's eyes widened slightly, "This name sounds cool, but isn't it too long?"

Pleased with himself, Wang Dong said, "A long name shows off how awesome we are, right? Let's just abbreviate it to 'A Golden Road'. In any case, nobody else will even know what it is. Once we get back, let's ask Teacher Zhou to evaluate the effects and strength of our 'A Golden Road Amidst Withering Resplendence'. Then, we can find out what's going on." n-(0ve1B1n

Once he heard the words 'Teacher Zhou', Huo Yuhao suddenly felt a chill up his back. He then turned around and noticed the sun, which was already rising gradually.

Wang Dong was instantly reminded by his actions, and started to think of something. The two then looked each other in the eye and simultaneously let out a cry, immediately running.

We're gonna be late again... and it's even when the knock-out tournament's about to start. We're gonna be late again...

For the sake of getting back to Shrek Academy in the shortest time possible, the two had no choice but to hold hands and run at full speed, activating the Vastwinter Power. Under this situation, not only was the consumption of energy even smaller, it even allowed them to reach their maximum speed.

Fortunately, they weren't too far away from the Academy. Thus, they didn't need too much time to return, but they were still late.

Roughly thirty or so academy teachers, including the old lady Zhou Yi, were standing in a line outside the Assessment Area.

Zhou Yi currently had an unhappy look in her eyes. She scanned through the nearly two hundred students beneath her, but she still couldn't find the people she was looking for.

Xiao Xiao was already there, and she was currently waiting with a panicked expression on her face. This was because registration had already started, and in addition to that, it had started with their Class 1. However, Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong weren't there yet. If they didn't manage to make it there before registration ended, they'd be disqualified from the tournament. Without even mentioning what a pity it'd be for them to miss this opportunity, Old Lady Zhou's rage was something they wouldn't be able to endure! And she, who was part of the same team as Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong, would have to suffer this stroke of bad luck with them.

Just what're those two guys doing? They were late yesterday, don't tell me they're going to be late today as well?

The number of participating students from Class 1 was greatest among the ten classes, and as such, the time needed to register them was also the longest among the ten classes. When it was time for Xiao Xiao's team to be registered, Xiao Xiao was the only person who responded. Unexpectedly, nobody responded to the names 'Huo Yuhao' and 'Wang Dong'. Once this occurred, not only was the entire student body stunned, even the teachers were astonished.

Although this wasn't the first time that a situation like this had occurred in the history of Shrek Academy, it was an extremely rare occurrence. Even if they had already passed the freshmen assessment, it would seem as if they were looking down on the academy if they didn't turn up for the knock-out tournament. As such, they would give an unfavourable impression to all the teachers.

The teacher in charge of the registration paused slightly for a moment before continuing to register the students from the other classes. This went on all the way until Class 6, when Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong finally arrived.

The two of them had rushed all the way to the academy, and they'd even slept in the forest overnight. In addition to that, they hadn't even had time to clean themselves up. As a result of this, their figures looked extremely sorry. Without even talking about how dirty their clothes were, there were even traces of mud and dew on their clothes.

However, the deed was already done. Thus, they could only thicken their faces and come up. After all, they couldn't actually forfeit their places!

Chapter 23.3: The Golden Road Amidst Withering Resplendence

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong both ran towards the area between the teachers and students, loudly shouting "Reporting in." as they did so.

The teacher in charge of the registration immediately paused. This teacher looked fifty-or-so-years old, and had a tall frame. He was dark-skinned and beardless, and had a stern expression on his face.

"What class are you two from? What happened?"

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong both recognised him. This teacher was called Du Weilun, and he was the director of the outer courtyard's Martial Soul Department. He possessed the greatest authority in the outer courtyard.

Huo Yuhao shouted, "Reporting in, Teacher Du. We're Class 1's Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong. We were late due to excessive cultivation."

Du Weilun's face darkened. "You're even late to the assessment? Have you no concept of time? As a punishment, you'll be sweeping all the corridors of the freshmen teaching blocks two days after the tournament ends. Return to your team."

"Yes sir." Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong hurriedly replied. They inwardly let out a sigh of relief. As long as they didn't lose their qualification to participate in the tournament, everything else was fine. The two hurriedly walked to the area where Class 1's teams were and stood together with Xiao Xiao.

Du Weilun glanced at the nearby Zhou Yi before continuing to register the other students. With his temper, if any other students were late, it'd be very likely for him to directly strip them of their qualifications to participate in the ranking tournament. In any case, they'd have passed the freshmen assessment anyway. However, Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong were unique in the sense that they had performed exceptionally well during the round-robin tournament; they'd obtained a perfect score. This was the reason why the iron-faced director let them off leniently.

Although results weren't everything in Shrek Academy, students who were strong and obtained good results would have preferential treatment. This was the case in any academy.

"Where'd you two go to? Just wait till Old Lady Zhou takes care of you guys once today's matches are over. Look at her eyes; they look like blades. If looks could kill, you two would've died by a thousand cuts." Xiao Xiao spoke unhappily.

Wang Dong spoke with a depressed look on his face. "Stop grumbling. This is all Huo Yuhao's fault. If he didn't drag me out to compare notes with him, making me lose track of time, how could we be late?"

During the journey back, Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong had agreed to keep their martial soul fusion skill a secret for the time being. After all, they weren't planning on using it during the freshmen assessment. They agreed to only tell this piece of good news to Teacher Zhou, in order to appease her thunderous fury while letting her give them some advice regarding their cultivations. They'd then show it off in future assessments once they were adept at using it.

The director of the outer courtyard's Martial Soul Department, Du Weilun, quickly finished taking attendance, and what followed that was the drawing of lots. This was only a freshmen assessment, so there weren't too many complicated procedures involved. Huo Yuhao represented his team to draw

lots. The sixty-four teams involved in the knock-out tournament were divided into thirty-two areas where they would fight each other.

Yesterday, the students had had an entire day's worth of rest, and the layout of the Assessment Area had been changed during that day as well. They merely changed the positioning of the partitioning walls, re-dividing the Assessment Area into sixteen areas. This time, the area of every single sub-area was increased several-fold, allowing the participating students to have even more space to utilise.

The rules of the knock-out tournament were very simple; there would be one match in the morning and one match in the afternoon every day, and eliminated teams would have to return to class, while victorious teams would continue to compete. After three days, the top three teams would be decided.

After the lots were drawn, the round of sixty-four immediately started, and thirty-two matches were simultaneously held. This way, they could shorten the time used for the tournament and give victorious students ample time to rest for their afternoon match.

This time, Huo Yuhao's team was sent to the 15th area; their proctor had been changed as well. This time, the proctor in charge of them was a thirty-or-so-year-old female teacher who looked extremely good-natured.

When they drew lots earlier, they only obtained a number. Hence, they didn't even know who they'd be facing. Once they arrived, they were somewhat speechless. Their opponents in the first match was actually a few of their classmates, resulting in this knock-out tournament becoming a civil war.

Their three opponents were people who Huo Yuhao's team recognised. One of them had even attempted to challenge Wang Dong. According to Wang Dong, that fellow had been immediately humbled after Wang Dong privately beat him up.

Zhou Yi's judgement was extremely precise. Since she had chosen Huo Yuhao's team as Class 1's seeded team, their strength was naturally something that the other teams couldn't compete against. The match didn't last for long. Although their opponents were extremely resilient, the match was finished within ten minutes due to Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao working together, along with the assistance of Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection. Thus, Huo Yuhao's team successfully entered the top 32.

However, just as they walked out of the Assessment Area, their originally joyful expressions instantly vanished. This was because the gloomy-faced Old Lady Zhou was waiting for them by the exit to the Assessment Area.

"Xiao Xiao, you can go back and rest first. You two, follow me." With that, she coldly humphed and turned away.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong simultaneously felt a chill up their spines. Fortunately, they had already made their preparations. After glancing at each other, they followed Zhou Yi. Xiao Xiao could only gaze at them with an expression that said 'you can fend for yourselves'.

This time, Zhou Yi unexpectedly brought them straight to her office. As the teacher in charge of Class 1, her office was located in the Administration Area that was located behind the black and purple buildings of the outer courtyard's teaching blocks, as well as the northern area of the Dormitory Area. Her office was situated on the first floor, and she was the only person who was currently working there.

After following Zhou Yi into the Office, Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong couldn't help but feel astonished.

Unexpectedly, the cold and extremely strict Teacher Zhou had decorated her office in an extremely elegant manner. The walls of her office were painted a light pink color, and her table was made with a special type of wood that was light red. Furthermore, there was a large red sofa that was meant for guests along with a few other decorations. There was also a small door that seemed to lead to a lounge. One had to admit that Shrek Academy treated its teachers relatively well; even teachers in charge of freshmen classes had their own private offices.

Huo Yuhao was the last person to walk into the room, and he carefully shut the door upon entering. Zhou Yi was already seated on the large red sofa, and she crossed her arms in front of her chest. She spoke coldly. "Tell me, just what in the world were you two doing? You're really good! You two were late for two consecutive days. Since you've passed the freshmen assessment, your wings have hardened, and I can't control you anymore. Is that what you think? Let me tell you this. As long as I will it, I can expel you two from the academy with a single word. This world doesn't lack any geniuses, and I've expelled many of them myself. There's only one reason why I would expel a genius—and that's because they weren't suited to become an expert with their personality. Give me a good reason why I shouldn't expel the two of you."

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong glanced at each other, and Wang Dong bumped him, indicating that he should explain.

Huo Yuhao could only brace himself and say, "Teacher Zhou, sorry. We were in the wrong." During these three months, he could be considered to have become familiar with Zhou Yi's temper. Arguing with her had no benefits; it'd just enrage this Old Lady Zhou further. If you had a good attitude, you could receive a smaller punishment.

Chapter 23.4: The Golden Road Amidst Withering Resplendence

"Do you think sorry will cut it? Do you think that being late is just a small matter? Let me tell you this. Being late represents laziness, and laziness at your age is something extremely serious. If you only have this reason to defend yourself, you can screw off. Tell me, I need a logical explanation."

Only then did Huo Yuhao respectfully reply, "Teacher Zhou, please don't be angry. This is what happened. Do you still remember what happened? When we met Huang Chutian's team, they had a pair of twins who were called Lan Susu and Lan Luoluo."

"Yes." Zhou Yi replied.

Huo Yuhao continued, "During that match, we almost lost because the Lan sisters were able to activate a fusion skill. We were only able to forcefully block that powerful skill of theirs after working hard together. After that, we finally won that match and ended the round-robin tournament with a perfect score."

"After we got back, we both envied the strength of their fusion skill. Thus, we decided to try it out and see whether our martial souls could fuse. The school doesn't have a class that specialises in fusion skills, so we could only try it out by ourselves. However, who knew that our martial souls would fuse together on our first try? During the fusion process, we fell asleep on Wang Dong's bed, and class had already started by the time we woke up. That's why we were late yesterday."

As Huo Yuhao continued his explanation, he clearly felt Wang Dong softly pinch the skin on his waist and twist it a hundred and eighty degrees.

He felt an intense sensation of pain, but he didn't dare to show it. However, his expression immediately stiffened by a bit.

"A martial soul fusion?" Zhou Yi was stunned. She didn't think that Huo Yuhao would actually give a reason like this. She subconsciously asked, "Did you succeed?"

Huo Yuhao scratched his head and said, "We weren't sure about it yesterday. Thus, we tried it out for a moment when you asked us to run around yesterday, and it seemed to work. Later that night, we went outside the academy to try out our fusion skill. We never thought that it'd actually succeed in one try. Furthermore, its strength seemed quite strong. However, this was the first time we'd activated a fusion skill, so our soul power was overdrafted. After releasing it, we directly collapsed in the forest, and we were already late when we woke up. Teacher Zhou, we were truly late because we were diligently cultivating. This was just an accident; I promise you that it won't happen again."

With that, Huo Yuhao quietly raised his head and stole a glance at Zhou Yi. However, he only saw Zhou Yi's dumbstruck expression.

"You, you're telling me that you actually succeeded when you tried to use a fusion skill?" Zhou Yi's voice clearly rose in pitch. At the same time, she stood up with an astonished and excited look on her face.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong nodded simultaneously.

Zhou Yi excitedly said, "Quick, let me see. What's your fusion skill?"

Huo Yuhao replied, "Teacher Zhou, we still have a match in the afternoon, and we'll completely drain our soul power after using this skill."

Zhou Yi unhappily said, "Your energy will be drained the most when you use it for the first time. It won't be that draining when you use it in the future. If soul masters were to faint whenever they released a fusion skill, wouldn't it become a suicidal move? Hurry up. I'll be responsible for helping you recover your soul power, so it won't interfere with your afternoon match. Come, just use it on me."

Since Zhou Yi had already said so, Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong naturally wouldn't refuse. The two faced each other, and Huo Yuhao spread his arms and hugged Wang Dong in a very natural manner. Although Wang Dong's movements were still somewhat stiff, he didn't push Huo Yuhao away. He shut his eyes and spread his arms as well, hugging Huo Yuhao.

In the instant their bodies touched, they each released their martial souls.

Their soul powers instantly fused, causing the Haodong Power to flow through their bodies. The two of them felt as if their bodies were fused together.

One second, two seconds, three seconds passed...

Teacher Zhou's office was so quiet that even the sound of a needle dropping could be heard, but there were no other movements in the room besides the soul power undulations caused by Huo Yuhao's and Wang Dong's martial souls.

Zhou Yi widened her eyes as she stared at them. She was already prepared to defend against their attack, but the two of them were just standing there hugging each other without doing anything else. The corner of her eyelid was beginning to twitch.

The two of them could feel that something was wrong. In accordance with what had happened yesterday, their soul power should've quickly been drained! Then, a Golden Road Amidst Withering Resplendence should've been released in a single direction. However, nothing was happening at all.

"Just what the hell do you two think you're doing?" Zhou Yi's cold voice sounded as if it was spoken through clenched teeth. The two couldn't help but feel a chill up their spines, and they subconsciously stopped hugging each other. An expression of shock instantly filled their faces.

Zhou Yi's body was currently releasing killing intent; it was the second time Zhou Yi had given off this feeling towards the two of them. Old Lady Zhou was clearly about to blow up.

Huo Yuhao hurriedly spoke, "Teacher Zhou, this was how we released our fusion skill yesterday! We don't know what's going on."

Zhou Yi spoke with a chilly voice, "Are you trying to show off your gay love by hugging each other in my office? If I don't TAKE CARE of you two today, I'll..."

Without even waiting for Zhou Yi to finish her sentence, Huo Yuhao immediately sprung into action. He grabbed Wang Dong's hand and instantly used his Spiritual Detection Sharing on Zhou Yi.

"Hmm?" Zhou Yi was just about to blow up from her anger, but everything around her suddenly became clear to her. Her perception rapidly expanded, and within the blink of an eye, everything within a hundred meters of her became a clear three-dimensional image in her mind.

Why did his range increase by this much? Zhou Yi clearly remembered that the range of Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection was only thirty meters or so the last time he had used it. However, it had turned into a hundred meters this time around. The magnitude of this increase was simply too large.

As he looked at Zhou Yi's slight confusion, Huo Yuhao hurriedly explained, "Teacher Zhou, do you remember what I said last time? I told you that my Spiritual Detection would evolve as my cultivation increases, and after your caring guidance during these three months, its range increased to around fifty meters or so. In addition to that, I've found a way of concentrating its effects in one direction only, allowing its range to increase even more. On the other hand, the hundred meters that you're currently sensing wasn't done by me alone. After Wang Dong and I fused our martial souls, our soul powers fused as well. The reason why my Spiritual Detection's range increased by so much, to the point where it's even doubled in range, was due to Wang Dong's help. Doesn't this prove that we can fuse our martial souls? We really managed to use a fusion skill last night. If you don't believe us, we can bring you to the area we tested it out on. There are still a few traces left there."

After hearing Huo Yuhao's words, Zhou Yi gradually calmed down; she knew that she had been slightly impetuous.

During these three months, she had seen Huo Yuhao's performance in the academy. Even as she looked through her memories, there had never been a student who'd been more diligent than him.

Furthermore, he was calmer than his peers, and had a few hints of maturity. Even if he wanted to lie to her, he'd never tell a lie that could be exposed as easily as this one.

This was a perfect example of the saying 'everyone specialised in their own fields'. Although Zhou Yi was a teacher from Shrek Academy, she wasn't too familiar with martial soul fusion skills. After all, these skills were truly too niche. After listening to Huo Yuhao's explanation, she had already believed them. As such, the anger in her heart quickly dissipated.

Waving her hand, Zhou Yi said, "Fine. You can stop using your skill, I believe you two. Only, there's definitely something that went wrong when you were trying to use your fusion skill. Wait in my office for a while, I'll go bring a teacher who's familiar with fusion skills. I'll get him to dispel your doubts."

Old Lady Zhou was always a person who made swift and decisive decisions. By the time she had finished speaking, she was already outside, and was walking with quick steps.

Once she left, Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong simultaneously let out a sigh of relief. The two of them collapsed onto the sofa, and Huo Yuhao used his left hand to wipe away the sweat on his forehead. Wang Dong wanted to use his left hand as well, but he noticed that Huo Yuhao was still holding it.

"Release your hand." Wang Dong unhappily freed his hand from Huo Yuhao's grip. He then glared at him, "I'm blaming you for this. If it weren't for you insisting on trying our fusion skill out, why else would we be caught by that Old Lady Zhou? We don't really have any secrets now, do we?"

As Huo Yuhao leaned into the sofa, he chuckled, "Blame me if you want to, but this isn't really a bad thing. We'll be able to avoid doing things incorrectly if we have a teacher guiding our cultivation. Just when can you change this grumbling attitude of yours? I'm the only one who can tolerate you."

Wang Dong humphed. "I only do it when I'm with you. If it were anyone else, I'd be too lazy to even complain. However, it's worth it, since we saw Old Lady Zhou's stunned expression. Hey, do you think Old Lady Zhou will continue to teach us after we finish the knock-out tournament?"

Huo Yuhao replied, "It's hard to tell. Teacher Zhou's teaching seems to be quite comprehensive, but she seems to place emphasis on a few different things. Only, we're too young, and our cultivation levels are quite low, so we haven't seen her specialties yet. In any case, we'll find out after we get reassigned classes once the knock-out tournament ends. I'm hoping that we'll follow Teacher Zhou. Although she's somewhat strict, it isn't really a bad thing for us. At the very least, she'll continue to encourage us to diligently cultivate and learn."

Chapter 24.1: The Bet

Wang Dong laughed. "Are you a masochist? Right, let's cultivate for a while here. Once Old Lady Zhou comes back and sees that we were cultivating while she was gone, she'll definitely think that we're very hardworking. I'm sure that her mood will improve as well."

Huo Yuhao knocked him on the head and said, "You're an expert at doing these crafty things."

"Rubbish, you're the one who's doing crafty things. We've got a match in the afternoon, and we were somewhat drained from the match earlier, so what's wrong with recovering as soon as possible? Are you

gonna do it or not? Hurry up.” As he spoke, he took off his shoes and sat on the sofa in a cross-legged position. After that, he extended his hands out towards Huo Yuhao.

Huo Yuhao had always cultivated whenever he had free time, so naturally, he wouldn't refuse. He mirrored Wang Dong's position and placed his palms against Wang Dong's palms. Then, they simultaneously circulated their soul powers.

As their soul powers circulated and fused with one another, it felt somewhat different from yesterday's cultivation. Their soul powers seemed to have become more intimate, and their cultivation speeds during the initial stages of the fusion were clearly much faster than they were yesterday; the Haodong Power had already appeared in the instant they touched. As they willed it, the Haodong Power circulated along their cultivation paths at a speed that was at least 10% faster than yesterday.

When they started cultivating, they shut their eyes. As such, they didn't notice that three blue, purple, and gold lights had slowly emerged from their palms. These three lights revolved around their arms and started to hover around their bodies, and gradually, a layer of color appeared on their bodies.

Originally, they were merely planning on recovering some of their soul power. However, they quickly entered a meditative state once their cultivation started, resulting in them losing all awareness of the world.

Not long after they began cultivating, Zhou Yi returned with another person in tow. If the two of them had been awake, they would've definitely been astonished. This was because the person that Zhou Yi had brought back was their proctor during the round-robin tournament, Teacher Wang Yan.

Zhou Yi was startled by the appearances of the two as they cultivated, while Wang Yan was completely astonished. Afterwards, the two of them unexpectedly gave each other a signal to remain silent.

An inquiring look appeared in Zhou Yi's eyes, but Wang Yan merely shook his head. After that, he quietly walked towards their bodies and squatted down, observing their conditions. In addition to that, he started to carefully pay attention to the soul power undulations they were generating as they cultivated.

As he continued to pay attention to them, the astonishment on Wang Yan's face increased. He subconsciously started to rub his hands.

Zhou Yi and Wang Yan had known each other for a while; she knew that this action of his signified his nervousness and excitement. Moreover, she was a teacher herself. As such, she could also sense how unusual Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong's current state was. At the very least, she had never seen something like this before. Two soul masters were unexpectedly cultivating together, and not only did their soul powers not interfere with each other, they even fused together. They could see how quickly they were cultivating from the circulation of the three lights, and knew that even a three-ringed Soul Elder wouldn't be able to cultivate as fast as them!

After completing thirty-six cycles of cultivation, Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong stopped. The two managed to completely recover the soul power they had lost during their earlier match, and they even managed to increase their cultivation levels by a step.

The two of them simultaneously let out a sigh, slowly retracting their respective soul powers. This then caused the three lights revolving around their bodies to slowly dissipate.

As they opened their eyes, the two felt somewhat refreshed. Their current cultivation speed was simply too satisfying. However, they were quickly startled by the scene in front of them.

“Teacher Zhou, Teacher Wang?” To his astonishment, Huo Yuhao saw Zhou Yi and Wang Yan seated on chairs not far away from the sofa, fully concentrated on them.

Wang Dong was also astonished. Only then did the two remember that they were still in Zhou Yi’s office.

Huo Yuhao spoke with a slightly embarrassed voice. “Teacher Zhou, we wanted to recover some of our soul power and prepare for the afternoon match. That’s why we...”

Zhou Yi waved her hand and said, “No need for any explanations. Being hardworking is always a good thing. This person is Teacher Wang Yan, an excellent teacher from the Academy’s theoretical faction. He’s even one rank higher than me as a teacher. He’s very well-learned with regards to martial soul fusion skills.”

Wang Yan smiled slightly and said, “I don’t think that I need to introduce myself. We’ve met before. I was their proctor during the round-robin tournament.” The current him had already regained his usual calm look, but as for whether he was truly calm on the inside, only he himself knew the answer to that.

“Teacher Wang.” Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong simultaneously bowed to him respectfully.

Wang Yan nodded his head and said, “I’ve carefully observed your cultivations. In the beginning, I didn’t believe what Zhou Yi told me, but now, I’ve realised that I was inexperienced. Now, I can testify to Zhou Yi with a 100% certainty that you two have completed a martial soul fusion, and that you possess a fusion skill.”

Zhou Yi looked at him with a somewhat astonished expression on her face, but she didn’t interrupt him.

Wang Yan continued. “Your soul powers are actually so compatible that they didn’t even conflict with each other at all when they fused together. Moreover, the fusion even assisted your cultivation. This has never been seen in the ten-thousand-year records of Shrek Academy. There’s only one explanation for this—that is, your martial souls are perfectly compatible, achieving a perfect 100% compatibility rate. Only this legendary occurrence could allow your soul powers to perfectly fuse without any distinctions whatsoever, and allow you to share your cultivation speeds. Congratulations. I can even foresee that you two will definitely become Chosen of our Shrek Academy in the future.”

Huo Yuhao couldn’t help but secretly admire Wang Yan as he listened to his words. He’d heard of the words ‘Perfect Compatibility’ from the Skydream Iceworm, but Wang Yan was able to deduce this by merely observing their cultivations, even though he didn’t fully understand them. It was no wonder he was a representative of the Academy’s theoretical faction.

Puzzled, Wang Dong asked, “Teacher Wang, since that’s the case, why did our fusion skill fail today? Huo Yuhao and I tried it out earlier, but nothing happened!”

Wang Yan chuckled. “Do you think that fusion skills are ordinary soul skills? How could the activation of a fusion skill be so simple? Your martial souls and energies have to be at their peak conditions for a fusion skill to be activated. This is the first time I’ve ever seen two people with perfect compatibility rates, but according to my experience, there’s a fixed resting period for the activation of a martial soul fusion skill. Moreover, you won’t be able to activate it during this time period. This period normally lasts

seven days, but that will gradually lessen as your cultivations increase. This will happen all the way until you can completely master your fusion skill."

Chapter 24.2: The Bet

Huo Yuhao asked, "Teacher Wang, when will we be able to freely use our fusion skill?"

Wang Yan replied, "It's still too early to tell. You'd have to reach Rank 70 at the very least to be able to use it freely, as you'd have obtained a Martial Soul True Body by then. This is normally the case for any soul master. However, it's very likely that you two have a perfect compatibility rate. Thus, I suggest that you try using your fusion skill every day from now, all the way until it works again. We can then confirm the resting period of your fusion skill. Once you've confirmed the length of this resting period, come find me and let me see what your fusion skill is. I'm very curious as to what it is!"

With Wang Yan's explanation, Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong were now much more knowledgeable about fusion skills.

Zhou Yi asked, "Teacher Wang, since they've achieved a perfect compatibility rate for their martial soul fusion, what other benefits does it give besides aiding them in their cultivation?"

Wang Yan chuckled. "Teacher Zhou, a man who's never content is like a snake that's trying to swallow an elephant! You've already picked up two treasures. Simply allowing them to assist each other during cultivating can double their cultivation speed. You might not be able to see anything now, but give it a few years. I can guarantee that within three years, absolutely none of their peers will be able to compete with their cultivation levels. However, you're right to ask this question. There's another difference between perfectly compatible fusion skills and ordinary fusion skills, and that is their strengths. I'm pretty sure you know what I mean. According to the normal rules of a martial soul fusion, the higher the compatibility rate, the stronger the fusion skill will be. However, we've never seen a perfect fusion before. Hence, I wish to personally see how strong their fusion skill is, and what effects it has."

Zhou Yi nodded and said, "Thanks for your help. Teacher Wang, shall we report this matter together?"

Wang Yan shook his head and smiled. "No need. You can report it by yourself. You should've been promoted to a high-ranked teacher already. Furthermore, you were the one who discovered these two fellows. I can't steal your glory."

Zhou Yi smiled and nodded at him.

Wang Yan stood up and said, "You little fellas have to work hard. Go enter the top 32 in the knock-out tournament. You'll have to work even harder once you've entered the top 8. The academy will have a few higher-ups watching you fight. Furthermore, even we teachers think that the champion prize is quite good, so you can't miss out on it. If you have any problems, you can come find me. My office is on the fourth floor. Teacher Zhou, I'll be taking my leave then."

Zhou Yi walked Wang Yan all the way to the door to the office. Before leaving, Wang Yan looked deeply at Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong.

Zhou Yi didn't enter the room again. Instead, she beckoned towards the two who were still in the office. "Let's go, you should eat lunch. I'll treat you to lunch today."

Although she didn't explicitly state it, taking the initiative to treat them to lunch signified that she was apologizing to Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong for blaming them.

The two felt that it was somewhat inconceivable, but they quickly came to their senses and excitedly charged to the canteen with Zhou Yi in tow.

Zhou Yi was actually quite a generous person; she unexpectedly treated them to all of the canteen's top-ranked dishes.

The canteen's top-ranked dishes were extraordinarily pricey, and there were new dishes that were priced differently every day. However, their prices were always in gold soul coins. There were two top-ranked dishes today, and Zhou Yi ordered two of each, causing the total bill to exceed sixty gold soul coins.

"Teacher Zhou, you're spending too much on us." Huo Yuhao felt a bit bad. Even after all the time he'd spent selling roasted fish, he hadn't even earned a total of sixty gold soul coins yet...

Zhou Yi said, "Quickly, eat it while it's hot. Don't think that the Academy's selling these top-ranked dishes for the sake of making a profit. In reality, the top-ranked dishes are the only dishes in the canteen that cause the Academy to suffer a loss."

"Why?" Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong asked at practically the same time.

Zhou Yi smiled indifferently. "It's naturally for the sake of the bodies of the students. Do you two recognise these dishes?" She pointed at the plates in front of her.

These two dishes had strong fragrances. One looked like a stew, while the other was some soup.

That stew was made out of lean meat and tendons. The stew itself was strong and thick, while the meat was fresh and soft to the touch. Even the tendons had been cooked in such a way that they had a soft and gelatinous texture. Merely looking at the dish would make one's appetite increase.

On the other hand, the soup had a light-gold color, and there was nothing inside it; there was only soup. However, its fragrance assaulted one's nose, so much so that it even smelled richer than the stew. There was even the faint smell of medicinal herbs hidden within the soup.

Undoubtedly, Huo Yuhao was unable to tell the names of these dishes. However, Wang Dong hesitated for a moment, then said, "Teacher Zhou, this stew seems to be made out of the meat of the Devilscale Alligator? I can't tell what the soup is made out of, though." n)(Ov**E**1b1n

Zhou Yi nodded and said, "You deserve to be called a child from an aristocratic family. You're right. This meat of this stew comes from the Devilscale Alligator, which is an extraordinarily strong amphibian soul beast. Eating its meat is a large help to us soul masters, as it can improve our physique and increase the toughness of our meridians. It's a good thing that's quite rare. Only, the meat of the Devilscale Alligator is as hard as steel. Thus, it takes an extremely great chef to be able to refine it into something this soft. So let me tell you this: our Shrek Academy doesn't just have the best teachers on the continent, we have the best chefs as well. An adult Devilscale Alligator is at the thousand-year soul beast rank at the very least, so do you still think that this dish is expensive?"

“As for this soup, it was made by boiling an avian soul beast for a long time, and it has the effect of nourishing one’s internal organs. This can make our internal organs more stable, which can benefit our cultivation.”

“I’ve said this in the past, but we have three students this year who’ve reached the Soul Elder rank. It’s true that they’re talented and hardworking, but they’re also children who come from the large clans. Since their youth, they’ve received the assistance of the best food, drink, and medicine, which is why they are able to attain a cultivation like theirs at such a young age. Wang Dong could’ve also received treatment like this before coming to the Academy, but as for why you haven’t obtained your third ring, in my opinion, it’s very likely due to your laziness or a special condition in your body. Furthermore, if I haven’t remembered it incorrectly, you just turned eleven.”

Wang Dong nodded, “Teacher Zhou, I’ll definitely obtain my third ring before I turn twelve.”

Chapter 24.3: The Bet

Zhou Yi said, “Okay, you two should quickly start eating. Once you’re done, go back and take a small rest. The afternoon match is going to start soon. I’ll be reporting this matter to the higher-ups. If you’re selected as a core disciple of the outer courtyard, the Academy will provide you these top-ranked dishes free of charge. I’m pretty sure you can imagine how much this’ll benefit your cultivation. However, possessing a martial soul fusion skill doesn’t mean that you’ll definitely be selected as a core disciple. Remember, our Shrek Academy has no lack of geniuses. Your final ranking in the knock-out tournament will greatly affect your chances at entering the circle of core disciples. Truth is, I managed to graduate from the outer courtyard during my time, but I wasn’t able to become a core disciple, much less obtain the qualifications to enter the inner courtyard. But for you two, becoming a core disciple is an important step that’ll help you to enter the inner courtyard. Out of all the core disciples that’ve been in Shrek Academy, over half of them managed to pass the inner courtyard’s assessment. Also, becoming a core disciple signifies that you’ll receive even more help from Academy teachers. Do you understand?”

“Yes.” The two replied together. Then, they immediately gorged themselves silly.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong immediately acknowledged Zhou Yi’s praise of the Academy’s chefs. Huo Yuhao was still somewhat better; he’d never tried these types of high-ranked foodstuffs before. However, Wang Dong differed from him. He’d eaten these delicacies in the past, but the flavours created by his family’s chefs couldn’t compare to the dishes cooked by the Academy’s canteen.

Once they finished eating, the two instantly felt their bodies heat up. This was especially true for their stomachs; waves of warmth spread through their entire bodies, causing an indescribable relaxing feeling to arise. Sure enough, you really got what you paid for!

Zhou Yi followed them all the way to the dorm entrance. Before leaving, she placed her hand on Huo Yuhao’s shoulder and whispered, “Since you weren’t born as a noble, use your own strength to become one.”

With that, she turned and left. Ever since the meal had started, her icy expression seemed to have disappeared.

The old man who seemed to be the dormitory manager, yet never cared about anything, continued to lean on his recliner. He seemed to have heard Zhou Yi's words, and mumbled something in response, but nobody heard him.

After Huo Yuhao greeted the old man as he usually did, he returned to his dorm room along with Wang Dong. They'd just finished eating, but they had to cultivate for a while. After all, wasting time was disgraceful! Furthermore, the afternoon match clearly wouldn't be as effortless as the morning match.

When the afternoon bell rang, the freshmen assessment's knock-out tournament's round of sixteen officially began.

When compared to the morning, the number of competing students had decreased by a half. Once they drew their lots again, the students immediately headed toward their designated areas to start their respective matches.

The layout of the area hadn't changed, as this match was being held on the same day as the previous match. However, only the first 16 battlefields were used for the matches.

There was a tall stage erected by the northern part of the Assessment Area. This stage was 20 meters above the ground, and was supported by six metallic pillars. From the ground, it was impossible to see the number of people the stage contained. However, there were vague figures up there, as if there were people who were watching their matches. On the other hand, a distance of 20 meters from the ground was enough to overlook the entire Assessment Area, allowing the people up there to clearly see the state of every match.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong weren't late this time around. Instead, they came to the Assessment Area very early to draw their lots, causing Xiao Xiao to sigh in relief.

This time, they were assigned to the eighth arena. By the time they arrived at the arena, the other team who'd been assigned to the eighth arena as well had already arrived.

To Huo Yuhao's astonishment, their opponents were all girls. Furthermore, they were young ladies who were very pretty.

The Spectator's Stage.

Zhou Yi quietly stood on the stage, surveying the matches that were about to start. Class 1 had been the biggest winner among the ten classes during the round-robin tournament, but a few strong students had begun to reveal their true potential and strength when the knock-out tournament started. After the round of 32, only five teams from Class 1 remained. Although their numbers were greater than those from the other classes, their dominance was no longer that obvious.

The round of 32 was extremely crucial.

"Teacher Zhou, are you looking for your seeded team? I've just looked at the lots, and coincidentally, the seeded team you've chosen just so happened to meet up with the seeded team from my class. They're over there at the eighth arena. Say, who do you think will win?"

A thirty-or-so-year-old female teacher had walked up to Zhou Yi, and spoken with an amused tone.

Zhou Yi immediately squinted, "Mu Jin, do you think that your students will win for sure?"

Although Mu Jin wasn't young, her appearance could definitely be described using the words 'young and pretty'. She smiled, shaking her head. "That's not true. There are no absolutes in this world. However, I've heard that there aren't any particularly outstanding talents from your class this time around. At the very least, I've heard that you don't have any students who're above Rank 30. What a pity."

Zhou Yi's gaze turned chilly. "Are you trying to provoke me?"

Mu Jin's smiling expression instantly vanished, "So what if I am? Doesn't your Class 1 have good results? I want to see how many of the students who you've taught can get into the top 8. When I saw that my seeded team was paired up against your seeded team, I felt very happy. Ever since you expelled my disciples even when I bitterly begged you not to, this is the first time that I've felt this happy. I've heard that you want to be promoted to a senior teacher, but aih, you might be out of luck again."

However, Zhou Yi didn't pay attention to Mu Jin's provoking look. She cast her gaze down to the arenas below her, and fixed her eyes onto the eighth arena that Huo Yuhao's team was on. Then, she indifferently said, "Would you like to make a bet with me?"

Mu Jin's objective had been to enrage and humiliate Zhou Yi. Thus, she didn't hesitate to reply after hearing Zhou Yi's words. "A bet? What're you betting with me?"

Zhou Yi finally stopped ignoring her. Turning around, she spoke with a serious tone. "One soul bone. Do you dare to bet with me?"

After hearing the words 'soul bone', Mu Jin's eyes suddenly shrank.

A soul ring was already an extremely precious item to a soul masters, as a soul master needed a soul ring to be able to breakthrough the existence known as a bottleneck.

However, soul bones were a hundred times more precious than soul rings. Every soul master could fuse with six soul bones, which were the skull bone, the torso bone, and the four limb bones.

Every soul ring could give a soul master one skill, while a hundred thousand year ring could give two skills. In other words, an ordinary soul master who managed to cultivate his way to the nine-ringed Titled Douluo stage should possess nine skills. On the other hand, soul bones were a completely different story altogether. Every soul bone would give a soul master another skill, and would drastically increase the strength of the body part it was added to.

Soul rings were items that soul beasts would definitely produce, but that wasn't the case for soul bones; only hundred thousand year soul beasts would definitely produce soul bones. On the other hand, soul beasts below the hundred thousand year rank would only have a one percent chance of producing a soul bone! The appearance of any soul bone would definitely cause a scramble among soul masters.

Chapter 24.4: The Bet

There was a saying in the world of soul masters: "If one wanted to become an outstanding soul master, he would definitely have to work hard and increase his soul power, while obtaining an optimal soul ring."

However, if one wanted to become a peak-level soul master and become a true expert in the Douluo Continent, he would definitely need to possess a soul bone. Furthermore, a person would become even

stronger if he possessed even more soul bones. From another standpoint, a soul bone could even have the same effect as a medicinal pill, as fusing with a soul bone would increase the soul power of a soul master to some extent.

At this moment, Zhou Yi's suggestion of a soul bone was practically her bringing out a fortune to fight with Mu Jin. Hence, how could Mu Jin not be astonished? She didn't understand where Zhou Yi's confidence was coming from.

A trace of disdain appeared at the corner of Zhou Yi's mouth, "Get away from me if you're scared. I don't want to smell that nauseating perfume of yours."

A fierce light flickered through Mu Jin's eyes. "Fine, I'll bet with you. Were you trying to scare me away using empty words? If I lose, I'll give you a soul bone. But if you lose, I want Fan Yu to make me a close-combat soul tool."

Zhou Yi coldly replied, "I'm the person who's betting with you, not him. If I lose, I'll give you a soul bone."

Mu Jin humphed, "I don't want your soul bone. I want Fan Yu to make me a close-combat soul tool."

"Fine, I'll reply on her behalf." A deep voice rang out. A tall figure had already arrived at Zhou Yi's side; this was the Soul Tool Department's Fan Yu, who Zhou Yi had taken Huo Yuhao to meet in the past.

Once she saw Fan Yu appear, Mu Jin's expression immediately changed. Her previously arrogant and provocative temper had completely disappeared, and her face was somewhat pale. She took a slight step backward, and looked at Fan Yu with slightly red eyes. "You're teaming up with her to bully me."

Fan Yu's expression remained calm, but he furrowed his brows slightly. "You're the one who's pointlessly causing trouble for other people. If you want to make a bet, come; if you don't want to, don't bother Zhou Yi. As for our relationship, we're merely co-workers, nothing else."

"I'll bet. Why wouldn't I bet with her? Even though I lost to her, it doesn't mean that my students will lose to hers." Mu Jin suddenly turned around, tightly holding onto the railings with her hands. Meanwhile, her already-tearing eyes turned towards the arenas within the Assessment Area.

Huo Yuhao's team weren't aware that a scene like this had occurred on the Spectator's Stage; they were currently completely focused on their opponents.

The three young ladies in front of them were very pretty. They wore freshmen uniforms, just like Huo Yuhao's team. The girl standing foremost was rather tall; she was even slightly taller than Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong. She had short golden hair, and seemed extremely nimble. Her large blue eyes had long eyelashes above them, and there were a few cute freckles on her cheeks.

The girl behind and to her left had short fiery-red hair, while her eyes were a rarely-seen shade of red. At a glance, she seemed somewhat scary, but if you observed her carefully, you'd notice that her facial features were extremely exquisite. Her skin was jade-white, but the gaze in her eyes was extremely cold; she was even comparable to Old Lady Zhou.

On the other hand, the girl on the right contrasted sharply with the girl on the left. A long head of light-green hair was draped over her shoulders, while her dark-green eyes were filled with warmth. The delicate feeling she emanated caused one to unconsciously feel the need to be tender towards her.

The proctor announced: "Both parties, enter the arena and introduce yourselves."

The six people from both teams simultaneously entered the wide arena, and stood by their respective sides. Huo Yuhao's team of three maintained their original formation, with Wang Dong standing in front, Xiao Xiao in the middle, and Huo Yuhao right at the back.

However, the three girls changed their formation a bit. The golden-haired girl who had originally been standing at the front now moved to the back, while the other two girls simultaneously advanced to protect her.

The red-haired girl arrogantly announced: "Class 9, Wu Feng. I'm a Rank 25 Assault System Soul Grandmaster."

The green-haired girl glanced at her with a rebuking look in her eyes, as if she were blaming her for being too arrogant. She had even announced her own Soul Rank. However, she didn't change the format of her introduction. The contrast between her soft voice and Wu Feng's arrogant voice was as great as the contrast between their outer appearances. "Class 9, Nanmen Yun'er. I'm a Rank 24 Agility System Soul Grandmaster."

A monotone voice then rang out from the back, "Class 9, Ning Tian. I'm a Rank 31 Auxiliary System Tool Soul Elder."

Once her words left her mouth, Huo Yuhao's team was instantly stunned. A Rank 31 Soul Elder? They had truly never expected to meet one of the three Soul Elder-ranked freshmen just when they had gotten into the round of 16. Furthermore, she was even an auxiliary-type tool soul master.

It had to be known that the cultivation speed of a tool soul master was generally slower than that of a battle soul master. However, their opponent had been able to reach Rank 31 and obtain three soul rings at the mere age of twelve. This was no longer just a matter of talent.

Although they were astonished, Huo Yuhao's team didn't forget to introduce themselves. Since their opponents had started their introductions with their assault-type soul masters, they did so as well.

"Class 1, Wang Dong. I'm a Rank 24 Assault System Battle Soul Grandmaster."

"Class 1, Xiao Xiao. I'm a Rank 22 Control System Battle Soul Grandmaster."

Huo Yuhao was the last to introduce himself, "Class 1, Huo Yuhao. I'm a Rank 17 Control System Battle Soul Master."

After hearing the number '17', Wu Feng curled her lips in a very obvious manner, exposing a look of contempt on her face.

Wang Dong slightly squinted his eyes, and fixed his gaze on Wu Feng's body. He didn't know why, but he felt as if a fire had been ignited in his heart when he looked at Wu Feng's disdainful gaze.

Wu Feng also sensed his gaze. Their gazes met, and Wu Feng snorted coldly. The smell of gunpowder had already appeared between both parties, even though the match hadn't even started yet.

Huo Yuhao patted Wang Dong's shoulder, causing him to look back. Their gazes met, and although nothing was said, they both knew what the other person was thinking.

Right at this moment, the proctor loudly shouted, "Match, start!"

Wang Dong's feet tapped the ground, causing him to shoot off. His dazzling pair of golden wings suddenly unfurled as he charged forward.

Regardless of how confident they were, they couldn't help but blink and secretly admire the beauty of his Radiant Butterfly Goddess' brilliant pair of wings the moment they set their eyes onto them. n(.ø)-v)-e(-L//b..1-/n

Likewise, Wu Feng let out a soft cry, causing her delicate body to suddenly spring up. A strong wave of heat then surged out from her body, even causing the soft cry of a dragon to ring out. Wu Feng's delicate body then suddenly became slender. As she jumped into the air, her appearance unexpectedly turned into that of a matured sixteen or seventeen-year-old girl. Her slender body directly tore her uniform, exposing the skintight clothes underneath.

Clearly, she had already made her preparations. She wore an extremely elastic leather suit inside, exposing her large and delicate thighs. Furthermore, her leather suit was like a jumpsuit that got smaller as it went higher, enveloping her soft chest that had become plump after she released her martial soul.

A light-red luster rippled through her skin. An exquisite set of dragon scales started appearing on her face and spreading downwards, following her arms until they reached her left arm.

When Wu Feng's martial soul, which was also draconic in nature, was compared to Bei Bei's Blue Lightning Tyrant Dragon's martial soul possession, it was much softer. However, that was only relative. The powerful aura of a top-ranked martial soul surged outward, causing two yellow soul rings to instantly rise from her feet.

Wu Feng's figure seemed slender and pretty, but she gave off a feeling that made it seem as if she was filled with explosiveness. Her body flickered, and she instantly appeared before Wang Dong. Then, her left arm swept sideways in an attempt to whip at Wang Dong's body.

Facing her tyrannical attack, Wang Dong didn't counterattack with a soul skill. Instead, his body half-turned in midair while his right leg shot out like lightning, colliding with Wu Feng's left arm.

A muffled "Bang" rang out, and Wang Dong's body was sent flying five meters backwards. On the other hand, Wu Feng was forced to the ground. Evidently, Wang Dong was the one who'd suffered a loss during their initial confrontation. Although they were both assault-type soul masters, they had different strong points. In terms of physical strength, the Radiant Butterfly Goddess clearly wouldn't be able to take any advantages from the Red Dragon.

At this exact moment, Nanmen Yun'er made a move. In the instant she moved, her body was as light as a feather, as if she wasn't affected by gravity. However, her speed vastly exceeded Wang Dong and Wu Feng, who were fighting. With a flash, she crossed several tens of meters and arrived in front of Xiao Xiao.

A pair of dark-green wings had appeared on Nanmen Yun'er's back, but were only visible after she'd approached them. Her wings weren't large, and they definitely weren't as dazzling as Wang Dong's Radiant Butterfly Goddess. However, they caused Nanmen Yun'er's speed to become incomparably quick. At the same time, her hands turned dark-green in color, making them resemble those of a jade statue as she swatted at Xiao Xiao.

Meanwhile, the distant Ning Tian extended her right hand, shouting with a clear voice, "The Seven Treasures revolve to produce a Glazed Pagoda". Then, she quickly spun around, causing a dazzling seven-colored light to immediately emanate from her body. This then caused a seven-colored pagoda that was a foot tall to appear in the middle of her right palm, where the seven-colored light had gathered.

This pagoda flickered with an overflowing amount of color, making it seem as though there were an innumerable number of gems that had been embedded in it. Once it appeared, it drew the attention of everyone standing on the tall stage.

Ning Tian's three soul rings, which consisted of two yellow rings and one purple ring, rose from her palm, circling the seven layered pagoda in a rhythmical manner.

Up on the Spectator's Stage, Mu Jin turned towards Zhou Yi and Fan Yu, right in time for her to see the astonishment in their eyes. Zhou Yi couldn't help but cry out, "The Seven Treasures Glazed Pagoda of the Nine Treasures Glazed Pagoda clan!"

Chapter 25.1: Seven Treasures Glazed Pagoda VS Spirit Eyes

If Wang Dong's Radiant Butterfly Goddess was the pinnacle of beauty for Beast Souls, the Pagoda that had appeared within Ning Tian's palm could be considered the pinnacle of elegance for Tool Souls.

Ning Tian's clear voice rang out the instant that the pagoda appeared.

"I call upon the first of the Seven Treasures: Speed." Her first soul ring lit up when she finished saying this, the rich yellow light causing the pagoda to become even more beautiful. Immediately afterwards, two dazzling rays of light shot out from the pagoda and landed on the bodies of Wu Feng and Nanmen Yun'er.

Huo Yuhao had activated his Spiritual Detection at the start of the match, but he discovered—to his astonishment—that he was unexpectedly unable to perceive the circulation of Ning Tian's soul power, nor the soul skill that she was releasing. Ning Tian's dazzling pagoda seemed to be emitting a mysterious soul power undulation, which was protecting her aura from leaking out. Furthermore, it was actually able to block Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection. *nOve/LB-1n*

Just what was this Tool Soul? It was actually this strong?

The scene that followed caused Huo Yuhao's team to become even more startled. Wang Dong's and Xiao Xiao's situation suddenly changed when the two rays of light landed on Wu Feng's and Nanmen Yun'er's bodies.

The speed of Nanmen Yun'er's palms suddenly increased as they swung towards Xiao Xiao, so much so that even a string of consecutive afterimages were formed in midair.

If Huo Yuhao hadn't had his Spiritual Detection active, Xiao Xiao might've suffered a great loss from this exchange. The instant that the ray of light had landed on Nanmen Yun'er, Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection had warned her. At the same time, Huo Yuhao—who was currently standing behind her—had suddenly grabbed the back of her shirt and pulled her out of harm's way. However, she'd only managed to dodge Nanmen Yun'er's palms despite this.

Meanwhile, Xiao Xiao had activated her Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron, causing it to descend from the sky with a flash of black light. Once it landed, it caused a violent bang to ring out; Xiao Xiao's first soul ring lit up as her Cauldron Quake activated.

From the start of the round-robin tournament till now, Nanmen Yun'er could be considered the fastest opponent they'd met. This was even more true since she'd received the boost from Ning Tian's pagoda. Currently, her speed had completely exceeded the level of Soul Grandmasters; even agility system soul elders might not be able to best her in speed.

On the other hand, Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection was even more important during direct combat situations such as this.

After missing her attack, Nanmen Yun'er immediately charged forward. From her viewpoint, she was confident that she could end the battle within the shortest possible amount of time by utilising her complete dominance in speed.

However, a sense of crisis appeared in her heart the instant she charged forward. She suddenly forced her body to a screeching stop, and her first soul ring lit up, causing her hands to shine with a green light. One could faintly see that it had also spread to her arms, causing a thin layer of green light to appear around them. It felt somewhat similar to Wang Dong's Guillotine Wing, but was clearly much weaker.

The instant that she, the Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron suddenly landed, separating her from Xiao Xiao.

Nanmen Yun'er had originally planned to dodge it and continue attacking, but the effect of Xiao Xiao's Cauldron Quake activated, stunning her.

As a violent boom rang out, violent seismic waves covered Nanmen Yun'er's body, immediately sending her into a daze for a brief moment.

The combination of Xiao Xiao's Cauldron Quake and Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection could definitely be considered an extremely powerful weapon. Even with her swift speed, Nanmen Yun'er had suffered a loss.

The Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron then charged forward, slamming her body away.

When the Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron landed on the ground with a bang and stunned Nanmen Yun'er, the distant Ning Tian opened her mouth again. "I call upon the second of the Seven Treasures: Dispel."

Another ray of light landed on Nanmen Yun'er's body after she finished speaking; even though her dazed state should've continued for a few more moments, it was forcefully dispelled. She immediately moved backwards as fast as she could, while dodging the Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron.

As Huo Yuhao looked at the distant Ning Tian, he was inwardly astonished. What a strong auxiliary system martial soul, and what formidable judgement! She didn't have his Spiritual Detection, yet she'd instantly been able to judge the changes in the condition of the battle, and had supported her teammates without any hesitation.

From the soul skills she'd released so far, Huo Yuhao could tell that her first soul skill greatly increased the speed of her companions, while her second skill could dispel any negative effects or sealing abilities her teammates were afflicted with, thereby returning her teammates to their peak battle states. Regardless of whether it was battle experience or the strength of her martial soul, she completely deserved to be known as a Soul Elder-ranked expert!

Huo Yuhao was astonished, but Nanmen Yun'er and Ning Tian were even more astonished than he was. Their astonishment naturally had nothing to do with Huo Yuhao. From their viewpoint, the powerful person was Xiao Xiao, who'd rapidly retreated and released her soul skill. Furthermore, the positioning and timing of the Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron had simply been perfect. Furthermore, she'd perfectly controlled Nanmen Yun'er's soul skill while simultaneously blocking her sure-kill attack, and had even narrowly counterattacked, forcing Ning Tian to use her second soul skill. The two girls couldn't help but view Xiao Xiao in a new light.

On the other side of the battlefield, Wang Dong and Wu Feng were still stuck in a fierce battle.

Both parties had top-ranked Beast Souls, but Wu Feng had Ning Tian's buff, causing her agility and attack speed to increase. At the same time, she'd released her first soul skill—Dragonfire.

A dense layer of flames had shot out from her body, covering everything within 30cm of her. This made it so that all of her attacks possessed the high temperatures of Dragonfire, and made things extremely inconvenient for Wang Dong.

However, Wang Dong's combat strength wasn't at all inferior to his opponent's. His second soul ring was at the thousand year rank, so the increase in power provided by both his soul rings was greater than Wu Feng's. The rarity of his Radiant Butterfly Goddess also surpassed that of her Red Dragon. Although his opponent's speed was raised, don't forget that he had the assistance of Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection! Whenever he spread his Guillotine Wings wide, he wasn't put at a disadvantage. Contrarily, he was even able to place himself in an advantageous position by relying on the predictive ability of Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection.

Ever since he'd fused his martial souls with Huo Yuhao's, a sense of mutual understanding had faintly appeared between the two of them. The effectiveness of Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection had become greater when used on Wang Dong, compared to Xiao Xiao. Wang Dong's Guillotine Wing would often slash straight at Wu Feng when even miniscule opening appeared in his head. Wu Feng—who was currently being attacked—felt as if her hands were tied. In her current state, she definitely felt that she was stronger than her opponent. However, she was unable to put herself in an advantageous position. She didn't dare to let herself be hit by Wang Dong's Guillotine Wing. On the other hand, Wang Dong's Guillotine Wing seemed like a parasite; before she could even make a move, her opponent's attacks would already be waiting for her. This insufferable feeling—one that made her want to vomit blood—caused her to let out a few screeches.

Fortunately, her current speed exceeded Wang Dong's, and she was able to change her movements much quicker. Although Wang Dong could predict her movements, he still had to focus on defense. Even if he could predict where and when his opponent would attack, he'd suffer a loss if he couldn't keep up with his opponent's speed.

Chapter 25.2: Seven Treasures Glazed Pagoda VS Spirit Eyes

Everyone expected the match to end quickly as soon as they saw both parties released their martial souls. Even Zhou Yi was no longer confident. However, nobody expected that Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao would actually be able stand their ground while facing two strong opponents.

Mu Jin muttered to herself with an inconceivable tone in her voice, "This... how is this possible? What're they doing? With a three-ringed Seven Treasures Glazed Pagoda increasing their speed, their speeds should've increased by 40%! At the very least, they should be as strong as Soul Elders; why can't they beat their opponents?"

Zhou Yi turned around and glanced towards Fan Yu, who had an inquisitive look in his eyes. Zhou Yi nodded her head, causing Fan Yu to immediately understand what was going on. His eyes lit up, and he unconsciously glanced towards Huo Yuhao, who only had a ten year soul ring flickering behind him. He was currently the most inconspicuous person amongst the six people in the arena. *nope*)**LB**-In

"Is it him?"

"Yup."

Yes, it was Huo Yuhao.

Ning Tian's Seven Treasure Glazed Pagoda was absolutely at the pinnacle amongst auxiliary system Soul Elders, but wasn't Huo Yuhao's Spirit Eyes the pinnacle amongst control system martial souls? Although he was currently only relying on a single martial soul, don't forget that he was fighting against two Soul Grandmasters and a Soul Elder! Despite this, he was able to rely on his Spiritual Detection to counteract the advantages of the Seven Treasures Glazed Pagoda.

This was the strength of a million year soul ring. With the assistance brought about by his Spiritual Detection Sharing, he'd managed to take control of the entire battlefield. However, Ning Tian's strengthening abilities only helped two people.

Both parties were currently stuck in a deadlock. Although Xiao Xiao was able to block Nanmen Yun'er's attacks, she didn't dare to rashly make a move. This was because her opponent was simply too quick. At this moment, she'd already released all three of her Threelives Soulcrush Cauldrons; only after doing so had she been able to protect the two of them under the guidance of Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection. In reality, she was still stuck in a passive state.

Wang Dong was in a similar situation on the other side of the arena. If he didn't explode out with his power, he'd only be able to maintain his current situation. However, for him to counterattack would be extremely difficult. After all, his opponent was too quick; one bad move would give his opponent a chance.

A trace of doubt flashed through Ning Tian's eyes, thus she subconsciously looked towards Huo Yuhao. Xiao Xiao had a petite body, so she wasn't able to completely block Huo Yuhao's figure from view. On the other hand, Huo Yuhao was also looking right at her.

Their gazes met, and Ning Tian narrowed her eyes in a somewhat chilly manner. However, Huo Yuhao nodded towards her with a smile on his face.

Is it him? Ning Tian's heart shook. She looked at his soul ring, and saw that it was flickering with a gem-white light.

When the battle had started, their team of three had completely overlooked Huo Yuhao's existence; one couldn't blame them for doing so either. After all, how could a Rank 17 Soul Master, someone who only had a ten year soul ring, attract the attention of these Chosen?

However, seeing that the battle had reached its current stage, Ning Tian realised that something wasn't right. She was also the first person in the entire freshmen assessment to suspect Huo Yuhao.

How could a fellow who only possessed a single ten year soul ring manage to join Shrek Academy? Furthermore, his soul ring had been lit since the start of the match. This signified that he'd been using a soul skill the entire time. After realising this, Ning Tian couldn't help but recall what had happened at the start of the match. At that time, Huo Yuhao had claimed to be a control system soul master when he'd introduced himself.

What was his martial soul? What sort of soul skill was he releasing?

The instant she realized this, Ning Tian shouted, "Yun'er, attack that one-ringed fella in the back."

Ning Tian played the same role in her team as Huo Yuhao did; she was the brain of her team.

After hearing Ning Tian's command, Nanmen Yun'er suddenly sped up. However, she didn't attack Huo Yuhao straightaway, nor did she attack Xiao Xiao. Instead, she turned around and instantly charged towards Wang Dong, who wasn't far from her.

Nanmen Yun'er's current speed was simply too quick. Although Wang Dong was aware of her sneak attack due to Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection, his reaction to it was extremely rushed. Furthermore, Xiao Xiao couldn't make it in time to help him out.

At this moment, their opponents fully utilised their advantage in speed in order to unleash a pincer attack on Wang Dong.

Nanmen Yun'er and Wu Feng were extremely coordinated with each other. In the instant that she made her move, a red light suddenly spilled out from her body. Her second soul ring lit up, and the Dragonfire around her body suddenly turned dark red. The dragon scales that were currently covering half of her body suddenly became thicker, and her eyes shone with a red light. At the same time, her left hand completely transformed into the shape of a dragon claw.

This was Wu Feng's second soul skill, Dragonfury.

Both Wu Feng's attack and defense increased due to Dragonfury. At the same time, it also amplified the strength of her other soul skills, causing the intensity of Dragonfire's heat to practically double in an instant. This caused the air around her to violently distort.

Nanmen Yun'er also activated her own second soul skill; as she pounced towards Wang Dong, her yellow hundred year soul ring flashed. She clasped her hands above her head, causing a jade light to condense above them in the form of a crescent moon, which then shot directly towards Wang Dong.

Her martial soul was the Jade Bluebird, while the soul skill she'd used earlier was called 'Jade Blade', which turned her arms into blades. On the other hand, when her second soul skill merged with her first soul skill, it was known as 'Jade Slash'.

Agility system soul masters were always known for their speed and attack power, so the strength of this attack could be imagined. The jade-colored blade of light cut through the air in a beautiful arc as it swung towards Wang Dong. More importantly, this attack of hers had a lock-on effect, which made it impossible to dodge.

Two Soul Grandmasters had simultaneously activated their second soul skills, and in addition to that, were launching a pincer attack on Wang Dong under the speed boost of the Seven Treasures Glazed Pagoda. They clearly wanted to end everything in one move, and take care of Wang Dong then and there, as he was the only assault system soul master on their team. After that, Xiao Xiao and Huo Yuhao naturally wouldn't be a match for them. This was a method of utilising speed; even if their opponent knew what they were planning, they'd still be suppressed.

However, how could Huo Yuhao's team simply sit and wait for death? If it were anyone else, they would've been caught unprepared. However, their advantage lay in the fact that they'd already predicted Nanmen Yun'er's attack the instant she launched it via her movement, as well as the circulation of Wu Feng's soulforce.

They weren't able to do anything due to their inferior speeds. However, the three of them still reacted in three different ways.

Xiao Xiao's gaze became focused. She raised her hands into the air, and her temperament suddenly changed. A gentle and beautiful look appeared on her face, and following that, the two yellow soul rings surrounding her were suddenly replaced by a single yellow soul ring. The Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron simply floated above her head, while a jade-colored flute had appeared in her hands.

This jade flute was extremely long, and there were lifelike carving of phoenixes on it. When compared to the steady feeling given off by the Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron, Xiao Xiao now seemed as beautiful as a fairy as she held the flute in her hands.

Her soul ring quietly lit up, causing a peaceful melody to ring out. The melody didn't seem very moving, but it made everyone who heard it feel a tangible viscosity. Following that, a jade-colored halo spread outwards from Xiao Xiao's body.

Chapter 25.3: Seven Treasures Glazed Pagoda VS Spirit Eyes

Regardless of how quick Wu Feng and Nanmen Yun'er were, they weren't capable of being faster than sound. Their movements suddenly became sluggish just as they were releasing their soul skills in preparation to launch a pincer attack on Wang Dong.

"Twin martial souls!" Almost everyone in the audience gasped in surprise.

That's right, Xiao Xiao was currently using her second martial soul—the Ninephoenix Worshipping Flute. Although it only had a single soul ring, Xiao Xiao was still displaying the might of a control system Tool Soul Master.

In terms of quality, there was still a large gap between her Ninephoenix Worshipping Flute and Ning Tian's Seven Treasures Glazed Pagoda. Her first soul skill could only decrease the speed of her opponents by 20%. However, even though that was the case, it was still enough to considerably affect Wu Feng and Nanmen Yun'er, who'd already adapted to their buffed movement speed. This, in turn, inhibited their pincer attack on Wang Dong.

Of course, Wang Dong wouldn't just sit still and his opponents attack him. The instant that Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection warned him that something was off, his second, thousand year soul ring lit up.

His dazzling purple soul ring instantly overshadowed the light of Wu Feng and Nanmen Yun'er's soul rings. Following that, the brightness of Wang Dong's wings increased even more.

The golden patterns atop his azure wings seemed to have been lit by countless tiny suns, causing it to burst forth with a strong radiance.

These golden patterns gathered on the front side of his wings. He suddenly turned his left wing towards Nanmen Yun'er, who was behind him. At the same time, he turned his right wing towards Wu Feng. Afterwards, the golden patterns atop his wings simultaneously erupted with a brilliant flash of color.

Wang Dong's entire body was instantly dyed gold, causing him to become the most dazzling person amongst the sixteen arenas.

Even the teachers within the Spectator's Stand who hadn't initially been paying attention to Huo Yuhao's match turned to look. When they did, they saw Wang Dong's dazzling pair of wings release a powerful attack in two directions at once.

This was Wang Dong's second soul skill—Light of the Butterfly Goddess.

This was the first time that even Huo Yuhao had seen the true might of this soul skill.

Wu Feng—who'd released her Dragonfury—was swallowed by the golden light in an instant. On the other hand, Nanmen Yun'er's Jade Slash was only able to cut through half of the golden light before it was worn away. After that, the golden light similarly struck her body.

Wu Feng and Nanmen Yun'er only felt something warm, before they were violently flung away. On the other hand, Wang Dong spun around in midair, before nimbly landing in an incomparably dashing manner.

This was the strength of a thousand year soul ring!

However, nobody managed to witness the hidden exchange that occurred between Huo Yuhao and Ning Tian.

In the instant that Wang Dong had released his soul skill, Ning Tian had begun to chant once again, "I call upon the third of the Seven Treasures—" However, she'd paused in the middle of her chant. Not only that, but her previous buffs on Wu Feng and Nanmen Yun'er had simultaneously disappeared.

Because of this, the speed-reducing effect of the Ninephoenix Worshipping Flute—which had been mitigated by her second soul skill—was activated. This was also the reason that Nanmen Yun'er, whose forte was speed, had been unable to dodge the ray of light from Wang Dong's Light of the Butterfly Goddess. After being struck by that seemingly warm ray of golden light, she'd directly fainted.

Ning Tian clearly wouldn't have made a mistake such as this. The factor that led to all of this came precisely from Huo Yuhao's Spirit Eyes, which were currently glowing with a purplish-golden light. It had been his Spiritual Shock!

His Spiritual Shock was precisely what had interrupted Ning Tian's buffs. Furthermore, it had even interrupted the thousand year soul skill that she'd been preparing to unleash.

There was a large gap between Huo Yuhao and Ning Tian's cultivation levels, yet his Spiritual Shock, fused together with his Purple Demon Eyes, had still been able to briefly stun even Ma Xiaotao, despite the gap between them.

After receiving his attack, Ning Tian felt as if her brain had been stabbed by a needle, causing her to blank out for an instant. By the time she was able to resist the acute pain in her brain and come back to her senses, Wu Feng and Nanmen Yun'er had already been blasted away by Wang Dong's Light of the Butterfly Goddess.

Wu Feng was in a slightly better situation than Nanmen Yun'er, as she'd simultaneously activated her Dragonfire and Dragonfury skills, which had raised her attack and defense by a good margin right before she was hit. After taking Wang Dong's attack, she hadn't been injured that much. She rolled across the ground a few times, but she was able to stand back up. However, Nanmen Yun'er had directly fainted after landing on the ground, in turn losing all of her combat power.

"Ning Tian, what're you doing?" Wu Feng looked towards Ning Tian with an angry look on her face.

Despite this, Ning Tian merely supported her forehead with her hand. After recovering from Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Shock, a blank look flashed through her eyes. However, in the end, she was the core of their team, which was why she managed to immediately react. *no ve*)**LB**-In

"Wu Feng, go all-out."

As she spoke, Ning Tian began chanting as quickly as possible, "I call upon the first of the Seven Treasures: Speed. I call upon the second of the Seven Treasures: Dispel. I call upon the third of the Seven Treasures: Power."

The three soul rings surrounding her pagoda simultaneously lit up. As she simultaneously activated her three soul skills, the pagoda in her hand became extraordinarily resplendent, so much so that it even seemed to increase in size. Three rays of light shot out from it and landed on Wu Feng's body. At the same time, three beams shot out, turned around, and landed on her own body.

Her second soul skill could dispel all negative effects that were used by auxiliary system soul masters. She didn't believe that Huo Yuhao would have another way to interrupt her skills now that she'd used it on herself.

After Ning Tian's thousand year soul ring took effect, not only did Wu Feng's speed increase by 40%, her strength also increased by 40% as well. When all of this was combined with her resistance to negative

effects, she'd be able to contend with assault system Soul Elders. Although they'd lost Nanmen Yun'er's combat strength, they still had a high chance of winning the match.

"Wang Dong, come back." Huo Yuhao shouted.

Unlike Ning Tian, he didn't put up a false show of strength. Flapping his wings, Wang Dong quickly retreated to Huo Yuhao's side. Xiao Xiao's Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron floated in front of her, and her two soul rings intersected with her other singular soul ring, allowing her to simultaneously release her two martial souls.

Huo Yuhao placed a hand on Wang Dong's shoulder. After that, Wang Dong folded his wings slightly, perfectly covering Huo Yuhao's body. Other than Wang Dong, nobody else was able to clearly see what he was doing, regardless of which angle they were looking at him from.

After Huo Yuhao placed his hand on Wang Dong's shoulder, they fused their soul power to form Haodong Power. This match had already become too challenging for them, and they could meet other strong opponents tomorrow. As a result of that, Huo Yuhao didn't want to continue wasting more time; he wanted to thoroughly decide the outcome of the match.

Wang Dong could clearly see a purplish-golden light appear in Huo Yuhao's eyes. That mysterious light in his eyes instantly shot out a three-inch long ray of light. Although it disappeared with a flash, Wang Dong was still able to sense a terrifying undulation of spiritual power suddenly explode outwards via his Spiritual Detection.

Chapter 25.4: Seven Treasures Glazed Pagoda VS Spirit Eyes

When two people fused their martial souls with one another, they'd become almost entirely immune to each other's martial souls and their abilities. If it were anyone else but Wang Dong, even if they weren't struck by Huo Yuhao's attack, they'd still have been dazed for a while due to being in such close proximity of his enhanced soul skill.

If Ning Tian felt as if her brain had been stabbed by a needle earlier, then this attack from Huo Yuhao was akin to a large hammer hitting her brain. Everything in front of her became white, and her body turned weak. She collapsed onto the ground, blood flowing out of her nose and mouth like tiny snakes.

Her second soul skill could only dispel auxiliary system skills, but Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Shock was a spiritual-type attack in the truest sense of the word. How could her second soul skill cancel it? Furthermore, this attack had been launched by Huo Yuhao with the assistance of Wang Dong. Even if the Seven Treasures Glazed Pagoda was stronger than it currently was, it wouldn't have the ability to block spiritual-type attacks. From another standpoint, Ning Tian's buffing abilities had actually been perfectly restrained by Huo Yuhao.

Wu Feng, who'd already charged towards Huo Yuhao's team, instantly slowed down; the speed and strength buffs she'd just received completely disappeared. Astonished, she turned towards Ning Tian just in time to see her falling body. She completely gave up on attacking Huo Yuhao's team. Instead, she turned around and ran to Ning Tian's side, picking her up and holding her in her arms.

"Ning Tian, Ning Tian what's happened to you?" Wu Feng immediately panicked when she saw the injured Ning Tian.

Xiao Xiao suddenly turned towards Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong, then whispered in an astonished tone, "Did you two do this?"

Wang Dong had a pleased smile on his lips, while Huo Yuhao shrugged his shoulders and said, "I don't like your use of the word 'do'."

The proctor was slightly astonished as well. Only after Huo Yuhao reminded him did he announce that they'd won the match. Even though Wu Feng still had an indignant look on her face, she simply wasn't able to fight against the combined attacks of Wang Dong and the twin-souled Xiao Xiao without Ning Tian's assistance and Nanmen Yun'er's speed. Furthermore, she was anxious to treat Ning Tian; she didn't have the time to care about the competition.

Mu Jin was completely astonished as she stood in the Spectator's Stand; so much so that she didn't even dare to trust her own eyes. Her team had had two Soul Grandmasters and a Soul Elder! The latter even had the Seven Treasures Glazed Pagoda, which was known as the 'Number One Tool Soul Under Heaven'. Despite all of this, they'd actually lost to two Soul Grandmasters and a Soul Master, who only had a ten year soul ring.

Not to mention her, nobody would've believed the results of the match after hearing the difference in power between both teams.

However, the facts were right in front of her: Ning Tian's team had lost.

The trace of a smile appeared in Fan Yu's eyes as he said to Zhou Yi, "This was truly a marvelous match. Your students have astonished me greatly; especially that Huo Yuhao. I didn't think that he'd actually have an ability like this."

There was only a gratified look in Zhou Yi's eyes. "Let's go." As she spoke, she took the initiative to walk towards the stairs. When she walked past Mu Jin, she glanced coldly at her. However, she didn't say anything. Instead, she jumped forwards and leapt off the twenty-meter-tall stage.

Fan Yu didn't even seem to see Mu Jin as he followed Zhou Yi.

"What did you guys do just now? Why'd that Ning Tian suddenly faint?" After leaving the Assessment Area, Xiao Xiao didn't forget to ask about the doubts in her heart.

Huo Yuhao chuckled. "It's because I used an attack fuelled by my spiritual power. She couldn't defend in time, thus she was knocked unconscious by it."

"Ah? You can even do that? No wonder her soul skills were interrupted earlier. Was that you as well?" Xiao Xiao's face was filled with astonishment.

Huo Yuhao nodded and said, "Perhaps this is an advantage of having a Body Soul. Furthermore, this was also due to my Purple Demon Eyes, which is a secret technique cultivated by my Tang Sect. I used the Purple Demon Eyes to stimulate my spiritual power, which made my earlier attack as effective as it was. As for why my Spiritual Shock became even stronger after I asked Wang Dong to return, it's because we've successfully created a fusion skill."

They were all friends, and Xiao Xiao had done her best during their previous matches. Furthermore, Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong would definitely need to use their Haodong Power during their matches in the

future, so they wouldn't be able to hide it either way. It was fortunate that they'd decided to tell her the truth, so as to avoid making Xiao Xiao feel alienated.

Xiao Xiao stared blankly at them. She pointed at Huo Yuhao, then pointed at Wang Dong. After that, she blurted out a few words that made the two not know whether to laugh or to cry. "I was getting more and more suspicious that the two of you were gay...."

Huo Yuhao scratched his head and said, "What do you mean by 'gay'?"

Xiao Xiao took Huo Yuhao's hand and placed it in Wang Dong's hand. Afterwards, she glanced disdainfully at Huo Yuhao. "How could you not know what such a mainstream thing is? Being gay refers to the love between two boys."

"You...."

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong simultaneously let go of one another's hands. With a bell-like laugh, Xiao Xiao immediately turned around and ran; she even remembered to release her Ninephoenix Worshipping Flute and play it so as to reduce the speed of the two guys that were chasing after her.

Contrary to their high-spirited excitement, Ning Tian slowly awakened after being treated by a high ranking healing system soul master in the infirmary.

After awakening, she immediately clutched her head in a fetal position. The intense waves of pain stemming from her brain filled her forehead with a cold sweat.

"Ning Tian, Ning Tian..."

Wu Feng hugged her concernedly, while Nanmen Yun'er stood to the side with a perplexed look on her face.

Teacher Mu Jin had an extremely grave expression on her face as she asked the teacher who'd just healed Ning Tian, "Just what happened to her? What knocked her out?"

The teacher muttered in response. "I'm not really sure. It seems like her head was struck by a heavy object, thus causing her to have a cerebral concussion. As you know, the brain is the most complicated organ in our bodies—nobody has managed to truly grasp everything about it. As such, I can only make a few minor deductions about what happened here. However, despite her injuries, her soul power seems to have a very strong ability to adjust itself, so the problem isn't that serious anymore. She'll be able to fully recover after a short time."

"Thank you." After thanking the teacher, Mu Jin walked over to the bed.

After a brief moment of uncomfortableness, Ning Tian's headache gradually subsided, and her breathing became much more stable.

Nanmen Yun'er asked Mu Jin in a quiet voice, "Teacher Mu, what happened? How did we lose the match?" Up till now, she still didn't understand how her team had lost.

Mu Jin had a grave expression on her face as she remained silent. Wasn't Nanmen Yun'er's question the exact question that she had in her heart? She didn't even know how they'd lost the match. Although she'd been able to clearly see the entire match from the tall stage, she hadn't been able to concentrate

on the minute details. This was especially so when Wang Dong had used his wings to cover Huo Yuhao, and in turn when Huo Yuhao had used their Haodong Power to activate his Spirit Shock. She hadn't been able to see anything then. Only Ning Tian would be able to quell their doubts, but that would be after she woke up.

After a full fifteen minutes, Ning Tian slowly came to from her coma. When she opened her eyes, she couldn't help but furrow her brows. Her headache had already subsided by a large amount, and her train of thought had gradually returned.

After Wu Feng helped her up and gave her some water to drink, Ning Tian's pale expression improved slightly. After seeing Mu Jin—who was standing next to the window—an ashamed look appeared on her cute face. "Teacher Mu, we lost."

Mu Jin nodded and warmly said, "It's fine, don't be too upset over losing this match. It's fine as long as you're safe."

Mu Jin's words caused a warm feeling to appear in Ning Tian's heart. "Teacher Mu, were you able to see why we lost from the Spectator's Stand?"

Mu Jin was stunned. "You don't know either?" *nope*)**CB**-In

Ning Tian placed her hand on her forehead and started to concentrate. "Once I finished buffing Wu Feng, I used all three of my buffs on myself in order to protect myself. However, I saw a purplish-golden light appear in front of me right after I finished. After that, it seemed as if an enormous hammer struck my head. I can't remember anything else after that."

Wu Feng angrily said, "Those bastards dared to be so vicious. Teacher Mu, we can't just let it go like this."

Mu Jin coldly swept her eyes over her. "Then what do you plan on doing? This was just an assessment. Do you think that this is a sect war?"

Wu Feng lowered her head and stopped talking. However, she clenched her fists tightly. Her eyes were burning with both anger and rancor.

Mu Jin asked Ning Tian, "Think a bit more carefully. Just before you fainted, did anything strange happen?"

After thinking for awhile, Ning Tian replied, "Although I don't know how they did it, the problem most likely stemmed from that one-ringed Soul Master. His soul ring was lit up from the start of the match till the end, which meant that he was constantly activating a soul skill that we couldn't sense, yet was still affecting the situation of the battle. I faintly saw a golden light flickering in his eyes. Their team had a very strong assault system soul master, as well as a twin-souled control system soul master. What qualifications does that one-ringed freshman have to form a team with those two? He must have some sort of special ability. During the most critical moment of the battle, he interrupted my soul skills, preventing me from buffing Wu Feng and Nanmen Yun'er. At that time, my head felt as if it had been stabbed by a needle. However, his attack was much stronger the second time around."

Mu Jin's heart shook. Right! That one-ringed freshman didn't seem to make any moves the entire length of the match. That soul master who had the Radiant Butterfly Goddess and the twin-souled soul master

were the only ones who fought. Then, what role did he play in their team? No wonder Zhou Yi was that confident; that freshmen with that ten year soul ring must have some sort of secret.

After calming the indignation she had in her heart, Mu Jin said, "If you lost, you lost. However, you should summarize your experiences and use them as a lesson when you do. In any case, you've already passed the freshmen assessment. There'll definitely be competitions between you and them in the future. So, for right now Ning Tian, have a good rest."

"Thank you, Teacher Mu."

Chapter 26.1: National Treasure, Cauldron's Trembling Shake

After Mu Jin left, Nanmen Yun'er took her leave as well. Only Wu Feng stayed behind to accompany Ning Tian. Although the three of them were a team, in truth, only Ning Tian and Wu Feng were closely related; Nanmen Yun'er was only a classmate of theirs.

"Young mistress, we can't just leave this as it is. That bastard dared to hurt you! Shall we use the strength of the clan?" Wu Feng said hatefully.

An unresigned look flashed through Ning Tian's eyes. "Sister Feng, don't let anger cloud your reasoning. This is Shrek Academy. How can we rashly use the strength of our clan? Furthermore, we lost in terms of personal strength; we can't randomly accuse others for our loss. If we want to wash this humiliation away, we'll have to work hard by ourselves. Also, haven't I said this before? Don't call me 'young mistress' in the Academy. We're sisters here."

"Alright." Wu Feng obediently replied, softly nodding her head as she did so.

After pondering for a moment, Ning Tian said, "Let's see if we can find a way to watch their match tomorrow. As long as we watch them carefully, I'm sure we'll be able to find a clue as to why we lost. They didn't rely on luck to beat us, they relied on strength. That student with the ten year soul ring seems to be known as Huo Yuhao; he's the one we should pay the most attention to. He could end up being our greatest opponent during our time in the outer courtyard."

Fortunately, the tournament's matches were held individually, which meant that there wasn't a large audience for each match. As a result, Huo Yuhao's team wasn't followed too closely.

Aside from proving themselves, Huo Yuhao's team had had their confidence levels increased after both successfully entering the top 16 and beating one of the three strongest teams. Soul Elders weren't that scary; after all, hadn't they just beat a team led by a Soul Elder-ranked expert? Even an extremely synergistic team like Ning Tian's had lost to theirs, so the excitement in Huo Yuhao's team could be imagined.

Huo Yuhao finally fulfilled his promise with Xiao Xiao. He first sold his regular amount of twenty fish, then brought the remaining fish he'd bought to the forest and had a picnic with Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao. This went on all the way until the sky had become dark, when the three quietly returned to their dorms.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong first went to clean themselves up. Huo Yuhao knew that Wang Dong was somewhat of a mysophobic, so he changed into a set of clean clothes. "Are we going to do it on your bed, or on mine?"

Wang Dong's face stiffened and he replied with a slightly angry voice, "Would it kill you to add the word 'cultivate'? Can you not make it sound so ambiguous?"

Huo Yuhao was speechless. "Don't listen to Xiao Xiao's nonsense, I don't like you. I definitely still prefer pretty girls."

Wang Dong humphed. "Let's do it on our own beds, your's is too hard."

Huo Yuhao furrowed his brows. "Stop arguing, let's do it quickly. If we cultivate together, our cultivation speed practically doubles. Don't you want to quickly catch up to that Ning Tian in terms of soul rank?"

Wang Dong smiled craftily. "Who would want to argue with you? Who said that we can't cultivate together while we're sitting on our own beds? Drag your bed over and make a 50cm gap between them. That way, we'll be able to hold hands if we stretch our hands out. Furthermore, we'll be able to use the remaining space as the dividing line between our sides of the room."

Huo Yuhao rolled his eyes. "Aren't you tired of all of this? Aren't you just lying to yourself?"

Wang Dong glared at him with his large, beautiful eyes. "Are you coming over or not? If you aren't, I'm going to sleep. I wasn't even a hardworking person in the first place. If it weren't for you, why would I even think of cultivating at night?"

"Fine, I'm scared of you then." Helpless, Huo Yuhao could only drag his bed over next to Wang Dong's and sit in a cross-legged position with his palms outstretched.

Wang Dong raised his hands to meet Wang Dong's, causing their Haodong Power to rapidly circulate throughout their bodies.

Defeating Ning Tian today had been the first time that they'd tried using their Haodong Power to activate a soul skill together. When they'd succeeded, Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong had faintly felt that there was a chance for them to covertly turn all of their soul skills into fusion skills via their Haodong Power. When the two of them had gathered their soul power to activate the soul skill, it hadn't been as strong as a true fusion skill, but it had still distantly exceeded the strength of their usual skills. They'd been able to smoothly defeat their opponents because of this.

On the other hand, their match today had given Huo Yuhao a feeling of power for the first time ever. However, their cultivation levels were simply too low. It had taken the two of them working together to activate the soul skill for it to barely reach the level of a Soul Elder. After all, Huo Yuhao's own soul power was still too weak. If it weren't for the fact that his Spiritual Shock was a unique spiritual-type attack, they probably wouldn't have been able to win their earlier match as efficiently as they had.

Only a single day had passed, yet a large number of freshmen had already been eliminated from the freshmen assessment. After the second day finished, only the top 16 teams—or a total of 48 students—would remain from this year's freshmen assessment. Everyone that had reached this point could be considered an excellent figure from this year's freshmen; so much so that they could even be considered as one of the most outstanding figures amongst their peers in the entire continent.

During the lot-drawing for the top 16, Huo Yuhao's team saw a few familiar faces. Huang Chutian's team—who they'd beaten during the round-robin tournament—had entered the top 16 as well.

Huo Yuhao whispered to Wang Dong, “How long do you think the Lan sisters will have to rest in order for them to use their fusion skill again?”

Wang Dong replied, “I don’t think it’ll be that long. Even though they’re twins, their fusion skill wasn’t that strong. I reckon that it’s because their compatibility rate isn’t that high—their fusion skill wasn’t explosive enough. Its ability to restrict opponents isn’t too bad though. However, they aren’t able to maintain the drain on their soul power for a long time. If we meet them again, you won’t even need to make a move. As long as you help me activate my Light of the Butterfly Goddess, I’m confident that I’ll be able to break their fusion skill.”

While they talked, they continued to observe the rest of their opponents. At this point in the tournament, Huo Yuhao was probably the only one-ringed Soul Master left.

There were even more people in the Spectator’s Stand today. The stands had already been filled up, despite the matches not yet being started. Strangely, there was an empty space in the middle of the stands that was about three or so square meters wide. An old man with disheveled hair and holes all over his clothes was sitting there with his legs dangling off the edge of the stand. He was drinking alcohol from a reddish-purple gourd that he was holding in his hands. In addition to that, there were a few pieces of fried chicken that had been placed on oiled paper in front of him. He was also holding a fried chicken leg in his off hand. As he drank and ate, he appeared to be extremely joyful.

Every single person who was watching the tournament from the Spectator’s Stand was a teacher at Shrek Academy, yet nobody had even dared to approach this old man, much less question him.

Wang Yan respectfully walked over to the sloppily dressed old man and whispered, “Xuan Lao, you’ve come.”

“Yep.” The old man simply snorted before he continued eating and drinking.

Wang Yan pointed towards the stage below and said, “The three youngsters that I talked about are over there. Yesterday....”

When he got to this point, Xuan Lao impatiently waved his fried chicken leg around and said, “I’ll take a look for myself.”

Chapter 26.2: National Treasure, Cauldron’s Trembling Shake

“Yes.” Wang Yan stepped to the side, as he didn’t dare to say anything else.

After the lot-drawing ended, the round of 16 formally began.

The area used for each individual match was widened once again, and eight massive arenas all simultaneously began their matches. This time around, Huo Yuhao’s team was facing a rather strange team. In contrast to yesterday’s match—when they’d fought against three girls—they were now fighting against three boys.

Once their opponents entered the arena, they stood in a horizontal line. The person who stood in the center was a fat boy. According to the enrollment rules of Shrek Academy, he was twelve at most. However, his body really didn’t seem like that of a twelve-year-old’s!

He was at least 1.7 meters tall, which meant that he was at least a head taller than anyone on Huo Yuhao's team. More importantly, the length of his waist seemed to approach 1.7 meters as well...

As he stood there, he looked like a miniature mountain of meat.

On the other hand, the two people standing next to him seemed like sprouts in comparison to him. Not only were they shorter than him by a head, they were even slightly emaciated. The two of them seemed somewhat similar, as if they were brothers. However, they weren't twins. Something that was notable was that their arms were particularly slender.

If one were to look at these three students from a distance, the two skinny students would probably be overlooked.

"Both sides, introduce yourselves. Prepare for the match to begin." The proctor said in a deep voice.

The mountain-sized boy slapped his chest fiercely, causing the fat on his body to jiggle. "I'm Xie Huanyue from Class 2."

"Class 2, Luo Tianlong."1

"Class 2, Luo Tianba."2

The two skinny students had names that sounded extremely domineering.

Huo Yuhao's team then introduced themselves one by one. When the proctor announced the start of the match, the round of 16 formally started.

However, Huo Yuhao's team were already twitching their faces before the two sides had even clashed....

The reason behind this was very simple; they'd met another three-ringed expert....

Xiao Xiao couldn't help but comment, "Are we just this unlucky, or is the school deliberately playing with us?"

Three soul rings rose up from the student known as Xie Huanyue. Furthermore, his three soul rings were all optimal ones. As they moved rhythmically around his fat body, they became increasingly clear. In the instant that he'd released his soul rings, his body had unexpectedly expanded once again, causing his height to jump from 1.7 meters to 1.9 meters. Moreover, the color of his skin had instantly darkened. He forcefully thumped his chest using his fists, causing muffled thumps to ring out. Immediately afterwards, he charged towards Huo Yuhao's team with large strides.

Luo Tianlong and Luo Tianba didn't release their martial souls straightaway. Instead, their bodies flashed as they began to run behind Xie Huanyue; they were using his enormous body to hide themselves.

This was their usual style of fighting, and it had allowed them the advantage of making the first move on many occasions in the past. Unfortunately, this was the first time they'd met a prodigy like Huo Yuhao.

Hiding? What was the use of that!? Could they hide from his Spiritual Detection? Following the appearance of a faint golden light in Huo Yuhao's eyes, a three-dimensional image instantly appeared in both Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao's minds.

This time, Xiao Xiao didn't even bother to bring out her Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron. Instead, she instantly released her Ninephoenix Worshipping Flute. At this point, the fact that she was a twin-souled soul master had already been revealed. Thus, she naturally chose the best option for the situation.

As her speed-inhibiting song rang out, Xie Huanyue and the two students who were hiding behind him were instantly slowed down.

However, Wang Dong didn't impatiently charge forwards. Instead, after releasing his Radiant Butterfly Goddess, his dazzlingly massive pair of wings unfurled, hiding Huo Yuhao and Xiao Xiao from his opponents view. At this moment, he and Xie Huanyue could only see each other.

Xie Huanyue didn't seem to care about the fact that he'd slowed down; he heavily stamped his left leg into the ground, but this time around, there were no more thumping sounds. At that moment, his first soul ring immediately lit up.

The three of them were able to predicted that he was about to jump due to Huo Yuhao's spiritual detection. However, how high could that enormous body of his jump?

In the instant that Huo Yuhao's team felt puzzled, they quickly realised their mistake.

Unexpectedly, Xie Huanyue's body shot straight into the air; it was almost as if he'd been shot from a Soul Cannon. He actually managed to jump ten meters into the air. Immediately afterwards, he curled his body up, making him look like an enormous meatball that smashed towards Huo Yuhao's team.

Luo Tianlong and Luo Tianba—who were clearly siblings—simultaneously made their moves. Although their speed had been reduced as a result of Xiao Xiao's soul skill, they were still relatively quick. There were two hundred year soul rings surrounding them; in addition to that, their forearms were silver, and an enormous Mantis Blade had sprouted from both of their arms. Not only were they quick, but their bodies seemed extremely dexterous as well.

At that moment, Wang Dong charged forwards. He didn't rely on his powers of flight to meet the midair Xie Huanyue, but charged toward the Luo brothers instead, simultaneously releasing his Guillotine Wing in an attempt to defeat their agility with his power. The Luo brothers were slowed down by Xiao Xiao, so they weren't able to completely dominate him in terms of speed. As a result of this, he had the confidence to block them even though it was a 1v2.

As for Xie Huanyue, who was currently falling from the sky, the only thing that awaited him was naturally Xiao Xiao's Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron.

As her Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron had already split into three, Xiao Xiao activated her second soul skill, Cauldron Sweep. She didn't have any hope of completely stopping him, she simply didn't want to completely fail.

Xiao Xiao didn't dare to look down on her opponent in the least, as he was a genuine Soul Elder-ranked expert. Thus, she used her most powerful soul skill in the instant she made a move.

Unexpectedly, Xie Huanyue didn't dodge or use a soul skill as he faced Xiao Xiao's attack. Instead, she allowed the three large cauldrons to strike him.

In the instant that he collided with the three cauldrons, Xie Huanyue's body whirled around in midair, his first soul ring finally lit up, allowing him to activate his first soul skill.

His originally humongous body once again expanded, and this time around, he looked like a balloon that was being filled with air, causing his body to become perfectly round. n)/OrelB1n

Just as Xiao Xiao's Cauldron Sweep was about to activate its special effect for striking his body, the enormous 'balloon' suddenly shrunk, neutralising a large chunk of its power. After that, it immediately shot straight towards Xiao Xiao.

How strong! In that instant, Huo Yuhao and Xiao Xiao knew that they wouldn't be able to block his charge. This Xie Huanyue had an extremely mysterious martial soul, one which seemed unique amongst Beast Souls. However, they didn't know what it was.

On the other side of the battlefield, Wang Dong hadn't been put at a disadvantage; even though his opponents were strong, he'd still been able to rely on his Spiritual Detection combined with the durability and sharpness of his Guillotine Wing to fight on an even footing against the two people. However, the Luo brothers weren't just quick; they were crafty as well. They avoided directly clashing with Wang Dong entirely, putting them in a stalemate for the time being.

"Bang—" Xie Huanyue's enormous body was akin to a huge ball as he descended, but he was still sent flying by the Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron in the end. This was more or less because he'd been simultaneously struck by Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Shock and Xiao Xiao's Cauldron Sweep.

1. Means 'Gathering the Heavenly Dragon/Allheaven Dragon'.
2. Gathering the Heavenly Tyrant/Allheaven Tyrant.

Chapter 26.3: National Treasure, Cauldron's Trembling Shake

Because he wasn't able to use his force-neutralising soul skill due to Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Shock, he was sent flying.

Unfortunately, Xiao Xiao's Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron clearly didn't have enough power to threaten him. After his enormous body landed on the ground, he instantly bounced back up into the air.

Huo Yuhao had a stunned look on his face. When he'd used his Spiritual Shock on Xie Huanyue, he'd clearly been able to feel it slow down upon touching his fleshy skin. Furthermore, his spiritual power had also been filtered before it entered Xie Huanyue's brain. In the end, he'd only been dazed for an instant, which was about as effective as when he'd used it on Ma Xiaotao. Just what kind of martial soul is that!? How can it be this troublesome?!

The pressure surrounding Huo Yuhao and Xiao Xiao suddenly increased, which Wang Dong was naturally able to sense via Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection. A cold light flickered through his eyes as his wings suddenly flashed, forcefully shoving the Luo brothers backwards. Immediately afterwards, his second soul ring lit up.

The dazzling Light of the Butterfly Goddess once again appeared on the battlefield. Even though it didn't have a lock-on effect, Wang Dong definitely wouldn't miss his target, due to the foresight that Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection gave him.

The Luo brothers naturally wouldn't just stand there and wait to be defeated, but didn't have a support skill like Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection. As such, their reaction speed was much slower than Wang Dong's. By the time they'd readied their second soul skill, Wang Dong had already released his.

The Luo brothers sent out several tens of blade lights from their Mantis Blades in an attempt to stop Wang Dong's Light of the Butterfly Goddess, but it was all for naught. They were completely inferior to Wang Dong in all aspects, regardless of whether it was their soul rank, the quality of their martial souls, or even the age of their soul rings. A golden light flickered outwards as Wang Dong's Light of the Butterfly Goddess released its full power, forcefully blasting them away. However, the instant that their soul skills were broken, the proctor in charge of the match rushed into the arena like a ghost, retrieved them from the golden light, then left like a bolt of lightning. Evidently, he'd determined that the Luo brothers would've suffered heavy injuries from Wang Dong's attack. Thus, he'd interfered in the match. However, his interference signified that they'd be unable to continue any further.

Wang Dong's accurate judgement, high attack power, and prompt decision making skills were all acknowledged by the teachers watching their match. However, in the instant that Wang Dong had triumphed over his opponents, Huo Yuhao and Xiao Xiao were in the middle of taking on Xie Huanyue's all-out attack.

In reality, the total strength of Xie Huanyue's team was weaker than that of Ning Tian's team; there was an insurmountable distance between the Luo brothers and Wu Feng and Nanmen Yun'er due to the massive gap in quality between their martial souls. However, the teachers had privately evaluated all of the Soul Elders within the freshmen classes, and Xie Huanyue's had ended up ranked higher than Ning Tian. It could be seen how tyrannical he was from this.

After falling from the sky again, Xie Huanyue's second soul ring lit up. Huo Yuhao repeated his old tactic and sent another Spiritual Shock towards him. At the same time, Xiao Xiao made a move with her Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron. Their current objective was to drag the fight out between the three of them for as long as they could, so that they could wait for Wang Dong to return. When he did, they'd use the combined strength of all three of them to take on Xie Huanyue.

However, although Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection was able to detect where his opponents would move, he wasn't able to find out the specific soul skill they were planning to use.

Xie Huanyue's second soul ring suddenly lit up while he was still in midair, and he waved his originally stocky right arm. Just as Huo Yuhao activated his Spiritual Shock, Xie Huanyue's arm grew longer, and suddenly smacked all three of Xiao Xiao's Threelives Soulcrush Cauldrons that were flying towards him away with surprising accuracy.

Even though Xiao Xiao immediately activated her Cauldron Shock skill, Xie Huanyue's arm simply smashed through it. His monstrous strength had actually sent all three of her cauldrons flying. Immediately afterwards, his ball-like body descended from the sky. He extended the hand that he'd used to sweep the cauldrons away once again, and sent it towards Xiao Xiao.

He was affected by the Spiritual Shock for too short a time, and his control over his soul skills had reached the pinnacle; this was true foresight. After predicting the instant that Huo Yuhao would activate his Spiritual Shock, he'd used his own soul skill to escape danger by a hair's breadth. He'd placed himself in a winning position in but an instant.

Even though Xiao Xiao possessed two martial souls, her close-combat skills were extremely lacking. She'd always considered herself to be a control system Soul Master, not an assault or agility system Soul Master. As such, she wasn't too experienced in combat. When Xie Huanyue's enormous body fell towards her, she was left somewhat blank.

Huo Yuhao suddenly rushed towards her from behind and grabbed her waist. With a flash, his body swayed like a demon, allowing the two of them to evade Xie Huanyue's decisive blow. Afterwards, he immediately rolled on the ground with Xiao Xiao in tow, allowing them to escape the weight of Xie Huanyue's body.

"Pu—" Even though Xie Huanyue's enormous body had landed, the sound of a heavy collision didn't ring out. This time around, he didn't bounce back into the air; he rolled on the ground, following Huo Yuhao and Xiao Xiao.

This occurred just as Wang Dong defeated the Luo brothers by releasing his god-like powers, in turn causing Xie Huanyue to feel pressured. If he wasn't able to defeat Huo Yuhao and Xiao Xiao before Wang Dong returned... he didn't have any confidence that he'd be able to beat them in a 1v3.

The third soul ring on his fat body finally lit up, which caused his body to instantly be illuminated purple. This caused Xie Huanyue to look like an enormous purple ball. Following a low growl, a strong purple halo erupted from his body, allowing him to immediately catch up to Huo Yuhao and Xiao Xiao.

In that crucial moment, Huo Yuhao displayed the true quality of a man; he instantly stood up from his rolling position and exerted force through his arms, thrusting Xiao Xiao into the air—Xie Huanyue wouldn't be able to attack her while she was up there.

"Yuhao—"

"Huo Yuhao—"

Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao simultaneously cried out, but the tyrannical purple halo around Xie Huanyue's body had already collided with Huo Yuhao's. Huo Yuhao's entire body shook, and a purple halo rose from his feet. He stood there unmoving, while his Spiritual Detection Sharing instantly disappeared.

A figure flashed as the proctor pulled Huo Yuhao out of the arena just before Xie Huanyue's enormous body could crush him. This prevented him from becoming a meat patty beneath the meatball...

Xie Huanyue silently cursed his bad luck. However, he was still completely confident in himself. Defeating a Soul Master who only has a ten year soul ring isn't useful at all. That twin-souled Soul Grandmaster managed to escape. However, it seems like I still have a chance to win this battle! The Luo brothers were just his subordinates; he was the true source of combat power on his team. He was confident that he could use his three rings' strength to face two Soul Grandmasters, and felt that his chance of victory was still above 70%.

Chapter 26.4: National Treasure, Cauldron's Trembling Shake

However, he couldn't help but feel stunned when he looked up into the air. Xiao Xiao, who'd been flung into the air, had been caught by Wang Dong just in time. Wang Dong unfurled his wings while he held onto Xiao Xiao, allowing the two of them to remain floating in the air. At that moment, both of their

eyes had turned slightly red, which caused even Xie Huanyue, with his strength, to unexpectedly feel somewhat pressured by them.

“Wang Dong, let me down.” Xiao Xiao’s voice sounded somewhat chilly. At this moment, the girl who’d always been gentle in the past was truly enraged; Huo Yuhao had taken that blow for her! Furthermore, they hadn’t been sure that the proctor would be able to make it in time to save Huo Yuhao. If he hadn’t been able to make it, Huo Yuhao would’ve been severely injured, if not killed! How could Xiao Xiao not be moved by his actions?

Furthermore, she felt that it was her mistake that had allowed Xie Huanyue to get close to them. Currently, her will to fight had been entirely aroused.

Wang Dong retracted his wings and carried Xiao Xiao back down to the ground. He was just as angry as Xiao Xiao. As he fiercely glared at Xie Huanyue, he only had one thought in his mind. This bastard dared to injure Yuhao—I want to kill him.

Xie Huanyue didn’t make any impatient moves. As his enormous body moved slowly towards Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao, his first soul ring remained lit, allowing his body to remain as fat as it previously was. This was a special characteristic that belonged to his martial soul. As someone who owned a top-ranked defensive Beast Soul, he didn’t only cultivate his defense—his goals weren’t that simple. He wanted to become an all-rounded defense and control system soul master. Moreover, his cultivation up to this point had been extremely successful; so much so, that he, as well as another freshman who’d reached the Soul Elder Rank, had already become core disciples of the outer courtyard before the freshmen assessment had even started.

“Xiao Xiao, I need fifteen seconds.” Wang Dong growled. With that, he closed his eyes, simultaneously causing both of his soul rings to light up. Golden halos immediately started to appear from his dazzling blue wings. While this occurred, he raised his arms and folded his front wings.

Xiao Xiao nodded heavily, but didn’t say anything. Instead, she walked straight towards Xie Huanyue with large strides. The sounds coming from the Ninephoenix Worshipping Flute became extraordinarily passionate, and jade-coloured halos spread rapidly from her jade flute.

The Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron suddenly returned to her, and its three cauldrons surrounded her in a three-pronged formation.

With a snort, Xie Huanyue suddenly squatted down, then bounced himself back up into the air. This time around, he shot himself directly towards Xiao Xiao. His body was the most powerful weapon he had at his disposal, and even though his speed had been reduced, he was still extremely confident in himself.

At the same time, his second soul ring lit up as he looked for an opportunity to use his extensible arm to attack Xiao Xiao’s Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron.

However, just before he reached five metres away from Xiao Xiao, the three large cauldrons surrounding her simultaneously released a black light and shot towards him. However, instead of colliding with Xie Huanyue, they collided with one another above her head. At the same time, Xiao Xiao’s other two soul rings simultaneously lit up.

Practically all soul skills that belonged to a soul master could be used together with their other soul skills, but their level of synergy depended on both the strength of the soul master's martial soul, as well as the compatibility between the soul skills that were being used together.

Xiao Xiao finally revealed her strongest move as she faced such a powerful enemy.

National Treasure, Cauldron's Trembling Quake.

When the three cauldrons fused together, a violent bang rang out. An enormous cauldron that was double the size of her previous cauldron appeared, covering the sky as it did so. Mysterious runes emerged from the enormous cauldron, causing an indescribable sense of awe to burst forth.

Xie Huanyue's arm was forcefully deflected off the cauldron when he struck it, and when his fat body collided with it, he was actually glued to it, causing him to remain motionless in the air. Halos of black light that were being released from the enormous cauldron unceasingly invaded his body, causing Xie Huanyue to discover that the soul power in his body was unexpectedly rapidly evaporating.

Shocked, he hurriedly roused his soul power, wanting to utilize his powerful thousand year soul skill. However, to his astonishment, he discovered that he wasn't able to. His body seemed to be in a fixed state; he wasn't able to cancel any soul skills that he'd already activated, while at the same time he was also unable to release any more soul skills than the ones he had active. The only thing that occurred was the rapid evaporation of his soul power. On the other hand, the towering cauldron that was akin to a mountain continued to stand upright, as if it wasn't fazed by his attacks in the slightest.

The Ninephoenix Worshipping Flute instantly disappeared from Xiao Xiao's hand when the enormous cauldron appeared. Furthermore, one could clearly see black halos of light rising from her body as well. However, her expression was turning paler by the second.

The soul power consumed when fusing two soul skills using a special method like this neared the consumption of a fusion skill! When this was added onto the soul power she'd used up during the battle itself, Xiao Xiao definitely wouldn't last for a long period of time. However, Wang Dong's words were the only thing that was in her mind now. Fifteen seconds. No matter how I achieve it, I have to last fifteen seconds.

In the instant that Huo Yuhao had fearlessly thrown her into the air, her simple heart had been completely moved. In that instant, she'd been completely assimilated into Huo Yuhao's team. Although she was a girl, hot blood still surged through her heart. For our team's honor, and for my companions, I can sacrifice something as well.

Normally, fifteen seconds was a relatively brief period of time. However, it felt agonizingly slow now.

At that moment, a feeling of panic began to appear in the heart of the Rank 32 Xie Huanyue. When he looked into Xiao Xiao's eyes, he saw that they were filled with a resolute stubbornness; they clearly showed that she was willing to sacrifice herself to take him down with her! Is she crazy? This is only a match in the freshmen assessment! Although he wasn't sure what Xiao Xiao was doing to keep him from moving, he clearly understood that even twin-souled soul masters couldn't break one of the laws that governed all martial souls; the stronger its ability, the greater its drain.

One second passed. Another second passed. Yet another second passed.

The proctor began to get worried; he didn't know whether he should stop a match like this or not. Furthermore, even if he did stop the match, how would he decide the victor of the match? Huo Yuhao, who'd awakened from the intense feeling of dizziness the purple light had caused, clenched his fists tightly. Due to his Spirit Eyes, he was able to clearly see what was going on; Xiao Xiao was clearly overdrawing her soul power!

"Xiao Xiao, give up!" Huo Yuhao yelled. He wasn't willing to let his teammates get hurt, even if it meant losing the match!

Xiao Xiao's reply to Huo Yuhao was in the form of her tightly pursed lips. However, the black halo around her body seemed to intensify even further.

In that instant, Huo Yuhao was deeply touched by the stubborn look in Xiao Xiao's eyes. It wasn't just him; even the chicken wing-eating Xuan Lao stopped chewing his food and slowly nodded at Xiao Xiao.

Five, four, three, two, one...

When the last second finally arrived, a golden pillar suddenly appeared behind Xiao Xiao. Wang Dong's Radiant Butterfly Goddess had completely turned a brilliant gold, and following the appearance of the golden pillar of light, he rose into the air like a butterfly bathed in fire. As his body rose into the air, the golden pillar unexpectedly curved, transforming into a terrifying, enormous, crescent-shaped blade of light.

In that instant, the air itself seemed to have been rent apart as the entire arena was filled with a domineering undulation of soul power that was hard to describe.

As he looked at the enormous blade of light coming towards, Xie Huanyue was scared to the point that his soul nearly left his body. Even if he was extremely confident in his defense, he didn't think that he'd be able to block Wang Dong's attack.

The proctor didn't dare to hesitate any longer; he charged into the arena with a flash. However, he discovered, to his astonishment, that he wasn't able to separate Xie Huanyue from Xiao Xiao's Cauldron's Trembling Quake. As the enormous golden blade of light whistled over, the strong pressure emanated from it made the proctor feel as if he was suffocating—even with his Soul Emperor level of cultivation.

No way, is this something a Soul Grandmaster student can even use? Even though the proctor wanted to release his martial soul, it was already too late. Helpless, he could only use his body to forcefully block Wang Dong's attack.

At that exact moment, an enormous absorption force suddenly descended from the sky, causing the golden blade of light to turn towards the sky just before it hit the proctor.

A huge, fiery hand had suddenly appeared in the sky. It grabbed the golden blade of light and seemed to crush it within its grip. After that, the golden blade of light directly shattered with a "pu".

As he chewed on his chicken leg, Xuan Lao muttered, "This Orleanian chicken leg is a bit too salty today." With that, he stood up and slowly walked off the tall stage.

After the National Treasure cauldron quietly vanished, Xiao Xiao collapsed and fainted.

The brilliance of the Radiant Butterfly Goddess vanished as well, but Wang Dong forced himself to remain standing. He looked at the somewhat blank proctor with an unyielding gaze. "We've... won..." After forcing out these two words, he was unable to continue persevering, and collapsed.

"Wang Dong, Xiao Xiao." Huo Yuhao wildly rushed into the arena with all of his strength and hugged his two companions.

At that moment, Xie Huanyue's body had already returned to its original size, but his school uniform was soaked with cold sweat. In that instant, he truly felt that Xiao Xiao and Wang Dong had wanted to kill him, but there was nothing he'd been able to do about it. As the fat on his body trembled, he discovered that Xiao Xiao's gaze had been deeply carved into his heart.

The teachers in the Spectator's Stand were all completely silent. At this point in time, they'd were completely ignoring the other matches that were occurring or had already ended.

The individual strength of each student that made up the two teams weren't much to them. After all, one would have to be a six-ringed, Soul Emperor-ranked expert at the very least to become a teacher at Shrek Academy. However, they were astonished by Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao's stubborn conviction. Wang Dong's situation was still acceptable to them, as it seemed like he'd only used up all of his strength. However, Xiao Xiao had clearly overdrawn her soul power; this wasn't something that she could recover from in a short period of time.