

Tang Sect 281

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After three rounds of battle, Huo Yuhao still felt pretty good. While the amount of cold air the Snow Lady could absorb was limited, this was because Snow Lady was still a part of him. After the cold air was absorbed, the origin energy of Ultimate Ice would form new cold air. He also made his body absorb some of the origin energy when the Snow Lady took away the cold air. While the speed was slow, it was an alternative form of cultivation, and much easier than him trying to absorb it by himself.

The biggest benefit for this competition was that Snow Lady could maintain her momentum after she absorbed the cold air from his body. This was why Huo Yuhao said to Wang Dong'er that his temporary paralysis might not be a bad thing.

The other four members of the Earthdragon Sect could no longer sit still. After the first three members had been frozen into ice sculptures by Ice Lady, Huo Yuhao did not ask them to not take part in the upcoming group round. However, according to this tempo, they would soon find themselves unable to take part anyway.

Among the four remaining members of the Earthdragon Sect, the only female soul master stood up and walked to the stage with a serious expression.

"Hello, I'm Nan Qiuqiu." The Earthdragon Sect member took the initiative to greet Huo Yuhao.

"Hello," replied Huo Yuhao with a gracious smile.

Nan Qiuqiu looked at Snow Lady in Huo Yuhao's arms and said, "I know that she is an ability of your martial soul. Hence, I won't show mercy like my comrades." With that, she nodded at Huo Yuhao and turned away.

On the main podium, Xu Tianran, who was watching the scene interestedly, turned to Ju Zi and asked, "That should be the captain of the Earthdragon Sect, right?"

Ju Zi replied respectfully, "Yes, Your Highness. She's called Nan Qiuqiu, and she's the captain. While the more powerful members of their sect did not take part this time, she's still one of the most powerful members of their sect. She's probably competing to ensure that they don't do too badly."

Xu Tianran said, "Eh, not bad. While you're no longer in charge of intelligence anymore, you're still very well-informed! So, tell me, who do you think will win this round?"

Ju Zi was stunned. Then, she shook her head and said, "I don't know."

Xu Tianran said, "Huo Yuhao was a former exchange student in our Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy. He had the same teacher as you. How can you not know his prowess?"

Ju Zi was shocked, but her expression remained calm. She subconsciously looked at the middle-aged man who stood behind Xu Tianran. He had just passed the Prince a piece of paper.

"I interacted with Huo Yuhao for less than a month, and my knowledge of his abilities is limited. I just knew that he was a four-ringed soul ancestor, but he possessed twin martial souls. Now that he's in a wheelchair, I don't know how powerful he is anymore, nor do I know how much progress he has made in the past two years. Hence, I don't dare to make a judgment."

"Oh... then let us see," Xu Tianran smiled.

"Yes," replied Ju Zi politely.

Jing Hongchen, who sat next to Ju Zi, said, "Your Highness."

"Eh?" Xu Tianran looked at him inquisitively.

Jing Hongchen said solemnly, "We can't let this person go back. After the competition, we must make him disappear."

Xu Tianran looked in shock at Jing Hongchen and asked, "Hallmaster, why are you so interested in him?"

Jing Hongchen said bitterly, "Please don't laugh at me, Your Highness, but this person has made me suffer terribly. Not only is he exceptionally gifted, but he's almost as crafty as the Devil. He knows how to analyze the situation and make use of limited resources. I've only recently heard from my grandson that he's not competing on behalf of Shrek Academy, but instead on behalf of the Tang Sect."

Xu Tianran said interestedly, "What did he do to make you afraid of him?" For him to take part in this competition, he had to be younger than 20 years old. If someone so young could scare the Hallmaster, he must be extraordinary in some way.

Jing Hongchen said, "Huo Yuhao was the champion of Shrek Academy's team in the last tournament. At that time, he did not even have three rings, and yet was able to compete alongside his teammates. Furthermore, he showed off his skills in that tournament. He has twin martial souls, one spirit-type and the other ice-type. Furthermore, his ice-type martial soul is the rare Ultimate Ice. The fact that he can compete twice is a testament to his strength. Furthermore, on his way back to Shrek Academy the last time, he was even able to escape Senior Long's pursuit."

Hearing this, Xu Tianran was dumbfounded. "How can this be possible? With his cultivation, how can Senior Long...?"

"So this is one who made a bet with Uncle Long." On Xu Tianran's other side, the person clothed entirely in black opened his mouth to speak. His voice was weird, and one could not tell his age from his voice. Even his gender was indistinguishable. He looked demonic, and everyone couldn't help but turn to look at him when they heard his voice.

"Imperial Tutor, you know about this person?" Xu Tianran asked the person in black.

From the order of the seating, one could tell that the person in black was ranked even higher than Jing Hongchen.

"Yes. Hallmaster Hongchen asked for our help..."

In the arena, Huo Yuhao, who had started to battle, did not know that even in his crippled state, he had still caught the attention of the Sun Moon Empire's leadership. His attention was completely on his opponent. Nan Qiuqiu from the Earthdragon Sect was no easy opponent.

As the judge announced the start of the competition, Nan Qiuqiu released her martial soul. Two yellow, two purple, and one black soul ring appeared, showing off her rank as a Soul King, appeared.

A pink, chestnut-shaped crystal appeared on her forehead as she released her martial soul. Following that, her body started to grow. She seemed to have grown a head taller.

She pointed into the sky with her ring finger, and bright pink dragon scales started to grow from her fingertip. Unlike the other Earthdragon Sect soul masters, her scales were bright pink. With the growth of her scales, her right hand appeared to have turned completely bright pink. A faint pink light shone and instantly burned her entire right sleeve off to reveal an arm covered entirely in scales.

Then, she pointed in Huo Yuhao's direction. Her first soul ring lit up, and a ray of pink light shot toward Huo Yuhao. It was able to cross 100 meters in an instant as it appeared before Huo Yuhao.

This speed was almost as fast as a ray shot by a Class 4 soul engineer!

Huo Yuhao did not ask the Snow Lady to block it. He had to find out what kind of power this was.

He raised his right hand too, which was covered with a layer of ice crystals. He made a grabbing motion, and blocked the pink light ray.

The pink light ray was instantly destroyed. However, Huo Yuhao was deeply shocked. While it did not appear very powerful, since it had just crossed such a wide distance so quickly, its power exceeded his expectations.

It was not about the offensive power of the ray or its destructive strength. Instead, it was its specialty.

When the pink light ray came in contact with the Ice Empress' Pincer that was formed from diamond-like ice crystals, Huo Yuhao felt the ice in the center of his palm melt. That was unprecedented!

As a wielder of Ultimate Ice, he had yet to see anyone whose fire could beat him. Even after Ma Xiaotao formed his Dark Phoenix, Huo Yuhao was unable to judge the effects of its fire on him because they had never fought.

However, Nan Qiuqiu's ability was not Ultimate Fire! The soul power she released was extremely warm, and yet this soul power was able to melt Ultimate Ice.

This was...

The only ability this could be was.... annihilation? A power which could destroy all other types?

In the lessons of Shrek Academy, there was a special course that explained all types of soul power to the students. Annihilation was mentioned during that course.

Annihilation was extremely powerful. After it hit its opponent, it was able to destroy its target based on the target's type.

There were two things one had to watch out for when dealing with annihilation-type soul power or attacks. Firstly, it could not be countered by any type. Secondly, after it hit its target, its target's soul power would be depleted quicker than normal.

Huo Yuhao could not feel the depletion of his soul power just yet, as he possessed an Ultimate Ice martial soul. No matter how powerful annihilation was, it would have to expend a lot of soul power to disintegrate an Ultimate martial soul. If they continued to fight like this, the effects of its second trait would not be as obvious on Huo Yuhao.

Even so, Huo Yuhao was shocked. The teachers of Shrek Academy had mentioned that Ultimate martial souls were only slightly rarer than Annihilation martial souls. Just like Huo Yuhao's spirit-type, it was also difficult for them to form soul rings. He had never expected to meet one in this tournament.

Annihilation-type... Looking at her, could her martial soul be the rarely-seen Rogue Dragon of the First Dragons? That would be bad!

Other than being Annihilation-type dragons, Rogue Dragons also specialized in long-range attacks!

Nan Qiuqiu watched Huo Yuhao react to her first soul skill, the Light of Annihilation. A cold smile crossed her face. As Huo Yuhao assessed her abilities, how could she not assess his?

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She had been observing the Snow Lady's fighting style all this while. To her, Huo Yuhao should be a soul master who could tap into the power of his martial soul. However, this martial soul was exceptionally powerful. The fact that one could not see his soul rings meant that they were being deliberately concealed.

Her objective in using her Light of Annihilation was simple, she wanted to deplete his soul power. Using the accelerated depletion nature of annihilation, she hoped to obtain victory.

When Huo Yuhao blocked her first Light of Annihilation, she had already sent her second one out. However, her target was no longer Huo Yuhao, but the Snow Lady, who had flown into the air.

Everyone could see that Snow Lady was an Energy Body. However, to them, Snow Lady should just be a special soul skill of Huo Yuhao, and likely his most powerful soul skill.

The tiny Snow Lady moved in mid-air. She easily dodged Nan Qiuqiu's Light of Annihilation and then made a face at her.

Nan Qiuqiu was stunned. While they were 100 meters apart, her Light of Annihilation could move at a stunning speed. How could Huo Yuhao instruct Snow Lady to dodge her Light of Annihilation after he had just blocked another of her attacks? She did not believe that the Snow Lady was capable of independent thought. Like Zhou Sichen's summoning abilities, she thought that everything Huo Yuhao summoned was controlled by him.

However, she did not know that while Huo Yuhao could control the Snow Lady, she was a spirit that was one-of-a-kind in the world. She did possess her own life and independent thought!

Huo Yuhao moved. He pushed his wheelchair at a 'stunning' speed and advanced toward Nan Qiuqiu. At the same time, his Spirit Eyes started to shine. The golden light was not intense, but Nan Qiuqiu

instantly felt disoriented. Her third Light of Annihilation missed its target by quite a fair bit, and landed on the light screen far away, creating a ripple.

Eh, what's going on? Nan Qiuqiu's heart missed a beat. She calmed herself down and looked in the direction of Huo Yuhao and Snow Lady. However, what shocked her was the fact that she was now seeing double. No matter how hard she tried, she could not see straight.

What is this power? Nan Qiuqiu would never believe that her eyes had gone bonkers in such a short time. Doubtless, it was a trick of her opponent! However, what exactly did he do?

Spiritual Interference was the right answer!

One of the most powerful attacks that the Skydream Iceworm gave Huo Yuhao was the ability to effectively use Spiritual Interference at a distance. Huo Yuhao released this power, which was already in a weaker form, but it was still sufficiently powerful to make Nan Qiuqiu miss.

However, as the captain of the Earthdragon Sect, Nan Qiuqiu was no pushover. After she lost concentration momentarily, she quickly regained her senses. Her right hand was still pointed at the sky. This time, she extended three fingers, and her body slowly floated off the ground. She was now about sixty cm off the ground.

A sharp dragon roar rose from around her body. A blurry pink shape flashed behind her back and then disappeared. Following that, a ball of pink light started to congregate around her three fingers. In the blink of an eye, it became as big as a human head.

Nan Qiuqiu waved her right hand, and the pretty ball of pink light flew into the sky. While she could not see Huo Yuhao and the Snow Lady exactly, she could make out their general direction.

The ball of pink light expanded at an astonishing pace as it flew the sky. Thirty meters away from the ground, it stopped. Then, like a meteor, it came crashing down to the ground.

Boom!

An explosion rang out, and balls of pink light exploded all over the place. Each explosion had a radius of ten meters, and that was not the end. Following that, there were two more sounds of explosions. The successive chain of explosions caused the radius of the pink light to increase by at least fifty percent.

Chained Annihilation Explosions! This was Nan Qiuqiu's third soul skill, a domain attack. In the domain, the target might not necessarily be injured, but they could still be hurt by the explosion. It would cause a soul master's soul power to deplete at a shocking rate. Nan Qiuqiu liked this soul skill a lot!

Sadly, no matter how powerful Chained Annihilation Explosions was, it had to hit its target to be effective. Its continual explosions were able to produce so much strong Annihilation-type energy that even Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Interference was momentarily eliminated by it.

Nan Qiuqiu now realized that the person in the wheelchair was not in the domain of her attack. The power from the explosion had not affected him at all!

How... how can this be possible? Did he really distort my vision to this extent?

As she thought about it, she released her second Chained Annihilation Explosions. Nan Qiuqiu had always been resolute. While she missed the first time, Huo Yuhao had revealed his position. This opportunity was too good to let pass!

At this moment, the Snow Lady wriggled out of Huo Yuhao's arms. A ray of deep-blue sword radiance turned into a startling rainbow in the sky as it flashed out and disappeared. The light of the pink Chained Annihilation Explosions was instantly cut in half in mid-air. While the explosive power of the Chained Annihilation Explosions could still be felt, they all detonated harmlessly in mid-air.

Huo Yuhao pushed his wheelchair forward without any sign of haste as he advanced. The expression on his face did not change.

Accurate and powerful, was how Nan Qiuqiu would describe the power of that sword. She immediately thought of those two words. The little girl's battling abilities were so strong! Now she understood why her teammates had lost!

Her expression turned even more serious, and she no longer remained still. The tips of her feet touched the ground, and she turned into a pink ray of light hurtling towards Huo Yuhao. As a wielder of the Rogue Dragon martial soul, did she really specialize in long-range attacks? Just as everyone thought so, she surprised them all!

Huo Yuhao stopped his wheelchair. As his enemy was approaching him, he naturally did not need to move forward anymore. The Snow Lady flew toward Nan Qiuqiu, but stopped only ten meters away from Huo Yuhao. The eyes of the soul masters spectating the match lit up. Was this the maximum distance she could stay away from Huo Yuhao?

She lifted her tiny hand, and a round, icy halo appeared on the path that Nan Qiuqiu had to take to reach Huo Yuhao.

The tip of Nan Qiuqiu's foot touched the surface of the ground as her body twisted unbelievably to the side, and she actually started to move sideways before continuing her charge forward. In mid-air, she formed a 'Z' as she continued toward Huo Yuhao and Snow Lady.

"Eeeeyaa!" the Snow Lady cried out in shock. She lifted her hand and fired a ray of deep-blue light at the approaching Nan Qiuqiu.

Nan Qiuqiu did not dodge. She lifted her right hand, and her second soul ring flashed with light. Her body gave off a pink glow, and the pink in the palm of her hand became even more intense. The blue light disappeared as if it had been eaten by the pink light.

Annihilation Barrier. It could block everything!

At the same time, when Nan Qiuqiu straightened her body again, she was only ten meters away from the Snow Lady. She grabbed out with her left hand, and her fourth soul ring started to glow. Instantly, a huge pink dragon claw appeared in mid-air as it made a grab at Snow Lady.

Hand of Annihilation! She even possessed this soul skill! No wonder she was so confident. This was the best soul skill to use against the Snow Lady!

Hand of Annihilation, like its name would suggest, was a huge hand that brimmed with the power of Annihilation. Once you were caught by it, your soul power would be utterly depleted. With Nan Qiuqiu's current cultivation, soul masters with fewer than five soul rings would have at least half of their soul power depleted by her once she touched them. It was the best skill to use against an Energy Body like the Snow Lady.

However, the Snow Lady was controlled by Huo Yuhao. Naturally, she would not give up without a fight. Her cute little face turned icy-cold, and an intimidating look appeared in her deep-blue eyes. She lifted her right hand and cried out in a childish voice. She too thrust a palm out at her opponent. When her tiny palm was sent flying out, the huge Hand of Annihilation had already wrapped itself around her tiny body.

I win! Surfaced in Nan Qiuqiu's mind.

Any summoned creature would disintegrate quickly after it was caught by the Hand of Annihilation! While she found the Snow Lady cute, she was still a summoned creature! This was a competition, and nothing was more important than winning!

However, this thought only stayed in her mind for a short while. In the next instant, the huge pink hand turned icy-blue. Then, it turned into many specks of icy-blue light as it disappeared in mid-air.

The Snow Lady remained suspended in mid-air. However, her big pretty eyes were closed. She appeared to be sensing something. Huo Yuhao, who was not far from her, had the same expression.

"Oh!" The Snow Lady turned into a ray of blue light and flew back toward Huo Yuhao. She entered through the center of his forehead and disappeared.

She... resisted it? My Hand of Annihilation could not overcome a summoned creature?

Nan Qiuqiu stared at the disappearing blue light around Huo Yuhao in shock. She even stopped charging towards him.

Only she knew that the Hand of Annihilation was not just used to wear her opponent down. At the same time, it had a second, almost god-like ability. It could restore her soul power!

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Around 20% of the soul power that the Hand of Annihilation took away would go back to her. The power of the Hand of Annihilation was built on the basis of strong soul power. As a thousand-year soul skill, it would deplete as much of Nan Qiuqiu's soul power as a ten-thousand year soul skill. However, since it helped to restore her soul power, it was still bearable for her. After all, her enemy would suffer the greater depletion.

However, she did not regenerate any of her soul power from that blow. This also meant that her soul skill had been broken. It was destroyed by a summoned being. One had to know that the most powerful ability of the Hand of Annihilation was its ability to destroy summoned creatures! This was something Nan Qiuqiu had never imagined could happen.

"A powerful Hand of Annihilation!" Huo Yuhao complimented Nan Qiuqiu. It was indeed powerful. The palm that the Snow Lady thrust out was one of Ice Empress' Three Ultimate Techniques, Snowless

Glacier! Just as Nan Qiuqiu had expected, her Hand of Annihilation was very adept at fighting summoned creatures. While a spirit was not a summoned being, these two were highly similar. Hence, she was able to constrain the Snow Lady by quite a bit.

Without Huo Yuhao's assistance in summoning Snowless Glacier, she would still be able to resist the Hand of Annihilation. However, the powerful Annihilation in it was something that the Snow Lady could not take. Huo Yuhao feared that in the subsequent battle, she would face more of this Annihilation. Thus, he recalled her.

Nan Qiuqiu looked coldly at Huo Yuhao and said, "Your summoned being is the most powerful one I've seen, as well as the most agile. Not only can it use its own soul skills, but it can even destroy its natural nemesis, the Hand of Annihilation. This is something inconceivable to me. However, without her, you'll lose for sure."

Huo Yuhao suddenly smiled and said, "Are you bullying a cripple?"

Nan Qiuqiu paused momentarily. Only then did she realize her opponent was in a wheelchair. However, she said resolutely, "A cripple? Are you an ordinary cripple? If you couldn't summon such a powerful being, would you still be in this tournament?"

"Yes!" Huo Yuhao replied without any hesitation. "Don't think that you've won. The competition is not yet over."

Nan Qiuqiu's right hand glowed with the Light of Annihilation as she said, "Then, I'll end it for you."

"Wait, wait," Huo Yuhao's eyes betrayed signs of panic as he said, "Don't you feel shame when you bully a cripple like me?"

Nan Qiuqiu said harshly, "Don't waste time! While your summoned being is powerful and is able to destroy my Hand of Annihilation, it took quite a toll on you. I can see that this summoned being has a close tie with you. While it's powerful, it'll take quite some time for it to regenerate after it has taken too much damage. There's no point in you stalling."

Huo Yuhao grit his teeth and said, "Isn't your type my exact weakness? I'll still beat you, though!"

When she saw Huo Yuhao's determined and pained look, a cruel smile crossed Nan Qiuqiu's face as she said, "Fine! Let's see how you'll beat me!" As she said that, she advanced toward Huo Yuhao slowly, step by step.

The judge watched the two of them chat. At first, he wanted to remind them to treat the tournament seriously. However, when he saw Nan Qiuqiu approach Huo Yuhao, he stopped. He was also surprised that she was an Annihilation-type soul master.

Huo Yuhao sat in the wheelchair with an uneasy look in his eye. His right hand gripped the wheels of his wheelchair. While he appeared calm, panic rose in his eyes.

"You, wait!" Huo Yuhao shouted.

Nan Qiuqiu stopped and said, "What? What else do you want to say? You're really full of crap."

Huo Yuhao said angrily, "Don't think that you've won. I, I still have a trump card."

Nan Qiuqiu grinned. This time, she grinned in joy. She suddenly realized that torturing her opponent psychologically made her very excited. This was akin to telling her opponent, "Resist me! The more you resist, the more excited I am!"

"Well done! I want to see you what your trump card is. I thought you said you could win? So what if you can't win? Your summoned being is decent, why not join the Earthdragon Sect? I've never even heard of your Tang Sect before. The Earthdragon Sect is one of the top sects of the Dou Ling Empire."

Huo Yuhao said angrily, "Rubbish, how can I join your Earthdragon Sect? Does this mean that if you lose, you'll join the Tang Sect?"

Nan Qiuqiu said, "Yes! If a cripple who has lost his main offensive capability can beat me, that will mean that your Tang Sect is powerful indeed. So what's wrong with joining you?"

"These are your words? How can I know if you're trustworthy?" Huo Yuhao asked. As he spoke, he slowly pushed his wheelchair back. To Nan Qiuqiu, every single action of his reeked of fear.

"Of course I'll live up to my words! However, you'll have to live up to yours, too! There're many benefits to joining the Earthdragon Sect. Let's stop wasting time and end this!" As she said that, the tips of Nan Qiuqiu's feet touched the ground as she charged toward Huo Yuhao. She lifted her right hand, and her fourth soul ring lit up once again. Another Hand of Annihilation appeared. However, this time, it was making a grabbing for Huo Yuhao!

The wheelchair's wheels stopped spinning because Huo Yuhao had lifted his right hand. The look of terror on his face was wiped clean off. What replaced it was a smile.

He raised his right hand and waved it slightly. A huge dark-golden claw suddenly appeared. This razor-sharp claw was almost 8 meters long, and several times bigger than the Hand of Annihilation. It was terrifyingly sharp, and seemed capable of tearing the world apart. Wherever it touched, the air would be torn into five, long, black lights. Space itself was being torn apart!

The Hand of Annihilation was itself annihilated instantly. As the dark-golden claws slapped downward, they enveloped Nan Qiuqiu entirely.

Instantly, Nan Qiuqiu, who had thought victory was at hand, was dumbfounded. The terrifying dark-golden claw had not reached her, and yet, she could feel that the protective layer of soul power around her was being torn apart.

I'm screwed! Nan Qiuqiu's brain went blank. At this moment, all she could think about was survival and the smile on Huo Yuhao's face.

At this moment, an emerald light suddenly surrounded Huo Yuhao. Following that, a huge pillar of light suddenly shot out from behind him. It aimed itself at Nan Qiuqiu's body, enveloped her, and then moved her back 10 meters. The dark-golden claw that seemed only inches away from her body suddenly disappeared. It was forcibly retracted.

Nan Qiuqiu had now turned into an ice sculpture. Huo Yuhao remained in his wheelchair. To everyone present, he still looked like a cripple.

Everyone was silent.

This change in fortunes stunned everyone. No one thought that this youth, who sat in a wheelchair and who had only been battling with his summoned being, was able to attack with so much power. When the dark-golden claw appeared, the spectators, who were protected by a barrier from the arena, could still feel a terrifying aura. It was like a ferocious beast had appeared!

As he looked at the pink light glowing from within the ice sculpture, Huo Yuhao pushed himself up before Nan Qiuqiu. With his right hand, he tapped the ice and said, "Judge, I've won."

Doubtlessly, with the sharpness of his claws, he could have pierced through Nan Qiuqiu's body if he had wished to.

"Individual elimination Round 4, victory: Tang Sect," announced the judge numbly, staring at Huo Yuhao in shock.

Yuhao retracted his Darkgolden Terrorclaw and tapped on the ice sculpture that contained Nan Qiuqiu. At the same time, he hit the ground with his right hand. His entire body and wheelchair flew a few meters into the air.

The pink light suddenly brightened, and Nan Qiuqiu broke free from the Ultimate Ice. Protected by her Protective Annihilation, the Ultimate Ice did not affect her as much as it did the others, and she had still been able to move. If she was given enough time, she could break out. However, this was because Huo Yuhao controlled the energy he had placed in Ice Empress' Wrath. He did not want to hurt her.

"Stop!" The judge turned around and blocked Nan Qiuqiu. "The round is over, you've lost. Get off now. If you want to fight, you can do it in the team section."

"I, I didn't lose. You liar!" The last bit was aimed at Huo Yuhao.

The judge was perplexed as he said, "He has already shown mercy. If he really smacked you with his claws, you wouldn't be alive."

Rage made Nan Qiuqiu's chest rise and fall vigorously. Of course she knew that Huo Yuhao had shown mercy. However, she could not accept it! How... How terrifying is he? All that earlier was a show. With such a terrifying move, why would he be afraid of her?

Huo Yuhao smiled at her and said, "It's time for you to honor your word. The Tang Sect welcomes you. If you learn our Secret Techniques, the Annihilation power of your Rogue Dragon will increase greatly."

"Pft! Who wants to join your Tang Sect, stop dreaming!" Nan Qiuqiu cursed as she walked off the stage.

Huo Yuhao sighed and said, "Trust is all a man has. If you don't live up to your words, this incident will be in your heart forever. Your progress in cultivation will be harder."

Nan Qiuqiu's body froze. She turned around and said, "I made a bet with you. If you die, I don't have to honor it."

As she said that, she turned to the waiting area and shouted, "I'll marry whoever kills this bastard!"

Her voice was loud indeed. Not only did her teammates hear it, but those in the main podium heard it too!

Huo Yuhao's conversation with Nan Qiuqiu during the round had been inaudible to them. When she shouted that, a question surfaced in everyone's mind. What exactly did Huo Yuhao do to her?

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Huo Yuhao's expression was frozen. He had never expected her to have such a bad temper...

While he admired her, he only admired her annihilation-type abilities. This type was too rare, and under some circumstances, it could have unthinkable effects. It could even be useful in making high-level soul tools. Hence, he put on a show, and she fell for his ruse.

However, she would rather kill him than live up to her promise! My character is too awful. Had it been Dong'er, the results might have been different. After all, her face can charm both guys and girls.

Indeed, when the fifth member of the Earthdragon Sect jumped onto the arena, the first thing he said to Huo Yuhao, through gritted teeth, was, "Bastard, what did you do to my elder sister? If I don't kill you, I'm not worthy to be a human!" As he said that, he made a rush straight for Huo Yuhao.

The referee blocked him and said, "The round hasn't started!"

The fifth competitor appeared to not have heard him. Instead, he attacked the referee with a soul skill.

What happened next was totally expected. The young man was immediately sent flying by the eight-ringed Soul Douluo referee.

"Attacking the referee is a violation of the competition's rules. You are out. Next!" The referee said emotionlessly and coldly. He was probably the only competitor who had dared to attack the referee so far in this tournament. If not for the referee's status, he would probably have killed him there and then.

The sixth member of the Earthdragon Sect controlled his emotions. Unlike his predecessor, he was not as brash. Even so, he still gnashed his teeth as he looked at Huo Yuhao. Immediately after the referee declared the start of the round, he rushed toward Huo Yuhao without hesitation.

Offstage, Nan Qiuqiu sat in the waiting zone. The rage in her eyes gradually disappeared, and instead, was replaced by pensive thought.

Defeat, is my defeat really unjustified? While that guy has a powerful summoned creature, he himself is also powerful in his own right. With his claws, even if I had prepared for them, could I really resist them? What soul skill was that? It was so terrifying! If he's an ice-type soul master, that soul skill should come from a soul bone...

How much of his soul power was depleted in the previous four rounds? Can our remaining guys defeat him, or even kill him?

Before she could get an answer, the fifth competitor had been knocked down. The sixth competitor rushed onto the arena without waiting for her instructions.

Nan Qiuqiu's face turned pale. She knew that the Earthdragon Sect was going to lose for sure. As the captain, she had lost her cool, and now so had her teammates.

She was a proud maiden, and hence, she had allowed some key members of her team to rest during the elimination round. While the Earthdragon Sect team was not the strongest one that could have been assembled, they still had four Soul Kings. According to her original estimate, it was completely possible for them to enter the finals. However, this was just the first round! Also, their opponent had only sent one guy out. She did not even know the level of his cultivation! It was a humiliating defeat!

However, what else could she do? Defeat was defeat! If the sixth member of her team lost as well, any further competition would be meaningless.

Reality proved her tragic prediction right. When the Snow Lady appeared once again, as if she had never been touched by the Hand of Annihilation, the result of the fighting was sealed.

Aided by Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection, the Snow Lady revealed the full extent of her power and defeated the sixth member of the Earthdragon Sect, who only had four rings. Right now, Huo Yuhao rivaled Meng Hongchen's success from yesterday, as he managed to single-handedly beat six opponents. Of course, he had a much easier time compared to Meng Hongchen, as the wheelchair had made his opponents underestimate him.

"Keep calm, you must keep calm. Much of his soul power is depleted. Don't fight him head-on, but instead, slowly wear him down. Only then can you deliver the killing blow, do you understand?" Nan Qiuqiu suppressed the uneasy feeling in her heart as she instructed her last teammate.

"Yes, elder sister. Don't worry, I'll win." With that, the last member stepped onto the arena.

"I'm Xiao Ye, please guide me." The last member of the Earthdragon Sect looked rather decent. Unlike the previous two members, he was not brash. He even took the initiative to greet Yuhao.

"Hello, I'm Huo Yuhao!" Huo Yuhao replied with a smile. Actually, from start to end, other than the time when he made Nan Qiuqiu fall for his trick, his face was perpetually plastered with a smile.

The two combatants retreated to the edges of the arena. From afar, they watched one another.

Huo Yuhao clearly understood why Meng Hongchen was unable to hold on until the end. This round-robin style was draining indeed. Furthermore, his opponents were not weak!

If he were at full strength and not paralyzed, he would naturally not be afraid. After all, he had made a name for himself during his time at the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy by taking on many opponents at once.

However, right now, he could only move his right arm. It was a massive handicap! He could not use many of his abilities. In the previous six rounds, he had used the Snow Lady throughout, and while the origin energy of Ultimate Ice in his body helped in his regeneration, his soul power was still massively depleted. After all, he had been using his Spiritual Detection the whole time too!

A faint golden light flashed, and Huo Yuhao released the Snow Lady once more. As the referee's right hand came down, Xiao Ye ran lightly toward Huo Yuhao. As he ran, he also released his martial soul. Two yellow, two purple, and one black. It was the same as Nan Qiuqiu's, the ideal combination for a powerful Soul King.

“Not an easy opponent!” Huo Yuhao mumbled to himself. However, the smile on his face showed no sign of fading.

Xiao Ye’s martial soul was the Night Dragon. When he was about fifty meters from Huo Yuhao, he suddenly stopped, before releasing a black layer of light from his body. It instantly swallowed up every single strand of light in the arena. Then, the darkness moved toward Huo Yuhao, about to engulf him!

Control-type soul master! Huo Yuhao reacted to it instantly. Then, an apologetic smile crossed his face.

A control-type soul master was normally much more difficult to defeat than an assault-type soul master. Furthermore, if he could completely control his opponent, then he would have no difficulty facing multiple opponents.

However, this control-type Soul King’s power had something to do with darkness. He had to control his opponent’s vision. Huo Yuhao’s martial soul was the Spirit Eyes, but how could his vision be so easily controlled? With his Spiritual Detection, he did not even need his eyes to see! Hence, the audience watched as Huo Yuhao dumbly pushed his wheelchair into the patch of darkness.

The competition ended faster than anyone could have imagined. The darkness lasted for no more than ten seconds before it faded. Huo Yuhao remained standing, or rather sitting, onstage. Xiao Ye, however, had fainted, and was lying on the ground unconscious.

Huo Yuhao turned and smiled at Nan Qiuqiu as he said, “Thanks for going easy on me. The Tang Sect welcomes you.”

“This is impossible!” Nan Qiuqiu jumped up from the waiting zone. “He-he probably used some illegal method! If not, how could he defeat Xiao Ye?” Xiao Ye was their squad’s main control-type soul master. In terms of cultivation, he was only slightly weaker than her! His Night Dragon was powerful indeed, and it definitely did not just obscure his opponent’s vision with darkness, it had some control elements in it too! In the darkness, Xiao Ye’s full repertoire of powers would be revealed. Nan Qiuqiu had to use her annihilation-type power to overcome his darkness-type power to achieve victory. However, Huo Yuhao was able to beat him in a matter of seconds. Furthermore, he did not even freeze Xiao Ye over.

This was beyond her comprehension!

The referee looked coldly at Nan Qiuqiu and said, “Silence, the competition has ended. Between the Tang Sect and the Earthdragon Sect, the Tang Sect has won. It accumulated 12 out of 12 points. May the two sides please vacate the premises!”

Nan Qiuqiu did not hesitate as she rushed into the arena. She did not rush toward Xiao Ye, but instead, she made straight for Huo Yuhao. She had lost, completely and utterly. This was unacceptable to her at such a young age. While she understood that Huo Yuhao was much more powerful, she was still unwilling to admit defeat!

At this moment, a shadow silently blocked her.

“The competition has ended, what do you want to do?” The person who had blocked her was Wang Dong’er.

Nan Qiuqiu roared in rage, “Scram!” As she moved, her palm came toward Wang Dong’er as she released her annihilation-type power.

Wang Dong’er frowned. She raised her right hand too, and slapped over as well. Intense, golden flames rose.

Peng-!

The golden flames appeared slightly muted under the Light of Annihilation. However, Nan Qiuqiu stumbled back three, then four steps, and almost fell to the ground.

“You...” She raised her head to look over. Then, she saw a dazzlingly handsome “man” with light-blue hair pulled back in a ponytail.

Like all women who first saw Wang Dong’er, Nan Qiuqiu’s gaze froze. Wang Dong’er’s handsome face was like a magical cure. Instantly, her anger, unhappiness, and will to battle dropped by half.

He’s so handsome! Nan Qiuqiu swallowed a mouthful of spit as she said in a hoarse voice, “Soul Emperor?”

To beat her back with one palm without releasing their martial soul was a feat only Soul Emperors could achieve. However, Wang Dong looked so young! Earlier, “he” had been in the waiting zone! Nan Qiuqiu’s heart instantly turned cold.

[Chapter 282.2: Nan Qiuqiu and Nan Shuishui](#)

So-so this was how powerful the Tang Sect was! They actually had Soul Emperors who had yet to take part in the competition! Is that guy in the wheelchair a Soul Emperor too? If so, this defeat was not without reason!

I have to join the Tang Sect... However, they are so powerful... If I join the Tang Sect, my life won’t be as painful. Then again, how can I answer to my mother...?

Just as Nan Qiuqiu was having this internal argument, Wang Dong’er came over to Huo Yuhao’s side and asked in a low voice, “Yuhao, how are you?”

Huo Yuhao smiled and said, “Excellent! Did you see how cool I looked when I beat seven of them?”

Wang Dong’er covered her smile and said, “Yes, you’re very cool. Enough is enough. You almost tricked the other team’s captain into joining us. This is a resounding victory! However, why do you always seem to have some issue with a person called ‘Qiu’? Is it deliberate?”

“Keke...” Huo Yuhao said with an awkward look on his face. “As for that, Dong’er, you know... I...”

Wang Dong’er smiled and said, “It’s fine, we’ll talk about it later.” As she said that, she pushed his wheelchair with one hand as she placed her other hand on Huo Yuhao’s shoulder. Their Haodong Power fused and helped Huo Yuhao replenish his soul power.

After examining his body and ascertaining that he was fine, Wang Dong’er relaxed.

“Qiuqiu, get down now!” an angry voice rang out.

Nan Qiuqiu trembled. She turned around to look, and realized that a pretty woman, who shared a sharp resemblance with her, was speaking to her. However, her face was icy cold.

Only then did Nan Qiuqiu leave the arena with a dejected look on her face as she made way for the next round.

“Mom!...” Nan Qiuqiu said in a low voice.

The middle-aged woman said angrily, “Don’t call me ‘mom’! The Earthdragon Sect has been utterly humiliated because of you! I put you in charge of the tournament, and yet, you did not send a single strong team member out. Instead, our opponent thrashed all seven members of our team with just one guy! You, you, you...”

The chest of the woman rose and fell rapidly in her rage.

Nan Qiuqiu lowered her head and said, “Mom, I know I’m in the wrong. However, they are indeed powerful. The one in the wheelchair is at least a Soul Emperor. The one who blocked me just now is also a Soul Emperor.”

“Soul Emperor?” The middle-aged woman paused momentarily, but her face still betrayed an ugly expression. “So what if they’re Soul Emperors? You sent seven people out, but none of you could defeat a single one of them. In some rounds, your teammates lost without any reason. In particular, you, as the captain, not only led your team to defeat, but continued to holler afterward. What kind of behavior is this? This time, when we get back, you shall go to the Dragon Suppressing Cliff and cultivate alone for a year! If you don’t become a Soul Emperor by then, don’t even think of coming out!”

Nan Qiuqiu suddenly knelt in front of her mother. “Mom, I’m sorry!”

The middle-aged woman was momentarily stunned. Her eyes betrayed a tinge of heartbreak. Nan Qiuqiu was her daughter, after all! And she was indeed exceptional enough. However, because of how exceptional she was, she had become arrogant. Among her fellow sect members of the same generation, she was the most cherished one of them all. Her seniors liked her, and not only did her peers like her, but they even let her do whatever she wanted. This time, after she made such a huge mistake, the middle-aged woman was determined to take this chance to discipline her. If not, no one knew how she would screw up in the future.

“Get up! What are you doing in front of all these people?” The middle-aged woman shouted. This was the resting zone, and there were many other sects watching this spectacle. From the start, she did not count on the Earthdragon Sect to obtain good results here. Instead, her objective was to show them the world. However, they were eliminated after only the first round! Of course, defeat was just defeat. The more important thing was for them to learn their lessons! She did not find defeat to be particularly humiliating. However, she would not tell these youths these things.

“Mom, I don’t think I can go back with you. I...,” Nan Qiuqiu fumbled with her words as she tried to speak with her head bowed. A cunning look flashed in her eyes.

The middle-aged woman was stunned. Then, she bellowed in rage, “You dare to defy my orders? Don’t forget, I’m not only your mother, but I’m also the sectmistress of the Earthdragon Sect! You know what the rules of our sect are!”

Nan Qiuqiu shook her head vigorously, and then lifted her head once more. At this time, tears streamed uncontrollably down her face. "Mom, I'm sorry but... but it's too late. In the round just now, I made a bet with Huo Yuhao and I... I lost myself to him."

"What?" At this point, the middle-aged woman was truly stunned. "What... what are you saying? You lost yourself to a cripple? You... you are really infuriating! Are you going to spend the rest of your life with a cripple? Even if he's powerful, he's..." She could not speak anymore. Her entire face was red.

What was a tournament in comparison to her daughter's happiness?

When Nan Qiuqiu heard that, she realized that her mother had misunderstood her. She quickly explained herself, "No, no, mom, it's not like that. I lost myself, yes, but I lost myself to the Tang Sect. We bet that if I won, he'd join the Earthdragon Sect, but if I lost, I'd join the Tang Sect." As she said that, her voice became softer and softer as she lowered her head once more.

When the woman recovered from her shock, she asked about the details of the bet once more. Nan Qiuqiu did not dare to hide anything from her as she recounted the entire process once more.

"Mom, I know I made a mistake, and I fell for his trick. However, if I'm willing to bet, I should honor it. Furthermore, he's right. If I don't honor my bet, it'll be difficult for me to make any sort of breakthrough once my cultivation reaches a bottleneck."

At this point, Nan Qiuqiu's tears flowed freely.

The leader of the Earthdragon Sect was stunned. Not only did she lose the competition, but she had also lost her own daughter, too? As the sect leader, she could certainly forcibly bar her daughter from joining the Tang Sect. However, if she did it would prove problematic for Nan Qiuqiu's future!

She inhaled deeply and calmed herself down. She glared at Nan Qiuqiu, but at the same time, she pulled her up.

"Come with me." As she said that, she pulled Nan Qiuqiu toward the resting zone where the Tang Sect sat.

Over on the Tang Sect's side, Huo Yuhao had already told everyone his story about how he had made a bet with Nan Qiuqiu.

Everyone had an odd expression on their face. In the end, only He Caitou said something honest, "That girl is too silly!"

Xiao Xiao looked at him coldly and said, "She's just innocent, alright? Yuhao is too devious. He tricked her completely, so pitiful! However, it's not a bad thing for our sect to have more girls too. Hehe!"

As they spoke, the woman pulled Nan Qiuqiu over to them.

"Who's in charge of the Tang Sect?" The woman asked plainly.

Everyone from the Tang Sect looked at Huo Yuhao. The woman was stunned. Her eyes turned cold. Can this young man in the wheelchair be their leader, as well?

“Hello senior, what do you seek from us?” The woman resembled Nan Qiuqiu, so Huo Yuhao could guess their relationship. He felt awkward too. He had tricked her daughter over from right under her nose! This was a dishonorable move!

“You’re called Huo Yuhao, right? I heard about your bet with Qiuqiu. I’m the leader of the Earthdragon Sect, Nan Shuishui, and her mother. State your price, and I’ll buy her back,” the woman said plainly.

Nan Qiuqiu coughed, “Mom, I’m not a commodity...”

Nan Shuishui glared at her, and she shut up.

Huo Yuhao said with an awkward smile, “Senior, the Tang Sect does not lack money. Just now, in the competition, you know that words are weapons too. While we did make a bet, there’s no need to treat it so seriously. It’s alright if you take her back.” In front of her mother, he could not just tell her to live up to what she had promised in the bet and leave her life behind.

Nan Shuishui said, “While the Earthdragon Sect is not an influential sect on the continent, it’s still one of the top-ranked sects in the Dou Ling Empire. How can our words count for nothing? Since she made a bet with you, there’s nothing I can say. If you want her to join the Tang Sect, I’m fine with it, on two conditions.”

Huo Yuhao was stunned. What kind of mother would give her own daughter to the Tang Sect? While he did want to recruit Nan Qiuqiu, he was not confident that it would actually happen. After all, he had made the bet casually. He did not expect the opportunity to truly arise!

“What are they?” Huo Yuhao replied calmly.

Nan Shuishui said, “First, while my daughter did lose her bet to you, she’s still a disciple of the Earthdragon Sect. There’ll be a price to pay if she wants to leave my sect! For you, I’ll give you a discount! She can join your Tang Sect for a certain period of time. Afterward, if she wishes to stay, she can stay. If not, she is free to return. You can’t stop her.”

“Second, Qiuqiu is a girl. You can’t force her to do things that she doesn’t want to do. Promise me these two things, and I’ll agree to let her leave the Earthdragon Sect. If not, I’d rather she break her promise and remain in the Earthdragon Sect.”

Huo Yuhao looked at his friends. This mother was easy to negotiate with. These two conditions were like nothing.

“What’s a suitable time frame?” Huo Yuhao asked.

Nan Shuishui thought for a while, and then said, “Three years. If the Tang Sect can allow her to become a Soul Emperor in three years, you can extend the timeframe for another 2 years. However, after 5 years, it’ll be time for her to get married. By that time, we would have lived up to our promise. How about it?”

“I agree!” Huo Yuhao replied without hesitation. In these few years, there would be many changes to the continent. The Tang Sect needed talents to grow. With her current cultivation, it would not be difficult to get Nan Qiuqiu to rise to a Soul Emperor in three years. All she had to do was get six rings and rise a few more ranks!

Chapter 282.3: Nan Qiuqiu and Nan Shuishui

However, Huo Yuhao was confident. In the next five years, the Tang Sect would grow exponentially. He did not dare to say how strong the Tang Sect would be in five years' time, but it would not be hard to keep Nan Qiuqiu.

Nan Qiuqiu was stunned. She had not expected her mother to give her up so easily. The two conditions were almost meaningless! Five years! She would soon become a disciple of the Tang Sect for at least five years!

Nan Shuishui looked Huo Yuhao deep in the eyes, nodded, and said, "Alright, then I shall hand Qiuqiu over to you. As long as you don't deliberately bully her, it's alright for you to be slightly strict with her. I've spoiled this girl. This time, she has to pay for her own mistakes to learn a lesson. Oh right, where is the Tang Sect? After this competition, I wish to pay your sect a visit!"

Huo Yuhao smiled and replied, "We welcome you wholeheartedly. The Tang Sect is located in Shrek City. As long as you are there, it won't be hard to find us. The Tang Sect has a long history, but it has also had a period of decline. We're rebuilding the Tang Sect, and we are confident that we'll turn it into an even more powerful sect."

"Shrek City?" Nan Shuishui's eyes betrayed a look of shock. She dismissed some of the thoughts she had instantly. She turned her head to look at Nan Qiuqiu and said, "Alright, you're now part of the Tang Sect! Five years from now, in the next tournament, you make the call as to whether you want to return or not. It's settled!" With that, the sect leader of the Earthdragon Sect turned to leave.

While Nan Qiuqiu had planned to join the Tang Sect to avoid punishment, she could not help but feel wronged when her mother gave her away so easily. Tears streamed down her face.

Wang Dong'er approached her and said, "Qiuqiu, the Tang Sect is not a bad place. By joining the Tang Sect, we promise that it will not affect your future development negatively. We welcome you." As she said that, she extended her hand out.

Ever since Wang Dong'er got together with Huo Yuhao, she decided to give up her cross-dressing charade. Hence, she fell into her role as a girl, but she forgot about the dangerous impact of her cross-dressing.

When Nan Qiuqiu heard Wang Dong'er's words, she lifted her head to look at her perfectly-formed face. She nodded and not only did she stop her tears from flowing, but she reached out and grabbed Wang Dong'er's hands. Wang Dong'er led her to the resting area.

There was nothing wrong with Wang Dong'er holding Nan Qiuqiu's hand. However, it made someone else immensely jealous.

"She-she actually dares to hold Wang Dong's hand. I'll kill her...!" Meng Hongchen said with gritted teeth as she walked out of the resting zone.

“Be calm! Sister, you must be calm!” Xiao Hongchen rushed toward to hold her. A helpless look crossed his face. He did not know why his sister would lose a few IQ points everytime Wang Dong was mentioned.

Nan Shuishui returned to the Earthdragon Sect’s side and sat down. A smile crept across her face as she thought, “Tang Sect. What a sec! Shrek Academy’s Tang Sect. That is the perfect place to train Qiuqiu!”

The Earthdragon Sect had a mysterious secret technique that originated from its first sect leader more than a thousand years ago. They were able to determine the personality of a person just by looking at his/her face. Just now, she could see the righteousness in the faces of the Tang Sect disciples. If not, as a mother, how could she entrust her daughter to strangers? Furthermore, after she heard that the Tang Sect was in Shrek City, she was even more relieved.

Among the group of youngsters, at least two of them were Soul Emperors! What did that mean? Before they signed up, Nan Shuishui had deliberately researched past tournaments. Any team with a Soul Emperor would be able to enter the top eight! For them to have soul masters at that level, and for them to establish their sect in Shrek City, how could anyone believe that they had no ties whatsoever with Shrek Academy?

Due to her assessments, Nan Shuishui had enough assurance to make her decision. She abandoned her plan of bringing a few men to kick up a fuss at the Tang Sect. Of course, she would still pay a visit to the Tang Sect! She had to see if her daughter had a future in the sect. All mothers were the same in this aspect. No matter how tough they seemed, their kids could melt their hearts.

While the competition had ended for the Tang Sect, Huo Yuhao his team did not return to the hotel. Instead, they stayed to continue watching the tournament. He was waiting to see a particular sect fight.

Soon, his wait paid off.

As noon approached, the morning rounds for the second day were coming to an end. Soon, it was the last round.

“Holy Ghost Sect versus Heavenly Capital Academy. Participants, please approach the arena.”

Huo Yuhao was resting with his eyes closed, but when he heard the name ‘Holy Ghost Sect’, he opened his eyes immediately. He looked toward the resting zone.

Indeed, he saw a youth clad in black walking out. The tips of his feet touched the ground, and soon, he was in the arena. His attire was exactly the same as Tang Ya’s.

Holy Ghost Sect, Holy Ghost Church. It was indeed them. They really decided to take part in the competition!

Huo Yuhao’s expression turned serious. He stared intently at the youth in black.

Wang Dong’er sat next to him, looking slightly vexed. Right after she asked Nan Qiuqiu to sit down next to her, she realized that something was wrong. She had made the same mistake once more. Nan Qiuqiu finally calmed down and then, she continually asked ‘him’ about the Tang Sect. Then, she started to ask

more personal questions. Undoubtedly, she had her own secret objective! Wang Dong'er had experienced too many of these types of situations already.

"Wang Dong, where do I stay once I'm at the Tang Sect?"

"What method did Huo Yuhao use to defeat the last member of my Earthdragon Sect?"

"Wang Dong, you are really handsome, but your shoulders are slightly narrow. Eh, your feet aren't big either! What's your size!"

Nan Qiuqiu blurted out a whole bunch of crap in just a short while.

The other members of the Tang Sect pretended to not hear. They sat there rigidly, but the mirth in their eyes could not be concealed. Evidently, another girl had become infatuated with Wang Dong'er!

Nan Qiuqiu was no romantic. However, when she met this handsome young man who had managed to reach Rank 60 before he was 20, how could she not be attracted to him? Perhaps she did not even realize it herself.

Just like Huo Yuhao said, Wang Dong'er could charm both guys and girls.

At this moment, Huo Yuhao's attention was completely focused on the tournament. The youth from the Holy Ghost Sect in black looked plain, his face slightly pale. However, when Huo Yuhao cast his Spiritual Detection over him, he felt something eerie.

The Sun Moon Empire led the continent in terms of soul tools. For such a huge arena, the protective barrier was over five hundred meters high, and its protective abilities were amazing indeed. Hence, Huo Yuhao, with his current spiritual cultivation, had to expend a lot of spiritual power to penetrate the barrier. However, he had to find out more about the Holy Ghost Sect, so he did not mind making the sacrifice.

Earlier, when he finished off the Earthdragon Sect, Huo Yuhao had relied on his Spiritual Shock. Unlike before, he could now completely control the intensity of his attack. He could render his opponent unconscious without actually hurting him. If he wished, even a Soul Emperor could not resist a blow from his Spiritual Shock. Actually, this was his trump card, and hence, he had only revealed it when he was shrouded in darkness. He would not use it easily.

Huo Yuhao was not a real cripple. As his spiritual power increased, he realized that his soul power and his body could not match it.

For example, he would not dare to use his Eye of Destiny to release his Spiritual Shock. If he did so, his brain would be unable to take it, and it might very well explode. As for this problem, he tried to ask Elder Xuan what he should do. Elder Xuan gave him a simple answer. If a soul master wanted to make an all-around improvement, his soul power would serve as his foundation, as well as the most important measure. With a rise in soul power, other aspects of the soul master's body would increase as well. In the long run, his cultivation would become stronger and stronger. Regardless of whether it pertained to one's tenacity in terms of spiritual power or soul power, the pre-condition was that one had to have a strong body first!

Huo Yuhao's body was indeed more exceptional than other soul masters of his rank. Furthermore, with the vast life energy from the Life Gold and his twin martial souls, his body's caliber easily rivalled that of a six-ringed Soul Emperor! However, that was his limit, as he still only had five rings.

Right now, his spiritual power astounded even Elder Xuan. One could only guess the improvement he had experienced in terms of his spiritual power. Elder Xuan told him directly that if he wanted to capitalize on his concrete-material realm spiritual power, he had to reach the stage of a Titled Douluo. Only then could his body reach a level that allowed him to release his spiritual power without reservation.

Of course, there was a more superficial method. He could also retrieve a powerful soul bone that would allow his Spiritual Sea to stabilize. Like that, when he released his spiritual power, his attack would be more powerful. Of course, he would still be unable to maximize his full strength, and hence, the best way to overcome this problem was to rely on simply increasing his cultivation!

[Chapter 283.1: Team Holy Spirit](#)

However, he still could not use his immense spiritual power to its fullest extent. Chiefly, he could not use explosive-type abilities. As for Spiritual Detection, Spiritual Interference, Spiritual Sharing, and other pseudo-soul skills, they had all experienced a tremendous increase in power. This was why Huo Yuhao was still the main control-type soul master on the team.

As a faint light flashed, a cold look crossed Huo Yuhao's face. He narrowed his eyes and his spiritual power was locked onto the youth from the Holy Ghost Sect. From his target's soul power, he could sense that he was a five-ringed Soul King. He could not be said to be strong. However, the eeriness he gave off told Huo Yuhao that he was an evil soul master. There was no other possibility.

The Heavenly Capital Academy was an old, well-established school. Like the Earthdragon Sect that the Tang Sect had just encountered, it was from the Dou Ling Empire. The first person it sent out was also a youth. He was tall, sturdy, and clearly energetic.

The judge noted that both competitors were in their respective positions. His right hand came down swiftly, and the two competitors acted at the same time as they charged toward each other.

The Holy Ghost Sect youth's body started to shine with a pale, white light. His body seemed to remain normal, but his two hands, under the glow of the light, turned ghastly pale. As he lowered his head, his eyes turned white too.

What kind of martial soul was this? Even Huo Yuhao could not detect the martial soul this youth released instantly.

This was the first round of the tournament, and every team wanted to start their first rounds off with a bang. The youth from the Heavenly Capital Academy was not weak either. As he roared loudly, his body emitted a powerful energy.

Two long knives appeared in his hands. A total of five soul rings, two yellow and three purple, circled around his knives. Without a doubt, they were his martial soul!

The two sides quickly approached each other. When they were just inches away, the Heavenly Capital Academy youth leapt into the air. The first soul ring around his body started to shine and in mid-air, he sliced down toward the Holy Ghost Sect competitor in a crescent-shaped arc.

Yellow jolts of electricity shot out from the blades of his knives, and crackling sounds rang out as they arced through the air.

This martial soul was impressive indeed. On the battlefield, it was more powerful than normal assault-type martial souls! Huo Yuhao silently assessed the situation. At the same time, he began to concentrate harder as he observed how the Holy Ghost Sect youth would react.

The Holy Ghost Sect youth had five rings too. However, he had the ideal soul ring combination. As he noticed his opponent's crescent-shaped attack coming toward him, his body suddenly twisted oddly. Everyone felt as if he had turned into a shadow, causing his opponent to momentarily lose his target. The crescent-shaped attack landed on the metallic ground, leaving a deep scar behind. At the same time, a black tornado rose up from the ground. As the tornado shrieked, it charged toward the Heavenly Capital soul master.

The Heavenly Capital student was still in mid-air. In this position, his strength was maximized. His third soul ring started to shine, and the knives in his hands formed three rays of faint shadow. This time, the three rays, which seemed more powerful than the light from the knives, came rushing out. As the rays of blade light flew out, the body of the Heavenly Capital Academy youth shone with an intense yellow light. It was as if the sun had descended.

Triple Sun Moon Slash, a powerful thousand-year soul skill!

Instantly, the tornado that was about to encircle him was sliced to pieces by the knives. The three rays of blade light then turned inward, and quickly afterwards, they exploded into countless smaller rays that shot outward.

Regardless of whether it was in terms of strength, control, or power, this attack had them all. The other teams in the resting zone could not help but nod their heads in approval. This student from the Heavenly Capital Academy was extraordinary, indeed!

Just when everyone thought that the Holy Ghost Sect youth could not continue this fight anymore, the black smoke, which had just been sliced apart, suddenly spread outward. Following that, its color became paler, and soon, it turned purple before reforming itself.

With Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection, he could hear wailing and crying. From the inside of the thick purple smoke, a purple skull flashed and then quickly disappeared.

It all happened too fast. As it was too fast, almost everyone on-scene could not even react. The Heavenly Capital Academy youth had already been devoured by the purple smoke.

In the next instance, the smoke retracted itself and turned into an arrow as it flew into the distance. Over there, the Holy Ghost Sect youth's body reformed as he landed on the ground.

The Heavenly Capital Academy youth re-appeared in mid-air. However, he appeared to have lost control over his body. At that moment, his skin was deathly white. The knives in his hands disappeared, and his body fell from the sky, unmoving.

Oh shit! Huo Yuhao closed his eyes. He had been using Spiritual Detection to observe this competition. He had the best view and understanding of this entire fight. The soul of the Heavenly Capital Academy youth had been completely devoured. While his body was intact, it was just an empty shell!

The fourth soul skill! The combatant from the Holy Ghost Sect had used his fourth soul skill from the smoke. His soul skill was akin to an insect, a very odd insect. It was small and like a needle. If not for Huo Yuhao's spiritual power, accompanied with the evolution of his Purple Demon Eyes to the Sumeru Realm, he would not have been able to discover it.

The black smoke was a manifestation of countless insects from his martial soul. When the black smoke turned purple, it was because these insects opened their wings, which were purple. Then, their bodies entered a half-energy realm as they forced their way into the head of the youth from the Heavenly Capital Academy. They entered him from his seven orifices. Not only did they devour his soul, but they even ate his brains.

Such a cruel evil soul master! The Holy Ghost Sect youth, who had just devoured a Soul King, brimmed with energy. His icy-cold eyes betrayed a look of joy.

Evil soul masters were not only strong, but they were able to improve rapidly at a certain cultivation level. However, after they accumulated more than five rings, their cultivation would gradually slow down, depending on how powerful their evil martial souls were. The more powerful their evil martial souls were, the faster they would improve. At the same time, they required other forms of assistance. If not, why would they be called 'evil soul masters?'

"Heavenly Capital Academy, dead. Next."

When they heard the word 'dead', the waiting zone for the Heavenly Capital Academy instantly went into an uproar. Everyone stood up as they stared angrily at the Holy Ghost Sect competitors.

The first competitor from the Holy Ghost Sect rushed out from the waiting zone. After he ran out, the other members of the Holy Ghost Sect sauntered out. According to the rules, there should have been six members. However, only three of them walked out. Tang Ya was nowhere to be seen, there were just three cold youths. They all had different physiques. However, their eyes were all icy-cold and treacherous.

Including the one on stage, there were only four people on their team. This also meant that they were confident in winning this competition with just four members. What level of confidence was this?

The Heavenly Capital Academy sent two of its students to retrieve the corpse of their schoolmate. When they lifted his corpse, a huge amount of blood gushed out from his orifices, staining the arena red.

Over on the Holy Ghost Sect side, a youth licked his lips and mumbled to himself, "What a waste, such fresh blood."

"How can you kill?" The teacher in charge of the Heavenly Capital Academy stood up in rage as he made an angry protest.

"In previous tournaments, people died too. If you are capable, you can kill us too!" a cold, clear voice retorted from the resting zone.

The Heavenly Capital Academy had no right to enter the pavilion in the resting zone. The face of the teacher in charge changed rapidly. Suddenly, he strode toward the waiting zone.

“Stop, the teacher in charge can’t enter the waiting zone to direct the battle. If not, you’ll be disqualified.” The organizing team of the tournament naturally sent someone out to block him.

“We aren’t going to fight. We admit defeat,” the teacher said angrily. “This is a competition, not a life-and-death fight. That was pure murder! Everyone can see that it was blatant murder! It was not an accident from the competition. The Heavenly Capital Academy withdraws from the competition. Everyone get back, we aren’t doing this anymore.”

When they heard the teacher’s words, the remaining members of the Heavenly Capital Academy team sighed in relief. The youth in black was too mysterious! They had sent their captain out just now, and if even he died under such mysterious circumstances, how would the rest of them fare? Everyone feared death. They were here to compete, not to die!

On the main podium, Xu Tianran frowned and said, “Imperial Tutor, tell your guys not to go overboard. This is just a competition. There are other places for them to show off their skills where they won’t be subjected to such criticisms.”

“Okay,” the man in black next to him said plainly.

In just one round, the Holy Ghost Sect was able to scare its opponent off. Likewise, they progressed to the next round with 12 full points. When the youth in black walked off the arena, he was booed intensely by everyone. His cruel methods not only provoked the other teams in the resting zone, but also earned him the displeasure of the crowd.

Huo Yuhao sat there stunned in his wheelchair. His eyes were blank. Slowly, his blank eyes betrayed an incredulous look.

Wang Dong’er was the first to notice this. “What happened, Yuhao?”

“That voice, did you hear it? From the pavilion in the resting zone,” Huo Yuhao said dazedly.

Wang Dong’er paused for a while, and then said, “I heard it. It sounded familiar. Was that Teacher Tang Ya?”

Huo Yuhao shook his head and said, “No, no. It... it sounded like sister’s voice!”

[Chapter 283.2: Team Holy Spirit](#)

“Sister?” Wang Dong’er looked at shock at Huo Yuhao. Then she quickly got over her shock. Huo Yuhao had told her that he was an orphan. She was familiar with his background. There was only one person he would call ‘sister’.

“You mean to say that that was Sister Xiaotao’s voice? That... that can’t be real,” Wang Dong’er said in shock.

Huo Yuhao turned his head to look at her seriously and said, "Why can't it be real? If this is true, it would make sense. Sister Xiaotao's disappearance has something to do with Jing Hongchen. This is undeniable. He probably used some trick when he was observing her, which allowed her to leave so easily. Furthermore, when Sister Xiaotao disappeared, the Academy was under attack, too. Teacher told me that the attackers were a group of evil soul masters. The Holy Ghost Sect is the only sect formed from evil soul masters that I know of. If they captured Sister Xiaotao, then everything would make sense. Sister Xiaotao and Teacher Tang Ya have been captured by them. These bastards...!"

As he said that, Huo Yuhao clenched his fists and became more and more emotional. Despite how reasonable his prediction was, he would have never expected to see Ma Xiaotao here until he heard her voice.

"The competitions for the morning end now. For the teams that are competing in the afternoon, please don't be late. The teams who have finished competing may return to their hotels to rest and prepare for the subsequent rounds."

The competitions for the morning of the second day ended. However, Huo Yuhao could not help but stare at the pavilion in the resting zone.

He saw the group of black-clothed Holy Ghost Sect disciples quickly leaving the pavilion. Other than Tang Ya, his gaze instantly fell on a female disciple of the Holy Ghost Sect.

Like Tang Ya, her face was covered with a veil. Huo Yuhao closed his eyes briefly, and as his spiritual power vibrated, he was able to implant his own voice into her head.

"Sister."

The black-robed woman paused momentarily. However, she appeared to not have heard Huo Yuhao's voice as she continued walking forward with her teammates.

Evidently, the other youths in black respected her greatly. She and Tang Ya were in the center as they walked out.

Huo Yuhao paused momentarily as a look of confusion crossed his eyes. The result of his probe was not what he had expected. Could this mean...?

"Yuhao," Wang Dong'er called him gently.

Huo Yuhao nodded and said, "Let's go."

Circled by everyone, they also left the resting zone as they proceeded toward the Brilliant Delight Hotel. On their way there, Huo Yuhao fell into deep thought.

Nan Qiuqiu appeared to have calmed herself down. She was much quieter, but she still kept close to Wang Dong'er. When she saw Wang Dong'er pushing Huo Yuhao's wheelchair, the expression on her face changed. She harbored no good feelings toward Yuhao. If not for his tricks, she would not be in the Tang Sect.

After obtaining victory in the first elimination round, they had ample time to rest. Before the competition started in the morning, the organizing team had announced that the first elimination round would last four days because there were just too many teams. This also meant that they had two more days of rest.

It was not early, so the first thing they did upon returning to the hotel was to head for the cafeteria to eat.

In terms of dining, there were clear differences. For teams like them who resided on the fourth level, they could only have their meal in the common cafeteria. For teams who resided above the fourth floor, they could order their meals directly, and the hotel would try to fulfill their every request.

As they sat around the round table, dishes that had already been prepared were quickly served. While their treatment was not as good as the treatment accorded to more famous sects and schools, the food was not too shabby either. After all, the Brilliant Delight Hotel was one of the best in Radiant City.

Xu Sanshi took some food out to send to the injured Bei Bei. Huo Yuhao looked at Nan Qiuqiu, who sat next to Wang Dong'er, lifted the cup of warm water in front of him and said, "Come, let us all raise our cups. Qiuqiu, welcome to the Tang Sect. Now, I'll introduce everyone to you."

As he said that, Huo Yuhao introduced his teammates to Nan Qiuqiu one-by-one.

Nan Qiuqiu's mouth twitched as she glared at him and said, "Liar."

An awkward expression crossed Huo Yuhao's face as he said, "You can't blame me for this. At that time, you were too arrogant. I thought that no one would fall for such a trick..."

"What do you mean by that?" Nan Qiuqiu, who had just regained her calm with much difficulty, was incensed once again.

Huo Yuhao shook his head helplessly and said, "Let's eat."

"Explain this to me clearly before you eat." Nan Qiuqiu stood up suddenly. The anger she had been suppressing on her way here was only suppressed because of Wang Dong'er. However, on the way here, the more she thought about how she had ended up here, the angrier she got. How could she lose herself so easily? In the Tang Sect, she could not enjoy herself as much as she used to in the Earthdragon Sect. She also did not know how the others would treat her. Her panic and rage were all concentrated on Huo Yuhao.

Huo Yuhao looked at her in pity and said, "Now I finally understand why your mother was so willing to send you over to us."

"You..." Nan Qiuqiu was already upset with her mother because of this. When Huo Yuhao said this, this 'princess' was so triggered that she could almost explode. Her soul power was pulsating violently.

"What do you want to do?" Wang Dong'er turned her head over to glare at her.

Among everyone from the Tang Sect, Nan Qiuqiu disliked Wang Dong'er the least. Her face contorted with rage, she said, "Forcing me to join the Tang Sect is just a way for you to humiliate me. If you can, kill me now. I'll rather die than surrender!"

He Caitou said in a stunned voice, "Is it so serious? Sister, we are good people."

"Who's your sister, baldie?" Nan Qiuqiu said angrily.

"How can you say that?" Xiao Xiao could take no more. She slammed the table and stood up. A fight was on the verge of breaking out.

At this moment, Jing Ziyang chortled and stood up. She pressed Xiao Xiao and said, "What are you doing? What are all of you doing? Aren't you hungry? I'm hungry. Sister Qiuqiu, don't worry so much. Now that you're in the Tang Sect, everyone welcomes you. No one will target you for anything. Sit down and eat. Once we get back, I'll accompany you. Don't worry, if anyone dares to bully you, I'll stand up for you. I am like their teacher in charge. They'll listen to me."

No one reacted to what Jing Ziyang had just said. Everyone stared at her with an odd gaze. She sounds like a wolf in disguise...

When Nan Qiuqiu looked at Jing Ziyang, who was smiling, the expression on her face changed for the better. Finally, someone was speaking her language. Furthermore, now that her mother had allowed her to join the Tang Sect, she knew that her own abilities could not take so many of them on at once. Hence, she decided not to say anything, but instead ate her meal angrily.

Huo Yuhao looked at Jing Ziyang and then at Ji Juechen, who sat next to her emotionlessly. In his heart, he thought, It's not a bad decision to let these two train Nan Qiuqiu's temper.

No one from the Tang Sect took kindly to Nan Qiuqiu's temper. Hence, no one bothered her too much. They ate their meal in silence.

"Where does everyone want to go in the afternoon?" Huo Yuhao asked his friends after he wiped his mouth clean with a white cloth.

Xu Sanshi, who had returned from delivering Bei Bei his meal, said, "It doesn't matter. Haven't you seen all the teams that you're interested in?"

Huo Yuhao nodded and said, "I've seen the most important one, yes. As for the others, there are too many things that can't be seen clearly now. I recommend that everyone rest in the hotel for now and get ready for the next round."

Everyone nodded in agreement with Huo Yuhao's suggestion. They still had quite some buffer time afterward. This would benefit Bei Bei in making a full recovery.

"Alright, let's go back and rest." Huo Yuhao made the decision after he sought everyone's opinion.

Everyone stood up and prepared to leave the cafeteria. A displeased voice sounded, "Eh, wait a moment, where will I stay?"

Nan Qiuqiu looked upset as she stared at everyone. She felt as if they had all forgotten about her.

Before Huo Yuhao could open his mouth, Jing Ziyang walked up to her with a smile and said, "You can stay with me. While our living conditions aren't ideal, it won't be too much trouble to have one more person."

Xiao Xiao and Jiang Nannan stayed together. Wang Dong'er stayed with Huo Yuhao. Jing Ziyang and Na Na stayed together. If Nan Qiuqiu stayed with them, the three girls would share one room.

Na Na said, slightly peeved, "Sister Ziyang, what will I do?"

Jing Ziyang said, "It's fine! If we combine two beds, it should be enough for three people to sleep together."

"What? We have to combine beds?" Nan Qiuqiu looked at them in shock. "No, I must have my own room. Get the organizing team to give me my own room."

Xu Sanshi chuckled and said, "Beauty, who do you think we are? We're just a small, unknown sect. Will the organizing team listen to us? When in Shrek, do as the Shreks do. Since you've already joined our sect, stop making so much trouble for us." With Jiang Nannan present, he was much more reserved. Under other circumstances, he would have made fun of her far more mercilessly.

"That's... that's not possible," Nan Qiuqiu said defiantly.

Huo Yuhao said, "How about this? You can go and rest with the Earthdragon Sect for now. After the tournament ends, we'll bring you back to the Tang Sect. After all, you signed up as an Earthdragon Sect disciple, and you can't compete on our behalf."

[Chapter 283.3: Team Holy Spirit](#)

Nan Qiuqiu glared at him and said, "You eliminated the Earthdragon Sect. Do you think we still have rooms?"

"Er... then there's no choice. Third brother is right. I don't think the organizing team will give us a new room. How about you pay for your own room?"

Nan Qiuqiu's face turned green as she said, "Are you pretending to be stupid or are you really stupid? Is there even a hotel with an empty room during the tournament? Furthermore, now that I'm part of the Tang Sect, shouldn't you arrange for a place for me to stay?"

Everyone looked at Huo Yuhao with schadenfreude. Xu Sanshi tapped his elbow and said, "Yuhao, you brought this upon yourself. Solve it yourself." With that, he casually walked off with Jiang Nannan.

Huo Yuhao replied, "Nan Qiuqiu, the situation as you see it. The Tang Sect had ten members before you joined. In total, we have five rooms. You can pick any room you want. However, regardless of who you stay with, someone will have to squeeze. So?"

Nan Qiuqiu rolled her eyes. Suddenly, she had a plan as she said, "Then I shall room with you."

"Ah?" Huo Yuhao looked at her in shock. "Guys and girls shouldn't room together, ma'am!"

Nan Qiuqiu said, "We're all soul masters, what's there to be ashamed of? There's no need to think so much, I'll sleep on the sofa. Let's go, bring me to your room."

With that, the maiden turned to leave.

Huo Yuhao looked at her disappearing figure in shock. Then, he turned to Wang Dong'er, who was next to him and said, "Does she want to room with me, or does she want to room with you? She probably guessed that we're rooming together. Dong'er, you are really too attractive."

Wang Dong'er smiled slightly and said, "That's right, you are getting smarter."

Huo Yuhao suddenly flew into a full-on panic mode. "No, no, she can't room with us. Let's go." He suddenly realized that with Nan Qiuqiu around as a third wheel, how could he be intimate with Dong'er?

When they were back on their floor, Nan Qiuqiu was already waiting for them outside of their door, guided there by Xu Sanshi.

"Qiuqiu, listen to me, we're all guys. It's really inconvenient to have a girl like you around. It's much more normal for you to room with Sister Ziyan or Xiao Xiao. For a young lady like you, don't you care about your honor?"

Nan Qiuqiu looked at the troubled expression on Huo Yuhao's face and her heart swooped in delight. "How can I not care about my honor? I'm not sleeping with you. I trust you. Look at you. While you're strong, I don't think you'll do anything bad."

"You, you, you..." Regardless who it was, all guys would react the same way when their ability in a certain aspect was questioned. Huo Yuhao was so angry he could not say anything for quite some time. With much difficulty, he spurted out, "What about him? He's normal!" He pointed at Wang Dong'er.

Nan Qiuqiu replied without hesitation, "How can you compare to him? You're a liar. Anyone can see that Wang Dong is a true gentleman who won't take advantage of others. Am I right, Wang Dong?"

"Yes, you're right," Wang Dong'er said with a dazzling smile. While she did not want another girl in the room, she found Huo Yuhao's current state extremely amusing. Her childish desires were piqued as she went along with Nan Qiuqiu's flow.

"Open the door," Nan Qiuqiu said as she pointed at it.

Wang Dong'er opened the door and Nan Qiuqiu walked in first. While the room was not big, it was very clean. Wang Dong'er had cleaned the room herself. After they checked in, she had told the hotel reception that there was no need to clean their room for them. She liked to take care of Huo Yuhao herself.

Nan Qiuqiu sat on the sofa and said, "Right, I'll sleep here temporarily. I won't fight for a spot with a cripple. Eh, why do you two guys share one bed?"

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong'er's room only had one double bed, and not two single beds like most rooms.

Wang Dong'er said naturally, "So I can take care of him. It's hard for him to move around."

Nan Qiuqiu's eyes gleamed as she sighed in admiration, "Wang Dong, you're so kind! You treat this despicable, pretentious, and shameless guy so well."

"I..." Huo Yuhao felt that before he could correct this girl's bad habits, she would make him die from anger.

"What's wrong?" Nan Qiuqiu said gleefully. As she looked at Huo Yuhao in this state, she was happy beyond words!

Huo Yuhao's eyes flashed, and a smile appeared on his face once more as he said, "Wang Dong, carry me onto the bed, I want to rest for a while. I've been busy for the entire morning and I'm tired."

"Alright," Wang Dong'er said. When she heard that he was tired, her heart ached. Normally, with Huo Yuhao's resilience, he would not throw the word 'tired' around easily. Immediately, she bent over to lift him from the wheelchair and carry him toward the bed.

"Wait a moment," Huo Yuhao suddenly said.

"What's wrong?" Wang Dong'er asked.

Huo Yuhao stared deeply into her light-blue eyes and said dramatically, "Dong'er, I love you."

"Eh?" Wang Dong'er paused momentarily. Soon, she melted in front of Huo Yuhao's gaze as she replied softly, "I love you too."

Huo Yuhao wrapped his only movable right arm around her neck as he lifted his head. Then, he kissed her tender, soft, red lips. After a brief kiss, he let go.

Wang Dong'er had already gotten used to his sneaky kisses after all this while. She also started to view herself as Huo Yuhao's wife, and hence, she did not mind being kissed by him. However, because of that dramatic 'I love you', she almost completely forgot that there was someone else in the room with them.

"Ah!" A piercing scream sounded. It rose a few dozen decibels instantly, and seemed capable of bringing the entire Brilliant Delight Hotel down. Even those on the top floor could hear this scream clearly.

Wang Dong'er was so alarmed by the scream that she almost threw Huo Yuhao out of her arms. At this moment, she realized that Nan Qiuqiu was still in the room. At this moment, she was still in disguise as a guy!

"You, you, you, you two, you two..." Nan Qiuqiu pointed at Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong'er as her red lips trembled. An incredulous look appeared in her eyes.

Huo Yuhao looked at her in pity and said calmly, "In this world, there are many types of love that you wouldn't understand. I was angry just now because you intruded into Dong'er's and my private space. However, we have thought this through. Since you aren't afraid of having needles in your eyes and you insist on watching us, then watch away. We don't care anyway."

"Wang Dong, Wang Dong, you're actually..." Nan Qiuqiu pointed at Wang Dong'er as her voice trembled more and more.

Wang Dong'er looked at Huo Yuhao, who was smiling helplessly. She continued his charade for him and said, "Qiuqiu, you can't discount homosexual love. Actually..."

“Shut up!” Nan Qiuqiu screamed. She turned and ran out of the room. She pulled the door open and disappeared instantly. She did not forget to close the door, but slammed it with such intensity that it made both Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong’er tremble.

“You’re too naughty,” Wang Dong’er carefully placed Huo Yuhao on his bed, and a helpless smile crossed her face.

Huo Yuhao did not let go of her neck as he chuckled and said, “She pissed me off first. She questioned my ability as a man, that’s unforgivable. Furthermore, I’m helping you solve a problem too! If not, she’ll bother you non-stop.”

Wang Dong’er stifled a laugh and said, “However, you’re affecting her worldview.”

Huo Yuhao said, “With her temper, it’s alright to shock her every once in a while. I suspect that she’s going to find Sister Ziyang and the rest, though I wonder if they’ll tell her that you’re a girl.”

Wang Dong’er bit her lips gently and said, “With Sister Ziyang’s troublemaking personality, what do you think she’ll say? Poor Qiuqiu! She’s right, you are a bad boy.”

Huo Yuhao pulled her into his embrace and said, “So what if I’m bad? I’m your bad boy, and your silly boy, so good! All guys will have to be these two ‘boys’. Hehe, nap with me.”

Huo Yuhao did not know what happened to Nan Qiuqiu afterward. After they ate, the pale-faced maiden sat as far from them as possible. All she did was eat. She did, however, appear much more docile. Jing Ziyang could not help but look meaningfully at Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong’er.

The first elimination round of the tournament ended after two days. In total, half of the 167 teams were eliminated. Instantly, the Brilliant Delight Hotel became much emptier.

Every single team that made it past the first round was assigned new rooms. The Tang Sect was sent to the third floor, which was much more spacious than the second floor. Furthermore, since they passed the first round, the organizing team agreed to their request for one more room. Hence, Nan Qiuqiu was given an additional room.

Among the 167 teams, there were still 84 left. Shrek Academy did not take part in the first round. In the past few days, Huo Yuhao and the Tang Sect did not see anyone from Shrek Academy. Wang Qiu’er and Dai Huabin seemed to have disappeared.

As faint light flashed, a cold light appeared on Huo Yuhao’s face. His eyes flashed with light, and the air around him distorted.

“Whoosh!” He swallowed the purple light and cultivated its essence. With this, he ended his morning cultivation.

Wang Dong’er stood next to him. She was cultivating her Purple Demon Eyes too, but her eyes were much weaker than Huo Yuhao’s. After all, she did not have a martial soul like the Spirit Eyes that was helpful in cultivating her Purple Demon Eyes.

“Round Two. Shrek Academy will be competing today, right?” Wang Dong’er asked Huo Yuhao.

“Yes,” Huo Yuhao nodded in confirmation.

[Chapter 284.1: Seven-Man Fusion Skill](#)

He had an indescribable feeling towards Wang Qiu’er. He was sure that it wasn’t love. He had given all his love to Wang Dong’er. But he couldn’t break away from Wang Qiu’er. It was an affection that seemed to bind their blood together. It was something that Huo Yuhao couldn’t understand.

The second elimination round started. As the first elimination round took too long, there wasn’t a break between it and the second elimination round. After the duels ended yesterday, the lot-drawing for the second round commenced immediately.

The Tang Sect would be competing tomorrow. Today, Shrek Academy was going to compete. As the legendary team in the tournament, many people were waiting for them to compete. In the previous tournament, they had managed to create a miracle even though the circumstances were unfavorable for them. Could they do the same in this tournament? No one knew the answer. The inclusion of sects made the tournament more worth watching, but also made it much more unpredictable.

After the first round, fifty-six of the remaining eighty-four teams came from sects. That was two-thirds of the teams left in the tournament. This showed how powerful sects were. However, there were some traditional academy teams which were true powerhouses, such as the Star Luo National Academy and the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy.

The resting area was much more spacious now. The seats had also been re-arranged. The Tang Sect, which had obtained full twelve points in the first elimination round, was guided to the pergola. This was the VIP resting area. Only the strongest teams could rest here.

“The second elimination round is about to commence. Everyone, please stay silent. The reigning champions and winners of all of the previous editions of the tournament, Shrek Academy, will be competing today.”

The Sun Moon Empire’s citizens didn’t have a good impression of Shrek Academy. It was because of Shrek Academy that the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy always came in second in the tournament. When they heard the words ‘Shrek Academy’, many of the spectators started booing.

Huo Yuhao could see many things much more clearly as he entered the VIP resting area. Although the Tang Sect had managed to gain access into this area due to their impressive performance in the previous round, they could only sit at the sides.

Shrek’s Academy team was in the center of the VIP resting area. They were next to the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy, the Holy Ghost Sect, and other strong teams.

Huo Yuhao also noticed another team. They were on the other side of the VIP resting area. He had noticed this team on the second day of the tournament. They had seemed to be very average, but their martial souls couldn’t be concealed. They were from the Body Sect. However, they were doing their best to conceal their abilities.

Apart from these few teams he had taken note of, Huo Yuhao's expression suddenly changed as he unleashed his Spiritual Detection. Almost every team in this VIP resting area was extraordinary. From what he sensed, there were very few competing members that had less than five rings. Most of them were at least Soul Kings. Huo Yuhao was only a Soul King himself. Although his Spiritual Detection was great, his judgment of the aura of those beyond his cultivation wasn't fully accurate. However, it was still good enough for him to tell how strong or weak a team was.

Wang Qiu'er was sitting on a chair at the very front of Shrek Academy's team. Huo Yuhao discovered that Dai Huabin, Ning Tian, Zhu Lu, Wu Feng and the others behind her appeared very resolute. After not seeing them for some time, they seemed to have matured greatly. At the very least they were less impatient.

It seemed like the pressure from the tournament wasn't entirely a bad thing! Huo Yuhao was impressed.

"Second elimination round. The first fight will be between Shrek Academy and the Heavenly Armor Sect. Both parties, please enter your waiting areas." The voice coming from the main stage announced the beginning of the second elimination round.

Heavenly Armor Sect? Huo Yuhao felt that this name was very familiar. He immediately recalled how he had met the disciplined Heavenly Armor Sect before they came to Radiant City. They were all riding Hornscale Horses from the Dou Ling Empire. The Heavenly Armor Sect had even left a deep impression on him. He hadn't expected them to have to face Shrek Academy in the second round.

Both parties entered their respective waiting areas. As expected, the seven from Shrek Academy were Wang Qiu'er, Dai Huabin, Zhu Lu, Ning Tian, Xie Huanyue, Wu Feng, and Cao Jinxuan.

Zhou Sichen, Lan Susu, and Lan Luoluo were seated beneath the stage as substitutes. They weren't able to compete today.

The Heavenly Armor Sect wasn't in the VIP resting area, they were still in the resting area outside. Huo Yuhao unleashed his Spiritual Detection, and immediately sensed Han Zhanhu choosing the competing members for the Heavenly Armor Sect. He could sense the tense nerves of the Heavenly Armor Sect's competing members.

Shrek Academy was extremely reputable. They had built that reputation with their ability for thousands of years. The Heavenly Armor Sect was simply too unlucky to have drawn Shrek Academy! After making it through the first round, they had met Shrek Academy in only the second round.

Han Zhanhu was helpless. Since they had met Shrek Academy, what could they do? They could only go all-out against them. This was the idea that he planted in his disciples' heads after the lot was drawn. It was a rare opportunity for them to fight Shrek Academy. At least they could have a taste of the abilities and fighting strategies of the top academy on the continent!

The seven competing members from both sides entered the waiting area.

The referee said loudly, "Individual elimination round. First members from both teams, please enter the stage."

A muscular youth from the Heavenly Armor Sect jumped onto the stage as the spectators watched. Dai Huabin was the first from Shrek Academy to compete.

“What!?” Huo Yuhao gently exclaimed. As he watched Wang Qiu’er’s back, the look in his eyes changed.

“She’s not the first to compete? This is unlike her!” Wang Dong’er also muttered under her breath.

Huo Yuhao clapped his hand against hers and said, “They’re really smart. It seems like she really values this tournament. To conserve her abilities and fight in a balanced manner, she’s managed to remain patient. It won’t be easy for us either, if we meet them!”

Wang Dong’er said, “It’s better not to meet them. It’s not good for us to go against one another.”

Huo Yuhao smiled and replied, “Let’s see how our luck is. If we don’t meet them in the next round, we should be able to last until the finals.”

Dai Huabin was much fitter than before. He entered the stage confidently.

Both parties greeted each other in front of the referee.

“Shrek Academy, Dai Huabin.”

“Heavenly Armor Sect, Han Yu.”

The referee repeated the rules of the tournament once more and emphasized that neither of them should intentionally kill their opponent. Otherwise, they would be punished. After that, he let the two of them retreat and prepare for the fight.

While Dai Huabin appeared very calm, he was actually very anxious.

He was finally here at the tournament. Even though he was a substitute, he was still finally here! After years of tireless cultivation, he finally had a chance to display his prowess. Dad, elder brother, wait and see. I’ll definitely show how good I am!

He bumped his fists together in front of his chest. A strong competitive intent was exuded from his body. He cracked his knuckles and stared at his opponent. Right now, he was like a famished and ferocious tiger.

“Match, start!” The referee swiped his right hand down.

Dai Huabin shot out like a ferocious tiger. However, he didn’t unleash his strengthening skills like he always did. He only unleashed his martial soul.

Two yellow, two purple, and one black soul ring, the best combination. White hair grew from his body, and he expanded in size as he unleashed his White Tiger.

If someone else had such a cultivation, everyone would be terrified. However, it was apt that Dai Huabin possessed such a martial soul, since he was representing Shrek Academy.

The youth from the Heavenly Armor Sect didn’t rush forward. Han Yu looked very calm, and also unleashed his own martial soul. Two yellow, two purple, and one black soul ring also appeared, once again the best combination for a Soul King!

A pitch-black, hexagonal piece of metal flew out from his body before it condensed to form a hexagonal shield. The shield was dense and heavy, and formed from proportionate pieces of scales.

After unleashing his martial soul, Han Yu took big strides towards Dai Huabin as his aura continued to soar.

With a roar, Dai Huabin's speed increased rapidly. His thick and strong legs unleashed great force. The speed at which he was moving was so fast that an illusory projection seemed to drag along behind him. He slammed his tiger palm towards Han Yu.

Han Yu did the opposite. As he was bursting forward, he suddenly stomped his left leg and came to an abrupt stop. As he stopped, he unleashed his Heavenly Armor Shield.

The Heavenly Armor Sect was a family sect. All of its disciples were descendants and relatives, and they possessed almost the same martial soul, the Heavenly Armor Shield!

Bang—!

It was only the first strike, but Dai Huabin demonstrated how powerful he was. Their cultivations were at the same level, and his opponent had used a shield to defend against him, but his palm strike forced Han Yu back more than three meters.

Han Yu's feet even made sparks as he slid across the metal surface. Dai Huabin's sharp tiger claws had left five deep marks on the shield!

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This was a direct collision, a probing attack and defense. Neither party used soul skills. In terms of strength, the winner was clear.

Dai Huabin didn't stop moving. At the same time as he struck his opponent, he opened his mouth wide, and a streak of white light shot out of it. It was his second soul skill, White Tiger's Fierce Light Wave!

A loud boom resonated, and Han Yu retreated once again. His first and second soul rings lit up, and the surface of the Heavenly Armor Shield shone like a mirror. As the White Tiger's Fierce Light Wave shone on it and the scales of the armor undulated in a weird fashion, many small streaks of white light were reflected away, immediately diverting a large portion of the Wave's impact. At the same time, the Heavenly Armor Shield shifted, and sixteen hexagonal scales flew out of it towards Dai Huabin. The sides of every scale were like sharp blades!

Defense and counterattack! Han Yu was very steady in front of Dai Huabin. In terms of abilities and psychological mindset, he was excellently trained!

Dai Huabin acted like he didn't see the armor scales. He burst forward again, and his first soul ring lit up. A layer of white surfaced on his body. Just as the shield's scales were about to cut into him, a white light spread out and deflected all of them away. Although they turned and flew back towards him, Dai Huabin had already reached Han Yu in this short span of time.

Dai Huabin roared again, and everything in front of Han Yu turned black. Following this, his tiger palm struck the Heavenly Armor Shield forcefully again.

Han Yu's Heavenly Armor Shield was adept at countering long-range energy attacks, just like how it dealt with the White Tiger's Fierce Light Wave earlier. However, it was helpless against such physical attacks. However, he was still a defense-type soul master. Noticing that something was amiss, he immediately

squatted down, and the sharp base of the shield stabbed into the metal floor. He leaned the entire shield back and used it to resist Dai Huabin's attack at an angle. At the same time, his third soul ring lit up.

The sixteen pieces of shield scales in the air turned fiery red, as if they had been heated in a forge, and flew towards Dai Huabin with a piercing screech. It was Han Yu's third soul skill, Meteoric Fire Armor!

He had to attack his enemy at a vital spot. Han Yu was very confident in his thousand-year soul skill, the Meteoric Fire Armor. In his opinion, Dai Huabin would find it difficult to deal with his double-pronged attack even though he was very strong as a close-combat soul master.

However, he didn't expect Dai Huabin to ignore the Meteoric Fire Armor and continued to reach for the Heavenly Armor Shield with his right palm.

A terrifying and huge force was exerted on the Shield. It was different from the forceful push earlier. This time, it was an intense jerk that came from Dai Huabin's tiger palm.

Han Yu was so shaken that he almost spat blood. He could feel that his shield was about to be crushed. He even heard painful sounds coming from the armor scales that formed the shield.

However, Han Yu was also very excited now. That was because his Meteoric Fire Armor had already reached Dai Huabin. It was impossible for him to resist or dodge at this moment. The sixteen scales had blocked off his escape route. Did he really not realize it?

Dai Huabin answered his doubt instantly. His white hair released an extremely intense golden light. His body expanded, and his tiger palm seemed to stick to the Heavenly Armor Shield. As he lifted his palm up, he used his right elbow to hit the shield with incredible force.

Dang, dang, dang, dang, dang, dang...

Boom——!

Two different sounds could be heard at the same time. When the scales struck Dai Huabin's body, they were bounced away again. He didn't even seem to feel their impacts at all, and resisted the blows easily.

The tremendous boom that sounded was caused by his right elbow as it struck the shield.

Han Yu didn't expect Dai Huabin to use such a method to resist his attack. He was completely unprepared for this strike.

The Heavenly Armor Shield was blown apart. Dai Huabin continued to burst forward in a dominant fashion, and slammed into Han Yu's chest with his shoulder.

As his shield was crushed, Han Yu's defense was crippled, and he was bleeding profusely. His arms were in great pain. Everything happened too quickly, and he couldn't use a stronger soul skill anymore. He also needed time to retract his scales! Right now, he was like a turtle that had lost the protection of its shell. He was in front of Dai Huabin in his weakest state.

The only thing he could do was raise his soul power and push his palms out towards Dai Huabin.

Boom——!

From the spectators' view, Han Yu was like a fired cannon shell as he was knocked back. He flew more than ten meters and struck the protective barriers surrounding the stage before he was bounced back to the floor. He couldn't get up after that.

Dai Huabin stopped and calmly turned around. He walked back towards the center of the stage.

From the start until the end, this was a very short fight. Dai Huabin had demonstrated his great fighting strength.

Han Yu had the same number of soul rings as he did. As a defense-type Soul King above Rank 50, he didn't even have the chance to unleash his fourth and fifth soul skill before he lost. This was the gap in their abilities! Dai Huabin gave off a very barbaric and ruthless air. Many people were stunned by his performance.

"This..." Wang Dong'er was in shock as she noted, "He has been greatly affected by Qiu'er!"

Huo Yuhao's lips moved slightly, "His actual combat ability has greatly increased. Although his fighting style is very simple and violent, he's much calmer than before. He also aptly used his White Tiger's Vajra Transformation."

Wang Dong'er nodded agreement and said, "Yes! However, this is also a good thing. After all, they are representing Shrek. Qiu'er has brought about great change to them."

Shrek Academy didn't slip up against the Heavenly Armor Sect in the second elimination round. They used their dominant abilities and ruthless fighting style to win. Dai Huabin overwhelmed his opponents yet again.

There were fewer and fewer boos from the spectators. What was the use of boos in front of them, since they were so strong?

However, Dai Huabin conceded defeat before he fought the third competing member from the Heavenly Armor Sect and left the stage.

"Oh, what kind of momentum is this?" Xu Sanshi muttered to himself, curious about what was going on.

Wu Feng was already on the stage, and walking towards the center of it.

"Dai Huabin can obviously still fight. Why did he concede defeat? Is it because he's not confident? Impossible! With his character, he won't know when to stop." Xiao Xiao was also confused.

Huo Yuhao squinted. "This must be a strategy Qiu'er arranged. She's training them so that they can get used to the tempo of the tournament. After all, it's their first time."

Huo Yuhao was right. This was her strategy, helping them gain experience so that they could fight better. It was only through continuous fighting that they could increase their abilities and demonstrate

what they had learned over this period of time. This also made them more confident. Otherwise, Wang Qiu'er would have been able to defeat the entire Heavenly Armor Sect on her own.

Wu Feng's opponent was also using the Heavenly Armor Shield.

"Match, start!" As the referee shouted, Wu Feng's eyes lit up. Burning dragon scales started to surface throughout her entire body. As she leapt out, the air around her started to form ripples from the heated air around her.

This member from the Heavenly Armor Sect had learned from the lessons of the two previous competitors, and immediately unleashed his offensive skills.

He unleashed two soul skills at the same time. His Meteoric Fire Armor was sent flying towards Wu Feng.

The hot-tempered Wu Feng didn't choose to directly resist the armor, her petite figure blurring as she dodged the attack. She didn't move as swiftly as Tang Sect's Ghost Shadow Perplexing Track, but she was quick. Dragon roars could be heard rising from her body. Every time her body twisted, supernatural changes started to occur. From the looks of it, her body only seemed to distort slightly before she dodged the Meteoric Fire Armor scales flying at her. However, her body moved countless times in that instant.

Huo Yuhao turned his attention to Wang Qiu'er, who was in the waiting area. He had seen such a similar dodging movement from her. Wu Feng must have had been taught by Wang Qiu'er, as they both had dragon-type martial souls. As a possessor of Ultimate Strength, there were many things that Wang Qiu'er could teach Wu Feng. It seemed like Wu Feng had improved as much as Dai Huabin!

Wu Feng let out a deep dragon's roar. After dodging the attack, her speed soared again as she burst towards her opponent.

The youth from the Heavenly Armor Sect was already prepared. Without any hesitation, he unleashed his strongest fourth soul skill. Yes, he was a Soul Ancestor just like the second competing member from the sect.

The outward bulge on the Heavenly Armor Shield turned into an inward bulge. Several streaks of red light started to reflect from the mirrored surfaces of the armor. They were reflected towards a single point, converting into a beam of fire that shot towards Wu Feng.

Heavenly Armor Needle, a single-target offensive soul skill. It was as strong as a ten-thousand year soul skill. Its penetrating abilities perfectly demonstrated the strength of the Heavenly Armor Shield!

[Chapter 284.3: Seven-Man Fusion Skill](#)

The Heavenly Armor Needle was unleashed at the correct moment. It was at the instant when Wu Feng dodged the Meteoric Fire Armor scales, so it was impossible for her to dodge anymore. She hadn't expected the Meteoric Fire Armor scales to be a trap!

In fact, Dai Huabin had defeated the Meteoric Fire Armor twice already. No one in the Heavenly Armor Sect was confident in this soul skill anymore. Without a special method, there was no chance of victory

against a five-ringed soul master, especially since he was only a four-ringed soul master. The Heavenly Armor Needle was his only chance.

However, Wu Feng had been through tough training, and was “tortured” by Wang Qiu’er mercilessly almost every day. It wasn’t that easy to defeat her. Even though she couldn’t compare to Huo Yuhao, her advantage over other soul masters was still very evident.

As Wu Feng opened her mouth, she spewed flames to counter the Heavenly Armor Needle. Her third soul ring lit up as she slowed the needle down, and she punched out at it.

The space around Wu Feng distorted furiously and turned dark red. It felt as if she it had collapsed after she unleashed her fist. Her entire fist also turned scarlet red.

Boom!

A scarlet-red ball of light blew apart. Undulations of terrifying fiery soul power spread for more than ten meters before they dissipated. Intense flames spread everywhere, and the youth from the Heavenly Armor Sect was blown more than ten meters back, his Heavenly Armor Shield cracked.

While the Heavenly Armor Needle was strong, he only had four rings. Against Wu Feng’s five rings, it wasn’t at all easy for him to achieve victory.

Wu Feng’s third soul skill, Explosive Dragonmouth, crushed the Heavenly Armor Shield with its immense destructive force, and also forced her opponent into helpless retreat. Shrek Academy won the third round.

Her next opponent was another four-ringed Soul Ancestor. His martial soul was also the Heavenly Armor Shield. Wu Feng didn’t slip up.

Just like Dai Huabin, Wu Feng left the stage after she won two consecutive rounds, ending her participation in today’s elimination round.

By conceding defeat, it meant that Shrek Academy couldn’t progress directly into the next round through the individual elimination round. They had to go through the team round, too.

The third from Shrek Academy to compete was Xie Huanyue. He also announced his defeat after winning two consecutive rounds.

Shrek Academy lost three rounds at this stage after sending three competing members up, whereas six from the Heavenly Armor Sect had been eliminated. They were only left with one member.

“We admit defeat for the individual elimination round!” The youth sitting in front of the entire Heavenly Armor Sect’s team in the waiting area exclaimed. He was the team leader of their squad, Han Jian.

There wasn’t much meaning in continuing the individual elimination round. Rather than lose again, it was better for them to risk everything during the team round.

The few competing members of the Heavenly Armor Sect were all injured from the previous few fights, but they would still be able to compete in the team round.

“The individual elimination round is over. Shrek Academy is left with four members. They have four points, while the Heavenly Armor Sect has zero points. After a two minute break, the team round will be conducted. Both parties, please prepare.”

Even though most of the previous teams had only emerged victorious in the team round, many people were still disappointed with Shrek Academy. After all, there were a few teams that managed to qualify after dominating their individual elimination rounds.

Right now, the rest of the six members of Shrek Academy’s team were in front of Wang Qiu’er. Twelve eyes were now focused on her.

Wang Qiu’er nodded and said, “We’ll fight in the team round like we practiced. Triangular formation. Do all of you understand?”

“Yes!” the rest of them acknowledged her order.

After two minutes, the team members from both sides lined up along the center of the competition stage.

The referee said, “This will be the same as the individual elimination round. Both teams will retreat to the sides and wait for my order. Anyone who loses his fighting strength will be considered eliminated, and he can’t continue to attack either. We’ll try our best to minimize injuries and deaths. Understood?”

“Yes.”

“Yes.”

The team leaders from both sides acknowledged the referee’s words. Right now, Han Jian seemed to be in a daze. It was because Wang Qiu’er was too pretty.

Although Wang Qiu’er was wearing a white veil right now, her powdery-blue hair, perfect body ratio and bright eyes could still be seen.

Han Jian felt his heart beating faster even though he had only glanced at her. He hurriedly lowered his head and didn’t dare to continue looking at her.

Wang Qiu’er didn’t have any expression in her eyes. She took her team members and withdrew to one side of the stage, standing in the forefront. Slightly behind, and to her left and right were Wu Feng and Dai Huabin.

Zhu Lu was behind Dai Huabin, while Xie Huanyue was behind Wu Feng. Cao Jinxuan and Ning Tian were behind Wang Qiu’er. It was an accurate triangular formation formed by the seven of them.

The Heavenly Armor Sect took on a different formation. They formed an arc, which was very rare in a team fight.

Even though an arc-shaped formation could be regarded as a half-encirclement, its single line of defense made it very vulnerable to exploitation. Once the competing members were separated, they would lose. Since they had formed up in this manner, it showed that they had some special fighting method.

In the VIP resting area, Huo Yuhao was pensive as he said, "The Heavenly Armor Sect team looks confident. Along with their weird formation and similar martial souls, they must possess some kind of special ability."

Jiang Nannan was a little worried as she said, "They won't lose, right? After all, they are representing the academy."

Shrek Academy's glory was very important to all of them!

Huo Yuhao shook his head and said, "All plans are futile against an absolute power. At a certain level of cultivation, using special methods might not be enough to change the situation of a fight. Let's see. Since the Heavenly Armor Sect is so confident, I'm sure they must have some way of competing." His confidence in Shrek Academy arose from Wang Qiu'er's presence.

On the tournament stage, the seven Heavenly Armor Sect team members were lined up neatly. Although some of them looked pale, as they had been injured, they didn't appear weak. Their gazes were filled with an unyielding desire for victory.

"Match, start!" The referee swiped his right hand down and retreated quickly at the same time.

On Shrek Academy's side, seven people moved at the same time. They burst towards their opponents together. Not only were they neatly arranged, but they were also extremely quick!

Wang Qiu'er lifted her right hand. Two yellow, two purple, and two black soul rings rose from her feet. Although she was wearing a veil, her moving figure and long, swaying hair still left a deep impression.

Xiao Hongchen was in a daze as he looked at the stage. He muttered to himself, "Why do I find this team leader from Shrek so familiar? Have I seen her before? It'd be great if she could take off her veil."

Meng Hongchen snorted. "You always find pretty girls familiar."

He coughed quickly. "Give me some face in front of the rest!" Xiao Hongchen snapped at his sister.

On the tournament stage, once Shrek Academy's team burst off, the Heavenly Armor Sect team also acted immediately. However, they didn't burst forward, but only unleashed their Heavenly Armor Shields at the same time.

Seven shields appeared at the same time. Following this, the seven of them shouted at the same time. Then they threw the shields in their hands out.

The seven shields flew through the air, and a series of metallic clanging sounds rang out. Their seven shields were broken down and converted into hexagonal scales.

Was this an attack of scales converted from shields? Most people had the same thought.

However, the expressions of everyone from the Tang Sect changed at this moment. Huo Yuhao blurted out almost instantly, "A seven-man fusion skill?"

As he was speaking, the scales started to gather at the center of the stage. Suddenly, a huge Heavenly Armor Shield was formed and drifting in mid-air. The entire shield exuded a sinister aura. Following this, the hexagonal scales started to turn red, so brightly polished it resembled the surface of a mirror.

The fourth soul rings of the Heavenly Armor Sect disciples lit up. Every one of them released intense soul power undulations.

A seven-man fusion skill and martial soul fusion skills were completely different. More accurately speaking, a seven-man fusion skill was formed by overlaps. They were usually overlaps of identical martial souls, gathering the strength of all these martial souls to unleash an attack. They required the martial souls and soul skills to be the same, so that they could be unleashed together once a sufficient level of coordination was achieved.

Compared to the qualitative changes of martial soul fusion skills, seven-man fusion skills were slightly weaker. However, it was a killer move for sects that had certain types of martial souls.

As the seven shields gathered to form a huge shield, unleashing the same type of skill, it was equivalent to a combination of seven identical soul skills tied together to form one soul skill. Its strength was incredible!

Something as magical as this hadn't appeared in the tournament for ages, as sects had not been allowed to compete in earlier editions of the tournament. This was also the reason why the Sun Moon Empire proposed that sects be recognized again.

Only sects possessed many soul masters with the same martial soul. This was very difficult to find in an academy, and most academies wouldn't bother trying to develop such a fusion skill, either. Many years had passed, but such a fusion skill had finally appeared in the tournament again after sects were once again allowed to compete!

The entire Shrek team, even Wang Qiu'er, felt a sense of crisis once the Heavenly Armor Shield was fully formed. It was as if a formidable, savage beast had appeared in front of them, and was baring its teeth at them!

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Wang Qiu'er squinted. If one looked carefully, her pupils seemed to have stretched vertically. Not only this, but her first and second soul rings also lit up. A layer of bright light suddenly shone from her body. A primitive aura that seemed to originate from ferocious, prehistoric beasts flowed out of her. The team members behind her felt the pressure on them dropping.

Everyone from the Heavenly Sect Armor's team was horrified. They felt a sense of fear as they watched Wang Qiu'er, who hadn't even competed yet. She was actually capable of taking on their seven-man fusion skill on her own! The most frightening thing was that her aura didn't pale in comparison to theirs.

All of this happened within a short span of time. After their Heavenly Armor Needles were combined, Han Jian unleashed their terrifying skill just as Wang Qiu'er's aura started to soar.

A thick beam of light shot up from the center of the Heavenly Armor Shield. The spectators outside of the stage only saw the lights dim before a huge patch of ripples appeared on the stage. It seemed like the air had been set on fire!

A dark-red light shot out through the distorted air. The target of the red light was Wang Qiu'er!

Wang Qiu'er quickly rushed to the center of the stage. Just as the Heavenly Armor Shield was unleashed, she felt an intense suffocating feeling, like her body was on the verge of melting.

However, her response was instantaneous. A streak of golden light lit up in front of her body as she let out a sonorous dragon roar. Following this, she stepped on the floor with her right leg. Her Golden Dragon Spear turned into a ball of golden light that resisted the attack of the combined Heavenly Armor Needle.

Just as Wang Qiu'er burst out, two others from Shrek's team also unleashed their soul skills.

Ning Tian mimicked a lifting action with her right hand, and a dazzling rainbow-colored treasure pagoda surfaced above her palm.

"There are seven levels of this Seven Treasures Glazed Pagoda. First – speed. Third – strength. Fifth – soul." Shrek Academy's inner courtyard students were obviously very strong. She used three soul skills at the same time, and they were all used on Wang Qiu'er. The golden light from Wang Qiu'er's body was beyond dazzling!

Everyone had to admit that the number one auxiliary tool soul was the Seven Treasures Glazed Pagoda, and this title had never been snatched away before.

Besides Ning Tian, Cao Jinxuan also moved. His first and third soul rings lit up.

A huge illusory projection of a clock surfaced behind Cao Jinxuan. The time on this clock reflected the real time. However, a blinding silver light then lit up on the dial of the clock. Following this, the second hand stopped for a moment before it moved back by a second.

The entire stage seemed to have paused for an instant after the clock appeared. At this instant, two streams of blood flowed out from Cao Jinxuan's nostrils. His body shook, and he looked a little dizzy.

In the air, the Heavenly Armor Needle that was about to reach Wang Qiu'er stopped, and strangely moved back half the distance that it had already travelled. A gap of more than ten meters had been created between it and Wang Qiu'er. Everyone was stunned by this strange scene.

Even Huo Yuhao couldn't help but open his eyes wide, and he focused his gaze.

Wang Qiu'er had expected this from the start. As the Heavenly Armor Needle moved back, Wang Qiu'er leapt up using this one second of delay. She made a half-turn in the air, and her sonorous dragon roar

changed to a piercing pitch. She raised her right arm behind her before she flung her Golden Dragon Spear out. Her target was the beam of red light from the Heavenly Armor Needle.

Gold and red intersected in the air. The ripples in the air started to undulate more thickly. It was like a huge rock had been thrown into a lake...

The red light from the Heavenly Armor Needle continued to shoot forward. However, the streak of golden light tore through it as it did.

A second streak of red light flashed past Wang Qiu'er and collided with the red light from the Heavenly Armor Needle. Although it dissipated instantly, it also stalled the red light from the Heavenly Armor Needle for a slight moment. Following this, the approaching red light converted into a huge dragon head that seemed like it was about to swallow the Heavenly Armor Needle. Even though it was dissipated in the next moment, the light from the Heavenly Armor Needle was also weakened by more than twenty-five percent.

On the other side of Wang Qiu'er, a huge ball of white light was unleashed, and accurately blocked the path of the Heavenly Armor Needle. A series of noises dissipated another quarter of it. When it reached Wang Qiu'er, only a third of its remaining strength was left.

Wang Qiu'er's third soul ring lit up. The golden light that she released was gathered on her right fist instantly, and turned into a golden dragon head. This was her third soul skill, Golden Dragon Head!

Boom——!

Boom——!

Two booms sounded at the same time. One of them came from Wang Qiu'er's fist, while the other came from the Heavenly Armor Shield.

Wang Qiu'er stopped in mid-attack only for a brief moment before her right leg slammed down on the floor again, making an indentation several square meters wide on the metal-layered floor. She was like a golden cannon shell as she burst forward.

On the other side, the combined shield was broken into seven pieces after the Golden Dragon Spear drilled past the Heavenly Armor Needle. The seven pieces revolved in the air, trying to combine once again.

However, Wang Qiu'er was too fast. Before they could do so, she was already close, and her right hand grabbed onto the Golden Dragon Spear that had flown back to her. She swept the air before her with her spear.

A golden light flashed, and three of the shields were instantly shattered. Three of the Heavenly Armor Sect disciples screamed pathetically. They were gravely injured as their martial souls were destroyed.

Wang Qiu'er didn't seem to stop at all. Her Golden Dragon Spear turned into lights that filled the sky. As these golden lights shone down, the remaining four disciples felt as if Wang Qiu'er was attacking with all her might.

The four shields didn't have a chance to recombine before they were forced back. Wang Qiu'er's body flashed again before she landed beside two of them on the left. On the right side, Xie Huanyue and Dai Huabin had already arrived.

The Heavenly Armor Sect's team was completely dismantled after their fusion skill failed. Team Shrek didn't go too hard on them, either. They only defeated the Heavenly Armor Sect's team in the fastest way possible and ended this team fight.

Beneath the stage, Han Zhanwu was completely shocked when he saw this. He couldn't believe that their fusion skill had been overcome so easily. It was too much.

To many people, Wang Qiu'er was the one who had done everything on her own. From the first step she took, everything seemed to have been decided. The entire process couldn't have been any faster. Wang Qiu'er was like a goddess who controlled the entire proceedings, defeating her opponents with the simplest fighting strategy. The Heavenly Armor Sect's team's fusion skill seemed very weak. If not for the fact that it was astonishing the moment it was unleashed, everyone would have forgotten about it.

Wang Dong'er was a little pensive as she softly said, "They're much stronger than we thought!"

Huo Yuhao nodded gently and said, "Let's hope we don't meet them." He knew better than anyone else, since he was the one with Spiritual Detection. He was also the clearest on what happened in the entire process.

That's right. Wang Qiu'er had appeared to be extremely strong throughout the fight. However, she wasn't the decisive factor. Her two teammates behind her were the decisive factors.

Why was Wang Qiu'er able to easily defeat her opponents even when they unleashed their fusion skill? It wasn't because her opponents weren't strong. It was because the Seven Treasures Glazed Pagoda was behind her to enhance her strength in all aspects, allowing her cultivation to soar to the level of a seven-ringed Soul Sage. Cao Jinxuan's Time Elapsing Clock had also reversed their opponents' skill and created sufficient time for her. It wouldn't have been easy for Wang Qiu'er to deal with the fusion skill alone, even though she was extremely strong.

Their coordination right now wasn't the same as it was when they sparred with Shrek's Seven Monsters earlier. Whether it was their individual fighting strength or team fighting strength, they were much better than before. They were like a complete unit now, and Wang Qiu'er was the core of their unit.

Huo Yuhao was very familiar with those from Shrek. Whether it was Dai Huabin, Wu Feng, or Ning Tian, they were all talents in the younger generation. However, they possessed a very defining trait of a talent: arrogance! However, it seemed like they had retracted a little bit of their arrogance. It was almost impossible to spot that arrogance anymore. It was also precisely because of this that they could come together as a unit.

It was also why Huo Yuhao's expression had turned serious.

With Huo Yuhao's understanding of Wang Qiu'er, he knew that she would give her best if they met in the tournament. They were bound to compete against one another in terms of their abilities. However,

Huo Yuhao wasn't very willing to meet them in the tournament. His team was both familiar with them, and they were very strong. Before Bei Bei recovered, he was even more unwilling to meet Shrek's team!

[Chapter 285.2: Team Shreks Improvement](#)

The first fight of the second elimination round ended. Although Shrek Academy didn't win by a landslide, they still demonstrated their strength. This was especially true for Wang Qiu'er. Her performance in the team round caused all the other team leaders to turn dismal. Of course, the expressions of the Holy Ghost Sect's members couldn't be seen, since they concealed their faces.

The tournament continued, and the next few fights were very intense. In order to qualify, every team gave their best. There were many casualties in this second elimination round. The bloody smell coming off the stage also grew stronger and stronger.

"Let's return," Huo Yuhao said to his teammates after looking up at the sky.

"You are not watching anymore?" Xu Sanshi was a little stunned as he glanced at Yuhao.

Huo Yuhao shook his head and replied, "We've seen what we need to. There's nothing much left to see. No matter who our opponents are, we'll have to give our all, right? Let's return to rest." As he spoke, he gestured for Wang Dong'er to push his wheelchair.

Although Huo Yuhao wasn't the oldest among them, he was the stand-in team leader since Bei Bei wasn't around. No one questioned his words. Everyone stood up and left the venue silently, returning to the Ming Yue Hotel.

They were competing tomorrow. Their opponents weren't well-known, and were from a sect too. They didn't have any information regarding this sect, and they didn't notice this sect in the first elimination round either. However, that didn't mean that their opponents were lousy.

After returning to the hotel, Huo Yuhao called his teammates to his room.

In the the tournament, they had had a meeting room they could use. However, they had to make do with this for this round.

"I'll talk about tomorrow's strategy briefly," Huo Yuhao began.

Xu Sanshi laughed, "Are you planning to compete first and continue all the way until the end?"

Huo Yuhao shook his head as he smiled and replied, "It's different from the previous round. There were many competing teams then, and we had sufficient time to rest. From this round onwards, the time between each successive round will be shorter. We must try our best to conserve our fighting strength. After all, we don't have many substitutes. In fact, we should learn from Shrek's strategy today. None of them depleted too much of their energy, but they still fought to warm up their bodies. They kept themselves in their best physical condition for the team round. Tomorrow, we shall follow their strategy. Third senior, you'll fight first tomorrow. What do you think about this arrangement?"

Xu Sanshi's eyes brightened, and he said, "Great idea! However, don't you want us to conceal our true abilities?"

Huo Yuhao chortled and replied, "You only have two opponents to defeat before you concede defeat. Are you really going to reveal your trump card in those two fights?"

"Of course not!" Xu Sanshi said proudly.

Huo Yuhao laughed, "That's great! Second senior, you'll be the second to compete. You'll fight two of them also. Xiao Xiao, you'll be the third to fight. You'll only need to fight one. Fourth senior, you'll fight one person only too. Dong'er will be last, and she'll take care of the last person."

Na Na looked a little pitifully at Huo Yuhao. After hearing that she had no role, she lowered her head.

Huo Yuhao chortled, "Na Na, haven't you realized that we'll have to lose a few fights in the individual elimination round with such an arrangement? The final fight will be in the team round. You'll have your chance then. In the team round, I'll have to rely on everyone else. I'll only be the main controller of the team."

Na Na lifted her head again and subconsciously said, "Master, I have no objections to any of your arrangements."

After hearing the word "Master", everyone's expressions turned a little weird.

Huo Yuhao also felt very helpless. He had corrected her many times, and struggled to get her to call him by his name. However, there were times when she wasn't careful, and still called him Master. Na Na didn't find anything wrong with this, since she was very grateful to Huo Yuhao. Not only did Huo Yuhao save her parents' souls, but he also gave her a new life! He was her benefactor!

Huo Yuhao coughed and said, "Seniors, please return to rest. Na Na, stay behind."

Xu Sanshi stood up and patted Huo Yuhao's shoulder. He shot him a weird look and softly said, "Yuhao! You must control yourself since you're already in this state!" Wang Dong'er could hear him clearly even though he was trying to speak softly.

Besides laughing bitterly, what else could Huo Yuhao do? Everyone else left, but they wore weird smiles on their faces.

Only Wang Dong didn't smile. She walked to one side and poured a glass of water for Na Na.

"Thank you, Mistress." Na Na received the glass respectfully.

Wang Dong'er felt very helpless too, "Sister Na Na, please don't call me that. I can't take it. We are senior and junior from the same sect. Yuhao has helped you before, but everything's already in the past. Don't tell me that you won't help us when we are in trouble? Don't be too bothered..."

"Okay." Na Na acknowledged her words naturally, but it was evident that she didn't take them in.

Huo Yuhao knew that there was no point trying to convince her. He didn't bother doing so. "Na Na, how's your progress on the matter that I wanted you to investigate?"

Na Na turned serious, and a look of fear flashed across her eyes. She nodded gently and replied, "Yes, you're right. It's them, I'm sure of it! I wouldn't forget their aura even if I turned to ashes. It's them! It must be them!"

Huo Yuhao nodded and said, "Right. You've verified my guess. The Holy Ghost Sect is the Holy Ghost Church. Don't be afraid, everyone will protect you as long as you remain with us. What about the other thing? How's the contact?"

Na Na said, "I went to three black markets, and only the biggest one says that there are goods available. However, the details have to be discussed. Furthermore, their asking price is very high, and they are difficult to deal with."

Huo Yuhao smiled and said, "It's okay if the price is high, as long as the goods are available. Before the war starts, we must prepare. Continue to maintain contact with them and bargain. After that, set a time to meet. I'll meet them. Let's do it this way; continue to contact them a further three times and let them sense our sincerity. After that, purchase some samples."

"Alright." Na Na acknowledged his words.

Huo Yuhao said, "You should return to rest, too. Take care of your safety when you are alone at night. If you can't handle it, ask for help from Sister Ziyan or Brother Ji. After all, they are people who can't handle loneliness."

"Alright!" Na Na regarded herself as Huo Yuhao's servant. After acknowledging his words, she turned around and left.

She closed the door behind her after she left. Wang Dong'er asked curiously, "Who did you ask Na Na to contact? Why don't I know about it?"

Huo Yuhao smiled and said, "Have you forgotten that my spiritual power has reached the concrete-immaterial realm? I instructed her a few days ago. Since we are here at the Sun Moon Empire, we can't leave empty-handed. We've found some big clients."

"At the same time, we are going to purchase some goods."

Wang Dong'er was intelligent. She immediately thought of something, and asked, "Rare metals? You asked Na Na to search for rare metals for sale on the market?"

Huo Yuhao nodded, "My love, you are really intelligent. Come here, I'll reward you with a kiss."

Wang Dong'er's face turned red, and she said, "Stop fooling around. Let's get back to proper business first."

"Alright. Since you've agreed, I'll wait until we are done with proper business first." Huo Yuhao said with a serious look on his face.

"Since when did I agree?" Wang Dong'er asked in embarrassment.

Huo Yuhao chuckled and said, "You said that we should get back to proper business first. Naturally, that means that we'll get to improper business after that."

"You..."

"Let's get back to proper business. You're right. I want to buy some rare metals."

Seeing Huo Yuhao's serious face, Wang Dong'er snapped as she pulled his hand toward her. She bit the back of his hand. However, she bit very gently. This was evident from how Huo Yuhao enjoyed her bite.

"Can you buy rare metals in the Sun Moon Empire? They're war resources now." Wang Dong'er asked doubtfully after she finished biting him.

Huo Yuhao smiled gently and asked, "Why not? As long as you have the money, nothing is impossible. It's because rare metals are considered war resources that they're very expensive. But this also means that selling them is very profitable. Some people will be interested in such profits. Furthermore, they are bound to be authoritative figures. This time, our two clients have accepted very expensive deposits. Gold soul coins are only useless, expensive metals. What we need are rare metals that can be continuously converted into wealth. Storing metals is better than storing money. That's why I plan to purchase rare metals. Before we left, eldest senior brought all our liquidated money. That includes the funds we gained by selling the Zhuge Divine Crossbow to the academy. Along with the payments that Princess Jiuju and Princess Wei Na gave us, the money that we have is quite substantial!"

Wang Dong'er was a little worried, "However, I'm afraid it'll be very troublesome to purchase rare metals here. What if we don't get the goods even after paying up? Even if we get the goods, can we return safely?"

Huo Yuhao patted her hand and said, "There'll always be a solution. Trust me."

"Alright."

Huo Yuhao said, "We are done with proper business."

Wang Dong'er naturally stood up and said, "I'm going to wash my clothes."

Huo Yuhao wouldn't let her go just like this. He pulled with her right hand, and she landed on his thigh.

She didn't struggle, and only buried her embarrassed head in his arms. She didn't struggle because she was afraid of hurting him. After all, only his right arm out of his four limbs could move!

"My love, just a while, alright?"

[Chapter 285.3: Team Shreks Improvement](#)

Ten minutes later...

"Didn't you say it would only be a light kiss?"

"I'll consider it a kiss after I'm satisfied."

"When will you be satisfied?"

"I'm unsure of that..."

After the Continental Elite Youth Soul Master Tournament entered its second elimination round, it became more and more intense. The remaining eighty-four teams went all-out against one another. After the first day of the second elimination round, twenty-one teams had already successfully qualified

for the next round. After this successful qualification, they already had one foot in the round-robin stage.

That was because forty-two teams would emerge after this second elimination round. Although the next round was still an elimination round, the bottom twenty-one teams had to compete with one another in terms of points so that the best ten teams out of these twenty-one teams could be selected for the next round-robin stage. It was already very prestigious for a team to enter the round-robin stage, as it wasn't an easy feat!

The second day of the second elimination round...

The Tang Sect's fight was arranged for the afternoon. They didn't go to the tournament venue in the morning, instead remaining in the hotel to rest. Bei Bei's injuries seemed to relapse and become more serious. This also cast a shadow on the Tang Sect's match.

After eating lunch, they rested for a while, and then embarked on their journey to the venue as it came closer to the time of their fight.

The resting area was much less crowded, and it no longer felt packed. But the number of spectators continued to rise. These last few days of intense competition had left them more and more excited.

Huo Yuhao had set their strategy yesterday, and thus he had nothing to tell them today. In the VIP resting area, his attention was drawn to the other teams that were in the area with them. He was surprised to find that he couldn't ascertain which team was representing the Body Sect.

The team that he had been monitoring had been eliminated yesterday morning. With the Body Sect's abilities, it wasn't possible for them to make such a low-level mistake, so he had to search for a new target to monitor.

The Holy Ghost Sect's team weren't there in the afternoon. They had competed in the morning, and had already advanced to the next round. Although no one from the Tang Sect watched their fight, they could roughly guess that it didn't last too long.

In contrast, Shrek's team came to the VIP resting area to watch the fights even though they had already qualified for the next round. Undoubtedly, they were here to watch the Tang Sect's fight.

Huo Yuhao could sense Wang Qiu'er's cold and level gaze looking at him when she sat down.

He smiled and nodded at her. However, he was greeted by a cold expression. He couldn't help but touch his nose, feeling that he had been sharply rebuffed by her.

On the other hand, Wu Feng, Dai Huabin, and the others were watching the Tang Sect very closely. Their expressions weren't very friendly. It was easy to see their intense competitive spirit from the look in their eyes.

Huo Yuhao shook his head helplessly. Is there a need for this? We are all from the same academy.

He was in a good state right now. Of course, he hadn't forgotten the deep hatred that he concealed in his heart.

The Holy Ghost Sect didn't come. Huo Yuhao sat where he was and rested his eyes. He circulated his Mysterious Heaven Technique and fused with the origin energy of Ultimate Ice in his body. Even though he could only strip off some of the origin energy, it was still better than nothing. Such a continuous fusion was also the safest and most stable method.

It was finally the Tang Sect's turn to compete after the fourth fight in the afternoon had concluded.

"Tang Sect versus the Ironsword Sect. Competing members from both teams, please enter the waiting area. The first competing member from each team, please enter the stage."

Everyone from the Tang Sect stood up as the referee called for them. Wang Dong'er pushed Huo Yuhao in front of everyone and entered the waiting area with the rest.

Even though Huo Yuhao had defeated all his opponents on his own in the previous round, the Tang Sect was still an unknown sect. The attention they received wasn't much. The deepest impression the Sun Moon Empire's citizens had of the Tang Sect was probably Huo Yuhao's wheelchair.

Xu Sanshi leapt up and ascended the stage, walking briskly to the center.

Ironsword Sect. This was an extremely unfamiliar name to the Tang Sect, but they definitely possessed some quality if they were able to pass the first elimination round.

The first competing member from the Ironsword Sect was a young lady. She had a slender figure and a refreshing appearance. Her long black hair drooped behind her back. Her charm wasn't lost amid her beauty and gentleness.

Xu Sanshi's eyes widened as he saw that his opponent was a lady. He subconsciously swallowed his saliva.

Beneath the stage, Huo Yuhao muttered, "Did this Ironsword Sect research us? How did they know that the best way to deal with third senior was by sending a beautiful lady to fight him?"

"Hmph!" Jiang Nannan's cold voice caused Huo Yuhao to shudder. He quickly shut his mouth and prayed as hard as he could for Xu Sanshi.

After a brief moment, Xu Sanshi's expression regained its normalcy. He walked to the center of the stage. Before the referee even said anything, he reached his hand over and said, "Beautiful lady, how are you? I'm Xu Sanshi from the Tang Sect. I'm usually called, usually called..."

He wanted to tell her about some mighty nickname that he had, but he was as speechless as he usually was when he saw a lady.

This lady didn't expect her opponent to be like this. Seeing his awkward look, she couldn't help but laugh. In terms of looks, Xu Sanshi and Bei Bei had different styles. However, they were both handsome.

The lady reached out with her right hand to shake his hand and said gently, "What are you usually called? I'm Wang Chengxi from the Ironsword Sect. Please have mercy on me, senior."

Xu Sanshi was still aware that Jiang Nannan was here, and so didn't grab her hand tightly. However, his face was still filled with a grin. "Of course, of course I'll have mercy on you. What do you think I should be called? Hmm, let me think. Eternal Defense? What do you think?"

“Eternal Defense?” Wang Chengxi was stunned, but she revealed a smile after that, “Great! It sounds impressive.”

“Are the two of you still competing?” The referee shouted, as he felt that the two of them didn’t care about his presence. He took a step forward and separated them. After that, he skipped the explanation of the rules and pointed to the two sides of the stage.

“I’ll see you later.” Xu Sanshi made a sneaky gesture at Wang Chengxi. He used his right hand to sweep his medium-length hair before turning around suavely.

Wang Chengxi was still wearing a smile on her face. She was apologetic as she nodded at the referee. After that, she turned around and walked towards her end of the stage.

Xu Sanshi felt his body turning rigid as he walked towards his side of the stage. He immediately turned in the direction of the cold intent that was being projected towards him. He saw a pair of big, beautiful eyes.

“Oh shit... I got too immersed!” Xu Sanshi shuddered. As he walked to his side of the stage, his expression turned very cool. After that, he gave Jiang Nannan a thumbs-up and softly said, “I was bewitching my opponent earlier so that she would be unable to see my true self.”

Jiang Nannan didn’t say anything. The defensive light barrier was soundproof...

Xu Sanshi turned around in a cool manner. After that, he saw the referee lifting his right hand up before swiping down.

He stopped fantasizing and quickly rushed in Wang Chengxi’s direction. Dazzling rings started to rise from his legs.

Yellow, yellow, purple, purple, black, black.

When his six soul rings rose, the spectators around started to exclaim.

Six rings. He actually had six rings.

Even the most clueless spectators knew what six soul rings represented. The abilities of a Soul Emperor!

It was very rare to find soul masters that were Soul Emperors. Since he was on this stage, it meant that he wasn’t twenty yet. For him to achieve such a cultivation at his current age, it must mean that he was a great talent and a truly strong competitor in this tournament. A team with at least one Soul Emperor should be able to reach the quarterfinals in this tournament.

Who would have expected the unknown Tang Sect to possess a Soul Emperor? In the previous round, the five-ringed Huo Yuhao took down seven opponents single-handedly. In this round, the Tang Sect sent a six-ringed Soul Emperor to compete first. Everyone saw the Tang Sect differently now!

Wang Chengxi hadn’t expected the guy flirting with her to be a Soul Emperor. However, her smile didn’t disappear. She took small steps as she advanced towards Xu Sanshi. However, no one could see the coldness in her eyes.

As she lifted her right hand, a pitch-black iron sword appeared in the air. Rings of light also appeared on the iron sword. There were two yellow and three purple rings. This was a rather good combination of soul rings for an ordinary soul master. Furthermore, she was also a Soul King. However, this was nothing in the eyes of a truly strong soul master.

The two of them got close to each other very quickly. To make amends for his mistake earlier, Xu Sanshi shouted, "This is a duel between sword and shield. Come on." As he spoke, he lifted his Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle and swept it towards Wang Chengxi.

Wang Chengxi smiled, and she stopped for a moment. After that, she jumped to one side, and her sword flashed with a light. Suddenly, a streak of black sword light was formed and shot towards Xu Sanshi's shoulder.

Xu Sanshi wasn't too bothered. His footsteps became faster, and he made a simple turn. At the same time, he pulled his shield back and blocked the sword light.

A crisp ringing sound rang out as the sword light struck his shield.

[Chapter 286.1: The Other Tournament](#)

Xu Sanshi leapt forward quickly and pressed his shield forward. He didn't unleash a soul skill, but instead used his dense soul power and physical strength to knock into Wang Chengxi. He was very sudden, such that Wang Chengxi was unprepared. Her sword was lifted into the air as she was pushed. From the looks of it, she was about to be struck by the shield.

Wang Chengxi reached her left hand forward. She grabbed her sword with two hands now and pressed it against the shield. She tapped into the forward momentum of the shield to lift her body into the air. Her movements were very elegant. As she exerted strength with her hands, she leapt into the air. At the same time as she passed Xu Sanshi, she flexibly turned her body and reversed direction.

The sword light from her sword started to shine very brightly. The sharp sword aura engulfed Xu Sanshi's body from the back.

She pressed her sword, leaping into the air and launching a counterattack. It was an eye-opener.

Xu Sanshi turned from the active to the passive party. However, he was very experienced, and had seen many types of situations before. He didn't panic at all. Wang Chengxi saw things blurring in front of her before Xu Sanshi miraculously used his shield to block his back. All the sword lights were deflected away, and none of them struck him.

Those who were watching the fight intently noticed that Xu Sanshi's shield turned along with Wang Chengxi as she leapt into the air, even though he hadn't turned himself. However, it appeared very abrupt because his shield was scooped up from the bottom.

Wang Chengxi's sword lights struck nothing again. However, her smile seemed to become wider. Her sword started to shine very brightly, and a layer of icy-blue started to engulf Xu Sanshi, coming from the third light ring that lit up on the sword.

The icy-blue glow quickly engulfed Xu Sanshi. At the same time, a black glow started to spread from the Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle. It spread out like exhaust gas, dispelling the icy-blue glow. Wang Chengxi was also engulfed by this exhaust gas.

It was Xu Sanshi's first soul skill, Mysterious Underworld Quake.

The difference this soul skill had from the past was that it now seemed to have its own intelligence. The strongest quake wasn't unleashed at the first moment, but covered Wang Chengxi's body instantly. It was only after this that the immense force of the quake was unleashed.

Wang Chengxi was stunned. She suddenly felt very restrained fighting against Xu Sanshi. Her outstanding fighting experience didn't seem to be useful here. Even her most confident skill had been seen through by her opponent! Xu Sanshi gave her a lot of pressure as he unleashed his soul skill.

The fifth soul ring on her sword suddenly lit up. Wang Chengxi grabbed her sword with both hands, and her body started to squirm. She was even calling out softly, "Painful!"

However, who knew that Xu Sanshi wasn't moved at all. The immense force from his Mysterious Underworld Quake was instantly unleashed. Not only that, but a pitch-black glow shone from his body. The surface area of his shield doubled, and the strength of the Mysterious Underworld Quake suddenly soared.

Thousand-year soul skill, Mysterious Underworld Force!

A light flashed from Wang Chengxi's hand. It was destroyed as a tremendous vibration struck her. Her fifth soul ring, which was on the sword, seemed to have been completely destroyed, and she was flung away by the strong quaking force. The lights on her sword suddenly turned much dimmer.

Xu Sanshi didn't follow up his attack. However, Wang Chengxi could hear him muttering, "Screaming in such pain, but your soul ring is still bright. That was too hypocritical!"

A pale glow was released from Wang Chengxi's body, which she used to resist the quaking force. As she supported her body with her right hand, she bounced straight back up.

"You really don't know how to take care of girls!" a whining voice sounded out.

Xu Sanshi was displeased as he said, "What do you mean, I don't know how to take care of girls? I'm only protecting myself. Even if I want to take care of girls, I'll need to prioritize my own life first! Am I right, beauty? Are you still attacking? If you aren't, you can leave the stage. I don't want you to complain that I'm not taking good care of you."

Wang Chengxi pursed her small lips and replied, "You haven't won. If I leave just like this, how can I account to my sect? Let's go again!"

As she spoke, she burst towards Xu Sanshi again. This time, she seemed even more elegant, and was also much faster. Her long, black hair danced with the wind.

Xu Sanshi didn't rush forward. He actually retreated one step, then lunged forward. There was a smile on his face.

He was indeed very fond of ladies. However, they would be in trouble if they thought that he was brainless and tried to harm him.

Wang Chengxi suddenly leapt into the air when she was five meters away from Xu Sanshi. She made a turn in the air and stabbed out towards him both hands on her sword. Her long swaying hair followed the movements of her body, appearing like a full, black moon.

Xu Sanshi didn't retreat or advance. He stood where he was and focused his gaze on Wang Chengxi's body. Her fifth soul ring lit up again, and the blinding lights from her sword were very clear. A black sword light was directly separated from her iron sword. It was completely black, but it released an intense silver light. Before the sword was even unleashed, its aura was already cracking the air with its sharpness.

At the same time, Wang Chengxi's black hair started to transform. It grew longer, and turned into black snakes that whipped towards Xu Sanshi. Not only this, but she also lifted her head suddenly, giving Xu Sanshi a shock.

While she had appeared very gentle and ravishing earlier, she was now very pale. Two fangs poked out from her mouth, and her eyes were completely white. Two streaks of pale white light instantly shot from them towards Xu Sanshi. The spectators couldn't see these two streaks of light clearly, as they were masked by the snakes. They could only see Xu Sanshi's body being engulfed by countless snakes.

Sword light, snakes, white lights! Three different attacks were unleashed at the same time!

Xu Sanshi was astonished as he shouted, "Twin martial souls?!" At this point, the white lights from Wang Chengxi's eyes had already shot towards him.

Xu Sanshi squatted down and used his shield to protect his entire body. He allowed the two streaks of white light to hit his shield.

Suddenly, he felt his shield becoming heavier, as it had turned into a massive rock! Following this, the countless snakes started to converge towards him from all directions. The sword lights were already in front of him too!

Beneath the stage, everyone from the Tang Sect couldn't help but get nervous. Wang Dong'er exclaimed at almost the same time as Xu Sanshi, "Twin martial souls?!"

Huo Yuhao shook his head, and his expression didn't really change.

Just when everyone thought Xu Sanshi was in deep trouble, something weird happened. The air distorted, and suddenly Xu Sanshi was displaced from his position, and Wang Chengxi replaced him in his original position. None of her attacks managed to strike him.

It was his fourth soul skill, the Mysterious Underworld Displacement! It was this skill that had created several miracles in the last tournament.

Xu Sanshi wasn't merciful anymore. A ball of black light was unleashed from his shield, a snake on its surface. White lights shot out from its blood-red eyes, which reconverted his shield back to its original state. Following this, his shield turned into projections in the air. The snakes that came towards Xu Sanshi were once again forced away by these projections.

Xu Sanshi followed his shield. His speed soared as he burst forward. He held the main body of his shield and was about to ram into Wang Chengxi!

At this point, there were five more soul rings on Wang Chengxi's body. Two were yellow, two were purple and the last one was black. The two purple soul rings were still shining brightly. As her snakes continued to burst forward, her body also turned soft like cotton. Her skin was even replaced by a layer of scales. She retreated quickly.

Her fifth soul ring also lit up again at the same time. A pale white color covered her eyes once again.

Medusa! This was Wang Chengxi's stronger martial soul. Her fifth soul skill was called Medusa's Gaze.

It was a pity that she was facing Xu Sanshi. His martial soul wasn't just simply his Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle. His shield had undergone a mutation.

The Xuanwu was a combination of a turtle and a snake, and it was the most outstanding water-type martial soul. Her Medusa's Gaze was completely curbed by the aura of his shield. As long as it didn't directly strike Xu Sanshi, it was impossible for her to have any effect on him. Her cultivation was also inferior to his, and he wouldn't turn to stone just because she gazed at him.

"Trying to escape?" Xu Sanshi snorted coldly. The shield projections in the air started to converge.

If the Heavenly Armor Sect's team hadn't left, they would have been embarrassed by how Xu Sanshi used his shield.

The shield walls formed by Xu Sanshi's Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle turned into a cage under his control, and Wang Chengxi was trapped within!

Two streaks of blood-red light shot out from the snake's eyes on the surface of his shield. As they struck Wang Chengxi's Medusa's Gaze, they destroyed it. He was also moving forward again at this point.

Wang Chengxi's body jerked back as she retracted all her snakes, but she then burst forward again and collided head-on with him.

It was a pity that her abilities were still far from his. Her snakes were destroyed, and she was completely trapped by Xu Sanshi. She groaned in discontent.

He watched Wang Chengxi from close-range and used his shield to block off her Medusa's Gaze. Xu Sanshi shook his head in loathing and said, "You look really good, but why do you have to make yourself appear so disgusting? It's a pity. I almost thought that you had twin martial souls. It seems like that isn't the case! You are quite smart, but it's a pity that you met me. Don't worry, I take good care of ladies. Concede defeat now!"

[Chapter 286.2: The Other Tournament](#)

“No!” Wang Chengxi looked at Xu Sanshi stubbornly. She used all her soul power and struggled to escape.

Xu Sanshi was a little helpless as he shook his head. Black lights were released again, his Mysterious Underworld Quake!

This time, his Mysterious Underworld Quake was unleashed as his shield was in its shield wall state. The quake was directed inwards instead of out.

By the time Xu Sanshi withdrew, Wang Chengxi had already regained her original appearance as she collapsed softly to the ground.

Xu Sanshi nodded his head in satisfaction and muttered to himself, “That’s right, you look much better now. You should thank me.”

The referee appeared gloomy as he rushed over and heard his words. Are all young people nowadays so shameless?

Xu Sanshi turned around in a very showy manner. He extended two fingers towards the others in the waiting area to signal his victory. After that, he suavely turned to his opponents and shouted, “Next!”

The referee couldn’t stand him anymore, and said furiously, “Why are you shouting? Do you think you are me? You are even carrying a speaker-type soul tool. Let me tell you. No one’s voice except mine can be heard within this protective barrier.”

“Uh...” Xu Sanshi recalled what he had said to Jiang Nannan and was stunned. When he was just about to turn around, two people from the Ironsword Sect hurried over and carried Wang Chengxi away.

She wasn’t hurt, but she was unconscious after suffering his quake. It was unlikely that she would wake up anytime soon.

Although Xu Sanshi loved to show himself off, it hadn’t been an easy fight for him. Given that he had to conceal his true abilities, Wang Chengxi’s explosive abilities had put a lot of pressure on him.

Wang Dong’er smiled as she said, “Oh, he’s finally won. Third senior is impressive!”

Huo Yuhao laughed, “Third senior can’t be stopped by this small wave. However, that lady was quite scheming.”

Wang Dong’er replied, “She doesn’t seem to possess twin martial souls. Otherwise, how could she bear to promote her soul rings to the same level for both martial souls? That wouldn’t be very good for her future development.”

Huo Yuhao answered, “Of course she doesn’t have twin martial souls. They aren’t that common.”

Jiang Nannan rolled her eyes and said, “Aren’t that common? There are already three of you who have twin martial souls among the seven of us.”

Huo Yuhao chuckled, “That’s because we are from Shrek! Fourth senior, third senior fought very steadily. Don’t put him in a difficult spot later.”

Jiang Nannan let a cold smile onto her face and replied, "I don't believe I can't change his bad habit."

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong'er looked at each other, and started to pray for Xu Sanshi in their hearts.

The second competing member of the Ironsword Sect quickly entered the stage. It was a young man this time, who wore a furious look on his face. When he entered the stage, he immediately interrogated Xu Sanshi, "What did you do to our senior?"

Xu Sanshi looked at him sincerely, "To prevent her from harming herself, I let her sleep. Don't worry, she'll wake up within a day."

The young man was stunned and said, "A day? What about our team round? She's our team leader! Without her, we'll..."

Xu Sanshi was shocked. "Brother, are you acting in front of me?"

"Acting? What nonsense! I'll fight it out with you!" The young man reacted quickly and burst towards Xu Sanshi.

It was a pity that he was stopped by the referee in the next moment.

The referee righteously said, "Although I detest him too, you'll still need to observe the rules. Stay back."

Xu Sanshi wasn't going to be merciful on this young man...

There were only ladies, beauties, and small animals in his heart. There wasn't such a thing as guys. As long as they weren't his close friends, they were automatically categorized as small animals. He wouldn't be merciful to them!

After Wang Chengxi's defeat, this young man, who was a four-ringed Soul Ancestor, lasted less than two minutes before he also lost.

Xu Sanshi's fighting style was very simple. There weren't too many flowery tricks, but he managed to use his shield exaltedly, and his soul skills flexibly. To others, he used one soul skill as if he were using three. Everyone could tell that he hadn't given his all yet.

However, he conceded defeat after he finished his second fight. He exited the stage and his teammate took over for him.

The Ironsword Sect's prowess seemed to have mainly come from Wang Chengxi. After her defeat, it was smooth sailing for the Tang Sect, there wasn't any real resistance for them. As for the team round, it was an overwhelming victory for them as well. Among the seven of them, He Caitou, Huo Yuhao, and Wang Dong'er didn't even make a move in the team round.

Xu Sanshi led Jiang Nannan, Xiao Xiao, and Na Na as they settled the fight in the team round.

The Tang Sect advanced, and the Ironsword Sect was eliminated.

Wang Chengxi's physical body was quite strong, and she woke up after the team round ended. However, there wasn't any hint of a smile on the face. From the looks of it, she wasn't any less furious than Nan Qiuqiu, who had lost to the Tang Sect in the previous round.

Nan Qiuqiu had followed the Tang Sect over to the tournament venue today. However, she remained in the resting area. She hadn't registered as a member of the Tang Sect, and thus she couldn't compete. However, she was much more honest now. She sat beside Jing Ziyang and shot clownish looks at everyone from the Tang Sect from time to time.

Over the past few days, Nan Qiuqiu had spent time with Jing Ziyang and Ji Juechen. Her hatred had shifted...

The Tang Sect didn't meet any strong opponents. After the next round, they would be in the round-robin stage.

After their fight ended, they didn't stay in the resting area. Huo Yuhao and the rest directly returned to their hotel to rest, where they also told Bei Bei about their victory.

Bei Bei was still in a bad condition. His condition didn't seem to have improved over the past two days. His injury couldn't be healed through healing-type soul masters. His body was invaded by an evil aura, so he could only use his own soul power to dispel the evil aura. At the same time, he needed to recover his vital energy.

Everyone returned to their rooms to rest, while Na Na left the hotel silently, continuing the mission that Huo Yuhao had delegated to her.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong'er returned to their room and started to cultivate. Huo Yuhao made full use of this time to absorb the origin energy in his body. It was only after night fell that a knock sounded at their door.

Wang Dong'er was jolted awake by the sounds of knocking on the door.

"Who is it?" Wang Dong'er asked.

"It's me," Na Na's voice came back quietly.

Wang Dong'er crawled out of the bed and walked towards the door before opening it

Na Na was apologetic as she said, "Mis... Dong'er, sorry for disturbing the both of you at such a late time. I'm really sorry."

Huo Yuhao's voice rose. "Dong'er, let her in."

Wang Dong'er brought Na Na into the room. Huo Yuhao had already ended his cultivation, and he was sitting by his bedside. His lower limbs still couldn't move. Even when he was seated, he could only rely on his right hand to shift himself. At this point, he grabbed onto the bed and tried to turn around.

"Was there any progress?" Huo Yuhao asked Na Na.

She replied, “Master, things aren’t going too well. I’ve contacted some of the black market sellers over these few days. They aren’t that willing to sell to us. They claim that their production is too little and the metals that we want are too precious.”

Huo Yuhao furrowed his brow and asked, “Is it because of money, or some other reason?”

Na Na said, “I asked, and heard that they are exploiting this tournament to organize an underground tournament. The rewards of this tournament are very substantial. As rare metals are a very important hard currency in the underground world, they are being used as stakes. It will be very difficult for us to buy any of them.”

Huo Yuhao was doubtful, “They are organizing their own tournament even as they bet? Isn’t the Continental Elite Youth Soul Master Tournament enough for them?”

Na Na said, “Master, there are some things you don’t know. The Sun Moon Empire has a very strict law that prohibits anyone from betting on this tournament. No one is allowed, no matter whether it’s on the surface or in the black market. Otherwise, punishment will be meted out.”

Huo Yuhao was stunned and asked, “Why is this so? I recalled that you could do so in the Star Luo Empire.”

Na Na replied, “I heard that the current Prince Regent detests gambling. That’s why the underground black market has no choice but to organize its own tournament.”

Huo Yuhao said, “Where do they find people to compete if everyone’s in the legal tournament? Without sufficient competitors, the tournament will be meaningless.”

Na Na said, “They aren’t organizing a fighting tournament, but one on creating soul tools. This is the specialty of Radiant City, it doesn’t happen in other empires. The only requirement is that the competitors have to be under thirty. Soul engineers of any class can compete. The entire tournament is purely about elimination. The rules of every round seem to be different.”

Huo Yuhao thought of something, and asked, “Can you tell me what this tournament is like? Also, what are the rewards and gambling system with regards to this underground tournament?”

Na Na had been living in Radiant City since her youth, and was very familiar with this place. She was also very good at obtaining such news. She thoroughly recounted the details of the tournament to Huo Yuhao.

The three biggest black markets had decided to organize their own tournament and exploit the opportunity of the Continental Elite Youth Soul Master Tournament to earn profits without angering Xu Tianran. To make it sound nice, they claimed that they were furthering the development of soul tools in the Sun Moon Empire.

The tournament wasn’t very strict. The only two requirements were that the soul engineers had to be under thirty, and they had to create Class 4 soul tools in the qualifiers. If they passed, they could advance to the next round, where they could truly compete.

[Chapter 286.3: The Other Tournament](#)

One could bet on the qualifiers. The bet was very simple: the number of people who could pass the qualifiers. One could bet on an absolute number, or whether it would be an odd or even number of people who qualified. The returns were a few multiples, and varied depending on the selections.

The qualifiers were being held right now. Creating soul tools wasn't as quick as a fight, so the soul engineers were given three days for the first round. The future rounds in the tournament would also be elimination rounds, but the topic for each round would change.

The three black markets even specially invited a member of the imperial family, a powerful Class 9 soul engineer, to be the chief referee. Twelve Class 7 and above soul engineers were also chosen to be the referee committee in this tournament, so as to ensure the fairness of the tournament and betting system.

The things they had to do were simple. They wanted to draw in the ordinary citizens, nobles, and wealthy individuals who wanted to gamble by exploiting the hype of the Continental Elite Youth Soul Master Tournament. Their aim was to make as much profit as possible.

So far, they had been very successful in this aspect. More than a hundred thousand people had bet in their tournament already, and the amount of money involved was undoubtedly very great.

To draw sufficient numbers of outstanding soul engineers to compete, the rewards of the tournament were all rare metals.

From the first round, those who qualified for the next round would be rewarded. This even applied to the qualifiers. As the rounds progressed, the rewards would increase.

Soul engineers could ignore money, but they had to have rare metals. They could create soul tools to earn money, but rare metals might not be available even if one had money. This was especially true in this tournament, since the rare metals were all being used as rewards for the competitors.

There was even competition between the three black markets. That was why there were three competing venues for the tournament. The winners in each venue would compete against one another. When that happened, the wager between the three black markets would also involve rare metals.

All this was why Na Na couldn't obtain any rare metals even though she was willing to offer a high price.

After listening to Na Na, Huo Yuhao sank deep into thought. He asked, "Na Na, are there any requirements to register for this tournament?"

Na Na shook her head and said, "It's very simple. One cannot be above thirty years old, and must be confident in competing in the qualifiers. Finally, there's a registration fee of a hundred gold soul coins."

Wang Dong'er's expression changed, and she said, "Yuhao, don't tell me you're thinking of competing. No, it's too dangerous! This is Radiant City! There are also many powerful soul engineers there."

Huo Yuhao smiled and said, "Won't it be a pity if I don't compete since the rewards are so good? Don't worry, I won't take any risks. I'm sure it's safe since they dare to organize such a tournament. The competitors are all soul engineers, the group of people with the greatest authority in the Sun Moon Empire. If they dare to do anything in the tournament, will the soul engineers tolerate such behavior? Definitely not! That's why we don't have to worry about the safety aspect. Furthermore, I won't

compete using my true identity. Your disguise and my Imitation will make it easy for me to scam everyone, won't it?"

Wang Dong'er furrowed her brow. "But we still have the tournament!"

Huo Yuhao said, "The underground tournament is mainly held at night. It won't affect anything. Dong'er, I must compete in this tournament for the development of the sect. Gambling is a good opportunity for us, but I won't be assured if I'm placing a bet on someone else. I'm a soul engineer, and this is a good opportunity to test my abilities. At the same time, I can learn a lot of things from others in the same line. I'll get second senior to follow me."

He paused for a moment and turned very serious, "Dong'er, the official tournament will help to build the Tang Sect's reputation, while the underground tournament will help to build the Tang Sect's future. They are both important!"

Wang Dong'er thought for a moment before saying, "You can go if you want, but on two conditions. First, you must seek eldest senior's approval. Second, I must follow you. However, are you really going to compete? Hasn't it begun already?"

Huo Yuhao said, "Na Na mentioned that there's still one day left in the qualifiers. It's not too late. I agree to your conditions. Let's go and find eldest senior before registering for this tournament!"

At such a time, he was very quick and decisive. Purchasing rare metals was one of his most important goals for coming here. It took on a significant meaning for the Tang Sect's future development and his own improvement in his soul engineering abilities.

Huo Yuhao asked Wang Dong'er to push him to He Caitou's room before they went to Bei Bei's room.

An hour later...

The sky had already turned dark. Perhaps everyone's energy was depleted because of the tournament in the day, but the night seemed very quiet. There were very few people roaming the streets, and most people had already retired to bed.

At a street corner around three hundred meters from the Ming Yue Hotel, the light seemed to distort at a pitch-black corner. Following this, four figures surfaced.

Huo Yuhao was still in his wheelchair, but his wheelchair was covered by a black cloth, and his appearance had changed greatly. Compared to before, he was much more handsome, and there were many changes to small details. Even if there were familiar faces around him, they wouldn't be able to recognize him unless they could deduce his identity using the wheelchair he was in.

Wang Dong'er was still dressed like a man. Her appearance was very cold and tough, and she also looked much more ordinary. On the whole, she seemed like an extremely normal and aloof young man.

The greatest change in He Caitou was his hair. He was wearing a brown wig that helped to cover his bright and shiny bald head. His wig reached his shoulders, and there was a black mask on his face. His complexion was also paler. Along with a thick, black robe, he seemed very mysterious.

Na Na's transformation was the simplest. She put on makeup to look like a maid. Her simple transformation made her look very pitiful. She stood beside Huo Yuhao's wheelchair, her deference towards him didn't need to be faked.

He Caitou was impressed. "Junior, your Imitation is getting stronger and stronger. We were completely unrecognizable just now as we left the hotel. No one will suspect us."

Huo Yuhao smiled and said, "Second senior, let's refer to ourselves differently from now on. I'm in a wheelchair, so I'll have no choice but to take advantage of all of you. We are brothers now, and I'll call you big brother. You can call me second brother. Dong'er and Na Na are my servants. They'll call me Master. I'll call the two of them Little Dong and Little Na."

Wang Dong'er snapped and said, "You are intentionally taking advantage of us!"

Huo Yuhao chortled, "No! Isn't that just logical? Call me Master."

Wang Dong'er pursed her lips as she saw his sly look. She snorted, and her voice turned very manly as she said softly, "Mas... Master..."

Huo Yuhao chuckled, "Be more natural. Come on, one more time."

"You..." Wang Dong'er lifted her hands, as if she wanted to do something. However, she couldn't bear to lay her hands on him seeing that he was in a wheelchair. She turned her head and ignored him.

"Let's go. It isn't early anymore. Let's follow the plan."

Wang Dong'er was pushing his wheelchair while Na Na followed to one side, He Caitou walked on the other. The four of them proceeded towards the center of the city as they took advantage of the darkness.

There was an underground world everywhere. Whether it was the Heavenly Soul, Dou Ling, Star Luo or Sun Moon Empire, it was all the same. There were many types of underground worlds. The lowest level involved sex, murder, and human trafficking. The higher-class ones involved arms trafficking, underground political trades, and the sale of rare resources. Whether it was the lowest level underground worlds or the higher-class ones, they were all controlled by powerful figures. Otherwise, there wouldn't be any way for them to survive.

In Radiant City's Underground World, there were three main organizations. They were the Duskwater Alliance, the Common Alliance, and the Alto Chamber of Commerce.

The Common Alliance controlled the sex industry in Radiant City, and was probably the shallowest underground power. The Alto Chamber of Commerce controlled assassin and thieves' associations, as well as some evil powers. They made a living by collecting protection fees and committing murders and theft, as well as through other illegal means.

The Duskwater Alliance was more advanced. They sold the most profitable medicines and arms, and trafficked people.

The Common Alliance and Alto Chamber of Commerce shared a very close relationship, teaming up together to oppose the Duskwater Alliance. However, they weren't as well-backed as the Duskwater Alliance. They weren't very interactive either, and only ensured a peaceful working relationship through agreements between their backers.

All three underground organizations were involved in the sale of rare metals. After all, it was a very profitable trade. As long as they were given access to mining channels, they could obtain rare metals at a low cost. However, these rare metals were in very high demand, and helped them make the most profits.

For example, there was a rare metal called Soulforging Silver. It could fuse with any type of metal and increase its affinity towards a soul master's soul power. At the same time, it increased the tensile strength and hardness of the metals it was fused with. It was used in almost all advanced soul tools.

It was only produced in the Sun Moon Empire, and was produced in average quantities. Around five hundred gold soul coins were needed to mine one kilo of it, but on the market, it was worth around a hundred gold soul coins per hundred grams. This was a two hundred percent profit if it was sold! How could anyone not go crazy over it? Even with the great exploitation of the mining channels, the profits were still very great.

The profits that could be reaped from Soulforging Silver were only considered average among rare metals. The prices of rarer metals were even more unbelievable!

[Chapter 287: The Newbies Compete](#)

Such enormous profits were too alluring, and the influence of Radiant City's three main underground organizations' reached every corner of the country, so it was natural that they could reap the rewards. Every year gave them immeasurable profits, and this was even under the circumstances where the country monopolized the industry, while ruling rare metals as strategic resources. The country had even prohibited exports!

The three underground organizations named this competition the Radiant City Elite Soul Engineer Tournament, and it piggybacked on the reputation of the Continental Elite Youth Soul Master Tournament.

Huo Yuhao decided to choose the strongest underground organization out of the three, because this organization was also being discreetly marginalized and clamped down on by the other two: the Duskwater Alliance. He was the only one who knew the rationale behind his decision.

The Duskwater Alliance's preliminary rounds were designated to be carried out at a luxurious hotel in the city center. One of the reasons this place was picked was because this hotel was not far from the Brilliant Delight Hotel, so the participants wouldn't have to travel too far away. Huo Yuhao wasn't that mobile after all, and a long journey would be a burden on him. He couldn't just let Wang Dong'er push him around inside the city...

The Green Hotel had a unique and characteristic name. It was a little more than a kilometer away from the Brilliant Delight Hotel, and was but two kilometers away from the Sun Moon Empire's royal palace,

located in a very prime and profitable location. However, people often mispronounced its name, and so people easily misunderstood this place as the Romantic Love Hotel... and yet, it was because of this fact that it became quite well-known. This property belonged to the Duskwater Alliance, but nobody knew if the Duskwater Alliance's headquarters were also located here.

The Green Hotel was built on a smaller scale than the Brilliant Delight Hotel. There were only five levels above the ground, but those who were familiar with this hotel understood that its true substance was beneath the ground!

There were four muscular men clad in black warrior robes standing outside the hotel's main door. They were all more than two meters tall, and they surveyed the throngs of people walking by with ice-cold eyes.

Huo Yuhao and his group hadn't even come near when one of them stepped up and blocked their path.

"The hotel isn't open for business today. Please leave."

Huo Yuhao was still sitting in the wheelchair. He smiled and said, "We're here to participate in the Radiant City Elite Soul Engineer Tournament."

The man in black was stunned for a moment, but his expression then became a little gentler. Soul engineers were held in high regard within the Sun Moon Empire compared to other empires, and offending a soul engineer wasn't a smart choice even if the other party had a modest rank.

"I'm sorry, soul engineer. The preliminary rounds have already begun, and they're about to end soon. You're too late." The man in black spoke with a look of regret on his face, but his expression contained a little more respect than before. Perhaps his change of attitude was also because the mysterious aura from He Caitou affected his state of mind.

Huo Yuhao also seemed a little rueful. "That's a pity. I originally believed that I could represent the Duskwater Alliance to participate in the final round, and perhaps help you guys claim the championship. How about this? I'll use a hundred thousand golden soul coins, and I'll wager that I can pass the preliminary rounds today. There isn't much time left anyway, so you guys will win a large sum of money even if I don't. But if I do, it also means that the Duskwater Alliance will have another relatively outstanding soul engineer to participate in the final round. This is a win-win situation for you guys, am I right?"

The man in black was slightly taken aback. "A hundred thousand golden soul coins,,, are you sure?" This underground wagering business wasn't a secret. The underground organizations wouldn't be able to host a competition as large as this without implicit approval from the authorities. Therefore, the man in black didn't dodge the question, but he was still astounded by the sum that Huo Yuhao had just quoted. Even aristocratic families were rarely able to quote sums like that, and this guy was betting on himself. Was he not afraid that the Duskwater Alliance would play some dirty tricks to win his money?

Huo Yuhao nodded seriously and said, "I believe that the Duskwater Alliance will be just. If you can't make this decision, please bring it to your superiors."

“Please wait here.” The man in black seemed even more respectful than before. He bowed to Huo Yuhao courteously before he walked briskly back to the Green Hotel’s main door and said something to his companions before swiftly entering the hotel.

It didn’t take long before a middle-aged man dressed in a long and elegant white gown stepped out from the Green Hotel’s main door. He immediately saw Huo Yuhao, and he took a few quick steps forward before he smiled radiantly and said, “I’m sorry, my subordinates are too immature. Please follow me, my honored guests.” He made a gesture to invite them into the hotel as he spoke.

Huo Yuhao was a little surprised at how candid this person was. He nodded in acknowledgement before Wang Dong’er pushed him into the Green Hotel.

The Green Hotel was quite rustic, indeed. Its layout was extremely simple, and there was no way one could tell from its appearance that this place was the number-one location that symbolized the underground organizations’ influence. Furthermore, this was also one of the Duskwater Alliance’s important strongholds!

The hotel’s layout felt smooth and sleek. There were white porcelain decorations and ornaments everywhere, and even the flooring and the walls were made of white porcelain. White and red were the main colors.

Wang Dong’er surveyed her surroundings as she pushed Huo Yuhao’s wheelchair. She thought to herself, Are those red decorations foreshadowing fresh blood? What does all this white porcelain signify? Fresh blood amongst all the pure whiteness?

The middle-aged man stopped walking once they entered the hotel and said, “My valued guests, may I know who the one that’s going to participate in the competition is?”

Huo Yuhao said, “My big brother and I will both join the competition.” He pointed at He Caitou beside him as he spoke.

The middle-aged man nodded his head and said, “How do I address the two of you?”

Huo Yuhao answered, “My big brother is called Tang Si, and I am called Tang Wu.”

The middle-aged man’s eyes sparkled. He could obviously tell that the two of them were patronizing him, and that these definitely weren’t their real names.

However, he didn’t know that Huo Yuhao hadn’t come up with these names at random. The Tang Sect’s original ancestor was named Tang San, so he definitely wouldn’t coin an identical name for himself. Therefore, he came up with Tang Si and Tang Wu.

The man didn’t pursue the matter any further. Many soul engineers had their own preferences and reservations, and many people were still relatively cautious. Since they were participating in an underground competition, there were quite a few contestants who used fake names. These underground organizations also definitely didn’t keep their hold on these soul engineers based on their names. It was important for these organizations not to probe into these soul engineers’ private information, as these organizations could only keep them here if they provided benefits.

“The competition has already been underway for quite some time, and will end soon. Time is of the essence. Why don’t the two of you verify that you guys are soul engineers first, and I will immediately arrange your entries into the competition. Also, about the wager that you just mentioned...”

Huo Yuhao raised his hand, and Wang Dong’er passed a dark-golden card forward from behind him.

“This is the Auspicious Gold Bank’s black gold VIP card that can be used across the Continent. Xiao Na, follow this mister afterwards to place our bet.” Huo Yuhao spoke plainly as he raised his right hand, and the middle-aged man saw a flash before his eyes before a short dagger appeared in Huo Yuhao’s right hand. A white beam of light shot up as a razor-sharp sword aura soared into the air and howled shrilly at the sky.

He Caitou’s method was even simpler. He raised his hand and unleashed an enormous soul cannon, which he pointed at the middle-aged man.

Cold sweat erupted from the man’s forehead, and he hurriedly said, “Calm down, guys. You have been verified, completely verified!”

Huo Yuhao smiled faintly and said, “Since you said that we are tight on time, then bring us there as quickly as you can.” He gradually withdrew his White Tiger Dagger as he spoke.

Huo Yuhao always carried around the only item that his mother had left him. He was no longer the immature youth that he had been, and he had done some research and investigation into his White Tiger Dagger. He realized that his White Tiger Dagger was a Class 5 close-combat soul tool, and it possessed a soul skill called Devour. As long as his opponent’s attack didn’t exceed his White Tiger Dagger’s absorption limits, the dagger could consume the attack and convert it into its own power, which would be released in the next attack.

Back when he had first entered the Great Star Dou Forest all those years ago, he relied on the White Tiger Dagger’s special characteristics to survive after he was ambushed by that ten-year soul beast.

The manager wiped the cold sweat from his brow as he escorted Huo Yuhao and the others to some soul elevators in the hotel’s inner regions. He used a soul transmitter to pass a few messages before he directed the four of them into a lift.

The lift went all the way down, and stopped after about ten seconds. When the lift’s doors opened again, a cacophony of noise could be heard, along with a strong smell of paper and metal that wafted into their faces.

This scene was drastically different from the main lobby’s simplicity. The shiny magnificence of the hotel’s underground world dazzled everyone. Everything was golden, even the mirrors! It felt as if this underground world was made entirely from gold...

The manager led them out of the elevator, and they crossed an extravagant circular hall before they entering through a door right in front of them.

There were two guards standing by the door, who immediately opened the large door when they saw the manager.

It felt like they had entered another world once they stepped inside. There wasn't as much light in this place, and what light there was seemed a lot gentler. However, the sheer size of this place caused Huo Yuhao to react in astonishment.

They were inside a circular domed hall, where the hall's ceiling seemed to be made of uncountable golden lines that were orderly and rhythmically intertwined together. The enormous dome provided enough light for the spacious hall, and rows of seats extended neatly down the aisle, while there were spiraling escalators that led upwards around the seats. There was a circular room hovering at the end of every flight of soul escalators, and there was no way to tell with the naked eye how those rooms were just levitating in midair.

There were eight sets of these soul escalators and hovering rooms, and forming a circle about the place.

There was a circular platform in the center of the hall at least thirty meters in diameter. It wasn't as spacious as the Continental Elite Youth Soul Master Tournament's competition stage, but it was spectacular enough. This was part of the underground world, after all!

There were numerous metal desks on the stage at the moment, and light flickered from time to time. There were several metal desks around the circular platform, and more than a hundred metal desks on the central platform. Some metal desks were already empty.

There were row after row of sapphire velvet chairs around the competition stage, and they were packed with people. However, they were all extremely quiet, and they were intently watching the people hard at work at the metal desks. A conservative estimate would place the number of people in the audience at more than two thousand, and one could tell from their clothes and their accessories that they were all relatively well-to-do.

Huo Yuhao had discovered from Na Na that only the whales who had wagered more than ten thousand golden soul coins could watch the contest in person. The other normal citizens who had also placed bets could only watch from these underground organizations' outer betting spots.

This was just one of the competition's multiple regions, and there were already several hundred soul engineers below the age of thirty who were participating in the contest. The black market's great contest was alluring indeed!

"Excuse me, how many people from the Duskwater Alliance are participating in the competition?" Huo Yuhao asked the manager, who was leading the way.

The middle-aged man replied respectfully, "We have a total of two hundred and sixty-four soul engineers participating in the competition. We will have two hundred and sixty-six if we include the two of you. Some of these soul engineers have already completed their projects. Today's contest is only the qualifying round, so we only require participants to craft a Class 3 soul tool in order to pass the assessment. Of course, you have to finish the project within a certain period of time. Look there, every soul engineer's desk has an hourglass. However, only half of the hourglass is remaining for the last few soul engineers who joined the contest, and that means you only have about an hour left. I wonder if the two of you will have enough time?"

Huo Yuhao smiled, and the corner of his mouth flowed with subtle confidence and pride. "That's enough." He was roleplaying as another person and not himself, so he began to make adjustments to his demeanor and his emotions from this moment onwards.

"Alright, then."

Huo Yuhao asked, "What is this place used for normally? An auction?"

A wary look flashed across the manager's eyes. "Have you guys never been to our Golden Hall?"

Huo Yuhao curled the corner of his lip apathetically and said, "Of course not. My family is so rich that..." He paused after this, and the same wary look came over his eyes. However, the wary look in his eyes made the middle-aged man look a lot more relaxed than before.

The manager smiled faintly, and a tinge of elegance could be seen in his expression. He said confidently, "That's a real pity, then. This place is an auction, and it's the largest auction house in Radiant City. Let me tell you a secret... even people from the royal family have sent people to participate in our top-tier auction! If you have time in the future, you are very welcome to participate! You will be treated like honored guests."

They arrived near the arena's center as they spoke, but someone blocked their path.

Two people who were dressed the same way as the manager intercepted them. After some brief conversation, one of the two men that blocked their way said, "The participants can enter, but everyone else has to wait outside. Place your bets immediately."

Wang Dong'er raised her eyebrows, but Huo Yuhao waved his hand and said, "Xiao Dong, Xiao Na, the two of you can go outside. Xiao Na will place the wager. I wonder what the odds are like today?"

The manager replied plainly, "If you bet on the exact number of people to qualify and you get it right, you will win ten times your wager. You can also place multiple bets, and the odds are different for every option."

Huo Yuhao was surprised. "But we said before this that we were wagering on the two of us being able to qualify."

The manager said calmly, "That wager is not possible, and this is but a qualifying round. However, the sum that you quoted must be wagered. Otherwise, you guys won't be allowed to enter the competition."

Huo Yuhao was momentarily taken aback. "You guys never mentioned that before."

[Chapter 288.1: The Fierce Genius Soul Engineer](#)

The person that had blocked their path said coldly, "It's not my problem that you guys are late. Time waits for no man – we're getting closer and closer to the end of the competition."

Huo Yuhao smiled, a very warm smile. "Alright then. Xiao Dong, Xiao Na, you guys can go ahead and follow his instructions. We'll make the wager. However, I hope you have the courage to stay here until the end, mister. I'm a very stingy person, and you will have to pay with your life if I lose my money."

The middle-aged man was momentarily stunned. He stared at the warm smile on Huo Yuhao's face, but for some reason, he began to feel a chill run down his spine. But the sensation only lasted for an instant, and he returned to normal as he said indifferently, "You're in the Duskwater Alliance's territory. If you have the ability, my life doesn't mean anything at all."

Huo Yuhao nodded and said, "Very well. Show us the way."

Wang Dong'er didn't feel very assured, but she went ahead with Na Na to make the wager anyway. Huo Yuhao and He Caitou followed the middle-aged man that Huo Yuhao had just threatened to the competition arena.

They weren't qualified to participate in the competition on stage, so they were brought to two metal desks in the outer corners that belonged to participants that had already finished their part in the contest.

Huo Yuhao frowned and said, "You guys don't even provide materials for crafting soul tools?"

The middle-aged man had just been threatened, so he shot Huo Yuhao a dark look and said, "We did have some originally, but there won't be any for you because of what you said earlier. You can find your own materials since you guys are late." He turned around to leave after he finished talking, and another elderly man clothed in yellow walked over and stood behind the two of them. The other contestants were in a similar situation.

"What are the rules?" Huo Yuhao asked the old man in yellow.

The old man pointed to a desk not far from them that was being used for the contest. "There's an hourglass over there – you guys will check the time yourselves. You have to craft a Class 3 soul tool before the last grain of sand drops down in the hourglass, and you will qualify for the next round once you complete your soul tool within the stipulated time. You will be eliminated if you can't complete the task. You may begin. I will be here to watch and to ensure that you don't use finished or half-finished soul tools to cheat."

Huo Yuhao turned around toward He Caitou, and then he looked at the metal desk that was well-equipped with crafting tools. He smiled and said, "Big brother, doesn't this feel familiar?"

He Caitou was wearing a mask. He naturally knew that Huo Yuhao was referring to their days inside the Illustrious Virtue Hall, and he nodded.

Huo Yuhao sighed and said, "Not giving us materials is just so harsh and unkind. I have to make use of what's around me, I guess."

He raised his right hand as he spoke. The old man behind him saw a dark-golden flash of light before one of the steel desk's corners was lopped off. The piece was half a foot thick, and the old man also saw the five sharp blades that flickered with dark golden radiance that extended from Huo Yuhao's right hand.

The Darkgolden Terrorclaw Bear was known as one of the most powerful species in the world of soul beasts. A unique and frightening aura could be felt once Huo Yuhao unleashed his Darkgolden Terrorclaw.

Huo Yuhao flicked his claw upwards, and the metal piece flew towards He Caitou. "We'll have to make do with this, big brother."

"Alright." He Caitou decided to talk as little as he could, to avoid saying the wrong things. He took the piece of metal and immediately began to work on it with a carving knife from the crafting tools that were laid out on the table.

Huo Yuhao didn't wait for the old man to stop him. The sharp blades flickered once more, and another piece of steel was cut off, but he took it himself this time.

"This is a standard desk for crafting soul tools, and every table is worth five thousand golden soul coins!" The invigilator was shaken by the Darkgolden Terrorclaw's aura for a little while.

"Oh." Huo Yuhao answered casually before he began to work with his right hand. Five golden blades trembled at the same time, and it felt as if they were forming a dark golden layer of water that undulated on the metal desk's surface. Metal powder and fragments drifted down, but they didn't scatter all over the place. They actually spread around him in an orderly fashion.

Huo Yuhao wasn't even looking at the tough steel that he had just retrieved. He turned around towards the invigilator and asked, "Are you a soul engineer as well? What's your Class?"

The elderly man didn't answer his question, because he was in a complete daze at the moment, his eyes fixated upon Huo Yuhao's rhythmic right hand.

That was a hand that could accomplish miracles! Huo Yuhao's five razor-sharp blades continued to move rhythmically, and the irregular piece of steel quickly became rectangular, before strange and peculiar patterns began to appear on its surface. The steel piece was subsequently split into pieces and carved... the entire process was as smooth as a flowing river.

Huo Yuhao's fingers seemed like they were just faintly quivering, and every movement was just so precise and accurate...

Just as Huo Yuhao had said, the old man in yellow was also a soul engineer, but he was only a Class 3 soul engineer. In the end, breaking through three rings was quite a drastic change for most soul masters, and many people couldn't breach that barrier, even across an entire lifetime.

This elderly man was just a Class 3 soul engineer, but his eyes were quite fine. He was part of the Duskwater Alliance, and he had seen multiple high-level soul engineers craft soul tools. What Huo Yuhao was doing at the moment was comparable to those high-level soul engineers. He was smooth, quick, and agile at the same time, and he was working at a speed that was almost impossible to believe.

From a soul engineer's perspective, steel was a relatively standard crafting material that was also easy to carve and engrave. However, working at such rapid pace was simply unbelievable, and the old man knew that he couldn't do anything like Huo Yuhao. The youth before him was going through everything so casually, and he hadn't even pulled out his carving knife. This youth was just using sharp blades from his martial soul, or perhaps from a soul skill, to craft his soul tool.

The silver-white steel gradually took shape. Huo Yuhao didn't use a single crafting tool from the table, but an impeccable metal tube was produced just like that. He quickly assembled, crafted, and inserted the formation arrays.

Huo Yuhao used the five sharp claws of his Darkgolden Terrorclaw to cut, drill, slice, chisel, and whatever techniques he had to use to craft his soul tool, and he only used one hand from beginning to end. Of course, there was no way he could use his other hand even if he wanted to, but the old man didn't know that. The elderly man felt as if he wasn't watching a contest, but a performance, an incredibly spectacular performance in crafting soul tools.

This process didn't continue for too long. Five minutes, after just five minutes, Huo Yuhao's undulating blades halted, and his body casually turned around as he signaled to the old man, who had a blank look in his eyes. "It's done!"

The elderly man recovered from his astonishment, and quickly stepped forward to pick up the silver-white soul tool on the desk.

The silver-white metal tube was long and smooth. It was about a foot long, and there was an arm buckle beneath it, so it was most suitable for use when attached to the arm. The old man carefully infused soul power into the soul tool, and it immediately lit up. The old man gasped, as he could feel that this soul tool was consuming his soul power at an alarming rate, to the point where he couldn't control it anymore. Afterwards, he could feel the formation arrays activating themselves from the soul power compressed in them. The entire silver-white metal tube sparkled, and intense soul power immediately began to radiate out of it. He realized that there was no way for him to stop it.

The contest was still ongoing at the moment, and this was the Green Hotel's Golden Hall! The invigilator didn't know what would happen if this soul tool was allowed to fire. He went a little hysterical as he exclaimed, "Quick, make it stop! Why won't it stop?"

Huo Yuhao smiled and said, "That's because you're not operating it in the right way." He raised his right hand as he spoke, and pressed down gently on the tube's surface. The charging and compression instantly disappeared, and the entire soul tool powered down.

Huo Yuhao said, "Your soul power isn't wasted. The energy-gathering formation array will still maintain its activity for two hours, and you can fire it at anytime you wish."

The old man wiped the sweat from his brow and stared at Huo Yuhao fearfully. "The soul tool that you have made is..."

Huo Yuhao grinned and said, "It's a simplified energy-gathering soul cannon. It should be at least Class 3, but Class 4 soul engineers are typically more suited to operate something like this. It seems like you're not a Class 4 soul engineer yet. The materials that I have had to retrieve on the spot were a little substandard, so this cannon can only be fired thrice. If you want to play around with it, you'll have to wait for me to complete the qualifying round. My part of the contest is over; have I passed?"

The old man's expression was entirely different from before. He handed the soul tool back to Huo Yuhao respectfully and said, "Of course you have passed the qualifying round. You're the one who has crafted this soul tool, please take it back. The soul engineers get to keep all the soul tools that they make within this competition. Of course, you can sell your productions to us if you wish."

Huo Yuhao replied, "I'll leave it to you then. Just treat it as compensation for damaging the table. That should be enough, right?"

“Yes, yes it’s enough.” A Class 3 soul tool was worth about three to five thousand golden soul coins, while Huo Yuhao didn’t destroy the entire table, so repairing the table probably wouldn’t require more than ten golden soul coins. Using a soul tool like this to compensate for the damage was more than enough. Furthermore, the crafting abilities Huo Yuhao had just displayed completely astounded this invigilator.

The old man asked probingly, “If I may ask, what Class are you in?”

Huo Yuhao smiled faintly and said, “You will know eventually. However, you have to continue with your duties. You haven’t seen the soul tool that my big brother is crafting yet.”

The old man realized that He Caitou’s hands had stopped moving on the other side as well, and he had also crafted another soul tool from the piece cut off from the table. The soul tool that He Caitou had crafted was a broad bracelet, the kind intended for men. The old man quickly went over to check.

“This... is this a storage-type soul tool? A storage-type soul tool crafted from steel?! Oh, my goodness! That’s such a waste of your abilities.” The old man didn’t know what else to say. He discovered after inspecting and testing the soul tool that this broad bracelet had about five cubic liters of storage space, and it absolutely met the criteria as a Class 3 soul tool.

[Chapter 288.2: The Fierce Genius Soul Engineer](#)

Storage-type soul tools and Milk Bottles were typically considered the most complicated soul tools among others of the same tier. This storage-type soul tool was made from steel, and that meant it wouldn’t be so durable, but its complexity and the difficulty of crafting something like this was the same as it would have been if another material had been used. It wasn’t worth much, but the craftsmanship was undeniable. If there had been better metal available, this storage-type soul tool would be considered an exquisite item compared to other Class 3 soul tools.

Two Class 3 soul tools were crafted within such a short period of time. What did that mean? This meant that these two brothers, who had only joined the competition when it was nearing its end, were at least Class 4 soul engineers. It was likely that they were even better; could Class 4 soul engineers craft soul tools with such smoothness and agility? The old man knew the answer to this question very well.

“The two of you have passed the qualifying round, and we will begin the first official round tomorrow. We will directly enter elimination rounds, and every elimination round will cut the total headcount by a third, until a champion is crowned. Here, these are your proofs for passing the qualifying round. The two of you can use them to claim your prizes for this round!”

The old man passed over two badges made from pure gold as he spoke. There were numbers on each badge; Huo Yuhao’s number was seventy-one, while He Caitou’s number was seventy-two.

He Caitou pushed Huo Yuhao’s wheelchair and they departed under the old man’s watchful and respectful gaze.

“Eh? How can it be over so quickly? Have they withdrawn from the contest because they know they can’t pass?” Some people were annoying and irritating, especially if they were born with a snickering

and sneering face. The middle-aged man that was throwing shade at Huo Yuhao before this took the opportunity and popped out of nowhere...

Huo Yuhao smiled and opened his right hand. "I just want to know where I can redeem my prize."

The middle-aged man noticed the golden badge in Huo Yuhao's hand just as he was mocking him sarcastically. He seemed like a duck that was grasped by the neck, and his voice stuck in his throat.

"That... that's impossible! How long did you guys take? You... you guys cheated!"

Huo Yuhao answered solemnly, "You have to be responsible for your words."

The old man in yellow came over hurriedly at this moment. "I'm terribly sorry, my two honored guests. This is a misunderstanding. Hurry and apologize to them, Great King."

"Great King? That's a great name!" Huo Yuhao spoke with a faint grin on his face.

The middle-aged man's expression didn't look so good, and it appeared to change color again and again. He grunted coldly and turned around to leave.

"Don't go! There's something else I want to discuss with you!" Huo Yuhao suddenly spoke to him.

Great King was momentarily stunned. He turned around and forcefully suppressed the complicated emotions riling up his mind as he asked, "What else needs to be said?"

Huo Yuhao continued, "I imagine I'm going to lose the wager that I've just made. Do you remember what I said to you before this?"

Great King's face instantly changed. He hadn't thought too much of it when Huo Yuhao had threatened him before with a smile on his face, as he didn't believe that this fellow in the wheelchair could pass this round of the competition. However, the yellow-clothed old man had confirmed that the two brothers had both passed this round within such a short period of time. He was very clear about what this meant; even though he was arrogant, sneering, and sarcastic by nature, he wasn't a fool. He was sharply aware that Huo Yuhao wasn't a person that he could afford to offend, and he himself was only a Soul Elder after all.

"The contest isn't over. How... how do you know that you can't win the wager?" Great King's voice was a little shaky and fearful.

Huo Yuhao smiled and said, "I know I can't win just by looking at your face. Are you telling me that you haven't done something to my wager? I remember I saw you walk out before this."

Great King took a few steps back subconsciously.

Huo Yuhao lowered his head instead as he muttered under his breath, "My best virtue is that I always honor my word."

Huo Yuhao suddenly looked up as he spoke, and he pushed out his right hand towards Great King.

"Don't do it, sir!" The old man called out hastily, but he was too late in the end.

Boom!

A flower that resembled some of the red and white decorations around the Green Hotel bloomed, and Great King's head instantly split open like an exploding watermelon.

Huo Yuhao was behaving as if he hadn't done anything at all. He wore a pitiful and regrettable expression on his face as he said, "I hope you can be the king of Great Kings in your next life."

The sudden incident immediately triggered intense and vigorous gasps of astonishment. This was one of the Duskwater Alliance's strongholds, and it was unimaginable that anybody would have the courage to murder someone in a place like this. Furthermore, this murder was executed in such a brutal and barbaric fashion.

The other guests descended into hysteria, and numerous men dressed in black quickly surrounded Huo Yuhao. The yellow-clothed invigilator and the manager that led them from the hotel door were also part of this group. It didn't take long before they surrounded Huo Yuhao and He Caitou, forming a very tight circle around them.

Huo Yuhao grunted coldly and said plainly, "Do all of you wish to die?" Huo Yuhao began to chant incomprehensibly as he spoke. He Caitou took a step horizontally, and a series of metal clanging sounds could be heard as he transformed into a frightening metal fortress. Several hundred soul cannons were coldly pointing all around him, and the aura he released was so terrifying that it immediately caused the thugs that were about to close in on them to retreat in fear.

"Stop! What's happening?" A deafening shout broke the silence. A human figure descended from the sky immediately afterwards, three yellow and two purple soul rings sparkling as this person landed in the middle of everyone.

The wings from the soul tool on his back folded up. He drew a cold breath when he witnessed the soul cannon fort that He Caitou had transformed into. He was a Class 5 soul engineer, and he was all too clear as to what he was looking at. He realized that even typical Class 6 soul cannon forts weren't as formidable as this one in front of him.

"Calm down, everyone. I'm Chen An, the Golden Great Hall's supervisor. Can someone tell me what just happened?"

The old man that had watched Huo Yuhao and He Caitou came forward hurriedly and whispered something into Chen An's ear.

Chen An's face turned black as he turned towards Huo Yuhao, and then his expression changed once more. He saw that Huo Yuhao's eyes were ghastly grey in color, as if there wasn't an ounce of life and vitality at all, and he felt as if his spirit was being sucked away when their gazes met. His body trembled vigorously as he took a few steps backwards in horror.

However, when he looked at Huo Yuhao again, he realized that his eyes had become clear once more, as if everything that he had seen in the previous instant was but a hallucination. A voice suddenly appeared in his head.

"If you want this place to be riddled with bodies, so be it. Otherwise, you know what to do."

This voice disappeared as soon as it appeared. In the next moment, a scene surfaced in his head: Chen An saw the exploding heads of the men in black around him, and he seemed to descend into a mountain

of corpses and an ocean of blood. The headless corpses slowly got to their feet, and swiftly transformed into zombies as they crazily assaulted everyone around them. It didn't take long before there wasn't a single other living soul besides the terrifying youth in the wheelchair and the muscular man standing beside him.

The intense fear caused Chen An's body to quiver uncontrollably, but the image that surfaced in his mind receded in an instant. His eyes widened, but all he could see were his subordinates' doubtful gazes, and the youth in the wheelchair that was still staring at him with a pair of bright and clear eyes.

"You are..." Chen An blurted.

Huo Yuhao answered plainly, "Great King went after my wager with underhanded methods, and his words were provocative and condescending. Did he bring his own death upon himself?"

Chen An chomped down on the tip of his tongue and instantly cleared his mind. He had outstanding composure, mental quality, and stability to be able to direct the Golden Great Hall, and his expression changed once again. This time, he was a lot more respectful than before.

"You're right, my dear guests. Great King violated the Duskwater Alliance's rules, and he attacked you foolishly. He has committed a crime, and he cannot be forgiven. Someone take his body away and feed his corpse to the dogs. Don't stand around, everyone! Go back and do what you're supposed to be doing!"

Chen An withdrew the soul rings on his body as he spoke, but he didn't dare to look Huo Yuhao in the eyes anymore.

The Duskwater Alliance was an underground organization, and these underground organizations were sometimes much more efficient and versatile with their operations compared to other, more legitimate corporations. Chen An was the Golden Great Hall's supervisor, and he was also a relatively powerful Soul King. He wielded extraordinary authority and influence in this place, and he was also the qualifying round's chief judge. His subordinates began to move right after he finished his sentence, some people moving to keep things in order, while some other people went ahead to clean up the mess.

It didn't take long before Great King's body and the mess around it vanished without a trace.

Chen An lowered his voice and asked Huo Yuhao, "Can we speak somewhere in private?"

"Alright," Huo Yuhao's answer was simple and straightforward. "I have two other servants. Can you ask someone to call them over?"

"I'll arrange for that immediately." Chen An whispered something to one of his subordinates, and that person hurriedly turned around and left.

"Follow me, my valued guests." Chen An turned around to lead the way as he spoke. Huo Yuhao nodded his head gently, and He Caitou pushed the wheelchair as they followed behind Chen An.

Huo Yuhao's eyes closed into squints, and his Spiritual Detection swiftly expanded around him and covered almost the entire place in an instant. There were several relatively formidable auras within the Golden Great Hall, but they were not enough to threaten his life. This was only the qualifying round

after all, and high-level soul masters and soul engineers couldn't be found just anywhere. They weren't inside Shrek Academy, after all.

Chen An led them to a small door at the side and exited the Golden Great Hall. They moved through a magnificent walkway, but they didn't have to travel for long before Chen An opened another door on the side and invited the two of them in.

The room was several hundred square meters in surface area, and the walls were covered in solid wood. The room's golden style and layout was not at odds with this underground world.

"Please sit," Chen An spoke as he stood beside a luxurious sofa.

Huo Yuhao answered, "There's no need for that. You can just say whatever you want to."

Chen An's eyes shifted as he lowered his voice and said, "If I may ask, are you guys from...?" He paused without finishing his sentence.

[Chapter 288.3: The Fierce Genius Soul Engineer](#)

Huo Yuhao grunted coldly and said, "Is that something you should be asking?" A peculiar aura suddenly emanated from his body, and a contorted white projection subsequently appeared before him.

Chen An could vaguely tell that the white projection portrayed a human figure, but the room became a lot eerier and more sinister when it appeared. The projection was twisting and contorting vigorously, as if it were struggling against something.

Huo Yuhao said plainly, "This is the end of your life. Looks like you had it easy. Go, be purified." White light lit up in his eyes as he spoke, and the twisting light projection immediately paused and became a lot clearer than before.

"The Great King?!" Chen An exclaimed; the projection looked exactly like King Wan!

The light projection shone with white light circles as it gradually dissipated, and King Wan's expression finally became one of peace and acceptance as he swiftly vanished into thin air.

Chen An's face was ghastly pale at this moment, and his body quivered as well.

Huo Yuhao said, "Do you want to test me again?"

Chen An wiped the cold sweat from his forehead, and he bent down as he replied respectfully, "No, there's no need."

Huo Yuhao continued, "You have to keep the two of us being here a secret. You can't tell anyone at all. Do you understand? The truth is we are here of our own accord, since it's nice to earn some money while claiming some rare metals for ourselves. Of course, you guys can make some money at the same time... we will only survive if we both reap benefits at the same time, don't you think?"

"Yes, yes!" Chen An hurriedly followed Huo Yuhao's lead.

Huo Yuhao nodded and said, "Then you should give us what we are owed today. We will return for the next round."

Chen An asked, "Do you need us to do anything else?"

Huo Yuhao waved his hand and said, "I don't need you to do anything else. What we eventually achieve in the contest is entirely up to our own abilities. You've seen what happened to King Wan. If someone else tries to mess around with me or provoke me, that person's outcome won't be as easy as what happened to King Wan. I believe most people haven't had their spirits tortured before. Whoever has to find out will probably remember the sensation on their shattered spiritual imprint for eternity."

Chen An shivered involuntarily and said, "Don't worry, I will restrain my subordinates to the best of my ability, and I will definitely adhere to your requests. We won't pass this on within the Duskwater Alliance, and everything will go according to your command."

Huo Yuhao nodded his head satisfactorily. "Looks like you're a smart one. Intelligent people tend to live longer."

"Thank you for the compliment, sir." Chen An's expression became a little more relaxed, but he was still radiating fear and trepidation.

Huo Yuhao said, "Alright, my people have returned. We'll make a move first."

Knocking sounds could be heard before he finished his sentence. The door opened, and one of Chen An's subordinates led Wang Dong'er and Na Na into the room. Wang Dong'er heaved a sigh of relief when she saw Huo Yuhao in the room.

Huo Yuhao said to Chen An, "We won't claim our money today, but we will take everything when we return. I can reveal some things to you... my brother and I are both Class 6 soul engineers, and I believe we can be considered some of the very best in this wretched place. Therefore, you can do whatever you like with the wagers to make your profits, but I want my share. I don't care about the money, but those hundred thousand golden soul coins are my capital, and you will be responsible for changing my money into rare metals. The more the better."

"Yes, yes!" Chen An acknowledged once more.

"Alright, let's go."

Wang Dong'er came forward hurriedly to take Huo Yuhao's wheelchair from He Caitou's hands, and began to push him outside. Huo Yuhao raised his hand for her to stop when they were almost at the door, and he said without turning around, "Chen An! If everything goes according to plan, and if you do everything properly, I will reward you after this contest is finished. If you're willing, it's even possible if you wish to become a part of us. Of course, there's a price to pay, but the returns that you shall receive will be worth a lot more."

Chen An was a little taken aback, but he became elated in the next moment as he took a few brisk steps forward and knelt down with one knee beside Huo Yuhao. "Thank you for the link-up, sir!"

"I will find you again before the contest. You will collate the inventory of metals that will be used for rewards in every round, and you will also give me a list of the bets that have been placed."

“Yes.”

Huo Yuhao waved his hand once more, and Wang Dong'er pushed him out at once. Chen An escorted him out personally, and he directed them all the way to a set of escalators that brought them back to one of the Green Hotel's simpler levels.

“Alright, that's enough. You don't have to send me any further. Remember what I've told you. If my father finds out about me... you know the rest. If that happens, then you will become part of my strength.”

“Your wish is my command. I will definitely follow your orders!” Chen An acknowledged hurriedly.

“Let's go.” Huo Yuhao waved his hand, and the company exited the Green Hotel.

Once they were past the main door, He Caitou couldn't help but ask, “What were the two of you talking about so mysteriously back there?”

“We'll talk about it when we get back, brother.” Huo Yuhao hurriedly interrupted He Caitou's words, and a voice appeared in He Caitou's head.

He Caitou felt his heart skip a beat, and he quickly shut his mouth and said nothing more. The four of them gradually disappeared into the night.

Huo Yuhao relied on his Imitation and brought everyone back into the Brilliant Delight Hotel. His expression became a lot more relaxed, and Wang Dong'er helped everyone remove their makeup once they returned to his room.

He Caitou said, “You can speak now, little junior brother. You actually gave me a scare when you lashed out just now.”

Huo Yuhao said ponderously, “We didn't waste our efforts today, and I've figured some things out. It's no wonder that the academy could never find traces of the Holy Ghost Church after they appeared. It seems like they've been hiding themselves like that.”

He Caitou was momentarily stunned. “Are you saying it's likely that the Duskriver Alliance has something to do with the Holy Ghost Church?”

Huo Yuhao answered, “It's not just likely, they definitely have something to do with the Holy Ghost Church! Actually, their name had already aroused my suspicions. According to Elder Xuan's description, one of the Holy Ghost Church's most powerful individuals has a similar name. That's the reason why I had my suspicions, and the probing that I did before was also because of that. I imitated an evil soul master's abilities, and that frightened Chen An. You saw how reverent he was to me after that, and it's obvious that he believes we're from the Holy Ghost Church. That respect is also for the Holy Ghost Church, and this proves the Duskwater Alliance's connection with the Holy Ghost Church. It's no wonder that the Holy Ghost Church hid themselves so well, what with Radiant City's number-one underground organization covering them. With the Duskwater Alliance's power and influence, they are definitely one of the Holy Ghost Church's most important branches, if they aren't part of the Church's core existence.”

Wang Dong'er frowned and said, "Doesn't that mean it's too dangerous for us to continue on in the competition?"

Huo Yuhao shook his head with a smile on his face. "No, it doesn't. This contest is aimed at raking in profits, and it doesn't mean much to the Holy Ghost Church's core existence. The church is focused on the Continental Elite Youth Soul Master Tournament. Haven't you guys seen the people that they've sent to participate in the tournament? Their energies aren't channeled toward the Duskwater Alliance, so it's natural that they aren't paying much attention to their events. We are quite safe. Furthermore, the Duskriver Alliance is ultimately one of the church's branches, and they are just a front for earning money and covering their identities, so the Holy Ghost Church won't send high-level individuals to watch over the alliance. The Green Hotel is quite important to the Duskriver Alliance, but the hotel's supervisor is just a Soul King, and he's not even an evil soul master."

Wang Dong'er became a little more relieved as she listened to Huo Yuhao's seamless analysis. She nodded and said, "So, we're still participating in the subsequent rounds?"

Huo Yuhao tilted his head and said, "Of course. We have to get our rare metals from this contest, and we don't even have to become champions. Isn't it fun and interesting to stir things up within Radiant City's underground organizations? Don't worry, Dong'er, I will make sure that I return safely; not just for myself, but also for you guys."

He Caitou stood up and patted Huo Yuhao on the shoulder. "It's getting late, little junior brother. Your body isn't in good shape, so you should hurry up and get some rest."

Na Na also stood up to take her leave.

Wang Dong'er helped Huo Yuhao onto the bed after everyone left, and she brought some warm water to wash his hands and face. Huo Yuhao's body was overflowing with ice-type origin energy of heaven and earth, so the parts of his body that were immobile didn't get dirty at all, so there was no need for her to wash those areas.

"You're too exhausted, Yuhao." Wang Dong'er slipped into his embrace, and felt the chilly aura emanating from his body as she whispered to him.

Huo Yuhao smiled and said, "The main reason why you don't want to me to continue on in the competition is because you're concerned about me, right? Actually, how can you not tell how safe we are with your intelligence and our abilities?"

"Yes," Wang Dong'er agreed softly.

Huo Yuhao said, "I promise you, Dong'er, that I will have a good rest when we go back. I will make sure my body recovers completely before I set off to do anything else. However, our journey to Radiant City is very important to the academy, to the Tang Sect, and even to how the Continent's political backdrop is going to turn out over the next few years. I need to be at my best to deal with everything, and it's worth it even if I get a little tired in the process."

Wang Dong'er was slightly taken aback. "I understand if you say that you're doing this for the academy and for the Tang Sect. But aren't you exaggerating a little about the Continent's political situation?"

Huo Yuhao shook his head and said, "I keep feeling as if something's not right. The Sun Moon Empire has expanded the people allowed to participate in the competition, and I've been feeling a little more stifled than the last competition, as if something is about to happen. Ever since my spiritual power ascended into the concrete-immaterial realm, I've developed a sort of clairvoyance. If I'm not wrong, the Sun Moon Empire will definitely carry out some operation during or after the competition. The only problem is that I can't tell anything yet at the moment, but I'm sure they will drop clues as the tournament progresses. I'm not sure what we can do for now, but anything that's not good for the Sun Moon Empire is beneficial for us."

Wang Dong'er nodded and replied, "But... your body..."

Huo Yuhao smiled and said, "You don't have to worry about my body. I have a secret weapon."

Wang Dong'er was momentarily stunned. "Secret weapon? What is it? Why don't I know about it?"

Huo Yuhao grinned mysteriously and said, "That's a secret. I'll tell you if you kiss me ten thousand times."

[Chapter 289.1: Tactical Surrender?](#)

The second elimination round of the Continental Advanced Youth Soul Master Tournament had ended. Forty-two teams advanced to the third round. Among those forty-two teams, only thirty-two of them could enter the round-robin stage. That would be dependent on their performance in the third elimination round.

Victory would ensure progression into the round-robin stage. Even if they failed, they still had an opportunity to fight for points in an additional qualifier round. After the last two elimination rounds, some of the weaker teams were showing signs of fatigue even though they had made it through. Their team members were hurt, and there were fewer of them who could compete, along with other reasons that weakened their chances of progressing in future rounds. These constituted huge problems for them!

Such problems didn't exist for the Tang Sect. However, the atmosphere within the sect became tenser after the lot-drawing for the third elimination round was completed.

Xu Sanshi lowered his head to look at his right hand, and a weird expression appeared on his face.

Huo Yuhao patted his shoulder and said, "Third senior, it's fine. You can't be blamed."

Jiang Nannan looked gloomy. "You still dared to volunteer to draw the lot even though your luck is bad. Hmph!"

Everyone's expression was also very weird and serious at the same time.

Huo Yuhao chortled, "It's just Team Sun Moon. Years ago, we also defeated them even though we were just members of the preparatory squad. Don't tell me that we are scared today even though we've improved significantly since five years ago?"

Yes, Xu Sanshi's luck was pretty bad, as he had managed to draw the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy's team in the third elimination round. This was only the elimination round, it

wasn't the finals yet! There would still be many rounds and stages after this round. It was going to be tough no matter the outcome, which would affect their energy in the future rounds even if they won.

Fortunately, defeat didn't mean direct elimination.

He Caitou nodded and said, "Yuhao is right. In fact, we can advance through the additional qualifiers. Even if we don't risk everything against them, we can still enter the round-robin stage. At most, our ranking will become worse, but that's all."

Xiao Xiao was displeased. "Do we really have to give up against them? No, we mustn't!"

Huo Yuhao turned his gaze towards his teammates, and all he saw were their determined faces.

Jiang Nannan said in a firm voice, "Yes, we must not give up! Even though it's unwise, we shouldn't bow down in front of the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy. Although we're representing the Tang Sect, we are also from Shrek Academy! Shrek Academy never loses to the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy! It is especially true since we're representing the Tang Sect in this edition of the tournament, and Shrek might not be able to last all the way until the finals. Yuhao, I wish to fight to protect Shrek's glory!"

"I'm willing too," Xu Sanshi said dryly as he stopped looking at his hand.

"Get lost, you unlucky chap!" Jiang Nannan rolled her eyes at him.

Xiao Xiao said determinedly, "I also hope to fight for Shrek and the Tang Sect's glory."

He Caitou immediately added, "I'll give my best as long as everyone is willing."

Out of the seven of them, four had already expressed their stand. Na Na's status in Tang Sect couldn't compare to Shrek's Seven Monsters. Everyone's gaze was focused on Wang Dong and Huo Yuhao.

Huo Yuhao opened his mouth and wanted to say something. However, he was stopped by a gentle hand on his shoulder. Wang Dong'er took a step forward. She stood in front of Huo Yuhao's wheelchair.

"Second senior, third senior, fourth senior, fifth senior. I agree with all of your thinking. However, have you thought of one point? If we go all-out against them, we must treat victory as our goal. In that way, how much fighting strength can we conserve even if we beat the Sun Moon team? We don't have any substitutes. Eldest senior's injury hasn't recovered either. All of you know about Yuhao's current condition too. Shrek and the Tang Sect's glory isn't completely dependent on this tournament. I would also like to give my all, but what if we sustain more injuries? We might even die if things go awry. We are without Shrek's halo as protection this time, and we are also arch-enemies with the Sun Moon team. I understand all of your intentions, but I don't agree that we should go all-out against them at such a time. If we give up on this round, we can still qualify. We'll also have more time to rest. We'll be able to fight in the round-robin stage in our best state."

After she established her relationship with Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong'er rarely opened her mouth in a discussion. Huo Yuhao's words were usually more defining. Her sudden speech left everyone a little stunned.

There were four Soul Emperors and three Soul Kings among Shrek's Seven Monsters. While Wang Dong'er was the youngest, she was a Soul Emperor that had twin martial souls. No one could neglect her presence!

Jiang Nannan furrowed her brow and asked, "Dong'er, are we going to give up our glory just like that?"

Wang Dong'er said, "Sister Nannan, true glory lies in being the champions. This is only an elimination round. Even if we give up, no one will underestimate us. This is purely tactical! It's true that I'm partly selfish, too. I don't want Yuhao to go all-out against the Sun Moon team right now, while only his right arm can move. I've already struggled to accept his decision to compete in this tournament. He's only in this state because of me! I don't want him to get into any sort of harm again. If all of you choose to fight the Sun Moon team, I'll have no objections. However, my only request is that I be the first to compete!"

Wang Dong'er revealed a cold and ferocious look in her eyes after she finished her last sentence. All this while, she had been labelled as Shrek Academy's genius along with Huo Yuhao! However, Huo Yuhao had been shining too brightly, and made many important contributions to the academy. Along with her tendency to stay away from the limelight, her talents had been concealed.

Among the four who had suggested that they fight the Sun Moon team, He Caitou was originally not very willing. His thinking was very similar to Wang Dong'er. Furthermore, he also knew that both he and Huo Yuhao had to compete in the underground tournament too! Xiao Xiao, Huo Yuhao, and Wang Dong'er came from the same class. The three of them had passed the academy's test many years ago and they shared a close relationship with one another. Right now, Xiao Xiao's gaze became gentler as she saw how Wang Dong'er stood out for Huo Yuhao.

As for Xu Sanshi, he only followed Jiang Nannan's wish. Jiang Nannan was the key figure out of the four of them, and so Wang Dong'er directed all her words to Nannan.

Jiang Nannan bit her lip lightly, and looked at Wang Dong'er with a stubborn look in her eyes. She eventually sighed and said, "Alright. However, we must never give up if we meet Team Sun Moon again, no matter the circumstance. We must give it our all."

Wang Dong'er heaved a sigh of relief, and took two steps forward to hug Jiang Nannan. "Sister Nannan, thanks." Her nose was getting a little runny, and tears almost flowed.

Jiang Nannan hugged her back and said as she smiled, "I didn't consider the facts thoroughly. There's no need to thank me. Dong'er, it'd be great if you were a guy."

Xu Sanshi started coughing tremendously to one side. He was watching Wang Dong'er with a more alert look in his eyes.

"Yuhao, you let your wife court my wife. Is that very interesting for you?"

"Who's your wife? It's all because of your unlucky hand. From now on, you won't be allowed to draw lots anymore!" Jiang Nannan glared at him, and he turned honest-looking and selfless once again.

Huo Yuhao didn't speak from the start until the end. However, his gaze was filled with softness as he watched Wang Dong'er. Rationally speaking, it wasn't the best time to fight the Sun Moon team. However, he wasn't going to object if everyone wanted to go all-out against them.

"I still need to ask eldest senior regarding this matter before we decide," Huo Yuhao said.

Bei Bei agreed with Wang Dong'er. After that, Huo Yuhao told the tournament organizing committee that they had decided to give up the fight during this elimination round.

"What? The Tang Sect has given up against us?" Xiao Hongchen and Meng Hongchen were astonished when they heard the news.

Xiao Hongchen muttered, "Does this mean we've beaten Shrek? They are Shrek Academy's stronger team! Besides the team leader, the rest of Shrek's team isn't that strong this time around!"

Meng Hongchen pursed her lips and said, "Brother, don't lie to yourself. How are you shameless enough to claim that we've beaten them without fighting them at all? Aren't you embarrassed? However, isn't it a good thing that they've given up? If we fight them, we won't have it easy either. The future rounds will also be closer and closer together, which will affect our chances."

Xiao Hongchen laughed bitterly. "Just let me feel good in my heart, alright? Champions? Are you still thinking of becoming the champions right now? Don't you know that..." As he spoke to that point, he paused for a moment, and his eyes were filled with resentment.

Meng Hongchen laughed coldly and said, "Why not? Will they necessarily win? I don't believe we can't beat them if we go all-out. Brother, with your lack of confidence, I'm afraid that you've already..."

Xiao Hongchen covered her mouth and stopped her from speaking. "Secret. This is a secret!"

Meng Hongchen groaned at him and said, "Alright, I won't say anything. The Tang Sect didn't give up because they were scared. Didn't you realize that they have no substitutes? They are more afraid than us that their abilities will be depleted. That's why they chose to give up! We'll win if we face them. Since they conceded defeat once, there's no way they can beat us again."

Xiao Hongchen caressed his sister's head and said, "I'm only praying that you won't meet Wang Dong. Are you confident that you won't be merciful on him when you meet him?"

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Meng Hongchen's face turned red, and she retorted in embarrassment, "So what? One fight doesn't say anything. I like him, so what? Compared to him, all other guys are trash!"

Xiao Hongchen was speechless as he touched his nose. He replied, "Your criticism is too broad. I'll tell grandpa."

Meng Hongchen snorted at him and said, "I'll just add these four words, 'of the same age'. Anyway, you are nothing compared to him in my eyes!"

Xiao Hongchen was angry. "It's hard to keep a woman at home! I'm your biological brother after all. How can you say something like that about me?"

The third elimination round of the tournament was too tragic, and was beyond the expectations of most people. The fights were very intense, as every team wanted to book their place in the round-robin stage. In this round, five people were killed, and more than twenty people were seriously injured. On average, every clash between competing teams involved some form of casualty. With regard to the situation, many teams also pointed out their doubts about the referees to the tournament's organizing committee.

The Sun Moon Empire was also vexed over this issue. They could only promise everyone that their referees would try to control the rhythm of the fights in the future rounds so as to reduce the number of casualties.

Although the Tang Sect conceded defeat in this round, they were able to qualify for the round-robin stage because of Huo Yuhao's dominant performance in the first elimination round and the stable foundation they had set in the second round. The only downside was that their ranking was quite low.

After the third elimination round ended, there was a one-day break before the lot-drawing ceremony for the round-robin stage was held. The Radiant City Elite Soul Engineering Tournament organized by the underground world also officially commenced on the same day.

When Huo Yuhao and the other three arrived at the Green Hotel, Chen An was already at the door to welcome them. Now that they had the exact time, they didn't arrive late.

"You are here!" Chen An looked at Huo Yuhao and hurriedly stepped forward before bowing respectfully.

"Yes," Huo Yuhao snorted, "Have you done what I asked you to do?"

Chen An hurriedly said, "Don't worry. It's all prepared. I didn't reveal that you're here to compete to anyone, either! Follow me to the VIP room to rest first. I'll pass the materials that I've sorted out to you."

"Please lead the way." Huo Yuhao maintained his cool look.

Chen An brought them to a room in the basement before instructing his subordinates to serve them fruits and drinks. He retrieved a document before passing it to Huo Yuhao.

Huo Yuhao received the document and glanced at it before saying, "Explain it to me."

"Yes!" Chen An replied. "This tournament was organized to facilitate the participation of ordinary people by exploiting the massive crowds currently in Radiant City. As a result, we've already opened the betting tables, starting from the qualifiers. This round of betting is very simple. As there are too many soul engineers – one hundred and nineteen! – betting on single individuals can be very troublesome. It's better to bet on the number of people remaining, or whether there'll be an odd or even number of people remaining. There are also multiple bets. The smaller the number of multiples, the lower the payout. The greater the number of multiples, the higher the payout. For example, your payout will be one point three times your wager if the number of soul engineers who qualify for the next round is a multiple of two. If you bet directly on the number of soul engineers who qualify, your wager will be multiplied by this number to generate your returns."

As he spoke, he passed a black-gold card to Huo Yuhao and said, "This is the money from your previous bet. We've already generated your payout. Don't worry, I'll be the only one who knows everything related to you, and I won't report to any superiors. However, I need to warn you that I'll only be the chief referee for the first two rounds. From the third round onwards, there'll be a more authoritative figure here to referee."

Huo Yuhao nodded and replied, "Please tell me about the rewards."

"Yes! If you pass the qualifiers, your reward will be five thousand gold soul coins. I've already added it into your card. The winner of today's round can choose one of the twenty-eight rare metals that we have on offer as rewards. You can take one kilo of it. If you win in the next round, you can take three kilos. Every round will see an increase. When there are fewer than ten people left, we'll introduce five very rare metals. We haven't decided what the detailed quantities will be though."

"The main show will be our final fight against the other two powers. At that time, all three parties will send their victorious soul engineer to compete in the finals. The eventual champion will obtain one percent of our revenue made in this tournament. At the same time, the champion can leave with one hundred kilos of rare metals. He can choose whatever amount of each rare metal to leave with, as long as the final number comes up to one hundred kilos maximum. In addition, he'll also be rewarded with one kilo each of five special and rare metals. Altogether, it will be worth more than ten million gold soul coins. It's because of these rewards that many outstanding soul engineers have been drawn to this tournament. Since you and your brother are both Class 6 soul engineers, it's highly likely that you can win this tournament! I rate the both of you highly."

Huo Yuhao sighed slightly and said, "It's a pity that we can't bet on a single individual today. What are we competing in today?"

Chen An looked gloomy. He thought to himself. While you're a huge figure, isn't it a little ludicrous that you don't know what the tournament is about even though you're here to pit your skills against the others?"

While he thought of this, he didn't dare to voice it out loud. He hurriedly said, "In this round, soul engineers are required to create a soul tool based on the given topic. The higher the quality, the better it is. As this is the first round, we are providing all the resources, and all the soul engineers can leave with their created soul tools, but the requirements are a little stricter. There's a slightly more difficult obstacle to overcome."

Huo Yuhao was a little impatient. "Let's cut the crap. I want to know what this topic is about."

He was trying to go through the back door. However, Chen An found it normal for him to act in this manner. He hurriedly said, "This round is about the creation of a Milk Bottle. It has to be completed within six hours. The Milk Bottle must at least be Class 3 and above. Anyone who can't complete this task will be eliminated."

It was a Class 3 soul tool, but creating a Milk Bottle was very complex. It was comparable to an ordinary Class 4 soul tool. It was a much tougher test than the qualifiers.

Huo Yuhao nodded and said, "Interesting. You can leave first. Inform us when the tournament begins."

“Yes.” Chen An acknowledged his words and left the room.

He Caitou was afraid that there were soul tools being used to eavesdrop on them, and only shot Huo Yuhao an inquisitive look. Huo Yuhao’s thoughts suddenly surfaced in his mind. “I want Chen An to be more convinced that we are from the Holy Ghost Sect. Elder brother, let’s do it this way later...”

Chen An was the chief referee, and still had to arrange many things for the tournament. He was naturally very busy. His assistant was the one who came to notify Huo Yuhao and He Caitou that the tournament was about to begin.

Wang Dong’er and Na Na remained in the resting area. He Caitou pushed Huo Yuhao into the hall.

They were no longer underestimated by the others now. At the end of the qualifiers, many people were astonished by the killing. Fortunately, it was only the qualifiers, and there weren’t any important figures who came to watch. Otherwise, Chen An couldn’t conceal the truth even if he wanted to.

Everyone turned their attention away from Huo Yuhao when they saw him, and didn’t dare to look at him. Although they didn’t know how he did it, the way he had casually made a man’s head explode was still too cruel.

It wasn’t just those VIP gamblers who showed more respect towards Huo Yuhao and He Caitou. Even the working staff in the hall became more respectful when they saw the both of them. The Great King’s death had happened only a few days ago. Although they didn’t know who Huo Yuhao and He Caitou were, Chen An had issued a gag order. No one wanted to be the second Great King!

Under Chen An’s guidance, Huo Yuhao and He Caitou were led directly to the middle of a circular stage, a slightly more eye-catching spot. Two metal tables were moved together, and their silvery-white surfaces didn’t reflect any light even under the illumination of the bright lamps.

Apart from the various standard equipment used to create soul tools, there were more than ten different types of metal on the stage. Three of them were rare metals that were suitable for making the formation arrays of a Milk Bottle. The other seven weren’t that rare, but they were still high-level metals that commanded pretty high prices, and were also present in sufficient quantities. There were more than three kilos of these seven metals, while there was more than one kilo of each of the three rare metals. It was a clear demonstration of the Duskwater Alliance’s wealth.

He Caitou pushed Huo Yuhao behind one of the metal tables before he went to the other one.

At this point, all the other competing soul engineers had already arrived. Chen An had deliberately arranged for the two of them to arrive last. Chen An’s intentions was very kind, he didn’t want them to wait around for others. However, the two of them also became the focus of all the gamblers.

“Silence! The tournament will officially begin in five minutes! I am the chief referee of this tournament. Let me reiterate the rules once again! To all visitors, no one is allowed to make a sound when the soul engineers are busy creating their soul tools. Anyone who flouts this rule will be kicked out!

“Please don’t be worried. After this round, all the remaining soul engineers will be allowed to compete on the stage in successive rounds. We can use soul soundproofing barriers to block out any sound then,

and all of you will be able to speak freely when that time comes. But I'll need all of you to exercise patience in this round!

"All soul engineers, please take note! I am going to announce the goal of this round. In this round, all of you will be required to create a soul tool based on a certain topic: you need to create a Milk Bottle that is Class 3 or above! If you can create a Class 4 Milk Bottle, you'll be exempted from the next round and advance directly to the third round. You will be given six hours for this round! Whoever can't complete this task will be eliminated! Please get ready!"

[Chapter 289.3: Tactical Surrender?](#)

Five minutes passed very quickly, and the tournament began with another shout from Chen An. The entire hall went silent, and all the soul engineers started to get busy.

He Caitou looked at Huo Yuhao. "Yuhao, we can skip the next round if we make a Class 4 Milk Bottle. Should we try?"

Huo Yuhao shook his head and said, "Follow the plan. We can't catch too much attention. Chen An is an idiot, he made us the center of attention. We can only earn money if we remain low-profile. If we are in the spotlight, it's going to be hard to bet!"

Huo Yuhao didn't unleash his Darkgolden Terrorclaws this time. He only simply used his right hand to pick up a piece of suitable metal and used the equipment on the table to build the shell of a Milk Bottle. He wasn't quick, but he was accurate. If someone watching wasn't experienced or skilled enough, he wouldn't be able to tell what Huo Yuhao was doing.

He Caitou proceeded with his work just like Huo Yuhao did. The two of them maintained a steady progression as they created their Milk Bottles.

For other soul tools, the outer shell was used for protection and decoration. However, it was different for Milk Bottles. Every part of a Milk Bottle was designed to prevent the leakage of soul power, so requirements for making the outer shell were very strict. It had to be fully sealed, and most parts of a Milk Bottle had to come from one entity. They couldn't be separate parts that were joined together to form an outer shell.

The standard crafting table that the Duskwater Alliance provided was of decent quality. There was stamping equipment that could shape soul tools, which helped to expedite the process of creating a Milk Bottle.

Very soon, an outer shell crafted from the Sun Moon Empire's specialty metal, Spiritmagic Bronze, appeared in front of Huo Yuhao.

Huo Yuhao looked at the rest of the busy soul engineers and calmly chose a piece of Skyspirit Silver, which was the most valuable and costly among the three types of rare metals. He placed it in front of him and use a cutting-type soul tool to cut four square-shaped pieces of the metal. Every piece was around two hundred grams in weight, and he placed each of the pieces in front of him.

It was complex to create a Milk Bottle because the requirements for its internal construction were as fine as the requirements for constructing its outer shell. The primary reason was that two formation

arrays were needed. The first one was an energy-gathering formation array, and the other one was a storage-type formation array.

Huo Yuhao cut four pieces of the Skyspirit Silver for a reason.

He didn't use his Darkgolden Terrorclaws, but retrieved a standard carving knife to hold one piece of the metal in a slot on the carving table. He could only use one hand, and thus it was a little inconvenient for him if he wanted to conceal his true abilities.

No one saw it, but Huo Yuhao's eyes brightened as he lowered his head. The entire structure of the piece of Skyspirit Silver was presented in his spiritual mind. His Purple Demon Eyes had reached their most advanced stage, and he could use his spiritual power to display the finest details in his spiritual world.

Huo Yuhao was slightly inferior to He Caitou in terms of creating soul tools. Mainly it was because He Caitou's cultivation was higher. It was also because He Caitou was more focused on specializing in soul tools compared to Huo Yuhao.

However, that was only true under one condition; if Huo Yuhao didn't use his Spirit Eyes! When Fan Yu decided to accept Huo Yuhao as his disciple, he already knew that Yuhao's Spirit Eyes were an unbelievable martial soul for a soul engineer. It was equally great in terms of creating soul tools or using them!

After two years of training in the Illustrious Virtue Hall, Huo Yuhao was able to fuse his Spirit Eyes and soul tool creation together.

The texture of the Skyspirit Silver was very fine. More importantly, its texture was very uniform even while it was very tough. It wasn't like other metals, which differed slightly in different areas. It was also why Skyspirit Silver was the first choice in creating the formation arrays of lower-level soul tools.

Huo Yuhao couldn't even bear to use it to create the formation arrays of the Zhuge Divine Crossbow Cannon! Huo Yuhao secretly sighed in his heart, and the carving knife in his hand moved.

While he could only use his right hand, it was very stable. His thumb and index finger were slightly to the front of the carving knife. He used the first joint of his middle finger to press down on the knife, holding it steadily between his three fingers. The bottom of the knife was shaped like a sharp cone. Most carving knives adopted such a structure, which was considered the standard by soul engineers.

The blade of the knife moved gently, and he poured his soul power into it. A dim layer of white light appeared on the surface of the blade. One corner of the piece of Skyspirit Silver was cut off. The knife moved in a gentle arc, and an arc-shaped mark was left behind on the piece of Skyspirit Silver.

Huo Yuhao's three fingers moved slightly and the knife was like a spiritual serpent that surrounded the piece of Skyspirit Silver. It moved up and down, carving off small bits of metal that fell onto the table. They were proportionally spread around the area in which Huo Yuhao was carrying out his work.

Quick, accurate and steady. Huo Yuhao didn't seem any different from the rest of the soul engineers, but he captured the essence of a true soul engineer. If there was an advanced-level soul engineer watching him, he would be extremely impressed.

He Caitou adopted a different method from Huo Yuhao. The knife in Huo Yuhao's hand moved very smoothly, and hardly ever stopped in the process of cutting the Skyspirit Silver. On the other hand, He Caitou stopped every time he made a cut. It was as if he needed time to think and judge.

On a closer look, every pause he made was equally long. Each pause only lasted for an instant. The continuous rhythm made his movements seem even more artistic than Huo Yuhao's.

This was a rhythm that only an advanced-level soul engineer could achieve. Every advanced-level soul engineer would come to possess his own rhythm in the process of creating his soul tools. The short pause mustn't be underestimated. He Caitou wasn't as accurate as Huo Yuhao. He had to rely on his own experience and eyes to make his own judgment and achieve overall control during the process of creating his soul tool. The short pause provided him time to think. Once he attuned to his own rhythm, his spiritual power, soul power, and focus could follow it unerringly.

A Class 3 Milk Bottle was considered quite complex among Class 3 soul tools. Even as He Caitou tried to suppress his own rhythm, he only used one hour to form the two formation arrays. The rhythm couldn't be broken. He couldn't help it even if he was too quick. He could only try to delay his progress in assembling the components of his Milk Bottle. As for Huo Yuhao, he was still carving. However, he was already on his third piece of Skyspirit Silver.

He was very serious at this time. He controlled the details very well, which was a stark contrast to his carefree attitude during the qualifiers.

He was here today to show his might, hoping to draw out those that he wanted to and test them.

As a soul engineer, Fan Yu had once told him that he had to respect his work. It was only by respecting his own work that his soul tool could have its own spirituality.

He Caitou managed to delay completing his tool for two hours. It was only after more than ten soul engineers had submitted their work that he slowly completed the creation of his Milk Bottle. Huo Yuhao also started to assemble the final components of his Milk Bottle at this point.

Since he was using one hand, he couldn't be as swift and flexible as when he was using two hands. However, he wasn't rushed or slow. He made great use of the carving table to aid himself. Finally, he managed to complete the creation of an exquisite green Milk Bottle.

Huo Yuhao let out a long breath as he lifted his head. He revealed a pleased look on his face. Among all the Class 3 soul tools that he had ever created, he was the most satisfied with this one. He had even completed it with an ordinary carving knife. He had carved it very meticulously, and even used some of the slight changes in the stable Skyspirit Silver to achieve his goal. Even though it was only a Class 3 soul tool, Huo Yuhao felt that it was something novel.

He Caitou smiled as he asked Huo Yuhao, "Are you done?"

"Yes." Huo Yuhao passed his Milk Bottle over to He Caitou. There were referees behind everyone. When the referee behind Huo Yuhao saw what he did, he shot him a look of disapproval. However, he acted like nothing had happened because of Chen An.

He Caitou placed the Milk Bottle that Huo Yuhao had created beside his own Milk Bottle. Both of them had used the same materials, but Huo Yuhao's Milk Bottle was slightly longer than his. After he touched Huo Yuhao's Milk Bottle, he revealed a stunned look on his face.

He Caitou was considered an advanced-level soul engineer. In Shrek Academy, he was one of the best. It was important to note that Fan Yu wasn't a Class 9 soul engineer yet. This meant that Class 8 soul engineers were the strongest in Shrek Academy right now.

Of course, Xuan Ziwen wasn't included. Xuan Ziwen was also a Class 8 soul engineer, but he was different from Fan Yu. He had been the chief researcher of Illustrious Virtue Hall! In terms of his theoretical knowledge and abilities in various areas, he was already at the Class 9 level, it was just that his cultivation wasn't at that standard yet.

The higher the class of a soul engineer, the more demanding the requirements on their soul power when creating soul tools. At Huo Yuhao's level, he could create Class 6 soul tools due to the fact that his overall soul power was greater than average due to his twin martial souls. As a result, he was considered a Class 6 soul engineer. Even so, he wouldn't be able to create Class 9 soul tools when he became a Class 8 soul engineer. Without the abilities of a Titled Douluo, there was no way he could create Class 9 soul tools. Acting recklessly would only endanger his own life. Xuan Ziwen had warned Huo Yuhao more than once that he couldn't overestimate his talents. Many soul engineers had perished at the hands of their own experiments. Huo Yuhao had also become very wary because of that.

[Chapter 290.1: Team Sun Moon](#)

He Caitou's first feeling when he grabbed Huo Yuhao's soul tool was balance. It was an indescribable sense of harmony. It was as if this wasn't a soul tool at all, but a piece of metal. Its texture felt very similar to that of solid metal.

Every part of the Milk Bottle gave him the same feeling. The weight and everything else felt like that. This feeling was too miraculous. He Caitou's Milk Bottle was much less balanced compared to Huo Yuhao's Milk Bottle, even it was roughly similar to Huo Yuhao's Milk Bottle in terms of appearance.

"Little... second brother, your Class 3 Milk Bottle isn't a Class 4 soul tool. It's better than a Class 4 soul tool!" He Caitou couldn't help but rave over Huo Yuhao's Milk Bottle.

Huo Yuhao chortled and replied, "I felt very good just now. It seems like the tense atmosphere of this tournament helps me to focus better." There were outsiders around, and thus he naturally couldn't say that it was his first time testing out the spiritual power obtained from his concrete-immaterial realm by fusing it into the entire production process.

He Caitou gestured and called for the referees behind them. He passed his and Huo Yuhao's Milk Bottles to the referees.

The two referees held their Milk Bottles separately and said, "I'll need the two of you to wait. We'll need the chief referee to test your Milk Bottles out. When he's done, we'll verify the results."

Huo Yuhao signaled for them to leave. He and He Caitou looked at each other and revealed light smiles of confidence.

For some reason, Huo Yuhao felt that He Caitou's eyes were very bright today. It might be because such a soul engineering tournament was what he was truly interested in. Huo Yuhao could even sense the excitement coming from him.

Very soon, Chen An walked over. He was holding the Milk Bottles that Huo Yuhao and He Caitou had made. He was completely astonished at this moment. He arrived in front of Huo Yuhao and asked softly, "Is this your work?" He handed the Milk Bottle that Huo Yuhao had made back over to him.

Huo Yuhao received his Milk Bottle and nodded.

Chen An took in a deep breath, and his eyes were filled with respect. "It's perfect." His admiration came from the bottom of his heart. He hadn't respected Huo Yuhao the first time he had demonstrated his evil soul powers, he had only feared him.

Huo Yuhao smiled and asked, "Have we passed, then?"

"Of course." Chen An answered without any hesitation. "After seeing your work today, I'm more and more confident that you'll be able to compete on behalf of the Duskwater Alliance. However, I won't submit your Milk Bottle. This is a secret of the Illustrious Virtue Hall. Surely you didn't install a self-destruction component, right?"

Huo Yuhao proudly said, "If I added such a component, it wouldn't be perfect, am I right? I'll give it to you. If you get into trouble because of this in the future, you'll have to handle the responsibility."

"You are giving it to me?" Chen An was shocked. Even though he knew it was a Class 3 Milk Bottle, he had tested it out, and knew that a Class 4 Milk Bottle was unable to handle the amount of soul power that it could contain! It was able to work like a Class 4 Milk Bottle with the structure of a Class 3 Milk Bottle. It was magical! He was even more shocked by the sealed-in system that the Milk Bottle contained.

Yes, Huo Yuhao had created a Sealed Milk Bottle. It was precisely because of this that he had had to complete two more sealed formation arrays compared to He Caitou. They even had to be separated by an exact distance. They were installed into the Milk Bottle using his acute senses, allowing the Milk Bottle to be completely sealed.

Although such a Milk Bottle was expensive, it wasn't the reason why Chen An was shocked. He was shocked by Huo Yuhao's technique! Huo Yuhao didn't mark the Milk Bottle or install any self-destruction components. This also meant that he could dismantle this Milk Bottle to research how Huo Yuhao had managed to create it. To him, this was something that couldn't be bought with money.

Huo Yuhao said, "Give us the verification that proves we've advanced to the next round. We are returning."

Chen An took in a deep breath. Apart from the admiration in his eyes, there were other emotions as he looked at Huo Yuhao.

"I can't thank you enough for your generosity. Don't worry, I'll do anything you want me to."

Huo Yuhao waved his hand and said, "Can you get as many rare metals as you can for me? I'm willing to buy them. You should know how soul engineers like us need rare metals. Without sufficient quantities of

them, we'll be unable to carry out some experiments. It isn't convenient for us to move around outside either."

"Yes, yes! I'll help you gather all types of rare metals!" Chen An answered without any hesitation.

Huo Yuhao lifted his hand and swept the remaining rare metals on the carving table into his Starlight Sapphire storage-type ring. After obtaining the verification from Chen An, He Caitou pushed Yuhao's wheelchair as they left the stage.

He Caitou didn't stand on ceremony either. He also put the remaining rare metals on the table into his storage-type soul tool.

Before leaving the hall, Huo Yuhao also passed on some instructions to Chen An. He only returned to meet Wang Dong'er and Na Na after doing so, before they left the Green Hotel and returned to the Ming Yue Hotel.

"Little junior, can we trust that person?" He Caitou whispered to Huo Yuhao as they were about to reach the Ming Yue Hotel.

Huo Yuhao smiled and answered, "There shouldn't be any problems in the short-term. In his heart, he believes that I'm an important figure in the Holy Ghost Church. I've also given him a lot of benefits. He won't do anything harmful to us before those benefits disappear. By helping us, he'll also stand to gain tremendously, I've already proven that to him today. If you were him, what would you do? I believe Chen An is a clever person. Clever people will do clever things. Furthermore, if we take a step back and assume he reports us to the Duskwater Alliance, I'll discover it once danger arises. It'll be convenient for us to escape any problems. There won't be any major obstacles."

His body stiffened as he finished speaking. His expression also changed.

Wang Dong'er's gaze was fixed on him. Seeing that his body had stiffened up so suddenly, she hurriedly asked, "Yuhao, what's wrong?"

Huo Yuhao laughed bitterly. "I just received a premonition. I suddenly felt very surprised, as if something important was going to happen. Furthermore, it's something that's not good for us."

Wang Dong'er, He Caitou and Na Na became more alert. They slowed down, and Huo Yuhao also unleashed his Spiritual Detection as he surveyed their surroundings.

He didn't discover anything, and everything seemed very normal. However, the sensation didn't seem to disappear.

They didn't discover anything even when they reached their room in the hotel. They weren't subjected to any ambushes, either.

He Caitou couldn't help but ask, "Yuhao, are you being too sensitive?"

Huo Yuhao shook his head lightly and replied, "That feeling was very sudden. I don't know what's going on, either. However, my premonitions are very accurate, considering my spiritual power. Everyone, please rest early. Be careful tonight. If there are any changes, we must inform one another according to our arrangement."

“Alright.” He Caitou and Na Na acknowledged his words before returning to their rooms to rest.

As if He Caitou’s words were being proven, nothing happened the entire night. The sensation that Huo Yuhao felt also slowly disappeared.

He washed his face and ate his breakfast. Even he was doubtful at this point, and muttered to himself, “Was I really being too sensitive last night? I don’t feel so suppressed anymore. However, I feel like I’ve forgotten something.”

Wang Dong’er smiled and said, “It’s alright to be wrong occasionally. After all, it wasn’t a good thing, either. I wonder who we’ll be facing in the round-robin stage. It’s the lot-drawing ceremony today. Sister Nannan and third senior have gone for it. I’m sure she won’t let third senior draw the lot this time. Haha!”

Huo Yuhao shuddered when he heard the words ‘lot-drawing ceremony’. He lost his voice as he said, “Don’t tell me my premonition has something to do with the groupings in the round-robin stage?”

Wang Dong’er was stunned. Just when she was about to open her mouth, she heard a frantic knocking sound.

After the third elimination round, they had been moved to the fourth story of the hotel, and their rooms were bigger now than they were before. There were also more facilities they had been given access to.

“Who is it?” Wang Dong’er walked over to open the door. Jiang Nannan and Xu Sanshi were standing outside.

Wang Dong’er couldn’t help but mutter to herself when she saw the both of them, “Don’t tell me that Yuhao was spot-on?”

“Dong’er...” Jiang Nannan was sobbing, and hugged Wang Dong’er. “I’m sorry, I’m sorry. I don’t know why it turned out like this.”

Xu Sanshi was standing to one side and appeared very helpless. “It’s okay, it’s okay. We can just fight it out.”

Huo Yuhao pushed his wheelchair over. “What’s going on? Third senior, fourth senior, how’s the situation for our round-robin stage?”

Xu Sanshi laughed bitterly. “Not too good...”

Huo Yuhao was slightly tense. “How bad?”

Xu Sanshi replied, “We are meeting the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy again. In addition, Shrek’s official team is also in the same group as us. The tournament’s organizing committee must have rigged this. We are even meeting Team Sun Moon in the first fight. This means that we are fighting them for two rounds straight. We’ve already conceded once. What should we do this time?”

“What?” Huo Yuhao lost his voice.

If there was a team that Huo Yuhao didn't want to face in this tournament, it wasn't Team Sun Moon or the mysterious yet powerful Holy Ghost Sect's team. It was Shrek's team!

[Chapter 290.2: Team Sun Moon](#)

This had nothing to do with Wang Qiu'er. It was because of Shrek! Elder Xuan had given them special permission to compete on behalf of their sect so that they could establish the Tang Sect. The duty of protecting Shrek's glory had been passed on to the hands of Wang Qiu'er and the rest. If they met Shrek in the tournament, how were they going to deal with this conundrum? If they personally eliminated Shrek, they would forever feel guilty over it.

This was only the round-robin stage, but they were already in the same group as Shrek Academy. This was the worst news they could possibly receive.

Jiang Nannan lowered her head. Her eyes were red as she said, "I drew the lot today. I didn't expect to be so unlucky, too. I'm sorry, Yuhao. It's all my fault."

After a brief moment of shock, Huo Yuhao calmed down and revealed a reassuring smile on his face. He said, "Fourth senior, don't put it this way. You've drawn a good lot for us! How is it disastrous? I believe it's the best lot that we could've drawn."

Jiang Nannan was stunned for a moment before she laughed bitterly. "Yuhao, you don't have to comfort me."

Huo Yuhao shook his head and answered, "I'm not doing that. I really think so! Think about it. If we're in the same group as Shrek, we can team up with them. According to the rules, we'll never meet before the final. Isn't that the best situation that we could desire?"

Xu Sanshi was speechless. "Brother, did you hear us carefully? We're also in the same group as Sun Moon. We're even facing them first!"

Huo Yuhao smiled and replied, "Just get rid of them."

The five simple words that he uttered left the other three in the room stunned. Jiang Nannan's red eyes slowly revealed a determined look.

Wang Dong'er squinted and said, "That's right. Let's just get rid of them. We can even pave the path for Shrek. It's best that we meet them first. Let's destroy them!"

Xu Sanshi gave Huo Yuhao a thumbs-up and said, "You are awe-inspiring!"

Huo Yuhao smiled and didn't say anything else. Yes! They could just destroy the Sun Moon team. Did they really have to be scared of them? They conceded defeat in the last round for a tactical reason, but this time, they had to fight. Since this was the case, then they should just give it their all. Why should the Tang Sect be afraid of the Sun Moon team?

"Third senior, I'll have to trouble you to call everyone here. We'll be competing tomorrow, so we need to discuss our strategy."

"Alright." Xu Sanshi turned around without hesitation and left. In a short span of time, he managed to gather He Caitou, Xiao Xiao, and Na Na, and even Nan Qiuqiu, Ji Juechen, and Jing Ziyuan.

Fortunately, Huo Yuhao's room had been upsized. It wasn't that packed anymore, even with everyone there.

Huo Yuhao wore a serious expression and said, "We'll be facing a strong opponent tomorrow, thus I'll need to form our strategy today. We must win this fight and try our best to bring them down so that Shrek's team has a chance against them. First, I hope no one tells eldest senior that we are facing the Sun Moon team. I don't want him to worry and let him focus on recovering. With his current condition, he can only fight when we reach the quarterfinal. If he worries too much, I'm afraid it might affect his condition."

Everyone nodded as they agreed with Huo Yuhao's opinion.

Huo Yuhao continued, "We have only one goal in the individual elimination round: weaken the abilities of our opponents! For Shrek Academy and the Tang Sect, let's not hold back anymore. However, we must also watch our own safety. We only have seven of us left; not even one substitute. Once we lose a member, we'll find it difficult against them in the later stages even if we win the first fight."

Nan Qiuqiu pursed her lips and said, "If only I could compete."

Huo Yuhao snapped, "There's no point in saying that now."

"You..." Nan Qiuqiu was angry the moment she saw him. Even though she had joined the Tang Sect to avoid being punished by her mother, she didn't have a good impression of Huo Yuhao.

Huo Yuhao didn't bother with her and said, "The team round will decide which team will eventually win. However, it's very important for us to weaken our opponents in the individual elimination round."

"We need to arrange the order in which we compete carefully."

"I'll go first!" Jiang Nannan said decisively. She was the one who had drawn the lot, and thus she blamed herself for it. She had even berated Xu Sanshi in the last round. Right now, she felt extremely guilt-stricken.

"No, Sister Nannan. Have you forgotten what I said? If we fight the Sun Moon team, I'll be the one to go first," Wang Dong'er said without any hesitation.

Jiang Nannan furrowed her brow and retorted, "Dong'er, this is not the time to be emotional. Your cultivation is higher, so you should among the last few to compete. If you compete first, your energy and power will be greatly depleted. When it comes to the team round, we'll still need to rely on your martial soul fusion skills with Yuhao."

Wang Dong'er replied, "Fourth senior, listen to me. Choosing to compete first isn't an emotional decision. Xiao and Meng Hongchen are undoubtedly the core of the Sun Moon team. In my opinion, Meng Hongchen's venom is more difficult to deal with, even though Xiao Hongchen's abilities are greater. The venom from her Vermilion Clear Ictetoad can greatly deplete one's soul power. Once you are unable to unleash any soul power, you'll be knocked out. Senior Dai Yueheng lost to her back then even though he was so strong. Once Meng Hongchen enters the stage, which one of you are confident of beating her? Only Huo Yuhao's Ultimate Ice can curb her."

“However, Huo Yuhao is our main control soul master. Furthermore, he can’t over-exert his body because of his physical condition. He’s also the one we need to achieve victory in the team round. Considering all this, no one is more suitable than me to fight her.”

Nan Qiuqiu was curious. “Why is that so?”

Wang Dong’er smiled and said, “It’s because my Fire of Light can curb her venom. At the same time, it’s also because of some special feelings that she has for me. I’m not trying to exploit her feelings, but at least I know she won’t try to kill me. This can tip the balance in my favor. At the same time, Yuhao can discover her weaknesses even if I lose through his control and detection.”

Nan Qiuqiu opened her eyes wide and said, “She-she likes you? She’s really shameless...”

Xu Sanshi slapped his forehead and shouted, “Qiuqiu! Your logic is really good. She’s shameless because she likes Wang Dong? Don’t you like him too?”

Nan Qiuqiu’s face turned red, and she turned around, refusing to sreply to Xu Sanshi. Although she was quite willful, she was a very straightforward person, and said anything she wanted to. Over the past few days, she had slowly integrated into the Tang Sect.

Huo Yuhao knew that it was time for him to express his opinion. He understood Wang Dong’er very well. He knew that she had said all that to compete first and handle more of the pressure. Who could be sure that Meng Hongchen would be the first to compete from the Sun Moon team? What if she wasn’t the first? Wang Dong’er would still have to face her opponent, and her opponent might even be Xiao Hongchen!

Both parties were arch-enemies. They couldn’t be surprised by any tactics that the Sun Moon team used.

“Alright, Dong’er will be the first to compete then.” Huo Yuhao made his decision. Even though he was gripping the handle of his wheelchair tightly at this point, he still made this difficult decision.

They were a single entity. He couldn’t leave her behind to fight just because of their relationship.

“However, eldest senior has instructed me to command the entire team in this tournament. Whether it’s Dong’er or anyone else, all of you must listen to my instructions. Whoever I choose to compete will compete, and whoever I choose to remain on the bench will remain on the bench. This is so that we can eventually achieve victory. Whoever doesn’t listen to my instructions will not compete anymore. Seniors, Dong’er ,and Na Na, I hope all of you understand where I’m coming from. There can only be one voice during the tournament.”

Huo Yuhao sounded very calm now, but he appeared much more awe-inspiring than he had been before. His eyes were filled with a look of determination. Even He Caitou and Xu Sanshi, who were both the oldest, were stunned when they saw the look in his eyes. Right now, they were impressed by his aura.

He Caitou was the first to express his support. He said, “I agree. There can only be one voice during the tournament. I believe Yuhao will be able to lead us to victory.”

“Me too.” Xu Sanshi added without any hesitation. They were brothers, but they were also teammates. If their hearts were not in unison against a strong opponent, they would already have lost half the battle!

The rest didn’t object either. Huo Yuhao’s gaze eventually landed on Wang Dong’er.

Wang Dong’er looked at his burning gaze before glancing at his immobile left arm and lower limbs and then nodded immediately. She knew that Huo Yuhao would do something crazy if something happened to her because she was being stubborn. He had landed in this state because of her. How could she bear to see him hurt because of her again?

Morning. A cool and refreshing air blew through Radiant City under the illumination of the morning sun. It was chilly outside.

It was the most comfortable season right now. The weather today was especially good. Inhaling the refreshing air along the streets of Radiant City felt very soothing.

The entire city had been bustling with activity over the past few days. Whether it was day or night, the streets were packed with people.

The Continental Elite Youth Soul Master Tournament had finally entered the round-robin stage. The confusion and mess from the presence of too many teams had finally ended. In the round-robin stage, more and more strong teams would face off against one another. It was early morning, and a huge crowd had already gathered at the suburbs where the tournament venue was. They were waiting excitedly for the tournament to truly begin!

[Chapter 290.3: Team Sun Moon](#)

The rules of the round-robin stage weren’t as direct as they were in the elimination rounds. The thirty-two teams that had advanced to the round-robin stage were divided into four groups. The eight teams in each group would face off against each of the rest of the seven teams once.

On the first day, four matches would be held in the first two groups. On the second day, another four matches would be held in the next two groups. This would continue until all the matches were completed. The entire round-robin stage would last around fourteen days. The top two teams from each group would progress to the quarterfinals.

The last eight would compete in the quarterfinals, and the victorious four teams would advance to the semifinals. The winners of each semifinal match would then progress to the finals, where the eventual champion would be decided.

The Tang Sect, Shrek Academy, and the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy were arranged in the same group. Since the rest of the five teams could make it past the elimination rounds, they were naturally skilled too. Their group was the group of death! Furthermore, the Tang Sect and the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy were going to face off in the first match of the round-robin stage.

“This format isn’t very good for us!” Meng Hongchen and Xiao Hongchen were walking together to the tournament venue.

“How is it not good for us? I think it’s pretty advantageous for us! Only one of the Tang Sect and Shrek Academy will enter the quarterfinals. Isn’t that great?” Xiao Hongchen said heartlessly.

Meng Hongchen rolled her eyes and said, “This is what you want, but not what they want. Do you really think the Tang Sect will give up this time?”

Xiao Hongchen was stunned, “Why not? Didn’t they do so in the last round? I think it’s only wise for them to make the same choice. While the rest of the teams aren’t that weak, they shouldn’t be our match, either. Isn’t it good for them to enter the quarterfinal with us before we meet in the final? Of course, the condition is that either we or them have to beat the Holy Ghost Sect. Come to think of it, we haven’t discovered which team is from the Body Sect...”

Meng Hongchen was a little annoyed as she looked at her elder brother and said, “Elder brother, please grow up. Those people from the Tang Sect come from Shrek Academy. If you were in their shoes, would you be willing to progress with your arch-enemy, or progress with Shrek Academy by teaming up with them? I don’t think they’ll give up today. Even if they can’t beat us, they’ll try their best to deplete our powers. On the contrary, I think we should concede defeat in this match. As long as we beat Shrek’s team, we can progress. Compared to the Tang Sect, Shrek is weaker.”

“Concede defeat?” Xiao Hongchen opened his eyes wide. “Younger sister, is your brain damaged? Are you asking us to concede defeat to the Tang Sect in front of His Majesty and grandpa? Not everyone knows about the Tang Sect’s background, but grandpa knows. They might not even choose to fight us. Even if they do, it’ll be a great opportunity to exact revenge on them. At most, we’ll just reveal our true abilities earlier. Huo Yuhao is crippled right now. If we concede defeat, how can we ever show our face in the empire again?”

“Bro...” Meng Hongchen wanted to say something, but she was interrupted by Xiao Hongchen.

Xiao Hongchen looked much more serious all of a sudden. “Meng, I know that you’re smarter than me most of the time. However, do you know why grandpa made me the team leader instead of you?”

Meng Hongchen was stunned.

Xiao Hongchen said, “We are competing for glory. At times, it’s not good to be overly rational. We need to have a forward-looking spirit. Have you ever thought what the motivational impact would be on the team if we can defeat the Tang Sect? You don’t have to say anything else. No matter what, we must never give up on this match.”

Meng Hongchen sighed and said, “Elder brother, I know what the benefits of winning are. However, if we lose...”

“Shut up. Don’t you know it’s extremely dangerous to undermine our chances before we even fight? I’ve already made my decision. Since you lack fighting spirit, I shall not let you compete first. You’ll be the last. In the individual round, we still can make choices. Our fight with the Tang Sect will be decided in the team round.”

Meng Hongchen sighed and didn't add anything else. Xiao Hongchen wasn't wrong, either. At times, a determined mindset was more important than rationality.

In the previous edition of the tournament, their overall abilities were greater than Shrek Academy's, and they still lost. After they returned, they tried to summarize the reason why they lost, and they came to a conclusion... belief! Shrek's Seven Monsters had been inspired to fight for Shrek's glory. Along with Ma Xiaotao and Dai Yueheng's abilities, they eventually defeated the stronger Sun Moon team.

Xiao Hongchen was still bothered by that defeat. Over the past five years, he had cultivated tirelessly almost every day so that he could avenge his humiliation. He had sacrificed a lot, and no one was clearer about that than Meng Hongchen. That was why she stopped trying to convince him. In her heart, her fighting spirit was also lit.

The resting area at the side of the tournament stage had been renovated over the past two days, and only the original VIP resting area was left. The resting area was also re-decorated, and the original wooden benches were switched to comfortable sofas. After all, there would be at most be eight teams at once in the resting area. It wasn't packed as tightly as before.

When Xiao Hongchen and Meng Hongchen brought their team to the tournament venue, they immediately saw the Tang Sect in the resting area.

Bei Bei was still absent. The rest of Shrek's Seven Monsters were all seated. Huo Yuhao's eyes were shut. It seemed like he was resting his mind, while the rest of them appeared to be very calm.

Meng Hongchen even suspected that she was wrong when she saw them. Were they really going to give up this match?

At this point, someone from the Tang Sect stood up and walked towards the Sun Moon team.

Xiao Hongchen squinted at him and stopped in his tracks.

Xu Sanshi was the one who had walked over. He walked in front of Xiao Hongchen and Meng Hongchen and said, "It's been a long time! How are the both of you?"

Xiao Hongchen's facial muscles twitched. It's been a long time? Were you blind over the past few days?

"Yes! Long time no see." Xiao Hongchen revealed a foxy smile on his face.

Xu Sanshi sighed and said, "Time passes really quickly! I never expected us to meet five years later. In the previous round, we decided to surrender because we understand how tough it must be on the both of you. I wonder if you can return the favor today. It'll be great if we can progress together!"

Xiao Hongchen snorted. "We are not so spineless."

Xu Sanshi looked very sad. "I hope the few people who died back then are resting in peace now. If I can, I'd like go over to pay my respects. It's hard to show mercy during the tournament. We're really not being hostile."

"You..." Xiao Hongchen was furious, and almost snapped. However, Xu Sanshi had already turned around and left.

Meng Hongchen dragged him back, "Don't be fooled. He's trying to provoke you."

Xiao Hongchen quickly calmed down. However, his eyes looked very cold, to the point that his expression was almost frightening. "Even if he didn't remind me, I will never forget our vendetta from the previous tournament!"

The eight teams who were supposed to compete in the morning had already arrived. Shrek's team was seated beside the Tang Sect. Wang Qiu'er was very close to Huo Yuhao, around three meters apart. Huo Yuhao's eyes were still shut, and he didn't move in his wheelchair. It was as if he were asleep.

Wang Qiu'er had seen him when she first arrived. However, she didn't fix her gaze on him. The cold look on her face was even more intense than before. Her ferocious aura could be felt even if one got slightly close to her.

"Hi, Qiu'er." Wang Dong'er was seated beside Huo Yuhao, and greeted Wang Qiu'er.

Wang Qiu'er only nodded at Wang Dong'er and didn't say anything back. Wang Dong'er was dressed like a man now, whereas Wang Qiu'er was wearing a veil. It wasn't easy to tell they were identical.

Dai Huabin also looked very cold, not much different from Wang Qiu'er. Zhu Lu and Wu Feng were openly hostile towards the Tang Sect. Xie Huanyue and Ning Tian were expressionless. On the other hand, Zhou Sichen and Cao Jinxuan were winking at Wang Dong'er and Xiao Xiao occasionally. The Lan sisters who were substitutes wore smiles on their faces.

Up on the main stage, Ju Zi pushed Xu Tianran over to the main spot. After tidying up his shirt, she sat down beside him.

Xu Tianran grabbed her hand and placed it on his thigh. He tapped her hand gently. Ju Zi smiled, and looked very cute.

Xu Tianran smiled as he said, "Today's first match is between the Sun Moon team and the Tang Sect. It should be quite interesting."

Ju Zi smiled and asked, "Really? The Sun Moon team will surely win."

Xu Tianran twisted his head to look at Jing Hongchen and asked, "Hallmaster Hongchen, what do you think?"

Jing Hongchen furrowed his brow as he replied, "I think it's difficult to tell. This is only the round-robin stage. Both parties won't be eliminated even if they lose. It's difficult to tell whether they'll give their best. If they do, it'll also be difficult to tell the outcome. The eventual victory will be decided in the team round. For teams like these two which are very close in terms of abilities, the elimination round is only a way to deplete each other's power and increase their own advantage. It's a way to ensure greater chances for the team round."

Xu Tianran smiled and asked, "Hallmaster Jing, have you arranged a strategy for the Sun Moon team?"

Jing Hongchen returned the smile and answered, "An eagle's wings will always remain weak if it doesn't learn how to fly on its own. I let them do whatever they want. My grandson and granddaughter have

been working hard over the past few years so that they can defeat the bunch from the Tang Sect in this tournament. I'm also eager to see what'll go down, even though I hope that they won't need to give it their all at this stage."