

Tang Sect 41

Chapter 41.1: Ice Jade Empress Scorpion

They were shaped like hexagons and shone with an incomparably bright luster, and were akin to a diamond in shape. They covered the front section of its body, and its six slender legs. Beneath the green sky, they emitted an incomparably brilliant luster. It was almost as if they'd become another source of light as it reflected all a myriad of rays of light.

Its two pincers were both a meter long, and they were both covered with the strange diamond-like hexagonal protrusions. Only, the foremost parts of its pincers were covered in a mirror-like silverish-white color just like its mouth.

However, the things Huo Yuhao paid the most attention to were its eyes. Its eyes were yellow, as if two yellow diamonds had been embedded within its sockets. They were also hexagonal, and the flickering of their crystal-like yellow light gave off a feeling similar to that of a gem glistening.

If its upper body could be considered sufficiently resplendent, its lower body—the long, yet upward pointing tail, was the core that dazzled everything around it.

Unlike the finely segmented tail of an ordinary scorpion, the tail of the Ice Emperor only had five segments. Each segment shone with an alluring jade-green light that was filled with luster. Its five segments were identically colored, and the segment nearest to its upper body was the widest of the five; the further away from its body, the narrower it got. The last segment was also inlaid with the diamond-like protrusions, and the very tip of its tail similarly flickered with a mirror-like, silverish-white luster.

How could a soul beast with a gem-like resplendence like this not be deserving of the title of 'beautiful'? Furthermore, merely describing it with the word 'beautiful' didn't seem to do it justice.

As the Ice Emperor appeared, the Skydream Iceworm unconsciously let an intoxicated look appear on his face. Staring at the Ice Emperor with a passionate gaze in his eyes, he said, "You've come."

Seeing the Skydream Iceworm's bright-gold body which was created by spiritual power, the Ice Emperor seemed to be taken somewhat aback. A trace of astonishment appeared in its crystal-yellow eyes.

"Skydream, did you think that I'd be unable to find your true body just because you hid it and used your spiritual power to create a virtual body to come see me? Even if your spiritual power's strong enough to create a body for yourself, you're still using the appearance of a human. You can't be too far away from your true body." The Ice Emperor said icily.

The Skydream Iceworm smiled slightly. His eyes were filled with an infatuated look, and he nearly started drooling, "You're still as charming as ever. I remember the last time I saw you, you still had six segments on your tail. However, they've already fused to five segments! I just love this attractive shade of green that you have. It seems like I wasn't wrong; you're not too far away from your limit."

Snorting disdainfully, the crisp, female voice of the Ice Emperor rang out again, "Useless words like that will only hasten your death. You've been hiding so well all these years, but you've suddenly come back now. Did you only come here to get yourself killed?"

With an adoring voice, the Skydream Iceworm said, "I've naturally come to let you live on! My suffering from the one-sided love I've had will finally come to an end. During these long years, I've always dreamt of you during my deep sleep. My beloved, we can finally stay together forever."

The Ice Emperor was no longer able to tolerate the Skydream Iceworm's infatuated appearance. Her tall, pointed tail suddenly lit up, and a spotlessly white beam of light instantly pierced through the Skydream Iceworm's body.

Huo Yuhao felt the Skydream Iceworm's spiritual power surging violently, and even his vision became somewhat fuzzy.

"I don't know what plans you have, but since you've come all the way here, you have to die. After absorbing your energy, I'll become the strongest soul beast in the entire continent."

After piercing through the Skydream Iceworm's body, the white ray didn't disappear. On the contrary, it started spreading through the Skydream Iceworm's golden body, destroying it in a berserk manner.

However, the Skydream Iceworm didn't reveal any signs of pain. Somewhat regretfully, he said, "I was originally planning to chat with you for a while, since I didn't want to be so heartless. However, I'll have to start it now, so that we can truly be together."

Having cultivated to its current level, the Ice Emperor could discern danger very well. She instantly felt that something was wrong, because the Skydream Iceworm's body had suddenly turned blurry. Right after that, he suddenly appeared right in front of her.

There was no need to doubt the Ice Emperor's speed, but she suddenly felt herself slowing down in this instant. The air around her seemed to have suddenly turned viscous, and the Skydream Iceworm's terrifying spiritual power had become a vast ocean that trapped her within it.

The Ice Emperor's gaze instantly turned ferocious. Forcefully waving her jade green tail, it erupted with a brilliant light.

"Skydream, you're courting death. You actually dare to use spiritual power in this manner? Aren't you scared of being unable to return to your original body? Moreover, regardless of how hard you try, it won't change the fact that you're trash. How long can you even keep me here for? One or two seconds?"

The Skydream Iceworm said gently, "Not much! One second's more than enough!"

At this moment, a membrane made of a pale white light slid across the ground noiselessly. No matter how strong the Ice Emperor was, she hadn't noticed it.

On the other hand, the hidden Huo Yuhao felt his body shake violently. Clenching his teeth, he concentrated all his soul power to defend against the extreme cold that had abruptly arrived.

Though he had the ice room, which was able to block out the outside cold, as well as the warmth created by the Skydream Iceworm's ignited shedded skin, he was still frozen solid instantly. He didn't know how low the temperatures here had reached, but it seemed as if his heart could stop beating at any time. He could only urge his soul power as if his life depended on it, maintaining the trace of warmth in his heart.

Right, a single second was enough for the Skydream Iceworm. The Ice Emperor was releasing all of her strength in preparation for the Skydream Iceworm to waste all of his spiritual power, but she suddenly felt her body tighten. Unexpectedly, she had lost the ability to move.

Astonished, the Ice Emperor immediately twisted about madly. White and green intertwined and flickered as she released all of her tyrannical skills without holding anything back.

However, this powerful several hundred thousand year-ranked soul beast who'd roamed about the Extreme North unhindered felt fear in the next instant. No matter how hard she struggled, it was unexpectedly to no avail.

The sensation of constriction was strengthening at an astonishing rate, unexpectedly causing a gurgling sound to ring out. Regardless of how she struggled, the strength of her bindings continued to strengthen unceasingly. Unexpectedly, she had no way to resist it.

The frontal pincers she'd raised up into the air were gradually pushed downwards, and her raised tail was pressed up against her body. The Ice Emperor, one of the Extreme North's Three Emperors, had actually been constricted this rigidly.

"No, no! This isn't possible. Skydream, how could trash like you be able to tie me up? What skill is this? Why can't I use my energy?"

The golden light vanished, and the Huo Yuhao-shaped Skydream Iceworm reappeared in front of her. With an indifferent smile on his face, he said, "I've truly waited for this day for too long already. You don't know what's happening? Right, I'll give you an explanation, but not now. Once we've left this area, I'll have a good chat with you. Right now, we should be on our way."

With that, he raised his right hand and pointed towards the Ice Emperor. Amidst the flickering golden light, the Ice Emperor's body vanished into thin air.

Facing the sky, the Skydream Iceworm let out a sigh. "I didn't think that I'd be able to use the few abilities I wouldn't have dared to use in the past after losing my body. Unfortunately, that was my only chance to use them. Ice Emperor, oh Ice Emperor, I really hope you won't disappoint me."

The pale white membrane reappeared, but the Ice Emperor had already vanished. The membrane slowly fell through the ground, re-entering Huo Yuhao's body, which was located within the ice room.

The extreme cold was instantly isolated from the ice room, but Huo Yuhao's body remained as hard as steel. A layer of frost had covered the surface of his body.

The golden light vanished into his forehead, and the Skydream Iceworm called out to him softly, "Yuhao, Yuhao, how are you? I've succeeded."

Though Huo Yuhao's body was frozen solid, he was abnormally clear-headed.

"Why?" Within his spiritual world, Huo Yuhao asked coldly. n-(OVeLBIn

Puzzled, the Skydream Iceworm asked, "Why what?"

Huo Yuhao's icy voice rang out, "Why did you lie to me? Did you really come here just to awaken my second martial soul? If so, how can you explain what you just did?"

The Skydream Iceworm fell silent.

His voice filled with grief, Huo Yuhao said, "Skydream, you know, after leaving the Duke's Mansion, you're the first partner in my life who'd given me hope. I considered you as a teacher, as well as my closest friend. You're the person who's finally given me a target I can work towards, but why did you have to lie to me? Why? Did you just want to use me as a puppet to come here? I used all of my energy to come here, but the only thing I saw was the love you had towards the Ice Emperor. I don't mind taking risks with you. If you had told me in advance, I would've been willing to follow you all the way, even if I had to climb through mountains of blades or swim through seas of fire. However, you shouldn't have lied to me."

The Skydream Iceworm let out a long sigh, "Sorry, Yuhao. I did lie to you. I didn't fully trust you. I didn't know whether you'd still be willing to follow me if I told you everything. You're not wrong, I had my own selfish motives. I hope to be with the Ice Emperor forever. Ever since I was born, the only person I've liked is the Ice Emperor. It's just like the 'love' you humans have. Even if she only treats me as food, I'll still love her without any second thoughts."

"I didn't realize that doing things this way would hurt you. I don't wish for you to look down on me. It's just as she's said, I'm a piece of trash and a coward. The Ice Emperor's full name is the Ice Jade Emperor Scorpion, and she's one of the true rulers of this freezing earth. The Ice Jade Scorpion tribe she belongs to takes my Iceworm clan as food, but I've loved her incorrigibly since the first time I met her two hundred thousand years ago."

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"I know what you're going to ask me: Why do I love her, even though we're from completely different races? Realistically speaking, a difference in race doesn't really matter at our level. Besides, what I'm pursuing is more of a spiritual relationship. You've seen what she thinks of me. To tell the truth, one of the main reasons that I was so eager to become your soul ring was because I simply couldn't wait any longer. I was scared that she'd reach her limit early, and that she'd pass away. Even though I love her, I won't force her to love me. However, I'll do everything I can in order to ensure that she stays alive, no matter what. It's my selfish wish that I can live with her beside me. Even if she ends up cursing me everyday, I'll still be willing to listen to her voice. Do you understand what I'm saying? This is love."

The Skydream Iceworm's voice was filled with several emotions. An intrinsic transformation seemed to have occurred in his usually lazy voice, so much so that even Huo Yuhao was gradually swayed by his words. Huo Yuhao was only twelve after all, thus it was natural for him to not understand what exactly love was. However, he had unwittingly been moved by the Skydream Iceworm's words.

"What if an accident had happened before we found the Ice Emperor? What if you hadn't been able to restrain her?" Huo Yuhao blurted out.

The Skydream Iceworm calmly replied, "There was basically no chance of that happening with my Spiritual Detection. Furthermore, there's no chance that she wouldn't have been restrained by me. When I died, my corpse became the strongest weapon that a soul beast has ever produced in the world. Not to mention her, I'm confident that I could've trapped the first-ranked Snow Emperor if it had been within fifty meters of us. Unfortunately, I could only use it one time. This was the first time that I've fought outside your body after fusing with you, and it will also be the last. The strength of my spirit

won't allow me to do this again. After all, I'm your soul ring; I've already completely fused with you. The dangers that you're worrying about couldn't have happened either, as I have a last-ditch skill that allows me to instantly teleport you several hundreds of miles away. As such, I wouldn't have had any problems making sure that you were safe. Yuhao, you need to remember this: Even though I was somewhat vigilant towards you this time, we're still a single entity. We share both our glory and our losses."

Huo Yuhao fell silent. The Skydream Iceworm's lie had hurt him quite a lot, but he felt the sadness in his heart gradually disappear when he heard the Skydream Iceworm's explanation. Afterwards, another feeling took its place.

"I can only do what I do best. Even if there hadn't been any feelings between the Ice Emperor and me, I still would've brought you to this place, as this is the only place where I could utilize all of my abilities to help you find a good choice to awaken your martial soul with."

Huo Yuhao took a deep breath, then muttered, "Brother Skydream, is my heart too fragile?"

The Skydream Iceworm replied, "No. I can't blame you for how you reacted. A person's mental state is truly determined by one's past experiences. You just rely too much on me. Haven't you realized it? Whether you're cultivating, undergoing an assessment, or even whenever you encounter danger. Every single time, you subconsciously tell yourself, No matter what, I still have Brother Skydream, or something like, As long as I cultivate diligently, Brother Skydream will help me become even stronger. Am I right?"

Huo Yuhao nodded subconsciously. By this point, the stiffness in his body had more or less receded. His blood had begun to flow quicker as he circulated his soul power, which in turn gradually caused a warm feeling to rise from his body.

The Skydream Iceworm continued, "This reliance can sometimes be a good thing for you, but it can also sometimes be a bad thing. Relying on me too much will cause you to lose your way. You are yourself; you are Huo Yuhao, a human soul master, and a human soul engineer. I, on the other hand, am the Skydream Iceworm. I'm currently an intelligent soul ring. And who do I belong to?"

"Me," Huo Yuhao replied.

The Skydream Iceworm said, "That's right. I'm your soul ring. Even if I'm an intelligent soul ring, I'm still your soul ring. Therefore, you have to remember that, while I am a part of you, you aren't a part of me. You're my master, and as such, you're the person who rules this body that we share. Because of that, I should be the one who's relying on you; you shouldn't be the one relying on me. If you keep thinking this way, you won't have any feelings of doubt towards me. If it continues like this, I'll have to consider whether or not any of my actions will affect my relationship with you. I'll only be fine if you're fine. Do you understand?"

After hearing the Skydream Iceworm's words, Huo Yuhao suddenly felt his mind clear up. He finally understood what he'd just felt—it was maturity.

In this short period of time, his heart had matured. The hatred he'd accumulated over the past several years seemed to have dulled by a large amount while, more importantly, his heart had matured. His fragile heart had firmed up, and the constant self-reflection he'd done had caused him to discard his resentment.

Once he realized this, his eyes became full of confidence once again.

I'm the master here. I'm the one who will grab the sun and moon, and who will pluck the stars from the sky in the future.

After digging his way out of the ice room, Huo Yuhao climbed out from underneath the snow. Suddenly, Huo Yuhao felt an urge to let out a shout towards the heavens.

"Don't make any noise. Immediately run in the direction I tell you to. The Ice Emperor's clansmen are coming, as they've more than likely sensed her aura disappear. If we don't leave, they'll definitely find us quickly. Now then, we need to quickly leave this place. We can handle the issue regarding the Ice Emperor once we reach a safe place."

"Okay." Huo Yuhao didn't waste any time as he immediately began running towards the direction they'd come from. His mind had cleared up, thus his footsteps had become extraordinarily swift. The Skydream Iceworm's powerful spiritual power concealed all traces of his aura, and there wasn't any need for Huo Yuhao to worry about leaving any footsteps behind. In this freezing world of wind and ice, all traces of his presence were wiped away with a single gust of wind.

As he ran, Huo Yuhao spoke to the Skydream Iceworm, "Brother Skydream, I was wrong. I shouldn't have doubted you. However, I'm still angry as, in the end, you still lied to me."

The Skydream Iceworm replied, "Okay, please don't be angry. You'll be able to see how beneficial this adventure was to you once we've taken care of the Ice Emperor."

Huo Yuhao said, "What's the Ice Emperor got to do with me? She's your lover. Don't tell me that you truly have the heart to kill her and make her into my soul ring?"

"Hehehe..." The Skydream Iceworm laughed. "You'll see, but not right now. However, I promise that I'll never lie to you again. You've passed my test."

"What test?" Huo Yuhao asked, a somewhat blank look in his eyes.

The Skydream Iceworm replied, "Your heart, of course. Although your small heart's somewhat fragile, and even though your emotions are affected very easily, I've still felt the complete trust and dependence you have in me. I did say that it wasn't a very good thing for you to do, but it's destroyed the last barrier between us."

Somewhat helpless, Huo Yuhao replied, "That doesn't really make me feel very good."

The Skydream Iceworm chuckled. "What's not good about it? Every experience always has its benefits. This isn't really a bad thing for you. Besides, you'll trust your friends more in the future, and you won't doubt them as easily."

Huo Yuhao replied, "If you won't tell me how you plan to deal with the Ice Emperor, then at least tell me the story between you and her. I want to hear what this 'love' is all about."

"Alright, I'll tell you a little story. Run a bit faster; if we're discovered, all our previous efforts will have been for nought..."

“I’m already running as fast as I can.” Huo Yuhao brought his soul power to the maximum as he ran along the surface of the snowy ground using the Ghost Shadow Perplexing Track. Because of both his speed and the packed snow of the Extreme North, he left a trail of shallow footsteps in the snow without actually sinking into it. This was the quickest way he could move forward.

The Skydream Iceworm said, “I’ve been in love with the Ice Emperor for two hundred thousand years. I’d just woken up from my sleep back then, and I was about to find another place to continue sleeping. But then, she suddenly appeared. She’d been looking for the Ten Thousand Year Ice Pith. Unfortunately, this Brother had already eaten all of it. The first time we met, we were both astonished. You’ve seen my original body; it’s beautiful, it’s big, it’s round, and it has a golden luster to it. Well, she was very beautiful too. The first time that I saw her resplendent body and her large, jade-green tail, I was deeply captivated by her. In particular, I was charmed by her cool temperament. She looks the most beautiful whenever she’s cursing at me. To me, it doesn’t matter even when she wants to kill me; her personality’s just that perfect.”

Huo Yuhao was left somewhat speechless when he heard this. “Brother Skydream, I don’t think you need to continue anymore. I just can’t sympathize with the love between you soul beasts. Also, I can’t help but say that you’re really infatuated with her. Even when she’s trying to kill you, you still find her perfect! Hahahaha...”

Enraged, the Skydream Iceworm yelled, “Huo Yuhao, how dare a stinky brat like you laugh at me. Do you really think that I wouldn’t dare to destroy your spiritual seal?”

“I don’t believe you. If you have the ability to do it, do it. However, if you destroy my spiritual sea, you’re screwed as well. And if that happens, you won’t be able to see your Ice Emperor ever again. Are you really willing to go through with that? If you are, come at me! I’m not scared of you.”

“You...” Huo Yuhao’s words had struck the Skydream Iceworm’s soft spot. He indignantly replied, “Getting too intimate really isn’t good for me! Now that we’ve gotten closer, you’re no longer afraid of the consequences for insulting me! I feel like I’ve lost out on this deal...”

Huo Yuhao snorted. “Haven’t you heard the phrase ‘being put at a disadvantage sometimes gives you an advantage’? Whatever, quiet down a bit. I don’t wanna get distracted.”

This time around, Huo Yuhao had truly unleashed the entirety of his potential. In his current situation, one where he couldn’t guarantee when he would even get to eat, he dashed wildly onwards in a way that seemed to overdraft his body. Only when his soul power was fully drained would he stop, shove two mouthfuls of snow into his mouth, then meditate.

He didn’t even consider eating the frozen food that he’d brought with him.

The drain on his physical energy by merely relying on water to replenish his energy could be imagined, but he didn’t have a choice. Repeatedly urged on by the Skydream Iceworm, he continued to run for twenty-eight hours straight. By that point, he’d finally left the core regions of the Extreme North and had arrived back at the border.

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“Pu—” Huo Yuhao fell to the ground atop the thick snow. He wasn’t able to crawl back up no matter what the Skydream Iceworm said.

The excessive overdraw of his physical strength had caused him to enter a state of extreme tiredness. Fortunately, the surrounding temperature had increased considerably once he’d reached the outer areas of the Extreme North. At the very least, it had become a bit easier for him to hydrate himself by eating snow.

“I can’t do this anymore, Brother Skydream. I just can’t run anymore. I have to rest. If I don’t eat any longer, I’m going to die.” Huo Yuhao muttered inwardly.

Huo Yuhao gasped for air as he lay atop the snow, which caused bursts of white mist to unceasingly emerge from his mouth. His vision had become blurry, and waves of dizziness were assaulting him. Currently, he was weak to the point that he wasn’t even able to activate his Spiritual Detection. The only thing he wanted to do right now was sleep. He’d never felt like this before, even during the most difficult moments of his training in Shrek Academy.

The Skydream Iceworm replied, “Let’s do it here then. I just did a quick search. It’s relatively quiet for around a hundred miles around us. As such, there shouldn’t be any soul beasts roaming about. However, Yuhao, you can’t rest yet; your true test is coming now.”

“Ah? You still want to test me? Just let me die.” After his last conversation with the Skydream Iceworm, their relationship had evidently improved by a significant amount. At the very least, Huo Yuhao had less misgivings when he conversed with the Skydream Iceworm.

The Skydream Iceworm replied, “Are you sure you don’t want to take this test?”

“What test?” Huo Yuhao asked, speechless.

The Skydream Iceworm smiled mysteriously. “Why did we come to the Extreme North in the first place?”

“To awaken my martial soul! What, are you saying that you want to take care of the Ice Empress right now?” Huo Yuhao finally came back to his senses. However, he really didn’t have any strength left. Just attempting to sit up took half of the little energy he had left, thus he chose to lie back down.

The Skydream Iceworm replied, “Right. I’m going to use my shedded skin to trap the Ice Empress’ body, then use my spiritual power to create a spiritual prison that’ll trap her temporarily. However, even though my spiritual power is my origin energy, I won’t be able to maintain it for too long. The Ice Empress’s so strong that I can’t truly trap her for long.”

Curious, Huo Yuhao asked, “What’s a spiritual prison?”

The Skydream Iceworm replied, “It’s a skill that’s activated by spiritual power. After I gave up my body in order to fuse with you, the origin of my spiritual power became independent from my body, allowing me to use a few skills. Unfortunately, my spiritual brand fused even further with you after I left your body. As such, I won’t be able to do this again. As of now, I can truly only be your subordinate. You need to prepare yourself as well, as there’s a prerequisite for the Ice Empress to fuse with you and become your martial soul—she has to do it of her own accord. However, even if she willingly agrees, you’ll still have to withstand an enormous amount of pressure. It won’t be as easy as it was when I fused with you

in the Great Star Dou Forest. At that point in time, I was fully drained of my energy. All I had left was my spiritual origin. Contrary to myself, she's a true three hundred thousand year soul beast; her cultivation is even at the 399,000 year rank. You definitely won't be able to absorb such a terrifying amount of power by yourself. As such, I'll have to seal her energy up in order to make sure that you won't explode. However, this will still come as an enormous shock to your body. Thus, you'll have to persevere no matter what. If you don't, all three of us are screwed. Do you understand?"

Huo Yuhao nodded. "I understand. But... will the Ice Empress really agree?"

The Skydream Iceworm smiled mysteriously. "Even though we've lived for so many years, we're actually more afraid of death than you humans. After all, is anyone truly willing to give up an extremely long life? No matter how much she looks down on me and how unwilling she is, preserving her own life is still more important! The reason that I created a situation like this was to force her; besides, those descendants of hers won't even be able to find us. Just watch me. You just need to lie down and stay still."

Huo Yuhao's eyes slowly lit up, while a strong golden light flickered within them. Immediately afterwards, he felt the mind-numbing cold. Even though it wasn't as intense as the freezing cold parts of the Extreme North, he shivered instinctively, and his body curled up subconsciously. The Skydream Iceworm had evidently taken his shedded skin away.

A ball of golden light emerged from in between Huo Yuhao's brows, then slowly rose into the air. It was only a golden dot when it emerged, but it gradually expanded as it rose. In the blink of an eye, it had become a disk of light with a one meter diameter.

The light that the golden disc had suddenly began to become illusory. If you were to look directly at it, your gaze would be sucked into a seemingly bottomless abyss.

A light flashed, and a figure emerged from the golden disc. The instant it appeared, the golden light in the air disappeared. A fist-sized ball of golden light surged out from Huo Yuhao's forehead and proceeded to float in midair. The trapped figure within was the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion.

Currently, she'd already been trapped by the Skydream Iceworm's shedded skin. No matter how hard she struggled, she couldn't get free. After all, the Skydream Iceworm's shedded skin was the crystallisation of his million years of cultivation. Even though his energy—which he'd accumulated after many years—had been continuously sucked out by the powerful soul beasts of the Great Star Dou Forest to the point where he'd almost dried up, he'd deliberately nourished his body with his energy during the extraction process. If it hadn't been for his durable body, he would've died god knows how many times already.

After choosing to give up his body in order to fuse with Huo Yuhao, the Skydream Iceworm's shedded skin had become an extremely valuable treasure. Even with the Ice Empress's terrifying level of energy and soul power, she had still been unable to break free from it. Its durability could be seen from this. Only, Huo Yuhao's current cultivation was far too weak to control it, thus only the Skydream Iceworm himself could do so. However, the drain on his spiritual origin would be extremely large whenever he used it, and as such, he could only use it at extremely important moments.

“Ice Empress, stop resisting. You’ve already tried so many times, you should know that it’s useless by now.” The Skydream Iceworm said in its distinctively lazy voice.

The Ice Empress replied coldly, “What do you want?”

The Skydream Iceworm gently said, “I only want to stay with my beloved forever.”

“This is your way of showing me your love?” After thinking it over for an entire day or so, the Ice Empress had already come to the understanding that she’d been duped. At that time, if she hadn’t been so close to the Skydream Iceworm, his plans would definitely have failed. Unfortunately, there was no use in her crying over spoiled milk. She’d already fallen into the Skydream Iceworm’s hands, and she wasn’t able to escape from this strange power. An existence like the Ice Empress, someone who had lived for almost four hundred thousand years, naturally wouldn’t give up easily. Thus, she could only rely on her other abilities to escape from this strange power that she couldn’t seem to resist.

The Skydream Iceworm smiled slightly. “Don’t be so impatient, listen to me.”

The Ice Empress replied coldly, “What did you say? You said that you loved me? If you really love me, then why haven’t you released your true body? I’ve already fallen into your trap, so what do you have to be afraid of?”

The Skydream Iceworm sighed. “I’m naturally not afraid of you, it’s just that there’s no way for me to let you see my true body! My true body no longer exists. Haven’t you realised that you’ve been looking at my spiritual origin all this time, not a virtual body? After ruling over your domain for so long, you’ve lost your cautiousness. If you hadn’t, I definitely wouldn’t have succeeded so easily.”

The Ice Empress was stunned. Astonished, she replied, “What? You only have your spiritual origin? So your body...” At that moment, she finally noticed Huo Yuhao, who was lying on the ground. Because of the cold, Huo Yuhao’s face had already turned somewhat pallid. Fortunately, his resistance to the cold had increased by a large amount after his journey to the core regions of the Extreme North.

“You couldn’t be referring to this human, right? Even though you’ve trapped me, I can easily tell how insignificant he is, just by using my eyes. Is he your puppet?”

“No, no, of course that’s not the case. He’s my host, or rather, he’s my master. The current me is a soul ring that belongs to him; you should know about the soul rings that these humans have. On the other hand, I’m the continent’s first ever intelligent soul ring.”

The Ice Empress cried out involuntarily, “What? You’ve actually become a human’s soul ring? How can this be?! Even though you’re a piece of trash, you’ve still lived for this long. How could a human’s fragile body withstand your enormous energy?!”

The Skydream Iceworm smiled bitterly. “Don’t bring that up. My tragedy began with you. At that point in time, you were so persistent on eating me... there was no way that I wouldn’t run away! I still needed a body to continue loving you, thus I drifted along the ocean and reached an area down south...”

The Skydream Iceworm used the most miserable voice he could muster as he recounted his experiences from the past hundred thousand years. Huo Yuhao had already heard his story, but the Skydream Iceworm used a much more sorrowful tone as he explained it to the Ice Empress. Moreover, he

described himself with a much more miserable tone, describing how he'd been 'beaten up till he was a mass of bruises', and how 'death would have been preferable to living'.

"...You know how terrifying limits are to us. You also know that no soul beast has lived longer than me. Even though I'm only a piece of trash in your heart, I'm still an old piece of trash who's lived long enough. My energy's foundation had been drained, and I was about to reach my next limit soon. However, I've already lived for this long—I naturally didn't want to die! I believe that you feel the same as I do. I can sense that your limit will arrive within a hundred years. Because of that, you're extremely worried."

"You and me, we both don't want to die. We've already lived this long; how could we be willing to simply turn into pile of dust? As such, I've found the best way to get past this."

The Skydream Iceworm's story finally aroused the interest of the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion. She subconsciously asked, "How?"

The Skydream Iceworm replied in a low voice, "By creating God."

"Creating God?" The Ice Empress was stunned. She immediately became even more curious. "What do you mean by creating God?"

The Skydream Iceworm replied in a low voice, "My beloved, let me ask you this: Which race on this continent has the highest potential of all?"

After becoming ensnared in the Skydream Iceworm's words, the Ice Empress subconsciously followed his train of thought. "Are you referring to humans?"

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The Skydream Iceworm nodded forcefully. "Right, humans. Even though there are some noble soul beasts like you, who are innately born with a powerful physique, you have to admit that we're much worse than humans in terms of talent. Although a human's body can't even be described as insignificant in the face of your Ice Jade Scorpion clan, they can still compete with your ten thousand year, or even hundred thousand-year-old clansmen after cultivating for several decades. Why is that? It's because they have a different amount of potential than us. Humans have frail bodies and short lifespans. However, their potential has allowed them to obtain the blessings of the heavens; they're incomparable. This is the advantage the humans have, and yet is also something we lack."

"Most importantly, we can't even hope to strive for the peaks that humanity can reach. Do you still remember that incident that happened ten thousand years ago?"

The Ice Empress replied, "The Heavens and the Earth changed color; a God was suddenly born."

The Skydream Iceworm said, "Right. At that time, I sensed the appearance of at least five Gods. Moreover, two of the Great Star Dou Forest's Great Beast Kings fell. They were both powerful existences who resided within the core regions of the Great Star Dou Forest, and even though they were somewhat inferior in terms of cultivation to those sleeping fellas who absorbed my energy, the races that they belonged to were extremely domineering. One of them had the same Titan bloodline that the Titan Ice Devil King has, while the other had the bloodline of dragons. Despite this, they both still fell. However, they didn't fall because they were killed by their enemies, but because they were used to complete the

most powerful human who existed ten thousand years ago—the person who later became the most powerful God.”

At that point, the Skydream Iceworm stopped for a moment. Afterwards, he continued in an even deeper voice, “Ice Empress, we both know the truth. Only Gods have an unlimited lifespan!”

The Ice Empress fell silent. Striking while the iron was hot, the Skydream Iceworm continued, “Whenever we soul beasts reach a hundred thousand years of cultivation, we can choose to re-cultivate as a human. However, there are an extremely small number of us who actually dare to re-cultivate. This is because we simply have no way of guaranteeing that we can cultivate and break through to the Titled Douluo stage in a short hundred years of time. Even if we did manage to break through, it would be very hard for our lifespans to exceed five hundred years. To us, becoming a God is a mere fantasy. The Douluo continent has been around for over a hundred million years, and we soul beasts were around before humans even existed. However, how many of us were actually able to use the method of re-cultivation to achieve an unlimited lifespan as a God?”

“This is also the main reason why soul beasts like you who have noble bloodlines are unwilling to re-cultivate into a human, am I right?”

“I’m not willing to try that vague and unreliable method, nor am I willing to die a premature death during the process of re-cultivation. I’ve chosen another method as the next best option. That is, to create a God. By creating a deity, even though I won’t be a God, I’ll still be able to follow this God, and will possess an unlimited lifespan by becoming part of this God. As such, I’ve chosen to become a soul ring. Not just any soul ring either, but an intelligent soul ring. I want to use my power to help him become a God, step by step.”

“You’re right. I’m just a piece of trash in your eyes, but I still have my million years of cultivation. Once I became an intelligent soul ring, I was able to give him a total of four soul skills, double that of you hundred thousand year soul beasts. Even though I wasn’t able to give him a soul bone, I was able to give him a martial soul, making him into a person with innate twin martial souls. This young man is only twelve, but he’s been gradually revealing his talent with my help. He has a much calmer attitude than his peers, along with the willpower to cultivate assiduously. If he has my help, why can’t he become an existence like that person ten thousand years ago. Why can’t he become a God?”

At this point, the Ice Empress was finally moved. She solemnly asked, “How confident are you?”

The Skydream Iceworm replied, “By myself, 30%. After all, I’m not good at attacking. As such, I can’t give him the ability to protect himself. However...”

When he reached this point, he suddenly paused.

“‘However’ what?” The Ice Empress asked, doubtful.

The Skydream Iceworm said, “I know what you’re thinking right now. You’re thinking of finding another human and trying to create a God like me. And you’re right to think like that. There are many areas in which you’re stronger than me. If you tried to create a God, you’d definitely be more successful than me. However, you’ve forgotten one thing: Your spiritual power isn’t anywhere near as strong as mine. More importantly, do you even have time to do the research that I’ve already done? You don’t even have a hundred years left, but I’ve already spent several tens of thousands of years thinking about this

feat. Furthermore, it took me several experiments before I was finally able to succeed. You don't have time to even do a single experiment. Even if I were to let you go, the path I'm going down isn't suitable for you."

"Then what are you bullshitting about with me for!?" The Ice Empress immediately flew into a rage. The trace of hope that had just appeared in her heart had instantly and mercilessly been obliterated by the Skydream Iceworm. It would've been strange if she hadn't been infuriated.

"I'm naturally not bullshitting you. My beloved, how could I be willing to let you die? Since I've told you about this method, I naturally have a way to help you! It's true that it isn't realistic for you to create a God by yourself, as you wouldn't be able to find a human able to withstand fusing with you, much less guarantee that you'll be able to maintain your consciousness and your complete spiritual origin. However, I have experience in this! I've already done it! Moreover, your chances of success will be multiplied by ten, at the very least, with the protection of my powerful spiritual origin. Right now, if I do it by myself, I only have a 30% chance of creating a God. However, if you were to work with me, our chances would increase to 50%, minimum! Isn't a, minimum, 50% chance to live forever worth us fighting for?"

The Ice Empress was left slightly blank. She finally understood the Skydream Iceworm's motive for explaining so much to her. A pair of crystal-yellow eyes fell upon Huo Yuhao's body, a somewhat astonished look in them.

Huo Yuhao had silently listened to the Skydream Iceworm and the Ice Empress' conversation. His body felt extremely cold due to the weather, but he felt extremely passionate inwardly. He couldn't help but admit that the Skydream Iceworm's words were very inciting. This was especially so to the Ice Empress, who was nearing her life's limit. The dawn of this hope was simply too attractive to her. It was no wonder that he'd brought the Ice Empress here; he knew that he'd be safe with his knowledge. He was simply poking the Ice Empress' weak spot!

Would the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion really become his second martial soul, and his second martial soul's first soul ring? This... she was the second-ranked Empress of the Extreme North's Three Emperors!

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Even though Huo Yuhao didn't expect to simply soar into the heavens with a single step because of this, he would still no longer be a simple control-type soul master who had no combat strength once the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion became his martial soul. On the contrary, he would become a powerful dual-attributed control and assault-type soul master. It didn't matter what soul skill the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion gave him, as it would definitely be a tyrannically offensive skill! After all, her strength had allowed her to become one of the Three Emperors of the Extreme North. Furthermore, since she was a hundred thousand year soul beast, she was also guaranteed to give him a soul bone.

How could Huo Yuhao not feel excited about this?

The Skydream Iceworm struck while the iron was hot, "How about it? You have to clearly think this through. You also can't miss this opportunity, as this chance definitely won't come again. I'm also no longer the original me. However, if you don't agree to my suggestion, I'll have no choice but to turn you into a regular soul ring, both for the sake of my own immortality, and to make my master stronger. Only,

if that happens, you'll lose your intelligence. You should know that I have several different ways to kill you know that I've trapped you. At most, I'll just have to waste some time to do so. On one hand, you have a chance at immortality. On the other hand, you have definite destruction. You'd best think carefully about which path you want to take."

His words undoubtedly carried a threat within them. However, the world of soul beasts was different than that of humans. More often than not, directly threatening the other party would bring about better results in a negotiation between soul beasts. The Skydream Iceworm had lived for a million years, and even though the first nine hundred thousand years of his life were as blank as sheet of paper due to his slumber, the amount of fighting and scheming he'd undergone due to the powerful soul beasts within the Great Star Dou Forest wasn't small. He'd undergone god-knows how many tribulations while attempting to escape with his life intact, all of which had strengthened his craftiness and intellect.

"Do I have any other choice?" The Ice Empress replied in an indifferent tone. Despite her tone however, her dense killing intent and chilliness had already decreased by a large amount. She was clearly trying to reach a compromise. Although she'd have to give up her freedom in for this chance at achieving immortality, living was still much better than dying—especially to a soul beast like her, who'd already lived for nearly four hundred thousand years.

The Skydream Iceworm let out a large sigh of relief. "It's no wonder that you're the Snowy I love the most. In the future, you'll definitely be delighted by the choice you've made today."

The Ice Jade Empress Scorpion angrily replied, "Skydream, if a piece of trash like you dares to take advantage of this old woman, I'll see to it that you two follow each other to the grave, even if it means risking my life to do so. I don't believe that I won't be able to destroy this cage of yours if I self-destruct. If that happens, you two will have no choice but to accompany me to my death. I'm fine with creating a God with you, but I have a request: Don't speak so much bullshit."

"Err... you don't have to be this merciless. I really came here just for you...."

The Ice Empress looked at him coldly, but remained silent.

"Alright fine, I agree. Release your spiritual origin for me. You can't just hope that I'll release you like this. That temper of yours doesn't reassure anyone."

Even though the Skydream Iceworm had been shooting his mouth off, he was still an extremely careful person. The Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's strength ranked her second in the entire Extreme North—how could releasing her be an option? The risks were too high if he did that. At the same time, the Skydream Iceworm wasn't worried about the her self-destructing like she'd mentioned earlier. A soul beast would almost always choose the path of survival, so long as there was even a trace of a chance that they would.

A trace of hesitation appeared in the Ice Empress' eyes. The second she released her spiritual origin, with the disparity in spiritual power between her and the Skydream Iceworm, there would be no way for her to back out. If the Skydream Iceworm was lying to her, she'd have no hope of turning the tables.

When he saw the doubt in her eyes, the Skydream Iceworm solemnly said, "Almighty Ice God, I, the Skydream Iceworm, vow on the name of Ice that I shall be stripped of all my Ice if I lie to the Ice Empress and don't help her become an intelligent soul ring once she releases her spiritual origin."

This vow didn't seem to hold much meaning to Huo Yuhao, but the Ice Empress didn't have the same view; in the Extreme North, this was the most important vow a soul beast could make.

"Fine, I believe you." As someone who had become one of the Extreme North's Three Emperors, the Ice Empress was capable of killing without sparing a second thought. After hesitating for a brief moment, she decided. After all, the current Skydream Iceworm had already lost his body. Besides, it was just like he'd said: It wasn't an impossibility for her to be reborn from the ashes. Furthermore, she'd always known that the Skydream Iceworm liked her. After considering several factors, she finally confirmed her decision.

Her crystalline yellow pupils gradually turned jade-green, while her long, jade-green tail suddenly rose into the air. This was something that she was only able to do after the Skydream Iceworm had loosened her bindings. nove/1B/1n

A soft, jade-green halo began to undulate from the root of her tail, then moved backwards and gathered at the tip of her tail. In a flash of jade-green light, small, jade-green balls of light began to separate from one another as they slowly rising into the air. At the same time, the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's eyes immediately lost their luster and dimmed.

This was her spiritual origin.

Even though the process of releasing one's spiritual origin seemed simple, not just any soul beast could do it. Only when a soul beast broke through their limits and reaching the hundred thousand year rank could they do such a thing. Of course, it naturally didn't pose any problems to unrivalled experts such as the Skydream Iceworm and the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion.

After letting out a large sigh of relief, the Skydream Iceworm's own golden ball of light immediately glided forward and glued itself to his shedded skin. The golden light increased in size the instant the jade-green ball of light made contact with it as it swallowed the jade-green ball of light like a whale swallowing its food. After swallowing the jade-green ball of light, it returned to Huo Yuhao's body and re-entered it via his forehead. Afterwards, the Skydream Iceworm's shedded skin rapidly retreated back into Huo Yuhao's semi-frozen body.

After losing her spiritual origin, the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's main body fell to the ground. With her spiritual origin no longer controlling it, her body immediately began to release an extremely terrifying amount of murderous might, while a jade-green luster simultaneously appeared in the sky. It could be imagined how terrifying the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion was from this.

"I'm freezing to death." Huo Yuhao involuntarily shivered.

"Skydream, you really made a poor choice. He's just as trashy as you. Do you actually want him to receive my power with such a weak body? Do you really think that such a thing is possible?" The Ice Empress' disdainful voice rang out after she appeared in Huo Yuhao's mind.

Huo Yuhao suddenly had a strange thought in his mind. With the Skydream Iceworm, the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion, the gray elder, and himself... there were now enough people to set up a mahjong table in his spiritual sea. It would be really lively in his spiritual sea!

The Skydream Iceworm chortled. “Ice Empress, there’s no need to be so impatient. If you’d died, it would’ve naturally been impossible for him to absorb your martial soul. With his current body, even a thousand year soul ring could cause his body to explode, not to mention someone like you who’s nearly reached four hundred thousand years of cultivation. However, the situation is completely different since you and I are helping him out! Will we really let him fail just like that?”

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When she heard the Skydream Iceworm’s words, the Ice Empress couldn’t help but hesitate. “Are you sure?” Once she made her decision, she’d naturally have to work hard for it. If she failed, even if she could let her spiritual origin return to her main body, she still wouldn’t be able to escape her next bottleneck. As such, how could she not be cautious?

The Skydream Iceworm replied, “If you work together with me, we’ll have at least a 90% chance at success. The remaining 10% will depend on Yuhao himself. Here, I’ll introduce you two. Yuhao, this is Snowy. Er... I meant to say Ice Empress. Anyway, this is the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion who is the second-ranked Empress of the Extreme North’s Three Emperors. Ice Empress, this is Huo Yuhao. He has the spiritual-type Spirit Eyes, as well as the foundation for an ice-type martial soul that I laid the groundwork for. Currently, his ice-type martial soul needs a main soul ring. Or, to put it better, it needs another intelligent soul ring like me. You could say that his ice-type abilities are currently blank slates, thus he needs you to fuse with him to gain them. Once you’ve fused with him, you won’t just become the first soul ring of his ice-type martial soul; you’ll become his martial soul. As such, his second martial soul will be you, the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion!”

“Hello, Ice Empress.” Huo Yuhao said. His voice was extremely moderate as he tried not to excessively reveal the emotions he was currently feeling.

The Ice Empress hesitated for a moment, then said, “Hello. I hope that you’ll be able to persevere through this process. If you can’t, all of our efforts will have been for naught, and we’ll all have to face the consequences.” Unlike when she spoke to the Skydream Iceworm, she was much gentler to Huo Yuhao. Perhaps it was because she would soon become a part of Huo Yuhao’s body that she was naturally willing to be friendly towards this tiny human.

When the Ice Empress had made her choice, she had done so somewhat begrudgingly. However, despite her choice being as such, she had immediately changed her position on the matter after making her decision. Huo Yuhao inwardly admired the speed at which she’d changed her attitude. Even though the Ice Empress hadn’t formally become his martial soul and soul ring, he already felt that she was somewhat more reliable than the Skydream Iceworm.

The Skydream Iceworm said, “We’ve already reached the outer regions of the Extreme North. With the Ice Empress’ body as a deterrent, only the Snow Emperor would dare to approach us. Even the Titan Ice Devil King himself will avoid this area once he senses the Ice Empress’ aura. As such, there shouldn’t be any issues regarding our safety here. Now then, we need to discuss how the fusion will proceed. Ice Empress, I’ll tell you the method with which you can fuse with Huo Yuhao, so let’s talk over it for a bit.”

Huo Yuhao’s spiritual sea quietened down. In order to avoid affecting his mental state, they didn’t want him to know how the fusion would proceed. Thus, the Skydream Iceworm and the Ice Empress communicated with each other using some other method.

After a short period of time passed, Huo Yuhao heard the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion let out a long sigh, "If we do it this way, it's true that there's a high chance we'll succeed. However, Huo Yuhao's body is still somewhat fragile and weak, so we'll need to change the order of the fusion. We'll first need to strengthen his physique before completing the entire fusion. Since I'm going to become an intelligent soul ring, I want to transfer as much of my strength as possible to him."

The Skydream Iceworm said, "Are you saying that you want to transfer your bone, your soul, then your ring last?"

The Ice Jade Empress Scorpion said, "Right. If we use your method, we'll have an 80% chance of succeeding at most. You're still underestimating the amount of power I have. My soul power is extremely tyrannical, and even if I restrain it whilst continuously sealing it, some of it will still leak out. I'm afraid that Huo Yuhao won't be able to withstand this spillover. Thus, I think it's better to be a bit more careful."

The Skydream Iceworm's voice changed, turning gentle as he said, "Snowy, so you do trust me even this much. If we do this, we'll directly destroy your body, leaving you with no room for escape at all. I'm really moved!"

"Just die, will you?" The Ice Empress' cold voice rang out. "When have I ever left a path of escape for myself when I'm doing things? Since I've made my decision, I'll have to go all-out. If I'm scared of the slightest thing, I'll only let my opportunities run away. Stop dawdling about with me. Skydream, don't forget that all of my power will appear in Huo Yuhao's body once I've fused with him. At that time, hmph, hmph."

"Uhh..." Hearing the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's words, the Skydream Iceworm immediately turned more moderate than before.

Huo Yuhao was somewhat puzzled, "Ice Empress, what do you mean by 'bone then soul'?"

The Ice Empress had a much better attitude towards him. Patiently, she said, "According to Skydream's method, I'll directly become your martial soul by molding the ice-type martial soul he gave you. After that, the energy within my body will become your soul ring. You're a human soul master, so you should know that we hundred thousand year soul beasts will definitely produce a soul bone. I'm not an exception to that. Though I've already cultivated for nearly four hundred thousand years, I can't turn my fleshy body into even more soul bones. However, the soul bone I'll drop will be much more powerful than one dropped from an ordinary hundred thousand year soul beast. Furthermore, I can decide its shape, turning it into any soul bone you choose. Because of that, I've decided to first help you fuse with your soul bone. This way, your physique will be strengthened by an extremely large amount. After that, I'll assimilate my soul power with your body, and because you already have my soul bone, the fusion process will be much easier."

Now Huo Yuhao thoroughly understood what she had meant. It was no wonder the Skydream Iceworm had said that the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion would have no room for retreat by doing this. Right! Her body would have to be sacrificed in the first step in this scenario, and if she failed, she might die. Sure enough, it was a method that left no ways out. This also gave Huo Yuhao an extremely favourable impression of her. Solemnly, he said, "Ice Empress, how do you need me to help you out?" At this moment, he didn't say any words of gratitude. This was because both parties were mutually benefiting

from each other in the first place. To the Ice Empress, fusing with her would be the most successful outcome.

The Ice Empress said, "Because I'm doing this of my own volition, there won't be any problems with you fusing with my soul bone. Under my control, the energy contained within my soul bone won't leak out. However, there's a problem with that. You'll have to withstand an enormous amount of pain. I've already thought about it, and to you, the most suitable soul bone I can give you is the spine. Due to my four hundred thousand years of cultivation, I'm confident in replacing your entire spine, your ribs, and your sternum. Due to the overly enormous amount of energy my soul bone contains, your entire skeleton will be remoulded by my soul bone. This process will be relatively long, and extremely painful. You'll feel as if all your bones are being disassembled and reconstructed. Can you withstand this amount of pain? My energy can protect your body, but it can't protect your mind. If you're unable to endure the pain and your mind collapses, everything will all be wasted."

Huo Yuhao's knowledge of soul bones wasn't lacking after his studies in Shrek Academy. Of the six soul bones, the most valuable bones were the skull and torso bone, followed by the four limb bones. What was referred to as the torso bone was in reality the spine, and not all the bones within the torso. For example, there were the ribs and the sternum, which were referred to as additional soul bones if a soul master found and fused with them. These additional soul bones had value comparable to that of a hundred thousand year soul ring, and they would give special and powerful abilities to their users.

Though the Ice Empress was only giving him a single soul bone, this soul bone was already equivalent to a torso bone and two additional soul bones! Regardless of what soul skill he obtained from her, it would possess an incomparably large amount of strength. Furthermore, hundred thousand year soul rings and soul bones would give him two soul skills each. It was no wonder the Skydream Iceworm had emphasised that as long as he was able to break through to Rank 20, he would experience a world-shaking transformation in strength!

"Ice Empress, I can endure it. No matter how painful it gets, I'll be fine." Huo Yuhao's voice was very sincere. After all, strength couldn't be obtained with mere empty promises. If one didn't give up anything in return, how could you gain a harvest? During this past year, he had cultivated with practically twice the effort of the other students. This was the reason why he had his current level of power. When such an opportunity was placed in front of Huo Yuhao, he would absolutely not cower regardless of how intense the pain would be.

The Ice Jade Empress Scorpion said, "Okay. Since that's the case, let's not waste any more time."

The Skydream Iceworm said, "Yuhao, we'll be starting your fusion with the soul bone. Take your Secret Law Soul out. We'll be using it as a medium to help you fuse with the Ice Empress' soul bone. This way, the process will go a little quicker and you'll feel much less pain. You'll even be able to prevent unnecessary leakages of energy during the fusion process."

Huo Yuhao hurriedly retrieved the Secret Law Soul from his Twenty Four Moonlit Bridges. So the Secret Law Soul was actually meant to be used in this way.

With a deep voice, the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion said, "Huo Yuhao, are you ready?"

Huo Yuhao nodded forcefully, "Start!"

The instant the word echoed out, a chilly sensation immediately blossomed in his mind. Huo Yuhao instinctively shivered, feeling as if he had fallen into a cavern of ice. This was somewhat different from how he had felt in the ice room in the Extreme North. At this moment, the chilly sensation had appeared in his soul itself, making it seem as if his mind had been frozen solid. n..OVEL&1n

The Ice Empress' voice rang out, "I'll use the cold to numb your pain, so as to reduce the pain you'll feel to the very minimum. However, your body isn't fully developed yet, so I'll have to be extremely careful while fusing with your original skeleton. Because of this, this process will go on for a very long time. For the sake of attaining maximum effectiveness, you can't pass out. The only way I can make a few adjustments based off your body's instinctive reactions is if you remain conscious."

At this moment, Huo Yuhao was no longer able to respond. The Ice Empress didn't leave any ways out for herself, so there was naturally no way she could change her plan.

A jade-green light flourished in Huo Yuhao's mind, and his Spirit Eyes instantly turned jade-green accordingly. The Skydream Iceworm appeared to have gone completely silent, allowing the Ice Empress to carry out the fusion process.

Two rays of jade-green light shot out from Huo Yuhao's eyes, accurately landing on the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's body. This, in turn, caused her 1.5 meter-long body to immediately shake violently. This was especially true for her long tail, which undulated unceasingly and violently with a jade-green halo. The diamond-like hexagonal protrusions on her body released an even more dazzling luster.

Chapter 43.2: An Ordeal of Extreme Pain

Huo Yuhao faintly heard the Ice Empress let out a long sigh. Right after that, he felt an immense sensation of cold that instantly numbed his body and soul. n./Ovel&1n

The ground Huo Yuhao was lying on suddenly shook, and he floated into the air, supported by a jade-green light. On the other hand, the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's main body rapidly flew over to his body.

An intense jade-green light wildly fluctuated towards the tip of her tail. When the jade-green light turned dark-green, the Ice Empress suddenly swung her tail, viciously stabbing it into Huo Yuhao's tailbone.

Huo Yuhao's body shook violently for a bit. He only felt as if his tailbone had instantly been run through by something. That sharp and pointed object pierced through his skin, muscles and flesh, and buried itself firmly into his skeleton.

This sort of pain that came from one's mind was something that humans were simply unable to withstand. Huo Yuhao instantly widened his mouth, and his eyes protruded as if they were about to pop out of his eye sockets. His body started trembling violently, and the Secret Law Soul he held in his hands instantly tumbled to the ground.

Though Huo Yuhao had already prepared himself for the arrival of this pain, he was still a human! Even if his body was already numbed somewhat by the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's extreme cold, he instantly lost the ability to breathe.

In this exact moment, a golden dot of light suddenly lit up between Huo Yuhao's eyebrows. The gentle golden light instantly covered his head, turning his spiritual sea gold as well. Gently and rhythmically, the

golden light protected Huo Yuhao's spiritual sea, which had started undulating violently. It resembled a mother's hand as it gently pacified his soul, which was experiencing an amount of pain that had reached the limit.

The Skydream Iceworm had made his move. With the Skydream Iceworm's help, Huo Yuhao's body softened a little bit. However, the Ice Empress had already started the process of fusing her soul bone with Huo Yuhao's body.

Another ray of jade-green light lit up, covering the Secret Law Soul. Immediately, the soul bone turned jade-green before dissolving at an astonishing pace. After turning it into a fist-sized globe of liquid, the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion opened her mouth and inhaled it.

Originally, the Ice Empress had planned to harmonize her soul bone using the Secret Law Soul. That way, the amount of pain Huo Yuhao suffered would be greatly reduced. However, she now chose not to do so. This was because she wanted to test how much a measly human like Huo Yuhao could endure.

The results of that test astonished her. Though Huo Yuhao's body had instantly reached the limits of what he could endure, the Ice Empress could tell from his body's reaction that Huo Yuhao's body was unexpectedly extremely durable, soft, with very few impurities within it. Most importantly, though his spiritual sea was fluctuating violently, it showed no signs of collapse. Even if the Skydream Iceworm hadn't made a move, he would not have been destroyed because of the pain.

A trace of admiration appeared in the Ice Empress' heart. The amount of talent and potential humans had was truly incomparable, even to that of a noble soul beast. Naturally, she only felt feelings of admiration. If she were given the choice to become a human, she would definitely not be willing to do so. Otherwise, she wouldn't have chosen to break through her limits during her hundred thousandth year of cultivation. Instead, she would've chosen to transform into a human and re-cultivate.

After all, no matter how talented humans were, their lifespans were just so. Even the strongest human beings had no way at all to compare with soul beasts in terms of lifespan.

After the liquid formed by the Secret Law Soul was absorbed by the Ice Empress, it was filtered into a wisp of green light that flowed into Huo Yuhao's body. He only felt a gentle feeling of warmth resembling the Skydream Iceworm's shedded skin that had previously protected his body, causing the previously intense pain to immediately decrease drastically. The spasming pain was still there, but he was feeling much better than before.

As this occurred, Huo Yuhao's chest started moving up and down vigorously. He greedily gasped for the surrounding cold air in big mouthfuls. At this moment, his body started sweating profusely, even in this freezing cold region of the Extreme North, so much so that he nearly pissed and shat himself. It was obvious how intense that surge of pain was.

After Huo Yuhao's cotton clothes absorbed the sweat secreted by his body, they were instantly torn to pieces by the jade-green light. Only the Twenty Four Moonlit Bridges escaped the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's power, due to the Skydream Iceworm's earlier warning.

Huo Yuhao's naked body was very sturdy; his one year's worth of bitter training in Shrek Academy hadn't gone to waste. However, his current skin was astonishingly white, making it practically identical

to the snow on the ground. More astonishingly, amidst his deathly pale skin, traces of jade-green light were slowly pouring into his spine, spreading throughout his torso.

The first place the jade-green light went to was naturally his spine. After that, the liquefied jade-green light slowly made its way upwards, causing Huo Yuhao's ribs to turn into branches of jade-green light. Then, it slowly headed further up.

The terrifying, spasming pain in Huo Yuhao's body followed wherever the jade-green light went. He did all he could to endure it, but his body's reaction to it was still extremely violent. Only, he was simply unable to move due to the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's control.

Huo Yuhao unceasingly told himself, Persevere, persevere. No matter what, I can't give up. It was difficult for him to endure the pain, but he was currently completely focused on numbing his senses. The Ice Empress had told him that the thing she was most afraid of was his mind collapsing the moment he could no longer persevere. If that happened, all of their previous efforts would have been for naught. Since that was the case, all he had to do was to protect his mind. As for his body, he would just leave it to the Ice Empress; she wouldn't just let him die, after all.

With this thought in his mind, Huo Yuhao stubbornly continued to numb his mind unceasingly. Astonished, the Skydream Iceworm discovered that the few tools he'd created to help Huo Yuhao protect his mind hadn't been needed at all. The spiritual origin of the Ice Empress was currently residing in Huo Yuhao's body, and she naturally noticed this miraculous scene. This was the first time that she had a whole new level of respect towards the Skydream Iceworm. Though the human the Skydream Iceworm chose was young, and his strength wasn't worth mentioning, he actually had a willpower that was this tenacious. This was an immensely good thing!

The Skydream Iceworm stealthily revoked the influences he'd made towards Huo Yuhao's spiritual sea, silently guarding him by the side. Huo Yuhao being able to withstand this pain by himself was naturally for the best, as this was an extremely good grindstone for his spiritual power. This would strengthen his willpower, causing enormously large benefits towards his future cultivation and growth.

By the time the jade-green light covered all the bones in Huo Yuhao's torso, the jade-green light on the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's body began to dim.

The soul bone created by the Ice Empress' main body was naturally the quintessential part of her strength. Though this process of reconstruction was painful, the future effects of this soul bone would vastly exceed that of Huo Yuhao's other soul bones. This would bring enormous benefits to his growth.

Though the Skydream Iceworm was a million year soul beast, in terms of who could give Huo Yuhao the most well-rounded benefits, he would definitely lose out to the Ice Empress. The Ice Empress had a noble bloodline, and she was a natural monarch. Moreover, she had cultivated for such a long time. Thus, the increase in strength she could give Huo Yuhao would definitely be a comprehensive one. Naturally, Huo Yuhao could only withstand an extremely miniscule amount of her total strength, so a large amount of it had to be sealed away. As Huo Yuhao's tolerance increased, the amount of strength she released would progressively increase. However, Huo Yuhao's potential would reach an extremely astonishing degree. To many soul masters, increasing one's soul power during the later soul ranks would prove to be very challenging. However, the issue of having insufficiently strong soul skills would

absolutely never occur to him. As for what he would grow to be in the future, even the Skydream Iceworm and the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion didn't know.

Their method of creating God was completely unprecedented, even on the entire Douluo Continent. It had to be known that the Skydream Iceworm had used a full hundred thousand years of time to complete the basic preparations of this plan. Even if he had easily fused with Huo Yuhao, he had actually sealed up his spiritual origin and divided it into many pieces. This process had been completed at a much earlier time. Moreover, there were even more minute preparations he had to make. Even now, he was giving instructions and assistance to the Ice Empress while she fused with Huo Yuhao by relying on his powerful spiritual power. All of this had to be accomplished for the fusion to succeed.

Huo Yuhao's body trembled incessantly. A layer of ice beads had already formed on his skin; that was created by his sweat freezing up. Traces of blood had already started seeping out from his seven apertures, causing the layer of skin underneath the ice beads to be completely red. The speed at which the blood within his body was circulating had already reached an astonishing degree. If this were anyone else, they would've already exploded and died. However, the powerful spiritual origins of the Skydream Iceworm and the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion were currently protecting Huo Yuhao's body.

The speeding up of his blood circulation was something that inevitably occurred due to him fusing with the Ice Empress' soul bone. On the other hand, the two of them were protecting Huo Yuhao's internal organs, meridians, flesh, and bones. This was equivalent to them covering his inner body with a layer of film. No matter how quickly his blood circulated, it couldn't break through the defensive perimeter the two of them had created.

The intense undulations caused by Huo Yuhao's blood, his pale skin, and his jade-green bones which could be seen from the outside sketched a terrifying image. Only, Huo Yuhao's eyes were still golden. Though the Skydream Iceworm didn't help him protect his spiritual sea, he still had to protect his martial soul.

As an intelligent soul ring, the Skydream Iceworm was the main martial soul of Huo Yuhao's Spirit Eyes, as well as the person who would control everything related to the future Spirit Eyes. After the Ice Empress fused with him, she would control the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion martial soul. All in all, Huo Yuhao would become a true wielder of twin innate martial souls.

In the beginning, the jade-green lights were merely strands of string that covered his spine, sternum, and ribs. As time passed, however, these strands of jade-green light started gradually expanding and widening, creating an outline of Huo Yuhao's entire skeleton.

The pain Huo Yuhao felt began to change yet again. The previously spasming pain gradually transformed, and an alternating feeling of extreme cold and extreme hot began to spread throughout all of the bones in Huo Yuhao's torso.

Chapter 43.3: An Ordeal of Extreme Pain

That was truly an amalgamation of ice and fire! The first moment would be so cold as to make him shiver, but the moment right after that was so hot that it evaporated all the ice beads off his body. The qi and blood in his body was starting to surge like a tide. During the extreme cold, his entire body would

freeze up; during the extreme heat, the blood within his body would boil up, causing tiny beads of blood to form on his skin.

The extreme cold changed to extreme heat, and the extreme heat changed to extreme cold. The violent changes in Huo Yuhao's body temperature made it seem like it was being smelted. Although his willpower was extremely strong, he gradually began to hallucinate. This was entirely different from the unadulterated pain he'd gone through earlier. This was as if he had been thrown off an extremely tall building before being violently smashed onto the ground. He was simply unable to withstand this feeling.

It could be said that Huo Yuhao was basically the person who'd endured the most violent bouts of pain during fusion with a soul bone, even in the entire history of humanity. One reason behind this was due to his excessively low cultivation, and another reason was due to the overly high quality his soul bone had.

Even if the Ice Empress was already controlling it to the best of her ability, her soul bone was still an existence older than three hundred thousand years! She had sealed an overwhelming majority of her power within it, but it still had an extremely large effect on the still-developing Huo Yuhao.

Huo Yuhao was even starting to become somewhat muddle-headed. No matter how strong his willpower was, he was still unable to continue resisting such violent bouts of pain. At this exact moment, the Skydream Iceworm's spiritual power surged into his body, rousing him back to his senses. At the same time, he shielded Huo Yuhao's spiritual origin, reducing the pain he was suffering by a slight amount.

The Skydream Iceworm wished to temper Huo Yuhao's willpower, but he would never just stand idly as he walked towards the path of ruination. Sensing that Huo Yuhao was about to reach his limit, he made a move immediately to give him a buffer.

Though Huo Yuhao had been tortured to the point where even dying was preferable, he immediately and acutely sensed the Skydream Iceworm's actions. He was now extricated from the extreme pain he had been feeling, and though the alternating hot and cold feelings were still there, he was now feeling much better. Composing himself, his nearly-collapsed spiritual power immediately began to gather.

By the time he'd gathered nearly all of his spiritual power, the Skydream Iceworm's protection disappeared. The extreme level of pain began to descend upon Huo Yuhao's body again.

Huo Yuhao inwardly let out a sorrowful roar, Brother Skydream, are you playing with me?!

A long time passed, but Huo Yuhao was simply unable to even think. Whenever his mind was about to collapse, the Skydream Iceworm would appear in a timely manner and relieve him of his pain to a certain extent. Comparatively, this made it somewhat easier for Huo Yuhao to endure it.

If the Skydream Iceworm had made his move at the beginning, lowering the pain Huo Yuhao had to withstand, then the amount of pain he withstood would have been maintained at a certain baseline from the start till the end. However, that didn't mean that he wouldn't collapse. And if he did collapse, the Skydream Iceworm's hands would have been tied. Even if he was able to persevere in a situation like that, maintaining one's mind at a consistent level of pain would do him no good at all.

However, the current situation they were in was slightly different. Though he would suffer an even greater amount of pain, the Skydream Iceworm only acted as a buffer whenever he made a move, relaxing Huo Yuhao. At the very least, Huo Yuhao would be able to recover a certain amount of strength during this buffer period.

After going through this cycle of pain and relief for a few times, Huo Yuhao understood what was going on. His Brother Skydream was clearly using this as an opportunity to temper his willpower! If this were any ordinary person, they might be unceasingly waiting for the Skydream Iceworm's help. However, Huo Yuhao was different from them. Training in Shrek Academy for a year had cultivated a 'when the going gets tough, the tough gets going' kind of mentality in Huo Yuhao. He clearly understood that the more he worked during cultivation, the more he would get in return.

Because of this, even though the Skydream Iceworm's protection gave him a certain amount of safety when he needed it, it also gave him an extra amount of confidence. As his body continued to withstand the pain, his willpower continued to increase. The gap of time between the Skydream Iceworm's every action got increasingly longer, and Huo Yuhao's willpower became increasingly stronger as well.

This discovery involuntarily stunned the Skydream Iceworm and the Ice Empress. A feeling of admiration towards a small human like Huo Yuhao had arisen in these two pinnacle existences. Even consummate-level soul beasts like them might not be able to persevere under such an intense level of pain. However, Huo Yuhao was able to do so. With the Skydream Iceworm's limited help, he had actually persisted the whole time.

Day became night, and night became day again. The jade-green light on Huo Yuhao's body was becoming increasingly intense, and the alternating colors of red and white on the surface of his skin began to weaken more and more. However, the qi and blood within Huo Yuhao's body was much, much stronger than when he had originally started the fusion process.

Though the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion had only fused an extremely miniscule part of her energy with Huo Yuhao's qi and blood, it was an extremely beneficial supplement to him. That was the origin energy of an Empress whose cultivation neared four hundred thousand years!

Through this nourishment, a transformation started to occur in Huo Yuhao's muscles, bones, and internal organs. Even if he didn't receive any limb or skull bones, Huo Yuhao's physique was comprehensively strengthened at this moment. Following the strengthening of his physique, the amount of pain he suffered now gradually decreased.

Currently, the Skydream Iceworm no longer needed to make a move anymore. Huo Yuhao could now withstand the pain caused by the alternating heat and cold by relying on his own willpower. He could even sense his qi and blood strengthening increasingly, and his body becoming more and more sturdy. As his soul power was stuck at the bottleneck of Rank 20, he was unable to determine how much his soul power had increased. However, there was no doubt that with his currently weak cultivation, the amount he would be strengthened by would definitely not be small, even if the Ice Empress had sealed her own power. At the very least, there would be no problem with him increasing his soul power by one or two ranks.

"Yuhao, you have to be careful now. Right now, the fundamentals of your fusion with the soul bone have been completed. The only thing that's left is the complete fusion between it and your bones. I'm

going to seal the power of the soul bone in your skeleton, allowing you to progressively absorb it in secret. It's very possible that the pain you'll suffer during this last step will exceed that of the previous parts of the fusion. You'll have to persevere. Even Skydream might not be able to give you any help during this process, and it'll take two hours or so. If you can endure it, you'll be able to possess this soul bone I'm giving you."

The Ice Empress' voice had become much gentler. The way she addressed Huo Yuhao had changed slightly as well, and her exhaustion could be heard in the tone of her voice. After all, she was fusing her own body with Huo Yuhao's! This was equivalent to ripping out her own bones and fusing them with Huo Yuhao's body. Though her cultivation was immensely strong, the amount of pain she had withstood was definitely not less than Huo Yuhao's. Only, the amount of willpower she'd obtained after cultivating for several hundreds of thousands of years far exceeded anything that Huo Yuhao could even compare to.

Huo Yuhao took a deep, deep breath. As he continued to endure the pain coming from the fusion, he no longer spoke. Right now, all he could do was convey a stubborn and resolute conviction towards the Ice Empress.

Was the Skydream Iceworm truly unable to protect Huo Yuhao's spiritual sea? The answer was naturally a definite no. The Ice Empress only said this in order to strengthen Huo Yuhao's willpower by another level. Only in a situation with no way out would he be able to stimulate his potential to its greatest possible extent.

However, the very instant the last bout of pain started, Huo Yuhao's body suddenly jolted. His spiritual sea surged violently, nearly collapsing in an instant. n..*OVEL*&1n

He was able to endure pain, and he was also able to withstand the alternating hot and cold. At this moment, however, what he suffered was a kind of pain he was nearly unable to withstand. That was, an itch.

The instant the Ice Empress made her move, Huo Yuhao felt a violent itch come from every part of his torso. It was as if there were an innumerable number of ants that were crawling about his veins and bones. This itch dug all the way to the bone, and it was omnipresent.

In that instant, Huo Yuhao's only thought was to thoroughly destroy his own body and scratch it ferociously, stopping this bout of pain.

Huo Yuhao's body was convulsing and shaking violently, but he was simply unable to control it. This acute bout of pain was causing the bones in his entire body to unceasingly release sounds of cracking.

The Skydream Iceworm was solemnly lying in wait; he had already prepared to make a move at any time. Once Huo Yuhao's spiritual sea showed any signs of collapse, he would not hesitate to intervene.

The Skydream Iceworm clearly understood that at this moment, the Ice Empress was also enduring the same pain that Huo Yuhao was. Even the spiritual power of one of the Extreme North's Three Emperors was shivering and fluctuating violently. From this, it could be seen how intense this pain was. However, the foundations of its transformations would only be completed after Huo Yuhao finished fusing with the Ice Empress' soul bone. It wasn't hard for her to become Huo Yuhao's martial soul and soul ring, but maintaining her consciousness and all of her intelligence was a difficult task.

The Skydream Iceworm didn't worry about the Ice Empress; the only thing he worried about was Huo Yuhao not being able to persevere!

Huo Yuhao's pale gold spiritual sea surged violently, occasionally trembling, occasionally rumbling like a sea wave. His jade-green bones gradually turned dark-green, then went back to jade-green. During this continuous process of transformation and fusion, he felt the most violent bouts of pain.

It's itchy, this itch is killing me. Huo Yuhao felt as though he wouldn't be able to continue enduring this pain anymore. This inhuman amount of pain was truly stronger than the two previous tortures he'd previously experienced.

In the end, a few cracks started to appear in Huo Yuhao's spiritual sea. If these cracks continued to grow larger, they would definitely cause an explosion in the end. The instant his spiritual sea was thoroughly destroyed, Huo Yuhao's brain would die.

The Skydream Iceworm unhesitatingly made a move, causing an intense golden light to rapidly surge towards Huo Yuhao's spiritual sea.

However, it was at this exact moment when Huo Yuhao's nearly hysterical voice suddenly rang out in the Skydream Iceworm's mind. "Don't help me! I can do it, I can do it!"

The Skydream Iceworm was left staring blankly for a moment. He could hear the stubbornness in Huo Yuhao's voice. On the other hand, Huo Yuhao's roar seemed to signal his counter-attack. The cracks that densely covered his spiritual sea miraculously started to close.

Chapter 44.1: Perfect Fusion, The Red Soul Ring

"Yuhao, you've grown... up. You must... become... an unrivalled hero... like... your father. But, mother... might not be able... to see that day... come. Mom has... to go, and you... have to take... care of yourself... Good child... don't cry... Mother's going to heaven, and... I'll always... be watching you. I don't... hate your father, truly. If... there's a single person... I don't hate within this White Tiger Duke's Mansion... it's actually... only him..."

"Mom... wasn't lucky, I had... no way... to continue... living on... with your... father. I... wish that... I could have... stayed by his side... and seen him everyday... like how it... was in the past! Maybe... I never had a spot... in his heart... but... I don't regret it. Yuhao... you look... a lot like me... If you can't... become a... soul master... in the future, then... learn a craft. As long as you're safe... your mom can also... smile... in the underworld..."

"Mom, mom—" Yuhao howled inwardly. A stubborn conviction suddenly rose up in his heart, and in this instant, it was covered by the longing and grief he felt. Mom, there will be a day when I'll complete your wish. I will make that man kneel in front of your grave and beg you for forgiveness.

Mom, for mom, I must become strong, I have to become strong. No matter what, I have to hold on. I'm not a coward, I'm Huo Yuhao. I'm my mom's son, and for mom, I must bravely live on. I can't become a person like the White Tiger Duke, I have to surpass him!

This inward howl became an indescribable energy that suddenly exploded within his spiritual world. All the cracks that had appeared due to him approaching his limit were healing at an astonishing rate, and

his spiritual sea was re-coalescing. Though it was still undulating violently due to the pain he was feeling, its core was abnormally sturdy. It was much sturdier than it previously was.

The Skydream Iceworm was utterly astonished. Huo Yuhao had actually endured the pain that even the Ice Empress found difficult. Just how much willpower did he need to do this?! In this instant, not only did the Skydream Iceworm feel admiration towards Huo Yuhao, he even felt a trace of fear. He knew that he had chosen the right person, but this small Huo Yuhao might not be someone he could control in the future. He might only be able to serve as his intelligent soul ring.

Two agonizing hours slowly passed, and the alternating jade-green and dark-green gradually stabilised. Finally, the color of Huo Yuhao's bones ended up an abstruse jade-green that was identical to the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's tail. However, an earth-shaking, heaven-flipping transformation had also occurred in Huo Yuhao's body.

Nourished by a large amount of nutrients, Huo Yuhao's bones had grown noticeably. His shoulders had widened somewhat, and he had grown by a little bit. Furthermore, his muscles, tendons, fascia, veins, and internal organs had become much sturdier. A jade-like luster had appeared on his skin, radiating a noble aura within this snowy world.

His eyes had been open the whole time, and now the jade-green light within them faded slowly. His deep blue pupils had become even more abstruse following this.

If you were to use a word to describe the current Huo Yuhao, then 'metamorphosed' couldn't be any more fitting.

When he had left the White Tiger Duke's Mansion in the beginning, he had only been a low-ranked soul master with an ordinary amount of talent who wasn't taught by a teacher. You simply couldn't see any prospects from him. However, he was now a full-fledged super-genius who had the number one torso bone in the world. Furthermore, he was about to become a young soul master who had twin innate martial souls.

As the pain gradually faded, Huo Yuhao's body loosened up. The Ice Jade Empress' tail which was stabbed into his spine slowly pulled back, placing Huo Yuhao on her back.

The abstruse light in Huo Yuhao's eyes gradually became one of exhaustion. Having been devastated by pain for such a long time, his body and mind had already reached their limit. The only thing keeping him up was the stubborn conviction within the depths of his heart. Now that his fusion with the soul bone had ended, the most important foundations had been laid. Following that, a strong wave of exhaustion swept towards him, and a sleepy feeling overcame him. Just like that, Huo Yuhao fell into a deep sleep while still on the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's back.

After nearly a full hour had passed, the Ice Empress' exhausted voice rang out slowly, "Skydream."

"I'm here. How are you feeling?" The Skydream Iceworm asked, deeply concerned.

The Ice Empress snorted, "I'm fine. Although a fella like you is a piece of trash, you have good eyesight."

"Hehe." The Skydream Iceworm was already used to being scolded by the Ice Empress, "To tell the truth, I didn't think that Yuhao would be this strong. He was able to persist due to the stubborn convictions he holds in his heart. This experience has opened up a brilliant road for his future growth. Let's quickly start

fusing your martial soul with his body. Now that you've discarded the most important origin of your body, your spiritual origin will get damaged if we waste too much time." **no ve.Lb/1n**

"En. Protect me." To Huo Yuhao, the crucial moment had already passed. After fusing with the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's torso bone, he had crossed a difficult level. With the torso bone as a foundation, his coming fusion with the Ice Jade Empress' martial soul and soul ring would be much easier. This would mainly rely on the Ice Empress and the Skydream Iceworm's strength in order to seal her energy and fuse it with Huo Yuhao. Thus, the most important task for the Ice Empress had just begun. Fusing her martial soul with Huo Yuhao while protecting her spiritual origin in order to not have it completely assimilated with Huo Yuhao so she could maintain her intelligence was the foundation of her plan to create God and attain immortality. She had never thought about a situation like this before, and it was simply impossible for her to have done any experiments in the past. It would be a lie to say that she wasn't nervous. If she did anything wrong, she would lose her sense of self, and her consciousness would disappear eternally.

"Don't worry, I'll help you out. Ice Empress, I truly do like you. Don't worry, for the sake of my own happiness, I'll do all I can to help you. Come, let's start."

Strangely, the Ice Empress didn't make a retort this time around. Right after that, a thick halo of white light blossomed from Huo Yuhao's body, sweeping upwards and covering his body within it. The crystal-like sphere on the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's body dissolved quietly, turning into threads of icy mist that entered Huo Yuhao's body through his skin.

Huo Yuhao was in too deep of a sleep. Furthermore, the Skydream Iceworm had already responsibly guarded his spiritual sea, ensuring that he remained in his sleeping state so as to not wake him up. The previous events had already tempered him enough, and the following stages of the fusion needed to be completed by him and the Ice Empress.

Huo Yuhao's presence quickly vanished within the icy mist. In addition to that, the Ice Empress underneath him also vanished without a trace.

If an ordinary human were to have witnessed this scene, they would definitely have assumed that the Ice Empress' body had melted. To the Ice Empress, however, this wasn't a melting, but a combustion of her own body. Only by burning the origin of her body could she create an effect like this. Otherwise, with the toughness of her body, even the strongest weapons in the entire world couldn't damage her easily.

A golden halo of light appeared noiselessly, drawing the white halo of light into Huo Yuhao's body. The Skydream Iceworm was actually doing all he could to help the Ice Empress. While protecting Huo Yuhao's spiritual sea, he even protected the Ice Empress' spiritual origin. Furthermore, he was even helping the Ice Empress suppress her own power. He was multitasking, doing all three things at once. Due to the Skydream Iceworm's powerful spiritual power, the Ice Empress' fusion with Huo Yuhao went much more smoothly. However, this process still took a long time.

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The cold wind was still as biting cold as ever. Large snowflakes covered everything as far as the eye could see within the icy plain.

Suddenly, a soft 'Pu' rang out. An arm jutted out from the thick snow, and right after that, a completely naked body crawled slowly up from underneath.

The contours of his body were extremely well-defined, and although his muscles weren't especially big, they were flawless. After his white, gem-like skin dug out from the snow, it radiated with a unique luster due to the parallelism created by the surrounding white.

As he slowly opened his eyes, two different colors instantly flashed through his deep blue pupils. It was gold at first, but then it turned jade-green before settling on a somewhat terrifying white that completely covered the original blue.

A strange scene then occurred. The falling snowflakes suddenly moved away from a three-foot radius around his body the moment they approached him. Unexpectedly, a clean patch of earth around him had appeared within the world of ice and snow.

As the white within his eyes slowly faded away, an abstruse dark-blue gradually resurfaced within them. His pupils had changed color three times; this was quite miraculous.

He clenched his fists tightly, and immediately, his taut muscles released a sensation filled with power. He suddenly leapt into the air, reaching an astounding twenty feet. When he reached the peak of his jump, he let out a long, resounding roar towards the sky.

The rumbling sound waves caused by his roar reverberated through the air, scattering the falling snowflakes. His breathing immediately became unhindered, and under the circulation of his soul power, he was able to clearly see that his sternum, ribs, and spine were emitting a jade-green glow.

This scene seemed beautiful, yet terrifying. A person's bones were suddenly emitting a light that could be seen through the skin; this was somewhat strange. At this moment, however, a halo of jade-green light suddenly spread out from his body, covering a ten-meter diameter around him in a jade-green light. It seemed as though the snowflakes within this area had increased in weight, causing them to fall to the ground with a crash. The moment they fell onto the piled-up snow, they cut out tiny holes, as if they were tiny knives.

However, that jade-green light only remained for an instant before vanishing quietly. Following that, his body collapsed to the ground.

Chapter 44.2: Perfect Fusion, The Red Soul Ring

A soul ring that flickered with a dazzling light rose up from the youth's feet. This soul ring was simply too bizarre; it shone with a terrifying blood-red light. This noble, cold soul ring that shone with a luster resembling a bloody sea emitted a boundless amount of might from it. There were also four golden patterns which were faintly discernible on the blood-red soul ring. The interwoven colors of red and gold were extremely dazzling amidst the snowy plains of ice. The instant this soul ring appeared, a sudden transformation occurred to the youth's aura. A desolation that seemed to come from the ancient times appeared on his body.

There were no obvious changes to his body, but there was now an enormous tattoo on his back. There was a pair of pincers that flickered with a dazzling light, and a captivating, jade-green tail. Was that not the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion?

This tattoo was extremely large, practically covering his entire back. Its six limbs hugged his ribs, and its pincers were located on the back of his shoulders. Its long tail was followed his spine, continuing all the way till his backbone before it slanted to the right, ending on his right buttock.

Other than the enormous tattoo, the youth's greatest transformation was in his hands. His hands were now covered in a layer of extremely detailed diamond-like hexagons, which were about the size of a bean. If you looked at him as a whole, the resplendent luster coming from his arms also brightened the enormous tattoo on his back. Naturally, all of these changes, other than the one that had occurred to his hands, would be hidden if he had clothes on.

"I've succeeded." The youth murmured to himself. At this moment, tears were flowing uncontrollably from his eyes. He had endured far, far too much pain for the sake of succeeding. After finishing everything, how could he not let tears of joy out? Something that was not easily obtained would make one cherish it more. After sensing the powerful feelings that were unceasingly spreading throughout his body, he nearly couldn't control his emotions.

Right, this youth was Huo Yuhao. Huo Yuhao, who had finally completed his fusion with the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion of the Extreme North's Three Emperors.

The blood-red soul ring flickering with four golden patterns was the first soul ring of his Ice Empress martial soul. It was a soul ring that had reached the four hundred thousand year rank.

Yes, four hundred thousand years, not three hundred and ninety nine thousand nine hundred years! During the fusion process, the Skydream Iceworm had used his origin energy to help the Ice Empress out. Due to this, she was able to break through her bottleneck during the fusion and strengthen her soul ring into a four hundred thousand year one. Although it was only a difference of a hundred years, it was a qualitative difference that was as different as the sky and the earth. That also represented the difference between a hundred thousand year soul ring with three golden patterns and one with four golden patterns!

"We've finally succeeded. All of my hard work wasn't wasted after all." The Skydream Iceworm's exhausted, yet relieved voice rang out.

"Brother Skydream." Huo Yuhao yelled out. Tears started to spring out from his eyes, "Thank you." He naturally knew that from this moment on, he was no longer the weak, bottom-feeder soul master from Shrek Academy who could only rely on his hard work to barely catch up with everyone else while having no attacking soul skills at all. Everything he had at this moment had been given to him by the Skydream Iceworm! Thus, how could he not feel moved?

The Skydream Iceworm chuckled. "It's good that you've succeeded. We've crossed the most substantial step now. With the torso bone the Ice Empress' given you, the strength of your body has increased by at least fivefold. Your endurance has also increased by a large amount, so you're now able to withstand the soul ring of a three thousand year soul beast at the very least. This is also the main reason why I got you to fuse with the Ice Empress before getting you your second soul ring. The Ice Empress has formally become the main soul ring of your second martial soul, as well as the main part of your second martial soul. She's strengthened you by a large amount, so much so that it's even more than what I've done. Your current cultivation is still weak, so you can only use a very small part of her power. However, as your cultivation continues to increase, the power she's given you will definitely give you a nice surprise."

“At first, I gave you four soul skills and a martial soul. Though the Ice Empress’ cultivation is inferior to mine, the legacy of her race is much more powerful than mine. Furthermore, according to the strength of a hundred thousand year soul beast, she’ll also give you four more soul skills in addition to the torso bone which has already fused perfectly with your body. The reason why you’re receiving four soul skills is because her soul ring will give you two skills, and her soul bone will give you another two. Though the fusion used up that Secret Law Soul you originally had, it’s absolutely worth it. Without the Secret Law Soul, the pain you received would’ve increased by at least 20%, and the fusion might not have been this perfect.”

It would’ve increased by 20%? Hearing the Skydream Iceworm’s words, Huo Yuhao couldn’t help but shiver. Though he’d already endured it, he didn’t want to even remember the fusion. This was especially so for the last two hours; the moment he thought about it, he felt his body itch incomparably.

“Four soul skills, another four soul skills!” Exuberant, Huo Yuhao asked impatiently, “Brother Skydream, what soul skills did the Ice Empress give me? How is she now? Was she able to retain her consciousness?”

An intelligent soul ring was much stronger than a regular soul ring that only gave him some strength. Let alone that, with the Ice Empress’ status in the Extreme North and her intelligence, anything Huo Yuhao wanted to do here would be much simpler. On the other hand, Huo Yuhao’s second martial soul was Ice. As a result of that, it was probable that he would have to return here in order to obtain more soul rings. Furthermore, the Ice Empress had done everything she could for him. If she couldn’t retain her spiritual origin, that would be extremely regretful.

“The Ice Empress is fine. Only, she’s just fused with your body. She had my protection, but she was still extremely exhausted. Right now, she’s in a deep sleep. After all, this was different from my fusion with you. When I fused with you, I didn’t really have much of my soul power left. It was a simple fusion with my spiritual origin. Moreover, I’m a spiritual-type soul beast, making it much easier. However, the situation was very troublesome with her. Fortunately, we succeeded. She’ll wake up in a while.” The moment he spoke about the Ice Empress, the Skydream Iceworm was evidently pleased.

“Then what about the four soul skills? What are they?” Huo Yuhao asked again.

The Skydream Iceworm smiled mischievously, “I don’t know either! I’m not the Ice Empress. You’ll slowly understand what they are. Go, head towards the east and we’ll go find your second soul ring.”

Huo Yuhao was extremely happy. Now that he thought about it, he was still a Soul Master. His soul power was still limited to Rank 20. There was nothing he could do about it. Though he’d obtained another soul ring, it was still the first soul ring of his second martial soul! Thus, he was still a one-ringed soul master. If he wanted to continue to increase his cultivation, he had to obtain another soul ring.

“Brother Skydream, should I get another soul ring for my Spirit Eyes or the Ice Empress’ martial soul?” Huo Yuhao asked. Both of his martial souls were one-ringed ones, and he was faced with a choice now. Would he choose to continue strengthening the Spirit Eyes or the Ice Empress’ martial soul? These were undoubtedly two different paths.

Normally, soul masters possessing two martial souls wouldn’t obtain soul rings for both of their martial souls at once, because that would erase the greatest advantage of having two martial souls. The truly

powerful twin-souled soul masters would do their best to increase their soul power while cultivating and adding soul rings to a single martial soul. When they cultivated to a certain level, they would begin to add soul rings to their second martial soul. This way, it was very likely that a situation in which their second martial soul was filled with high-ranked soul rings would occur. In that case, they would be much stronger than the other soul masters of their rank.

However, this required a process. Normally, twin-souled soul masters would add soul rings to their martial soul when they were at the seven-ringed rank, at the very least.

For example, Xiao Xiao. She had had no choice but to add a soul ring to her second martial soul in order to claim a place in Shrek Academy and give her a certain advantage over the other students. This was why she had chosen to add a soul skill to her second martial soul. Other than giving a soul skill, a soul ring would also increase the comprehensive physical ability of a soul master. After much consideration, and wishing to increase her cultivation as quickly as possible, Xiao Xiao decided to add a soul ring to her Ninephoenix Worshipping Flute. However, that was only her first soul ring. Before reaching the seven-ringed rank, she would definitely not add any more soul rings to her Ninephoenix Worshipping Flute.

If Huo Yuhao decided to continue adding soul rings to his Spirit Eyes, he would walk the path of a control-type soul master for a very long time; if he chose to add soul rings to the Ice Empress, he would switch to the path of an assault-type soul master. There was no doubt that he would definitely become the number one attack-type genius in Shrek Academy if he chose to switch to the path of an assault-type soul master, having a four hundred thousand year soul ring. There was absolutely no need to doubt this. However, how would he explain the appearance of a four hundred thousand year soul ring?

The Skydream Iceworm said, "Yuhao, I'm guessing that you're already thinking about it. It's true that the Ice Empress is very powerful, but from my experience, you'll have to hide your abilities as much as possible if you want to live for a long time. Moreover, even if you choose to cultivate the Ice Empress, you'll have to find a second soul ring for your Spirit Eyes right now. It's because the first soul ring of your Ice Empress is too eye-catching. You have to conceal it, otherwise you'll just be studied in a research lab.

Huo Yuhao nodded in agreement, "Brother Skydream, I've made a decision. I'm going to continue cultivating my Spirit Eyes. Once my cultivation's high enough, I'll continue to add soul rings to my Ice Empress martial soul. In the future, I'll do my best to not use the Ice Empress. This way, other people won't be able to see how special my soul ring is."

The Skydream Iceworm smiled mischievously, "Why won't you use it? If you don't use it, how are we going to go awe the others? That Shrek Academy of yours isn't simple! If you want to stand stably, you'll have to show off some of your strength. If you're going to use the Ice Empress, you don't necessarily need to be very subtle about it."

Chapter 44.3: Perfect Fusion, The Red Soul Ring

Huo Yuhao was at a loss. "Brother Skydream, I don't understand."

The Skydream Iceworm replied in a mysterious tone, "You'll naturally understand once you've gotten your second soul ring. Now then, do you really think you look that good butt-naked? Quickly clothe yourself so that we can get going. Time's not moving any slower while you're standing here. You should probably know that your school's about to re-open. In fact, I'm not particularly clear as to how long we

actually have left until it does. I lost track of time in the outside world while I was helping the Ice Empress fuse with you.”

When he heard this, Huo Yuhao immediately became astonished. According to his calculations, more than fifteen days should've passed since the holidays had started. It would take him quite a while to get back as well, thus he couldn't afford to not rush.

A pale gold light flashed through Huo Yuhao's eyes as he withdrew the Ice Empress and released his Spiritual Detection. However, he nearly jumped from shock the moment he released his Spiritual Detection.

As his cultivation had increased in the academy, the range of his Spiritual Detection had also continued to increase. When he'd left, it had surpassed eighty meters in all directions. If he were to focus it in a single direction, it could surpass two hundred meters.

However, the moment that he released his Spiritual Detection, Huo Yuhao immediately felt his eyes release an indescribable flow of air. Immediately afterwards, the ground in a two hundred meter radius around him—including a meter deep into the snow and some parts of the mud underneath—were encapsulated within the range of his Spiritual Detection. As soon as it did, a large amount of information surged into his mind. How could the large increase in the range of his Spiritual Detection and the amount of information he received not astonish him?

“How... how could this have happened?” Huo Yuhao asked blankly, having managed to find the nearby Twenty Four Moonlit Bridges using his Spiritual Detection.

“You didn't just suffer that pain for nothing. Haven't you realized that your spiritual sea has nearly doubled in size? If you'd followed the usual routine of obtaining your second soul ring, your spiritual sea would only be this big once you reached three rings. However, you relied on your own willpower to withstand that pain. As such, your spiritual sea has evolved. Of course, I've also used my spiritual origin to help you out a bit. Congratulations. As of now, you can release power equivalent to that of a five thousand year soul ring, while your body's endurance now permits you to both obtain and perfectly absorb a three thousand year soul ring.”

When he heard the Skydream Iceworm's words, a single emotion was left in Huo Yuhao's heart: Happiness.

After experiencing such an extreme amount of pain, a few shadows had been left in his heart. At this moment however, the pain and bitterness were over, while the rewards he'd gained were just beginning to show themselves. He finally felt that everything was worth it. After receiving the proper reciprocation for his efforts, the shadows in his heart naturally shrunk by a large amount.

He took a set of clothes out of the Twenty Four Moonlit Bridges, but decided to only wear a regular shirt, as he didn't feel cold at all.

What a joke. With an existence such as the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion connected to him, the number of things in the entire world that could even make him feel cold was practically zero. His own body was basically a representation of extremely cold ice!

“Go!” The Skydream Iceworm shouted, jolting a certain person who was foolishly giggling to himself back to their senses. This certain someone then hurriedly scrambled to his feet.

The originally-cold climate was no longer a problem to Huo Yuhao, as the soul ring and soul bone he’d obtained from the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion made it so that the quality of his physique now far exceeded what it had previously been. He wildly rushed through the snow, leaving only a few shallow traces behind him. In fact, he wasn’t hindered by the snow at all anymore.

The soul power in his body continued to circulate, but it didn’t seem like it was being drained at all. Right now, Huo Yuhao was unexpectedly relying only on his physical strength to maneuver through the snow. He didn’t know how long it had been since he’d eaten or drunk anything, yet he didn’t feel hungry or thirsty at all. At this very moment, he only felt that everything within the boundless, vast plains of ice was extremely beautiful.

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Within Shrek Academy.

The start of the new term had now arrived, which was the most important period of time every year. A large stream of people had already arrived outside of Shrek Academy by dawn. Besides the returning students, there was also an overwhelming number of parents who’d brought their children to register for the newcomer’s assessment.

No matter what background you had, or who you were referred by, you’d still have to go home if you didn’t pass the newcomer’s assessment.

A few of the upperclassmen were outside the school gates, helping the teachers conduct the assessment. Although they were only students, they were still able to represent Shrek Academy, as they were all at least at the three-ringed Soul Elder rank. Since they’d reached the rank of Soul Elder, they held considerable status within the continent. The lowest requirement for a student to graduate from Shrek Academy’s outer courtyard was to become a four-ringed Soul Ancestor. If you weren’t able to become a Soul Ancestor, you wouldn’t be able to become a Year 6 student. In the end, you’d only be eliminated during the assessment.

Twenty-eight days of the vacation had passed by, and the new school year would begin in just two days. Even though the newcomers were rushing to participate in the academy’s entrance test, the older students weren’t just lazing about; their advancement assessments were about to start too. They would only be able to truly advance to a higher year group once they’d passed their advancement assessments. If they didn’t, they’d have to do the exact same thing that the newcomers who weren’t able to pass the entrance exam had to—return home.

At least two-thirds of the older students in the academy had returned by this point. They hadn’t dared to relax at all during their vacation period. Seeing that school was about to start, they’d naturally come back earlier in order to ask their teachers about the contents of their various assessments. In addition to this, they’d also asked their teachers for extra pointers. Students who were strong enough naturally weren’t scared of the assessments; on the contrary, they enjoyed them. Through them, they could truly test the fruits of their cultivation. However, every single assessment would be an extremely difficult barrier to the vast majority of students. Thus, why wouldn’t they grasp every opportunity they had?

A figure rushed past the Sea God's Lake's lakeside path with astonishing speed, and quickly passed through Shrek Plaza. When he arrived at the Year 1 dorms, he muttered to himself, "Aih, I'm late, I'm late. He's definitely come back early and is probably waiting impatiently for me. Aih, it's all my fault! Why'd I have to go and go all-out! Whatever, I'll definitely give that guy a big surprise, haha."

With that, the youth arrived at the door to the dorm. The elder that was always present by the dorms was still lying on his recliner in an easygoing manner when, giving off an indescribable sense of leisureliness when he arrived.

"Grandpa, hello." The youth excitedly blurted out as he rushed into the dormitory.

A funny look appeared on the elder's face, but he quickly returned to normal. Squinting his eyes, he comfortably immersed himself in a half-sleep state.

"Peng, peng, peng." The youth rushed back towards his room, then forcefully knocked on the door, causing dust to fall off of it.

"Eeh?" The youth hurriedly ducked away from the dust. Feeling that something was off, he said, "Huo Yuhao, quickly open the door. Just look at how lazy you've become! You truly only know how to cultivate. There's already enough dust on the door to bury someone, yet you haven't even cleaned it."

Right, the youth who had hastily rushed over was Wang Dong. He didn't seem to have changed much compared to one month ago. He was still wearing the Year 1 uniforms, but his short, pinkish-blue hair had grown slightly. His large, bright eyes were also slightly livelier, and were filled with excitement.

They'd been separated for almost an entire month, however Wang Dong had been held up because of a few issues on his way back. He'd only managed to arrive three days before school started with great difficulty, which was much later than the time that he and Huo Yuhao had previously agreed on. He thought that Huo Yuhao would definitely have arrived earlier. After all, the quickest way they could cultivate was by being together. Having returned late, he was extremely apologetic. He was just about to apologize to Huo Yuhao and say a few good words to him; that was why he hadn't used his own key to unlock the door and enter on his own.

No response? Wang Dong couldn't help but be dazed when the dorm remained silent.

"Hey, don't be petty. Are you still angry at me? I didn't come back late on purpose. I was held up by something." Wang Dong knocked on the door again, however there was still no response.

"Huo Yuhao, you little miser. If you don't open the door, I'm going to open it myself." Wang Dong said fiercely.

There was still no response.

At that moment, Wang Dong couldn't help but feel stunned. He felt that, even though he'd arrived late, with the relationship between him and Huo Yuhao, combined with Huo Yuhao's character, he wouldn't stoop so low as to ignore him like this!

Wang Dong took out his key and unlocked the door.

The dorm was quiet on the inside. Everything was identical to when they'd left; there weren't any changes at all. Wang Dong's mattress had been rolled up and covered in a white bedsheet to shield it

from dust. On the other hand, Huo Yuhao's bed was still empty. A layer of dust had already appeared on the ground and the table, as if nobody had recently been in the room at all.

Wang Dong rushed into the dorm room. After looking at his own bed and then Huo Yuhao's bed, he felt his heart sink with a "thunk". His face immediately turned somewhat pale.

He didn't come back. He actually hasn't come back yet. Wang Dong instantly felt a wave of goosebumps travel from his feet to his head. He would've preferred to have Huo Yuhao waiting for him in advance to scold him the moment he saw him rather than the scene in front of him. The feeling of his heart being emptied caused his breathing to become rushed all of a sudden.

"How is it possible that he hasn't come back yet? Didn't he say that there was a teacher waiting for him outside the Great Star Dou Forest? He only left to get his second soul ring; there was even a teacher accompanying him. Why hasn't he returned after so long? He's an orphan, where else could he have gone?"

Wang Dong immediately became anxious. He violently took in a few deep breaths of somewhat dirty air from the dorm room, then suddenly turned around and rushed back towards the dorm entrance.

When he reached it, he instantly kneeled beside the reclining elder. "Grandpa, have you seen Huo Yuhao? He's living in a room with me; he's the guy who always comes back with me."

The old man squinted his eyes and shook his head.

Wang Dong bit his lower lip and stood up. Afterwards, he immediately dashed towards the faculty buildings.

Once he reaching the faculty buildings, he headed directly towards Zhou Yi's office. The door to her office was wide open, and inside a few students were talking to her.

Wang Dong was extremely anxious, thus he didn't even bother to knock on her door. Like a gust of wind, he rushed inside. "Teacher Zhou, Teacher Zhou."

The students standing in front of Zhou Yi's desk were all first year students, and they were all jolted by Wang Dong's hurried entrance. They were all aware of the fact that Zhou Yi hated students who broke the rules the most. Even though Wang Dong was a class monitor, he was still acting too gutsy. ~~no E-lø~~In

However, they were astonished by the fact that not only had Zhou Yi not flown into a rage when she saw Wang Dong, she'd even stood up. The two of them then spoke in an impatient voice at the exact same time.

"Where's Huo Yuhao?"

"Teacher Zhou, have you seen Huo Yuhao?"

The instant they finished speaking, both of them simultaneously became stunned. Afterwards, they spoke at the exact same time again, "You're also looking for Huo Yuhao?"

Chapter 45.1: You're Still Alive?

The seemingly tacit understanding between Zhou Yi and Wang Dong sent the students standing in front of Zhou Yi's desk into a daze. They had no idea what had happened.

Zhou Yi waved towards them, "You guys can go back and prepare first."

"Yes." Though the three students were very curious as to what had occurred, they didn't dare to stay behind. They hurriedly left Zhou Yi's office, cleverly closing the door as they did so.

Wang Dong spoke impatiently. "Teacher Zhou, has Huo Yuhao not come back yet? If you haven't seen him either, why don't we go over to the Soul Tool Department and ask them about it?"

Zhou Yi furrowed her brows, and a hint of anger appeared in her eyes, "No need. I've already gone there to ask them about it. Just what is that brat Huo Yuhao doing? He told me that the teachers from the Soul Tool Department were accompanying him to get a soul ring, but when I asked Fan Yu about it, he said that Huo Yuhao had told him that the teachers from the Martial Soul Department were taking him to get a soul ring. Isn't he just lying to both parties? In the end, nobody went with him. Don't tell me this brat just entered the Great Star Dou Forest alone?"

Hearing her words, Wang Dong immediately became even more anxious, "No way. He doesn't even have any attacking soul skills, so how in the world is he going to go hunt a soul beast by himself? That's too dangerous. No way, no way. Why would he be that dumb? When we left each other, his mood was still very normal!"

Zhou Yi spoke in a low voice, "He's definitely hiding something from us. Let's do this. Immediately go to the upperclassmen's dorms and bring Bei Bei and Tang Ya over here. If they're not here either, then that's what must've happened. Huo Yuhao belongs to the Tang Sect, so they might know what happened. If Bei Bei and Tang Ya followed him to the Great Star Dou Forest, then it's explainable."

"Okay." Wang Dong turned away and left. Right now, he was only praying that Bei Bei and Tang Ya weren't back yet. They must've followed Huo Yuhao to help him get his soul ring.

However, reality wouldn't just change due to a person's willpower. Within a few moments, Bei Bei and Tang Ya appeared inside Zhou Yi's office. Though they'd just arrived, they'd truly returned!

After hearing that Huo Yuhao hadn't returned, they were both astonished. Bei Bei said, "Teacher Zhou, our little junior brother was still fine the last time we saw him. He can't possibly have gone to hunt a soul beast by himself. Though we saw him kill a soul beast the first time we saw him, he was injured. Furthermore, the soul beast he killed was of the ten year rank. This time around, he's looking for his second soul ring. With his combat strength, even with a low-ranked Soul Tool and the martial arts of our Tang Sect, it's still going to be very difficult for him to take on a hundred year soul beast. After all, his cultivation's still too low. Our little junior brother's very smart, so why would he act so foolishly?"

They all looked at each other. No matter how they thought about it, they just couldn't understand why Huo Yuhao had lied to everyone when he left the academy.

He hadn't returned, and there was no use in panicking. Zhou Yi was anxious, but Fan Yu was even more anxious than she was.

It had been so hard for him to find such a good disciple who even revealed such an astonishing amount of talent in the field of soul tool creation. However, he had actually hatched such a wicked plan. It'd be

strange if he wasn't feeling anxious. Like the others, he wasn't completely sure as to why Huo Yuhao was doing this. However, with his understanding of Huo Yuhao, he knew that he wasn't an unreliable person! He definitely had a predicament that gave him no choice but to do this.

Every person who was close to Huo Yuhao had their own different thoughts. Some of them were angry, some were remorseful, and some were puzzled. However, none of them could think of the true reason why Huo Yuhao had hidden the truth from them. But, time didn't stop for anyone.

Within the blink of an eye, one day passed.

Within another blink of an eye, the second day ended.

It was finally time to re-enroll in Shrek Academy. The students from the various year groups were all reporting in and registering their names. The entrance exams had already ended, and the newcomers had already entered the school. However, the students from the other year groups were still waiting for the coming advancement test.

The registration period started in the morning and went on all the way till the afternoon before ending.

Wang Dong had already completed his re-enrollment. After that, he anxiously stood by the entrance to Shrek Academy and gazed outwards, waiting.

Why? Why hasn't he come back yet? Why?

Shrek Academy's rules were very stringent. If you weren't able to register in time, you would be forced to leave the school!

The sky gradually darkened, but he still hadn't returned yet.

As Wang Dong looked towards the distance, his gaze was already somewhat dazed. He was only twelve this year, and he was slightly younger than Huo Yuhao. During his twelve years of life, this was the first time he'd thought so much about anyone.

His legs had already gone numb after standing for so long, but scenes of his activities and studies with Huo Yuhao in the same dorm room during the past year floated up in his mind unceasingly. They had gone to class together, cultivated together, participated in the freshmen assessment together, become champions together, eaten roasted fish together, and completed their first year in Shrek Academy together.

I've already come back, so where are you?

The sky gradually turned dark, and the sunset left a pale red at the edge of the horizon. The glow of the sunset was very beautiful, but it was unable to illuminate the haze in Wang Dong's heart.

Late, he's already late. He's already gone past the registration time. He won't make it, he won't make it!

Bei Bei, Tang Ya, and Xiao Xiao had also walked over to the academy's entrance. Their expressions darkened as they looked toward the gradually dimming sky.

Wang Dong didn't even know how he'd returned to his dorm. By the time he got back, the outside sky was completely black. In the end, Huo Yuhao hadn't managed to make it back in time for him to register. At this moment, however, Wang Dong didn't blame him at all.

As long as you can come back alive, that's fine!

The thing he was most scared of was Huo Yuhao being buried in the Great Star Dou Forest! If that occurred, he wouldn't even have a corpse to bury.

While thinking, Wang Dong slowly sat on Huo Yuhao's bed, which was still covered with dust. At this moment, he seemingly forgot about his own mysophobia.

Huo Yuhao, are you still alive? Wang Dong couldn't help but clench his fists tightly. His eyes gradually reddened, and an anxiety that could drive one mad appeared in his heart.

At this very moment, the sound of rushed footsteps sounded out from the outside. This was accompanied by the sounds of a person's somewhat heavy breathing.

Wang Dong raised his head, somewhat stunned. Right after that, a person suddenly charged inside with a bang.

"I'm screwed, I'm screwed! I'm late! I ran over as quickly as I could, but I was still late. How in the world is this supposed to be good!?" The youth who rushed in had an anxious look on his face as he muttered gloomily to himself. Raising his head to look at Wang Dong, he smiled, "You're back! Is today the day when registration ends? I'm screwed, I'm late. This won't do, I have to quickly find Teacher Zhou and think of a way to go about this during the night."

With that, the youth turned around, about to leave.

"Huo— Yu— Hao!!!" An extremely loud screech suddenly rang out, causing the leaving Huo Yuhao to feel his back sink. He felt a large force strike him, immediately slamming him to the ground. Then, his back was struck by a series of typhoon-like fists.

Right. Was the youth who'd rushed into the room not the owner of the empty bed, Huo Yuhao? Though he'd exhausted all of his energy, he had still arrived late. He'd simply wasted too much time fusing with the Ice Empress, and he didn't even know how much time he had actually wasted. After the Skydream Iceworm helped him obtain his second soul ring, he left the icy plains. After asking someone what time it was, he was struck dumb. He did all he could to rush back, but he was still late by a day.

"Uhh..." Huo Yuhao wrapped his hands around his head, feeling somewhat dazed after being beaten up by Wang Dong. He felt two soft lumps of meat on his butt moving non-stop, causing his weary buttocks to feel a sense of relaxation that didn't feel bad at all...

"You still remembered to come back? You bastard, you still remembered to come back?" A stream of tears fell from Wang Dong's eyes. This was the first time he'd actually worried about someone other than his family. The instant he saw Huo Yuhao, he felt something in his heart shatter. This caused his repressed emotions to explode out uncontrollably.

His fists gradually lost their power, and he suddenly starting crying while sitting on Huo Yuhao's back.

Huo Yuhao was originally feeling somewhat gloomy after being beaten up by Wang Dong, but now he was struck dumb by the latter's crying. As he was being pressed down onto the ground, he wasn't able to get up even if he wanted to. For a period of time, Huo Yuhao couldn't help but feel that he was at a complete loss.

"Wang Dong, what are you crying for! Why're you acting like a girl?" Huo Yuhao was very speechless.

"Bastard, don't you know how worried everyone is? I even thought that you'd turned into a pile of shit from a soul beast in the Great Star Dou Forest. Why'd you have to lie to us and tell us that a teacher was accompanying you to go kill soul beasts? Why'd you go by yourself?"

Wang Dong was sitting on Huo Yuhao, his hands holding onto his shoulders firmly as he spoke angrily.

"This... the teachers can't have found out, right?" Huo Yuhao asked somewhat guiltily.

"What a load of rubbish. You didn't even come back. Is it even possible for them to not have found out?" Wang Dong gnashed his teeth with anger, itching to bite Huo Yuhao a few times to vent his anger.

Huo Yuhao smiled bitterly. "I say, why don't you get up before we start talking. You're not heavy, but you can't just keep pressing down on me like that."

Only then did Wang Dong react. As if he'd been electrocuted, he shot straight up, his face already blushing.

Huo Yuhao turned over and got up. Looking at the tear-filled Wang Dong, he knew that the latter had been worried about his safety. He couldn't help but feel moved. Scratching his head, he said apologetically, "I'm sorry! I've made you worry. I didn't think that I'd take this long. It's actually because I lost track of time."

After wiping off his tears, Wang Dong glared at him fiercely. "You lied to all of us. If you don't give me a logical explanation to this, we're not settled."

Huo Yuhao smiled mischievously. "Just look at you, you look like a little weeping woman. Just where did the imposing might of an assault-type soul master go to!"

Wang Dong was astonished. The tone of his voice immediately turned deep. "Just who did you call a little woman? Aren't you going to look for Teacher Zhou? Quickly go. I'll follow you. Teacher Zhou's also very angry. You'd better pray for luck." While speaking, he pushed Huo Yuhao out the door in a somewhat impatient manner.

Chapter 45.2: You're Still Alive?

Huo Yuhao was truly anxious to find a teacher and explain the situation. After all, he didn't want to get expelled just like this! Thus, he didn't notice how embarrassed Wang Dong was.

After leaving their dorm, Wang Dong finally calmed down. The dim light of the night was everywhere, and he suddenly felt peace of mind as he looked at Huo Yuhao, who was in front of him. At this moment, all of his worries had vanished from the face of the earth. The release of the baggage from his heart even caused him to feel tired.

“Just what in the world were you doing? You even lied to a teacher.” Taking two steps forward, he caught up to Huo Yuhao. Wang Dong then walked along with him side by side.

Huo Yuhao smiled bitterly, “It’s hard to explain everything. I’ll talk about it once we find Teacher Zhou. I can’t explain everything right now.”

Wang Dong said, “In any case, be a bit more careful. I feel that being late won’t be much of a problem. Though the academy’s rules are quite stringent, they’re much more relaxed for core disciples like us. In any case, you’re a core disciple of the Soul Tool Department. Problem is, you’ll now have to explain the reason why you were lying to the teachers in order to stop them from pursuing the matter. As long as Teacher Fan Yu and Teacher Zhou are willing to protect you, there won’t be any big problems. I’m sure you’re aware of Teacher Zhou’s temper. Teacher Fan Yu hasn’t said anything about it, but he’s definitely very worried.”

Huo Yuhao had already thought of a plan during his journey back. Nodding, he said, “I’ve truly got a special reason for why I did what I did. I believe they’ll definitely understand it.”

As the two continued to speak, they arrived at the teacher’s office area. The teachers from the outer courtyard were living within the office block. The lower floors were the office blocks, while the higher floors were the teacher’s homes.

However, Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong had never been to Zhou Yi’s house. Thus, they could only try their luck at the office.

Their luck wasn’t bad at all; the light in Zhou Yi’s office was still on.

Before they’d even reached the door to Zhou Yi’s office, Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong heard the sounds of Zhou Yi’s roaring...

“Fan Yu, what the heck did you just say that brat Huo Yuhao wanted to do? We’ve done all we could to cultivate him, but he actually lied to us and ran away. He hasn’t even returned yet. Just what reason do you think he had to lie to us? Don’t tell me that a teacher helping him to obtain a soul ring won’t be useful to him? I really didn’t think that I’d actually make a mistake. Originally, I thought that he was an extremely honest student who was willing to work hard. I didn’t think that he’d be an ungrateful brat like this. This really pisses me off. Don’t let me see him again. If I do, I’m going to flay all of his skin off.”

Hearing Zhou Yi’s words, Huo Yuhao couldn’t help but shiver instinctively. He felt his scalp go numb. With a somewhat pleading look on his face, he looked towards Wang Dong.

Wang Dong looked towards him with a smile that wasn’t a smile, then made a gesture that said ‘You’re on your own now’. Just who asked you to lie to everyone here? Who asked you to come back too late? Serves you right!

Bracing himself, Huo Yuhao carefully shifted towards Zhou Yi’s office. At this moment, Fan Yu’s voice rang out.

“Okay, stop being so angry. Do you think I’m any less anxious than you? Don’t you know how hard it is to find an inheriting disciple? Yuhao is more talented than Caitou. Don’t you know how much hope I’ve placed on him? Now that he’s lost, I’m even more worried than you. But, I feel that you’ve said something incorrect. After being in contact with him for so long, I understand him quite well. Though

he's made a lot of plans, he's a very kind and steady person. He definitely won't do anything silly. Since he's lied to us in order to go by himself, I believe that he definitely has a reason for doing so. Now, we can only wait for him to come back. That way, I believe that he'll give us a logical explanation."

Zhou Yi unhappily said, "He's already late, so what damn use is there for him to come back? Won't he get expelled anyway?"

Fan Yu said, "That might not be the case. As long as he has a reasonable explanation, we can reveal the fact that he's a core disciple of the Soul Tool Department to let him remain in the academy. His treatment as a core disciple of your Martial Soul Department is already coming to an end, so he'll definitely be stripped of his privileges if he can't give an astonishing performance during the assessment. Since that's the case, we can just reveal it. In any case, Dean Qian's already fallen for our trick."

Huo Yuhao felt moved as he listened to the husband-and-wife duo. He had lied to his teachers, but they were still worried about him. An intense sensation of guilt flooded his heart, and he wanted to reveal the truth to them right there.

The Skydream Iceworm's faint voice rang out in his mind, "If you don't want to be used as a guinea pig, you'd better control your mouth."

Huo Yuhao immediately regained his senses after listening to the Skydream Iceworm's reminder. Right! No matter what, he couldn't reveal the truth. A million year soul beast, in addition to one of the Three Emperors of the Extreme North, had become his intelligent soul ring. This situation couldn't even be described using the word 'astonishing' anymore.

Clenching his teeth, Huo Yuhao quickened his footsteps, reaching Zhou Yi's office door.

Zhou Yi's office door wasn't shut, and there was no longer anybody left within the teacher's office buildings at this time. Huo Yuhao peeked his head in just in time for him to see an extremely gentle scene.

Zhou Yi didn't have her mask on, and her beautiful face was filled with rage. However, she was sitting on Fan Yu's thigh, while her hands were cradling Fan Yu's neck. Fan Yu's arms were wrapped around her waist.

"Cough, cough. Teacher, Teacher Zhou, I'm back."

Fan Yu and Zhou Yi were both stunned by Huo Yuhao's appearance. Zhou Yi subconsciously jumped up from Fan Yu's thigh.

Wang Dong was right behind Huo Yuhao, and he was stunned to the point of being flabbergasted by this scene. Though he'd heard about Zhou Yi's mask from Huo Yuhao, this was still the first time he'd seen Teacher Zhou's true appearance. Furthermore, this had happened in a situation where she hadn't concealed herself at all.

"Huo Yuhao, you still know how to come back!" Zhou Yi shot towards him angrily.

It had to be said that Huo Yuhao was truly lucky. The flabbergasted Wang Dong subconsciously blurted out, "Teacher Zhou, you're really pretty."

The overbearing Zhou Yi was stunned for a brief moment. In an instant, the flames of anger within her heart diminished by over 30%. Pausing her footsteps, she glared fiercely at Huo Yuhao, "Follow me in and close the door."

At this moment, Huo Yuhao completely understood why Zhou Yi normally had to keep her old grandma mask on her face. Not only was she beautiful, her facial features were extremely gentle and soft. Though she was currently filled with anger, it was simply too hard for her to keep a deterrent effect up for the other students. On the contrary, the others would think that she was a beauty who was throwing a tantrum.

Fan Yu sat there unmoving, his gaze fixed on Huo Yuhao. Though he had just exonerated the disciple he was proud of, could he truly be not angry at all?

Lowering his gaze, Huo Yuhao obediently entered Zhou Yi's office. On the other hand, Wang Dong shut the door after entering. n(OVELL&1n

Huo Yuhao walked up to Fan Yu, falling to his knees with a "putong", "Teacher, I've done wrong."

Fan Yu's heart was originally filled with the flames of anger. Huo Yuhao had returned, and he was waiting for the disciple he was proud of to give him an explanation with an extremely stern look on his face. However, Huo Yuhao hadn't given a reason to exonerate himself. Instead, he'd immediately fallen to his knees in order to admit his wrongdoing. The stiff lines of Fan Yu's face immediately softened slightly.

It had to be said that any teacher would be slightly more lenient towards the students they were fond of. Zhou Yi and Fan Yu weren't an exception to that case. Zhou Yi was extremely strict towards her students, but she didn't utter a word with Fan Yu there. Instead, she stood behind Fan Yu, giving the initiative to her husband.

"Why?" Fan Yu said indifferently.

Huo Yuhao raised his head, giving a reply filled with guilt, "Teacher, I've done wrong. I shouldn't have lied to you and Teacher Zhou. However, I- I was scared that you'd be worried about me. That was why I had to concoct a lie before I could leave. This was because I wasn't even sure whether I would be able to come back when I left."

He'd already thought of many ways he could give this apology. With the Skydream Iceworm's help, there were basically no holes in his excuse. His guilt-filled tone wasn't fake, but he couldn't tell the truth. Regardless of whether it was for him or his two teachers, telling the truth might not necessarily be a good thing!

"Huh?" Hearing Huo Yuhao's words, Fan Yu, Zhou Yi, and Wang Dong's interest were piqued.

Zhou Yi couldn't help but say, "Is there anything the academy can't help you settle? Did you absolutely have to do this by yourself? Are you telling me that we wouldn't be able to help you if you'd told us the truth?"

Huo Yuhao shook his head softly, "You wouldn't have been able to help me. A problem came up with my martial soul. Teacher Zhou, do you remember? During Teacher Wang's class, he told us that the most terrifying thing to a soul master was the shattering of their martial soul."

Zhou Yi was greatly astonished, "What? Your martial soul..."

Huo Yuhao nodded, "When the school year had just ended, I noticed a problem with my martial soul. I occasionally felt absent-minded when I was using my Spirit Eyes, and there were even signs of my martial soul fracturing. At that time, I thought about what Teacher Wang said. He said that if a martial soul didn't have enough talent, and if a person who had relatively low innate soul power tried to forcefully cultivate, there was a very small chance that a martial soul could shatter. Moreover, the shattering of a martial soul was a catastrophe to a soul master. If they were lucky, they would lose all of their soul power, and their martial soul would shatter and disappear; if they were unlucky, it could even endanger their lives."

At this moment, even Fan Yu's expression had changed. If Huo Yuhao's martial soul was truly shattering, then there was truly nothing that could save him. Even a Titled Douluo wouldn't be able to do anything.

A martial soul was the internal core of every soul master. If any problems arose within that internal core, then not even heavenly treasures could do anything about it. That was equivalent to a death sentence!

"Yuhao, then, you..." Right now, Fan Yu didn't even care about how angry he felt anymore; his voice was filled with concern.

Zhou Yi said unhappily, "Since he's able to properly kneel here, there's clearly nothing wrong anymore. Yuhao, continue."

Huo Yuhao said, "During the few days before the academic year ended, those feelings were getting increasingly clearer. I was starting to be afraid. I was afraid for my martial soul, and I was afraid that I'd be unable to live up to the love you two have shown me. I thought about it carefully, and I decided not to tell you two about it. If my martial soul truly shattered, then talking about it would be of no use; if it didn't shatter, I'd definitely come back. Thus, I lied to both of you. I didn't want you to worry about me."

Chapter 45.3: You're Still Alive?

"You... what can I even say about you!" Fan Yu sighed. Bending down, he placed his hands under Huo Yuhao's armpits and propped him up. This child was simply too thoughtful.

The anger that was originally between Zhou Yi's brows had eased by a large amount. Only, Wang Dong's anger didn't decrease in the slightest. He inwardly thought to himself, This bastard. He lied, and he's lying again.

Huo Yuhao's lies could get past Zhou Yi and Fan Yu, but they couldn't trick Wang Dong. They had a perfect martial soul fusion, and they had cultivated together just before Huo Yuhao had left the academy. If anything had happened to his martial soul, Wang Dong would've sensed it immediately. However, he hadn't felt anything!

At this moment however, Wang Dong couldn't expose Huo Yuhao's lies. He could only bury his doubts in the bottom of his heart.

Zhou Yi said, "Then how are you feeling now? Did the signs of your martial soul shattering disappear?"

Huo Yuhao nodded.

Zhou Yi furrowed her brows tightly, "That's also a problem. Not only did you arrive late, you didn't even obtain a second soul ring. I'm afraid that the academy will..."

Huo Yuhao blinked, "Teacher Zhou, I've gotten my second martial soul!"

"Huh?" Zhou Yi looked towards him, astonished. Fan Yu interjected, "Let Yuhao finish what he has to say."

Huo Yuhao said, "When I left the academy, I felt that I didn't really have much hope anymore. In addition to that, there seemed to be an unseen force that was guiding me towards the north. The absent-mindedness from my martial soul was getting increasingly stronger, and I could sense that my Spirit Eyes were releasing traces of ice. It seemed to be guiding me towards the north. Under an absent-minded state like this, I didn't even know long I'd walked for, but I unexpectedly arrived at a world of ice and snow. That place was very, very cold, and I felt that I was going to be frozen alive. However, the sensation of shattering coming from my martial soul was becoming increasingly intense, as though it could shatter at any time. I didn't really know what was going on, but I fainted in that icy land. Just before I fainted, I felt that I wasn't going to be able to wake up again. I didn't know how long I fainted for, but it was because of this that I came back late."

Fan Yu and Zhou Yi glanced at each other. Though the area Shrek Academy was in was getting chilly, it was still late spring. If he spoke about a world of ice and snow, wasn't that the desolate and uninhabited Extreme North? Unexpectedly, Huo Yuhao hadn't gone to the Great Star Dou Forest; he'd gone to a place that was that far away. Furthermore, it was even under a situation in which his martial soul that had signs of shattering was guiding him. This was simply too fantastical.

Huo Yuhao continued, "By the time I woke up, it was still daytime. I didn't know how much time had passed, but my body was already buried in the snow. When I opened my eyes, my vision was filled with a dark white object. I thought that I was already dead, but I realized that something wasn't right after a moment. The condition of my body was still very normal, and I could even sense the flow of my soul power. Furthermore, my Spirit Eyes had completely stabilised; they no longer had any problems."

"I climbed out from the snow, astonished. Only then did I realise that I was still in my original location. More astonishingly, an extra burst of power seemed to be within my body. I found a dead scorpion that was longer than a meter near my body. Its entire body was pure white, while its tail was jade-green. There were many crystalline objects on the surface of its shell, and though it was already dead, I could still sense how powerful it was."

"An Ice Jade Scorpion?" Zhou Yi took a deep breath, while Fan Yu's eyes were filled with astonishment.

Wang Dong couldn't help but ask, "Teacher Zhou, what's an Ice Jade Scorpion?"

Zhou Yi said, "It's an extremely strong soul beast that lives in the Extreme North. They have an enormous population, and they're the true rulers of that bitterly cold land. They possess an ultimate ice attribute, and normally speaking, they only live within the core regions of the Extreme North. Even to us soul masters, that area is a forbidden place. It is a truly forbidden area to humans. Even Titled Douluo-ranked experts wouldn't dare to easily tread within that extremely cold place. Yuhao, you were actually able to survive after encountering an Ice Jade Scorpion."

Originally, Zhou Yi and Fan Yu still had some doubts towards Huo Yuhao's words. However, their suspicions immediately dropped by a large amount after Huo Yuhao described the appearance of the Ice Jade Scorpion. Though there were a large number of soul beasts within the Extreme North, human soul masters would rarely have the chance to encounter them. Furthermore, the outer courtyard had never taught them anything about the Ice Jade Scorpion from Year 1 to Year 6. If he hadn't truly seen an Ice Jade Scorpion, how would Huo Yuhao be able to describe a soul beast like it?

Huo Yuhao said, "I don't know how it did, but because I discovered some energy within its body, I tried to use my soul power to urge it on. In the end..."

With that, Huo Yuhao slowly raised his hands. A trace of white light flashed through his originally deep-blue eyes, and the temperature in Zhou Yi's office dropped right after that.

The strong chilliness caused even Wang Dong to involuntarily shiver instinctively. Fan Yu and Zhou Yi clearly saw a translucent and sparkling luster on Huo Yuhao's hands, as if he was wearing a set of diamond gloves that had a moving radiance to them. The temperature within the office dropped suddenly.

Fan Yu could no longer sit; he suddenly stood up. As he looked at Huo Yuhao, he unconsciously widened his eyes. Right after that, the two of them saw a purple soul ring slowly rise from Huo Yuhao's feet. It was a halo that flickered with a noble purple, and it slowly undulated rhythmically around Huo Yuhao's body.

"A thousand year soul ring!" Wang Dong cried out immediately.

Purple, didn't that represent a thousand year soul ring? However, how was that possible? Just what situation was this!?

Huo Yuhao quickly took off his jacket and removed his shirt, revealing his naked upper body.

"Ah—" Because Wang Dong was standing right behind him, he was able to instantly see the sparkling tattoo of the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion. The vivid and lifelike portrayal of the enormous scorpion gave him a jump.

Huo Yuhao slowly turned around, showing his back to Fan Yu and Zhou Yi.

During the journey back, when he and the Skydream Iceworm had gotten to this point, Huo Yuhao had asked him whether the teachers would notice that the Ice Empress' tattoo was different when compared to ordinary Ice Jade Scorpions.

The Skydream Iceworm then replied using the simplest words it could, "Other than you, every human who has seen the Ice Empress has died!"

"The Ice Jade Scorpion, it's really the Ice Jade Scorpion! Yuhao, you, you, this... this is impossible!" Zhou Yi's eyes were filled with a look of inconceivability, as was Fan Yu. The husband-and-wife duo looked at Huo Yuhao as if they were looking at a monster.

After putting his clothes back on, Huo Yuhao withdrew his martial soul and stood there obediently, "Teacher, Teacher Zhou, I don't understand what happened either. Can the two of you explain this

doubt of mine? In any case, I'm no longer afraid of the cold after I obtained this power. It seems as though I've already become a part of that world of ice and snow."

Suddenly, Zhou Yi's eyes lit up. She looked towards Fan Yu, "Do you think it's related to his Body Soul? Yuhao's Spirit Eyes should be a Body Soul. I've heard Teacher Wang Yan say that powerful Body Soul soul masters will have a second awakening of their martial soul. If that's truly the case, although the situation he's in right now seems extraordinary, it isn't fully unexplainable. Why don't I go find Wang Yan now and ask him about it?"

Zhou Yi was always the type of person who would act immediately. Just as she said that she was about to leave, Fan Yu grabbed her by the arm, "No, you can't go. Quiet down a little. If you let Wang Yan know about this, do you think the Martial Soul Department will let Yuhao go?"

Zhou Yi was stunned. As she looked towards the determined gaze in Fan Yu's eyes, she immediately understood what he meant. She remained silent after that.

Fan Yu sat back down, then looked towards Huo Yuhao, "Yuhao, this situation that's occurred to you is an extremely rare occurrence among us soul masters. This is the first time we've encountered a situation like this. Therefore, we're unable to give you a full explanation. However, according to our estimations, it should be something related to your martial soul. Body Souls have always been an extremely mysterious existence. There's a mysterious sect within the continent called the Body Sect, and they've always been doing their best to collect and cultivate soul masters who possess Body Souls. Perhaps they're the only people who could understand what's happened to your body. Teacher can tell you that this isn't a bad thing. From what you've shown us, you should have a second martial soul now. Moreover, this martial soul has a thousand year soul ring. It could've been given to you by the dead Ice Jade Scorpion you found beside you. As for why you were able to obtain an Ice Jade Scorpion as your second martial soul, we can't explain this. However, this is absolutely a good thing for you. The Ice Jade Scorpion ranks among the apex of assault-type martial souls belonging to the ice attribute, and it'll have extremely large benefits towards your future cultivation. Do you understand what I'm saying?"

Huo Yuhao nodded, "Teacher, then what should I do now?"

Fan Yu said, "Let me settle the issue of you being late. I'll formally announce the fact that you're a core disciple of the Martial Soul Department. In addition to that, I'll give a report to the academy that the reason why you were late was because you were helping me complete a task I assigned to you. However, if we do it like this, you won't be able to become a core disciple of the Martial Soul Department in the future. Teacher isn't willing to force you, so you'll have to make a choice by yourself. However, I can guarantee you that the moment the Martial Soul Department discovers that you're a twin-souled soul master who has a thousand year soul ring as your second martial soul's first soul ring, they won't expel you. Because of this, you have to decide by yourself whether you want to study alongside me or remain in the Martial Soul Department as a core disciple."

"As for your future cultivation, I personally believe that you should focus on your Spirit Eyes regardless of whether you stay in the Martial Soul Department or fully transfer to the Soul Tool Department. The greatest advantage of twin martial souls lies in the fact that you can add soul rings to your second martial soul once your cultivation's strong enough. At that time, the advantage of a twin-souled soul master can be fully displayed. However, you've already walked the path of your Spirit Eyes, so it'd be

better for you to not easily change your style of fighting. Earlier, you said that you'd obtained a second soul skill for your Spirit Eyes. Since that's the case, you should continue to cultivate your Spirit Eyes, and not this new martial soul you've just obtained. It's strange how you obtained this new martial soul, so we should observe it for a bit more before doing anything. Let us see your second soul ring first."