

## Tang Sect 61

### Chapter 61.1: Icy Domain and the Golden Light

Core disciples were entitled to a sumptuous breakfast. Furthermore, Huo Yuhao was now a core disciple of both the Martial Soul Department and the Soul Tool Department at the same time.

Normally, he'd only eat the food supplied by the Soul Tool Department, as it was more exquisite and precious than the Martial Soul Department's. However, he was extremely famished today, and his body was in dire need of a large quantity of nutrients. As such, he devoured both of the breakfasts he was provided with today.

Just as he was about to finish his meal, Wang Dong walked in in a dispirited and downcast mood. The moment he walked through the doors, Wang Dong spotted Huo Yuhao, who was pigging out. When he saw him, he immediately began to take large strides towards Huo Yuhao.

"Yuhao, are you alright? Ma Xiaotao didn't do anything to you, right?" Wang Dong ran over to him and questioned him impatiently.

Huo Yuhao kept a natural expression on his face as he replied, "I'm alright! In fact, I'm doing quite well. I simply accompanied senior sister Xiaotao to cultivate. You should know just how extraordinary the nature of her martial soul is. With my help, she's managed to suppress that demonic fire of hers."

When he'd left the Sea God's Island and returned to the lakeside, he'd firmly made up his mind: No matter who it was that questioned him, he wouldn't say what had really happened, even if he was beaten to death. It was too embarrassing!

Wang Dong gazed at him and felt a bit apprehensive. His nose twitched and he asked, "What's that fragrance?"

As a person who could normally control his desire very well, Huo Yuhao was used to controlling everything to the best of his ability. As such, he'd already thought of a countermeasure for this situation a long time ago. Without the slightest bit of hesitation, he sighed and replied, "It's because it was extremely exhausting when I cultivated with senior sister Xiaotao. That phoenix flame of hers is really strong, thus I ended up sweating all over. When I was done, I borrowed her washing liquid to wash my clothes. I never expected her to use such a fragrant washing liquid with that fierce personality of hers."

Wang Dong couldn't find a single mistake in what Huo Yuhao said, thus he gradually heaved a sigh of relief. However, he still bore a little resentment and said, "You actually needed a whole day to cultivate. Ma Xiaotao is too overbearing! What happens if it ends up interfering with your studies? Oh right, Teacher Zhou asked for us to see her in her office today before class starts. It seems like there's something going on, as we weren't the only ones called. All of the core disciples have to go and see her. It seems that they're giving us special attention now."

Huo Yuhao nodded and said, "This is a good thing! What was Dai Huabin's reaction?"

Wang Dong shook his head and replied, "Nothing. I haven't even seen that fellow since back then. Gosh, are you a pig? How much have you eaten?!" He'd only just now noticed that the table had been filled with empty plates.

Huo Yuhao laughed sheepishly and said, "I exhausted quite a bit of energy cultivating yesterday. However, what senior brother Xu Sanshi said at back then was correct. Even though it's painful to cultivate with senior sister Ma, the increased speed of cultivation I get is pretty good. I even asked her to help me melt that Whale Rubber so that I could eat it. Oh right, has your soul bone arrived yet?"

Wang Dong immediately became excited when he mentioned the Golden Light Left Arm Bone, and nodded repeatedly as he said, "Yep, it's already arrived. Can you protect me tonight so that I can fuse with it? I've already gotten permission from Teacher Zhou for a leave of absence. It won't be a problem even if it takes me more than a day to fuse with the soul bone."

Huo Yuhao nodded and replied, "Then I'll ask Teacher Fan Yu for some materials tonight so that I can remodel my soul tool in our dorm room while I'm watching over you."

Once he'd finished his breakfast, Huo Yuhao returned to the dormitory to freshen up. Afterwards, he changed into a new school uniform before heading off to find Zhou Yi with Wang Dong.

It was still both extremely sunny and cloudless today. Moreover, a new school term had begun in Shrek Academy. Students from every year group were all facing different levels of pressure. The new students had the Freshmen Examination, while students from higher year groups had both their Advancement Examination and courses to study for.

Huo Yuhao lightly knocked on the office door a few times.

"Enter." Zhou Yi's ever ice-cold voice rang out.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong pushed opened the door and entered.

The room was already full of core disciples from Class 1. Besides Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong, Xiao Xiao, Lan Susu, Lan Luoluo, Chao Jinxuan and Huang Chutian, who had officially become a core disciple, were all present in the room. As such, there were a total of eight people from their class present.

Zhou Yi intentionally glanced towards Huo Yuhao. When she saw that his expression was normal, she didn't ask any questions. With a cough, she directed everyone's line of sight towards herself. "The reason I called you guys here today is because I have a special situation that I need to inform you guys about: In three days time, the outer courtyard will be organizing a core disciple qualification match. Originally, it didn't have anything to do with second years, but the academy suddenly decided to let the Year 2 core disciples participate in the match as well. As a result of this, you guys will need to prepare yourselves."

Feeling somewhat curious, Zhou Sichen asked, "Teacher Zhou, what's this qualification match for?"

Zhou Yi replied, "However, you guys don't need to be too worried about it. There won't be any sort of punishment if you lose this qualification match. Those participating are all core disciples from the outer courtyard who are fifteen years old and under. People from the Soul Tool Department will also be attending. According to my calculations, there are around thirty people participating in the match. We'll be choosing seven from this group to take part in a mission. As for what sort of mission it is, only the students who win will know what sort of mission it is. It's worth noting that these places would normally belong to students from the third, fourth, and fifth years. However, you guys are lucky to be able to

participate in this match. You guys should do your best. We have eight core disciples from our class; at least try not to be completely wiped out.”

Hearing Zhou Yi speak as though she didn't think of the matter as very important, everyone immediately heaved a sigh of relief. They'd even silently cursed at the academy in their hearts for having a bit too many examinations. The Advancement Examination had just ended! What was the deal with a Core Disciple Examination now?

“Alright, you guys head back to the classroom first. Huo Yuhao, stay behind for awhile. The rest of you can head back first.”

“Yes.” Everyone uniformly replied. As they left, Zhou Sichen shot Huo Yuhao a glance that said that he was rejoicing in his demise. Afterwards, he took the lead and left the office with Cao Jinxuan.

Wang Dong said in a low tone, “Xiao Xiao and I will wait for you outside.”

Once the others had left the room, Huo Yuhao obediently closed the door. He then turned around and faced Zhou Yi as he asked, “Teacher Zhou, do you still have something to tell me?”

Zhou Yi indifferently replied, “I'm only relaying a message from Dean Yan and Dean Xian. Both of them mentioned that it would be fine, even if the others don't enter the top seven. However, they said that if you fail to do so, you'll suffer the consequences.”

“Um...” When he heard her say this, Huo Yuhao suddenly felt that the pressure weighing down on him was as great as a mountain! “Teacher Zhou, that's impossible! If the students from the outer courtyard were to compete with the core disciples in terms of strength alone, I would definitely be ranked amongst the top! However, there will be senior students participating in this match as well!”

A hint of a smile appeared in Zhou Yi's eyes when she heard this. She stood up and replied, “It's useless to talk to me about this, as I'm simply relaying their message to you. If you have the guts to do so, reason it out with Dean Yan and Dean Xian. Now then, get going, you still have a class to attend.”

“I...” Huo Yuhao immediately became crestfallen. Even though he felt confident about his abilities, that still depended on the circumstances! He'd be competing against a bunch of senior core disciples; how could it be that easy?! Disregarding the other students, Bei Bei, Xu Sanshi and Jiang Nannan alone were bound to be within the fifteen-year-old category, along with the many core disciples he'd never seen before. All three of them had four soul rings! He definitely didn't think that he could fight against his seniors with four soul rings—even if he did have an Ultimate martial soul.

Once he left the room, he noticed Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao waiting for him.

“Why did Teacher Zhou ask you to stay behind?” Wang Dong asked curiously.

This wasn't something that he could hide, thus Huo Yuhao told them what Zhou Yi had told him with a depressed look on his face. By the time he'd finished, Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao couldn't help but look at each other in dismay. They then simultaneously patted him on the shoulder. “You'd best rely on yourself, rather than on us.”

Huo Yuhao was full of lament and resentment as he replied, “Are you guys even human?! You're not even comforting me!”

Wang Dong laughed mischievously and said, "Who asked you to become a core disciple of two departments? Who asked you to show such an outstanding performance in the Advancement Examination, and to even have an Ultimate martial soul?! We'll cheer for you. Oh right, I keep forgetting to ask you. What was the skill you used the other day called? The one that sucked all of our soul power away and released that dark green light."

The reason that both of them had been able to escape their predicament that day was because Huo Yuhao had decisively used that move. It was mainly because he'd used that skill in the nick of time, which had prevented the three flying Soul Kings from pursuing them. They'd then able to escape to Shrek City's northern gates and had managed to wait it out until Ma Xiaotao and Bei Bei came to save them.

Huo Yuhao snorted and replied, "I'll just let you guys rejoice in my misfortune. This elder brother isn't telling you." As soon as he finished speaking, he turned around and headed towards the school building.

Elder Lin's guess that night had been spot on; the skill he'd used back then belonged to the domain-type. Domain-type skills were just as uncommon as Ultimate martial souls. A domain-type soul skill was a skill that affect everything within a certain area based on the user's domain. It could also be regarded as the highest ranked control-type soul skill.

Huo Yuhao's domain-type skill came from the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's torso bone. It was one of the skills she'd bestowed to him, which was known as the 'Domain of Perpetual Ice'.

Based on Huo Yuhao's current cultivation, it was still extremely difficult for him to properly use the Domain of Perpetual Ice. He'd still only been able to use a fraction of the skill, despite having borrowed Wang Dong's power that day. If he wanted to fully unleash the potential of this soul skill, he'd have to wait until he'd managed to obtain seven soul rings at the very least.

When the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion had been known as the Tyrant of the Extreme North, her Domain of Perpetual Ice could freeze over a thousand miles in an instant. As such, it was the one of the highest ranked origin skills. If Huo Yuhao wanted to use the skill at the same level that the Ice Empress had, he'd have to cultivate to the stage that she had been at.

Huo Yuhao was immersed in his anxiety the entire day during his classes. Regardless of how much he mulled the matter over, he couldn't think of a way to rise above a bunch of core disciples. However, he didn't complain about anything in his state of depression. Besides, he'd received preferential treatment from the academy during the Treasure Appreciation Auction; he couldn't say anything, even if he was currently facing pressure!

In the end, Huo Yuhao came to the conclusion that he'd just have to stake it all in the match.

## Chapter 61.2: Icy Domain and the Golden Light

However, when he went to the Soul Tool Department in the evening to study with Fan Yu, he finally received good news. This time, the core disciples of the Martial and Soul Tool Departments would jointly participate in the test. In other words, the two departments wouldn't be separated. In the Soul Tool Department, the number of core disciples under the age of fifteen was scarce. The only ones that could participate and had some hope of being selected were He Caitou and Huo Yuhao. Thus, Fan Yu had directly removed all those students that didn't have any chance of passing the preliminary round. With

that, the number of participants had dropped even more. And since he was a core disciple of both departments, Huo Yuhao could use soul tools during the test! This was a great boost to his fighting capability.

After consulting with the professors and receiving some pointers from Fan Yu, Huo Yuhao started to create a Class 2 soul tool that would suit him. He had only three days to improve his equipment.

For the sake of saving time, as soon as he finished his class, he decided to bring all the parts back to the dormitory. He was planning to assemble his soul tool while acting as a protector for Wang Dong, who would absorb the soul bone from the auction in the meantime.

As soon as he opened the dormitory door, he was welcomed by a burst of warm and comfortable golden light that almost made him jump out of his skin. He quickly closed the door behind him.

In the middle of their dorm room, Wang Dong was earnestly inspecting the Golden Light Left Arm Bone, which was hovering in mid-air. He seemed completely engrossed by it and didn't even spare any attention to Huo Yuhao's return.

Huo Yuhao sat beside him and also carefully observed the bone. Without the barrier of the stall, one could completely experience the awesomeness of this bone just by being near it.

It hadn't been priced at 9.5 million Gold Soul Coins for nothing! It looked like an artificial sun as it hovered in the middle of the room. Its warmth filled light had spread to every corner of the room and dispersed every shadow from every corner and nook. Apart from its warmth, the golden halo also radiated a faint pressure.

The most eye-catching parts were the fingertips. They were a pulsating strange reddish-gold light surrounding them which was continuously emitting a sharp 'chi chi' sound. n)-OVELb1n

Huo Yuhao arrived behind Wang Dong and placed his hands on his vest. After that, he slowly poured his soul power into Wang Dong, activating their Haodong Power.

Wang Dong's whole body shook as he finally came back to his senses.

"I'm here. You can start." Huo Yuhao whispered.

"Fine." Wang Dong didn't waste time. He raised his left arm and activated the Haodong Power.

He had already examined the Golden Light Left Arm Bone for more than two hours. The more he looked at it, the more incredible it felt. The bone also seemed to have felt his gaze. The energy within it had started to rhythmically pulse in sync with Wang Dong's breath. This made Wang Dong slowly enter a strange meditative state.

If he had to describe his relationship with this soul bone, the most apt description would be 'like attracts like'.

When the soul power of his left arm came in contact with the left arm bone, the reddish-gold light rushed toward him and started to twine around his arm.

Immediately, Wang Dong's entire body was covered with the shining reddish-gold light. A rich, dense aura of warmth rose and surged about while Wang Dong exhaled deeply. Following which, he closed his eyes and stood there calmly, enjoying the fusion.

At this point in the fusion process, the Haodong Power was irrelevant. Therefore, Huo Yuhao slowly stopped pouring his soul power into him. After stepping around in front of Wang Dong, he looked at his satisfied face and felt that it was somewhat unfair.

They had both fused with a soul bone. But why was the difference so big?

"Idiot. This is called compatibility. This soul bone has a very high compatibility with his body. Therefore, the fusion will also be very simple and quick. On the other hand, what was your cultivation level when you merged with me? Moreover, I was still alive when we combined. It's already a miracle that you succeeded at all." The Ice Impress said in a dissatisfied manner.

Huo Yuhao was startled, "Ice Impress! Skydream! Where did the two of you go?! Didn't you hear me when I was calling you earlier? Why did the two of you keep ignoring me?"

Be it when he and Wang Dong were in danger or when he was in that awkward situation with Ma Xiaotao, these two intelligent soul rings had acted as if they didn't exist.

The Skydream Iceworm said lazily, "If you rely on us for everything, how are you ever going to become strong? We can help you raise your strength but at the end of the day, the one that has to make the breakthroughs is you. Moreover, the more your cultivation rises, the more you'll need to rely on yourself. If you can resolve the situation on your own, we're unlikely to intervene. And you have to remember that we're only soul rings, not your bodyguards. Our strength has long since merged inside your body. If you encounter a dangerous situation, we're as powerless as you in dealing with it. In the worst case, we'll die together with you! That's why you have to rely on your own power, and not on us."

Although Huo Yuhao had already left them very satisfied, nonetheless the Skydream Iceworm and the Ice Empress knew that he would have to do way better if he wanted to become stronger and shock even them.

Huo Yuhao hadn't really blamed them for their actions. Therefore, he immediately said in a somewhat ashamed manner, "I'm sorry. I didn't think that someone would ambush us. I'll be more careful from now on."

The Skydream Iceworm said, "We have good news for you. You didn't suffer in vain yesterday. Although that girl's phoenix flames weren't very pure, their temperature was still quite good. In addition, the benefits your body received from that Ten Thousand Year Whale Rubber were greater than what we had imagined. Therefore, we unsealed some more of our power and merged it with our soul rings and soul bones. Your soul power also increased a bit thanks to the Ice Impress giving you a part of her power. According to our calculations, all of your soul rings can now put out around 4200 years of power. The power of your skills has also slightly increased. However, you'll need to train even more now. The stronger the soul skill, the larger its consumption of soul power. If you don't have enough soul power, it will all be for naught."

As expected, it was very good news. Huo Yuhao was very happy. It was also the greatest benefit that these two sentient soul rings had brought him. Maybe, if he kept cultivating like this... one day, he

wouldn't need to use his imitation skill to have red soul rings! No one else could raise the strength of their soul rings, but he could!

"Awesome, thank you very much. I won't slack off. However, I can't cultivate tonight since I need to act as a protector for Wang Dong."

The fusion between Wang Dong and the Gold Light Left Arm Bone went more smoothly than he had imagined. The entire process from start to finish was completed in less than six hours. The process came to an end as the last thread of reddish-gold light merged into his left arm.

Huo Yuhao didn't sleep for the whole night. While acting as a protector for Wang Dong, he had also been assembling his Class 2 soul tool. Since acting as a protector was distracting, he didn't engrave the formation arrays. However, he still made a few accessories.

"Huuuu" After a long exhale, Wang Dong slowly opened his eyes. The reddish-gold light wasn't flickering through his eyes anymore.

Huo Yuhao felt that Wang Dong's disposition had changed a bit. Before, he had given off a gentle and refined feeling. But now, he seemed somewhat aggressive. It was rather similar to the feeling Ma Xiaotao gave off.

"How is it?" Huo Yuhao asked quickly.

Wang Dong nodded and replied, "I've succeeded."

"Why don't you try out your soul skill?" Huo Yuhao asked curiously.

Wang Dong said, "First, tell me about your soul skill. I'll try mine afterward."

"You still remember!" Huo Yuhao said with a smile, "Fine, I'll tell you. The name of this skill is Domain of Perpetual Ice. It can reduce the temperature within a certain range. That day, those guys were frozen and fell from the sky as a consequence of this skill. What about yours?"

Wang Dong glared at him and responded, "It's better if you look." With that, he excitedly raised his left arm. The wings of the Radiant Butterfly Goddess tore the back of his shirt and slowly spread out. Then, his left arm was completely covered in a reddish-gold radiance.

The reddish-gold light was accompanied by a dragon's roar as it pushed forwards. Afterwards, a layer of reddish-gold flames started to cover his wings. It seemed as if those already beautiful wings now had an additional outer garment, making them look even bigger. The entire room was filled with the aura of the Radiant Butterfly Goddess.

"It's called 'Golden Light', and it's an auxiliary-type skill. It can be used with any of my soul skills. I'm also unaware of its concrete ability. I'll need to test it out. But it should have the ability to increase the destructive power of my light element."

Huo Yuhao's eyes lit up. "This soul bone skill can give you an overall power up. I think I've heard Teacher Wang say that an ability like this was very rare!"

Wang Dong, who was releasing the golden light, had an even more surprised look right now. "The restoration rate of my soul power seems to have increased as well. Just like you can feel your soul

power slowly reducing when you release your martial soul, right now, I can feel my soul power slowly increasing. Although it's not very clear, I can still feel it."

Huo Yuhao grabbed Wang Dong's hand. Their soul power mixed, transforming into Haodong Power. Immediately, Huo Yuhao also felt a dense light aura entering Wang Dong's body, slowly helping him recover his soul power. At this time, his soul power was abundant. Therefore, it was difficult to feel the recovering soul power clearly.

Huo Yuhao manipulated his soul power and released several skills, such as Spiritual Detection, Spiritual Sharing, Spiritual Shock, and Spiritual Interference, to consume their Haodong Power.

Under these circumstances, the feeling became clearer. That dense light aura started to quickly pour into Wang Dong's body. What made them even more surprised was that after once this light energy had poured into his body, no matter what skill it was, they all had an overall increase in power. The soul power of Huo Yuhao's Mysterious Heaven Technique was fairly calm and didn't cause any trouble either. Moreover, after mixing his power with Wang Dong's and activating the Haodong Power, Wang Dong was also able to directly make use of this power. And now, under the effect of the Golden Light, they could even recover their Haodong Power.

### Chapter 61.3: Icy Domain and the Golden Light

This surprise was simply too pleasant for them. Regardless of how much the Golden Light amplified Wang Dong's offensive capabilities, the simple fact that it could simultaneously restore their soul power was an enormous gain for them! Their combat strength in a prolonged battle would drastically increase now that they had this. Coincidentally, the Skydream Iceworm had brought up the issue of his soul power consumption in battle earlier.

"This is great news!" Huo Yuhao cheered, then immediately gave Wang Dong a big hug.

Wang Dong was dumbstruck when Huo Yuhao hugged him. His face reddened, but he didn't resist, nor did he hug Huo Yuhao back.

Huo Yuhao didn't feel that it was strange at all and smiled mischievously. "Quick, let's cultivate together to see if this golden light has any effect on our cultivation."

However, the facts proved that they hadn't been possessed by the God of Luck. The golden light was only capable of helping them restore their soul power; it didn't benefit their cultivation whatsoever. Despite this, their excitement didn't diminish in the slightest. The core disciples' qualification match would begin in two days, thus any increase to Wang Dong's strength would be incredibly helpful. n)-  
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The following two days were undoubtedly both tense and busy for Huo Yuhao. Besides his daily cultivation and studies, he also had to dedicate all of his energy to soul tool creation. For the sake of helping him progress faster, Fan Yu personally helped him create a few simple yet time-consuming components for a few of his soul tools. However, the formation arrays of the soul tools would still have to be personally done by Huo Yuhao. Fan Yu was very specific on this point. Even though he favoured Huo Yuhao, he was still a strict teacher.



Nobody knew how the core disciples' qualification match would be carried out. Despite this, it was inescapable for all of the core disciples. Fortunately, they wouldn't receive a punishment if they lost this match.

"Ding—" The class bell rang, signifying that their classes for the day had ended. The students from Class 1 immediately began to relax when they heard the bell.

In Shrek Academy, managing to rise to second years from freshmen was equivalent to managing to pass through a strict filter; every single student left was of sufficient strength. Furthermore, now that they'd finished their studies as a first year student, they truly understood just how hard they'd have to work to remain students. Because of this, every single student was serious about their studies. If they didn't work hard, it would only signify their expulsion.

Graduates from Shrek Academy were extremely popular on the continent, however graduating from Shrek Academy was easier said than done. Furthermore, this only referred to the outer courtyard.

Wang Yan tidied up his lesson plans, then said, "Those of you who are core disciples stay behind. I need you all to follow me to the Soul Duelling Area for a while."

It's come! The spirits of the core disciples present were instantly aroused. They all knew that the qualification match was about to start. However, they hadn't expected the test to be held after class had ended. Since it was, their class time hadn't be wasted at all.

The number of core disciples in Huo Yuhao's generation was extremely high; it was slightly higher than the previous generations. Class 1 alone had eight, while Class 2's Dai Huabin, Xie Huanyue, Zhu Lu, and Wu Feng—as well as Class 3's Ning Feng—made for a total of twelve core disciples. This was an extremely rare sight in Shrek Academy's outer courtyard.

The combined total of third year and fourth year core disciples was around this number.

When they left the classroom, Huo Yuhao immediately saw Dai Huabin, Xie Huanyue, Zhu Lu, and Wu Feng leaving their class together as well. Their teacher in charge, Mu Jin, lead them as they left.

Dai Huabin naturally saw Huo Yuhao as well, and a cold light flashed through his eyes when he did. He concealed his own emotions very well however, as he simply looked away from Huo Yuhao as they left. He didn't even spare him a second glance. Though his status as a core disciple hadn't changed, he'd still received a strict warning from the college. He'd also just found out that the corpses of the six experts who'd died in battle had been sent back to the White Tiger Duke's Mansion. Furthermore, this had all been done in the past two days. Fortunately, his father hadn't returned yet, thus his mother had been able to keep everything under control. If she hadn't, he'd have had to suffer his father's wrath.

Due to this, even though the rancor in his heart had deepened, his only choice was to hide it in the depths of his heart and not reveal any of it. Shrek Academy had already given the White Tiger Duke's Mansion quite a bit of face, despite not possessing any concrete evidence. Considering the academy's power, did the fact that they didn't have any concrete evidence really matter? At the very least, having him expelled wouldn't trouble the academy in the slightest.

Dai Huabin was similarly terrified once he realized the consequences of his actions. He couldn't afford to affect his future prospects just for the sake of some petty revenge.

Ning Tian—who hadn't been seen in ages—glanced at Huo Yuhao the moment she came out from Class 3 just like Dai Huabin.

The twelve core disciples of Year 2 left the teaching building as they followed the three teachers and headed towards the Soul Duelling Area.

Huo Yuhao saw a few familiar faces when they neared the Soul Duelling Area.

His senior brother Bei Bei, Xu Sanshi, and Jiang Nannan appeared in his line of sight; all of them were Year 5 core disciples. The most conspicuous of them were still the twin stars, Bei Bei and Xu Sanshi. The core disciples of Year 5 naturally weren't limited to the three of them, but they were the only ones who hadn't had their fifteenth birthday yet. They were, without a doubt, the strongest amongst the core disciples of the outer courtyard.

Soul Elders were very common in the outer courtyard, but there were very few students below Year 5 capable of reaching the four-ringed rank.

Advancing from a Soul Elder to a Soul Ancestor was much more difficult than advancing from a Soul Grandmaster to a Soul Elder. This point alone was enough to demonstrate Dai Huabin's extraordinary talent. He hadn't even turned thirteen, yet he'd already reached Rank 37. He was absolutely at the forefront of Shrek Academy. This was also one of the main reasons the academy hadn't been willing to give up on him so easily. However, his path to the inner courtyard had temporarily been sealed away. It would depend on whether or not he could explode out with an even greater amount of strength, such that it moved the academy's upper echelon, if he wanted to reopen this path. Shrek Academy wasn't owned by Huo Yuhao, and while it was true that his Ultimate martial soul had attracted the academy's attention, it wasn't as if the academy would give up on other talents because of him. Of course, Dai Huabin still had to suffer punishment for doing something malicious. As such, it had become much harder for him to enter the inner courtyard.

In reality, there weren't any other four-ringed core disciples besides Bei Bei's group of three. The third and fourth year core disciples began to arrive in succession, but He Caitou was the only core disciple of the Soul Tool Department to arrive. The final number of students participating in the match was twenty-seven, but the second year students occupied half of these spots.

Students from different classes stood behind their teachers in charge and waited silently. Though this test had come about somewhat mysteriously, and even though there wasn't any punishment if they did badly in it, anyone who could become a core disciple was quite gifted amongst their peers. Naturally, the more talented one was, the more confident one would be. None of them were willing to give up easily.

Dai Huabin stood there, eager to give it a go. He'd reached Rank 37, thus he wasn't really afraid of the core disciples from the higher year groups. From his point of view, this was an opportunity he could use to prove himself. Even though the teachers hadn't explained the benefits they'd receive if they entered into the top 7, the academy definitely had its own motives.

At that moment, a swaying figure slowly walked towards the Soul Duelling Area. His swaying appearance gave the impression that he could fall down at any time.

Huo Yuhao revealed a trace of astonishment on his face when he saw him. Wasn't that Elder Xuan? Even though a large portion of his face was covered by his messy hair, the signature calabash of alcohol in his left hand and the chicken leg in his right immediately revealed who he was. Besides Elder Xuan, Huo Yuhao had never seen a person within Shrek Academy act like this.

Elder Xuan unsteadily walked towards the group of students, then raised his head with an intoxicated look in his eyes. "Little Wang."

"Elder Xuan." Wang Yan hurriedly stepped forward and bowed respectfully.

"Is everyone present?" Elder Xuan asked.

Wang Yan replied, "Everyone's arrived. There are a total of twenty six core disciples from the Martial Soul Department between Year 2 and Year 5, while only a single person has come from the Soul Tool Department."

"Oh. Let's head in then." With that, Elder Xuan turned around and wobbled his way into the Soul Duelling Arena.

Most of the core disciples had never seen Elder Xuan before. Because of this, a large number of them had doubts in their heart. Dai Huabin couldn't help but whisper to Xie Huanyue, who was beside him, "Who's this drunkard?"

Xie Huanyue shook his head, but didn't reply.

The Soul Duelling Arena looked like it usually did, except for the fact that there were no other teachers or students present.

Elder Xuan walked all the way to the middle of the Area before he stopped. The core disciples also stopped, along with their teachers.

Elder Xuan spoke in a muffled voice, "Listen up you brats. The test you're about to take is extremely simple. I call it the Collective Chaotic Battle. It will be held in this Soul Duelling Area, and you're free to attack whenever and however you wish. There are no rules in this competition. If you surrender or are rescued by a teacher, you'll be eliminated. The last seven people will be the victors of this battle. Alright, I'm done explaining. Teachers, get ready. Once this old man gives the signal, you can start fighting."

"Even this sort of thing is possible?" The students present couldn't help but look at each other in shock when they they heard Elder Xuan's words. They'd never seen a test like this before. There were twenty-seven people here! Furthermore, everyone here had different cultivations and specialties! How would they be able to test anything on a chaotic battle like this?

The teachers naturally wouldn't disobey Elder Xuan's order, thus they left the Soul Duelling Arena one by one.

Elder Xuan didn't wait for the students within the Area to react as he suddenly raised the bottle gourd in his hand and shouted, "Begin!"

With a 'whoosh', Elder Xuan's figure vanished, which left only the twenty-seven core disciples of the outer courtyard in the Soul Duelling Arena

The sudden change in events truly happened too fast, thus the students present momentarily paused when they heard Elder Xuan's shout. Immediately afterwards, all of them made a different decision.

Huo Yuhao's reaction was extremely quick: He immediately stretched his hands out and grabbed both Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao's hands. Afterwards, a light erupted from his back, and he shot towards Bei Bei with the two of them in tow.

#### Chapter 62.1: The Chaotic Preliminaries

How exactly could a chaotic battle involving several tens of people be conducted? Considering that the participants ranged second- to fifth-year students, there was inevitably a large gap in their cultivations. This difference wasn't something that could just be made up with numbers.

Even if five or six people were to simultaneously attack Bei Bei, Xu Sanshi, and the rest, they still wouldn't be able to take them down! As such, almost everyone began to form alliances once the battle had started.

Huo Yuhao didn't form a team with the other Class 1 students. First off, they couldn't be considered to be well coordinated. Second, all of them were only second year students. In a chaotic battle such as this, they wouldn't have any chance at winning even if they all teamed up.

Huo Yuhao's first choice was to find his senior brother, as it was cooling to rest under a large tree.

Bei Bei naturally understood Huo Yuhao's intention, as he growled, "Sanshi, Nannan, let's work together." All three of them were fifth year students with four soul rings; it would be extremely easy for them to be attacked from all sides. Furthermore, their relationship was extremely subtle. A large number of people thought that Bei Bei and Xu Sanshi were rivals, yet in reality they were extremely good friends. At the same time, even though Jiang Nannan didn't have a deep connection with them, she naturally wouldn't make a bad decision considering their situation. Moreover, she was good friends with Tang Ya.

Other than Huo Yuhao's group, who'd decided to make do by themselves, the other students had all looked for companions that were near them. Dai Huabin, Xie Huan Yue, and Zhu Lu naturally decided to form a team together. Afterwards, they dragged their classmate Wu Feng and the nearby Ning Tian into their team in order to form a small, five-man team.

The other third and fourth year students formed their own teams, while the Lan sisters naturally formed a team with Huang Chutian. On the other hand, Zhou Sichen and Cao Jinxuan decided to follow Huo Yuhao's trio, and rushed towards Bei Bei. The two of them were extremely clever; when they'd witnessed Huo Yuhao reveal his astonishing amount of talent, they'd naturally understood that, at the very least, no harm would come from following him. Unfortunately, they weren't him, nor did they possess something like his soul thruster. The two of them were immediately left behind as soon as he accelerated with the use of his soul thruster.

Of everyone present, the only person who hadn't found a team was the tall and sturdy He Caitou, who was also the only core disciple from the Soul Tool Department participating in the event.

While the others scrambled to form teams, he stood there like a steel machine. A large number of tube-shaped pieces of metal began to appear all over his body, which caused him to resemble an enormous

steel hedgehog. Despite the many tubes that had appeared, the most terrifying things on his body were still the two enormous, thigh-sized cannons on his shoulders. Even if some of the students from the Martial Soul Department didn't know that they were stationary soul tools, they were still able to sense a terrifying sensation of crisis from them.

He Caitou had followed Fan Yu for a long period of time, as Fan Yu was the who'd brought him to Shrek Academy. The instant that the large number of soul tools appeared all over his body, two yellow and two purple soul rings rose up from beneath him and simultaneously lit up. Impressively, he'd managed to become a Soul Ancestor-ranked expert.

After all of the metallic tubes had emerged from his body, He Caitou mercilessly launched a volley of attacks towards the area that held the largest number of people...

Over twenty beams of light suddenly emerged from his body towards his target, and the ripples of soul power that instantaneously exploded outwards stunned everyone present.

Zhou Sichen and Cao Jianxuan were the most unlucky of those he'd targeted, as they had to bear the brunt of the terrifying volley of light. The barrage of attacks he sent towards them came too suddenly, and moved too fast for them to dodge. Furthermore, as an attack launched from a soul tool, it hadn't had any starting signs. This was also their first time facing one, thus they were somewhat stunned for a brief period of time.

The moment they were about to be hit, the two of them felt their bodies suddenly lighten. Immediately afterwards, they felt themselves soar into the sky and vanish from the battlefield.

"The two of you are eliminated." The smell of alcohol assaulted their noses as Zhou Sichen and Cao Jianxuan's found that, to their astonishment, they were now hovering in the air beside Elder Xuan, and a faint halo of light had covered their bodies.

A loud explosion then rang out from the ground beneath them.

The might of twenty soul tools was simply astonishing. Amidst the violent explosions, everyone other than Zhou Sichen and Cao Jianxuan—who'd been directly eliminated—hastily dodged to the side.

He Caitou hadn't launched his attack for nothing. In fact, he'd done it for the sake of his little junior brother. If he hadn't, why would his attack have perfectly collided with Zhou Sichen and Cao Jinxuan? Huo Yuhao made use of He Caitou's covering fire to smoothly reach Bei Bei's group of three with Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao. *novel*lb-1n

"Senior brother He, this way." Huo Yuhao waved towards He Caitou once he'd reached Bei Bei, then immediately began to release his powerful auxiliary abilities.

Huo Yuhao's eyes lit up with a faint golden color as his Spiritual Detection Sharing instantly enveloped Wang Dong, Xiao Xiao, Bei Bei, Xu Sanshi, Jiang Nannan, and He Caitou.

Of the six of them, Xu Sanshi and Jiang Nannan were the only ones who hadn't experienced Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection before. As such, the two of them were immediately astonished when they were enveloped by it.

It had to be known that his Spiritual Detection would grow even stronger as his cultivation increased. Even though it couldn't yet envelop the entire battlefield, it could still cover a large portion of it. A three-dimensional image appeared in all of their minds, after which every single action their surrounding opponents were taking or were about to take was transmitted into their minds via the analysis of Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection. This wonderful sensation of total control was something that no soul master would refuse.

Bei Bei gave Huo Yuhao a big thumbs up, then took a large step forward. He stamped the ground with his right foot, which caused a loud 'boom' to ring out. The sonorous cry of a dragon rang out from his body as he activated the mighty Blue Lightning Tyrant Dragon.

Xu Sanshi also took a step forward, and a dense flow of black air swirled around his body as he raised his enormous Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle. However, when he did so, his expression suddenly became strange.

"Bei Bei, did you use this when you won that Mysterious Water Pill from me? I was wondering how you'd become that fierce. You were cheating."

Bei Bei shot a glance towards the indignant Xu Sanshi, then replied indifferently, "Either way, my junior brother has already eaten it. What're you gonna do about it?"

"I'll settle things with you once we've finished this up," Xu Sanshi retorted angrily.

Next to Bei Bei, who was standing in front alongside Xu Sanshi, stood Jiang Nannan. On the other hand, He Caitou stood behind Bei Bei, while Xiao Xiao and Wang Dong stood next to each other behind him. The last in line was Huo Yuhao.

"We only have seven people, just the right amount." Huo Yuhao's quiet voice rang through the ears of everyone near him. The meaning behind his words was clear; only seven people could pass, and they had seven people in their team. As such, they wouldn't have to distract themselves with any infighting.

"Make your move!" Bei Bei let out a low shout, then took large strides forwards. He had a plentiful amount of battle experience, and it would be impossible for the four Soul Ancestors on their team to not attract any attention. As soon as the others noticed that they'd teamed up, they'd undoubtedly gather all of their strength in order to attack them. Right now was the best time for them to strike in order to gain the upper hand.

However, every single participant was a core disciple. As such, none of them were dumb. The instant that Bei Bei took a step forward, a fourth year core disciple let out a loud shout, "Everyone, let's combine our strengths to deal with that team of four-ringed seniors!"

The words 'four-ringed seniors' were extremely effective towards getting the other eighteen student's attention. When they heard that person's reminder, all of them immediately came to their senses and rapidly closed in on Bei Bei's team.

Seven versus eighteen? Everyone present was a core disciple! Even though Bei Bei's team had four Soul Ancestors, Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong, and Xiao Xiao were still slightly weaker than them. They simply didn't have any chance of winning.

Bei Bei immediately made a quick decision, stopped his charge, and shot to the right. When he did so, Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection transmitted Bei Bei's intention to all of the members in their team.

There were a total of six students from two teams to the right, all of whom were third year students. At that moment, they simultaneously released their martial souls. All of them were three-ringed experts, and all of them had an optimum combination of two yellow soul rings and one purple soul ring.

Their reactions were extremely quick, as each of them attempted to release their respective soul skills concurrently. However, they suddenly felt their minds go blurry for a second, which caused their movements to slow by half a beat.

They couldn't tell who'd made a move, but Huo Yuhao's companions—who were under the effect of his Spiritual Detection Sharing—could sense that he'd released a soul skill.

Bei Bei took the lead and charged mightily into the six soul master's formation, but he was immediately met by two assault-type soul masters.

The long hair of the person on the left turned orange, and his body doubled in size. His martial soul turned out to be the King of the Beasts: The Lion. Immediately afterwards, a pair of enormous palms met Bei Bei's charge. The martial soul of the person on the right was a lance, which turned into a ray of light as it shot towards Bei Bei's chest like a viper. Evidently this wasn't their first time working together. With one person standing in the front and the other person attacking from behind, they were extremely well coordinated. The lance-wielding soul master who was in the back made his move last, but his attack arrived first; his sharp lance shot straight towards Bei Bei's body.

Bei Bei wasn't afraid in the slightest as he faced their attacks. He let out a shout, and countless electric serpents surged from his body. They didn't just envelop the two soul masters in front of him, they also enveloped the other four soul masters behind them.

At the same time, the poignant sound of a flute rang out, which caused the speed of everyone that wasn't on Huo Yuhao's team to decrease. Xiao Xiao had chosen to release her Ninephoenix Worshipping Flute at the most appropriate time.

Bei Bei grabbed the sharp lance that was approaching him with his left dragon claw, which created an intense flurry of sparks. He then swept out with his right claw and sent the three-ringed assault-type master with the Lion martial soul flying.

Jiang Nannan jumped into the air soundlessly as this happened. She was simply too quick, such that even her figure couldn't be seen. She chose to make her move, aided by Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection, at the perfect time. The instant that the soul master who possessed the Lion martial soul flew into the air, his neck was clamped between her legs. She then twisted her waist and sent him flying away from their team.

## **Book 9: Escape - Chapter 62.2: The Chaotic Preliminaries**

The most important combatant among the six soul masters was naturally the one with the Lion martial soul. He was in charge of taking on Bei Bei's attacks in order to win some time for his teammates to surround them. However, he didn't think that a group of Soul Ancestors would be this strong. He'd been sent flying after trying to use just a single soul skill. Moreover, Jiang Nannan had shown mercy.

Otherwise, she could've easily snapped his neck due to the difference in their power. Despite that, he flew into the air and joined the ranks of people standing next to Elder Xuan after being thrown by Jiang Nannan.

Xu Sanshi chose this moment to make his move. He entered the fray from Bei Bei's other side, and his enormous Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle suddenly grew in size and simultaneously blocked the skills of two agility-type soul masters and a control-type soul master. This was done in order to let Bei Bei focus all his power on attacking.

At the same time, the outcome of the battle between the lance-wielding Soul Elder and Bei Bei was revealed. In front of Bei Bei's Thunderous Dragon Claw, his opponent could only last for three seconds before being forced to join his teammate by Elder Xuan's side.

The soul masters in the rear naturally wouldn't just sit and watch while Bei Bei and the rest continued their onslaught. And out of them, the fiercest team was Dai Huabin's temporary team.

The effectiveness of Ning Tian's Seven Treasures Glazed Pagoda revealed itself again. With her support, the strengths of Dai Huabin, Xie Huanyue, Wu Feng, and Zhu Lu were all raised by a single tier. The four of them charged simultaneously, shooting towards Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong, and Xiao Xiao like an arrow, with Dai Huabin and Xie Huanyue spearheading the attack while Wu Feng and Zhu Lu flanked them.

Huo Yuhao and the rest were all at the back, while Bei Bei and Jiang Nannan were currently fighting. As a result, a hole had naturally formed in the rear of their formation.

Huo Yuhao paused, then revealed a brilliant smile towards Dai Huabin and the other people who were charging towards him. Right then, several dozen rays of intense white light shot out to intercept them.

With the accurate aim of Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection, every Soul Ray perfectly intercepted the movements of Dai Huabin and the rest of his team.

Among the ranks of these core disciples, the person who was the strongest in terms of combat strength and offensive power wasn't Bei Bei, nor was it Xu Sanshi. Rather, it was the person who'd just stepped through the threshold of a Class 4 soul engineer, He Caitou.

Under the Soul Emperor rank, soul engineers would have an advantage over soul masters of the same rank. Moreover, He Caitou was Fan Yu's first inheriting disciple and was hence one the best among his peers in terms of his attainments in the field of soul tool creation. This could easily be seen from the might of his soul tools. His soul tools were at least 20% stronger than those made by soul engineers of the same rank in both offensive and defensive capabilities.

Even Xu Sanshi wasn't confident that he could survive He Caitou's all-out barrage of attacks head-on. When facing a soul engineer, a similarly ranked soul master could only do one thing, that was, to do their best to consume their opponent's soul power in order to have a chance of winning.

The instant Bei Bei, Xu Sanshi, and Jiang Nannan released their attacks, He Caitou was already aware of them due to Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection and had changed his strategy accordingly. Because of this, they weren't worried about the rear of their formation at all. At the very least, for the time being, there was no chance of anybody breaking through the barrage of He Caitou's firepower.



Naturally, he wasn't omnipotent. With his current cultivation, he didn't dare to rashly release long-range attacks. Otherwise, the drain on his soul power would be too large. A soul engineer who had no soul power was equivalent to a tiger with no fangs.

A stationary soul tool was naturally an exception to this but if He Caitou actually dared to use one of them in a test, Fan Yu would definitely not forgive him.

"Form a line and charge!" A fourth-year student made a quick decision and shouted as he took the lead. He was also a defense-type Soul Elder, and he pushed his arms forward, causing them to immediately expand and become unusually thick. A purple thousand year soul ring around his body flickered, and thick scales began to form on his arms. He strode forward and blocked He Caitou's barrage of attacks.

Though this was their first time working together, they were elites of Shrek Academy's outer courtyard. Even a single warning would be sufficient to make them change their plans. The panicked group of people who hid behind the defense-type Soul Elder formed an orderly line and charged forward.

This defense-type Soul Elder naturally wasn't comparable to He Caitou, but he was able to temporarily block the latter's attacks by relying on his defensive skills. All he needed to do was help the people behind him approach Huo Yuhao's group.

He Caitou reacted in a composed manner, and proceeded to stop his attacks in a composed manner. As he did so, an enormous cauldron blocked the path of the defense-type Soul Elder.

One of the advantages of advancing in single file was the fact that the range of attacks a team had to withstand would be greatly diminished. Even if He Caitou launched an arced attack, the destructive power of that attack would be greatly decreased. However, advancing in single file had its disadvantages as well. For example, the situation they were in right now. The moment the person at the front of the line was blocked, everyone behind him would have to stop as well. Moreover, a chaotic situation involving collisions of the people behind him could occur.

The people who charged forward felt a slight amount of dizziness flood their minds, and it seemed as though their surroundings had become somewhat illusory.

Huo Yuhao had activated his Spiritual Interference once more.

Spiritual Interference was absolutely not a useless skill. Although it wasn't especially effective, the slight dizziness caused by it could often change the situation of a battle. Furthermore, the greatest advantage of this skill lay in the fact that the user wouldn't suffer any backlash no matter what.

An enormous vertical eye soundlessly appeared at the other end of the orderly line and began to flash with a dazzling golden light. As the enormous Radiant Butterfly Goddess embraced and fused with the vertical eye, the golden light blossomed outwards.

The fusion of blue, purple, and gold formed a horizontal halo of dazzling light that left a brilliant Golden Road wherever it passed through. Following that a fantastic scene occurred, the orderly row of twelve core disciples were instantly dyed gold as the golden light passed through them.

Right, they had fallen into Huo Yuhao's schemes from the very start. As a spiritual control-type soul master, merely releasing his Spiritual Detection wasn't enough, he was controlling the flow of the entire match.

Regardless of whether it was Dai Huabin, Xie Huanyue, Wu Feng, Ning Tian and the others who were familiar with him, or the third and fourth-year students who were unfamiliar with him, absolutely none of them had thought that the two-ringed and three-ringed duo would be able to pose a threat.

Their attention had been drawn towards the four Soul Ancestors, Huo Yuhao had relied on this, in addition to He Caitou's powerful offensive capabilities, in order to lure them into a single line. Then, he and Wang Dong released their powerful fusion skill without any hesitation at all.

A Golden Road Amidst Withering Resplendence.

Even the six-ringed Soul Emperor who'd tried to kill them the other day had fallen into his trap, so naturally these core disciples who hadn't even reached the four-ringed rank didn't stand a chance.

As the twelve golden statues stood there, some of the students with weaker cultivations such as the Lan sisters and Huang Chutian began to fall into a critical condition.

The astonished Elder Xuan descended from the air and waved his right hand, causing a pure-white ray to envelop the bodies of every frozen student. Every student the ray landed on softly collapsed to the ground one by one.

The three-ringed students were comparatively better off as they were only left in an extremely disheveled state with their clothes corroded and their martial souls temporarily sealed. A large amount of their soul power had been consumed by the corroding Golden Road. However, the other two-ringed Soul Grandmasters had all fainted. If it weren't for Elder Xuan reacting in time, there was a chance that their lives would've been at risk.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong never thought that their Golden Road would be this effective and were briefly stunned by its effects. Over on the other side, Bei Bei, Xu Sanshi, and Jiang Nannan had also dealt with their six opponents. Impressively, the Soul Duelling Arena was only left with the seven of them.

He Caitou had his mouth wide open from astonishment, and so was Bei Bei's group of three.

The four Soul Ancestors had never thought that the test would actually end like this. The most decisive move in this battle had actually been Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong's.

Furthermore, there was even a pair of twins among their opponents who could release a fusion skill. However, their glory had all been overshadowed by Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong's 'A Golden Road Amidst Withering Resplendence'.

Dai Huabin was rendered speechless.

Ever since he'd lost to Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong, and Xiao Xiao in the finals of the freshmen assessment, he felt very unresigned. He'd always felt that he was much stronger than the three of them.

However, only now did they realize that Du Weilun's initial evaluation after blocking both of their fusion skills had been impartial. The Golden Road formed by Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong was truly something that their Netherworld White Tiger was unable to compare against. Though Dai Huabin didn't understand why this was the case, he still knew that he had thoroughly and completely lost after experiencing the evaporation of half of his soul power.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong glanced at each other. Other than happiness, what else could they see in each other's eyes?

The strength of a fusion skill was intimately related to the synergy between the two parties. Their Golden Road wasn't stronger than the Netherworld White Tiger in terms of the soul skills used, but rather in terms of the compatibility rate their martial souls had. The rarity of a 100% compatible fusion skill was even rarer than an Ultimate martial soul! Only, nobody had asked them about it.

Their cultivations had been steadily rising. Every single one of Huo Yuhao's soul rings had quietly risen to the 4200 year rank while Wang Dong had obtained the Golden Light soul bone. When compared to the day they'd been ambushed, their cultivations had increased by another level. Furthermore, the cooldown period between each use of the Golden Road had decreased to three days. Though all of their soul power would be drained with each use of the skill, the recovery ability of the Golden Light Left Arm Bone was currently helping the two of them recover their soul power as they held hands.

### **Book 9: Escape Chapter 62.3: The Chaotic Preliminaries**

With his cultivation, Elder Xuan only needed a glance to assess the current state of affairs. When he confirmed that no one had been severely injured, he relaxed. He then waved towards the people on the edge of the stage.

Wang Yan, Mu Jin, and rest of the teachers immediately came over.

All of the teachers had witnessed the battle just now. When they gazed at Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong, they felt as if like they were looking at two monsters. Even in this academy of monsters, there shouldn't be someone so monstrous. One of them had two rings, while the other had three. And yet, somehow they'd been able to defeat twelve opponents whose cultivation weren't inferior to their own.

"Those that have been eliminated can head back. You seven, stay behind." Elder Xuan took a bite of his chicken leg when he'd finished. Behind the mass of chaotic hair that covered his face, a strange light flickered through his eyes. He carefully observed Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong.

The students that had fainted were able to regain consciousness with the help of the teachers. Many of them revealed dissatisfied expressions on their faces when they came to. Indeed, many of them hadn't even had enough time to display their full potential before they'd been eliminated.

Therefore, even when they heard Elder Xuan's words, none of them left. Instead, they all silently gazed at him.

Elder Xuan took another bite from his chicken leg, then snorted and said, "Are you all not convinced yet? If you're not convinced of something in the future, you'd better show it with your strength. Do you think that this chaotic battle was unfair? Do you think that it was unfair that you couldn't display all of your abilities amidst all those people, and that you therefore lost in an inconceivable way?"

None of the core disciples replied, but their answer was clear.

Elder Xuan curled his lips and continued, "Was it really that unfair? In a chaotic battle, everyone has to fight for themselves. When you're on the battlefield, do you have the luxury of picking the number of opponents you have to face, or the conditions of the battle? No, you don't. However, in a chaotic battle like this, you all do at least have the same starting point. As such, you won't find yourself in an

immediately hopeless situation. With your current mindsets, none of you are qualified to become inner courtyard disciples. To tell you the truth, this 'unfair' chaotic battle is the best way to assess your actual strength. In this short chaotic battle, I was able to see how well each of you collaborates with others, your individual strength, and even your moral character. The saying that 'those that act in accordance to justice and morality will be widely supported' is utter bullshit. If you want someone's help, you'll need to have good relationships with others. Of course, you'll still need enough strength. However, a person who can't communicate is bound to be unsuccessful."

"A test that consists of a chaotic battle is an extremely common thing in the inner courtyard. If you can't even adapt to the situation, what qualifications do you possess to an inner courtyard disciple? Do you know what the most difficult situation encountered the inner courtyard disciples have faced is? Once, twelve inner courtyard disciples encountered a hundred thousand year soul beast when the teacher wasn't present. Eight of them died in battle. However, the four that survived now stand at the peak amongst the inner courtyard disciples. One of them even obtained the soul ring and soul bone of that hundred thousand year soul beast. Don't make mistakenly think that everything will be fine just because you're studying at Shrek Academy. If you want to become strong, you'll have to face life and death situations several times, even while inside the school."

Elder Xuan's tone was very flat. However, his words contained a formidable amount of spiritual power, which pounded into the hearts of the core disciples like a hammer.

"You should stop thinking that you'll become inner courtyard disciples just because you've managed to become core disciples of the outer courtyard. Even if you do manage to become one, don't think of it as something great, as that's just the starting point; a starting point that can decide your life and death. Do you know what the first thing students do when they become inner courtyard disciples is? They sign a contract of life and death. The only way you can become capable of making the impossible possible is by throwing away all regard for your life and your death. Only then will you be able to become a top-level soul master. Regardless of your family background, once you became an inner courtyard disciple of the academy, you'll become a real member of Shrek Academy. That means that, for your entire life, you'll carry Shrek Academy's mark. However, at the same time, it also means that you'll also face mortal danger every day. You might lose your life at any time. While you're still in the outer courtyard, your security can essentially be guaranteed. However, if you manage to enter the inner courtyard, you'll face all kinds of terrifying tests."

"Do you know how Shrek Academy managed to become the number one academy on the continent and how it managed to not fall over the past ten thousand years? It's all thanks to the efforts of the inner courtyard disciples. It's extremely rare for there to be more than fifty inner courtyard disciples. This is because every year, someone dies. Now then, does anyone still have any questions?"

Elder Xuan's voice had become even colder than normal towards the end. Based on his speech, the core disciples of the outer courtyard had come into contact with the world of the inner courtyard for the first time. It didn't give them hope, but rather somewhat stirred them up and gave them a solemn feeling when they thought about Shrek Academy's glory.

All of their previous resentment had vanished into thin air. Afterwards, all of the core disciples who'd been eliminated lowered their heads and left the Soul Dueling Area one after another. Every single word

said by Elder Xuan had been deeply engraved in their hearts; they wouldn't forget any of them for the rest of their lives.

Wang Yan bowed deeply towards Elder Xuan and said, "Thank you for teaching these disciples an important lesson."

Elder Xuan took a swig of alcohol and faintly said, "I only explained to them how the world works." At that time, no one noticed that his eyes had teared due to the mass of chaotic hair that covered his face.

When those twelve disciples of the inner courtyard had faced that hundred thousand year soul beast alone, he had been the teacher leading them! Eight of them had died in that battle. This was both one of the saddest and one of the most heroic moments in Shrek Academy's history. Even now, he couldn't help but blame himself for the accident. From that moment on, he'd begun to drink heavily, and had given in to despair. He, who had once been Shrek Academy's number one genius, had fallen into despair. Originally, he was supposed to take over the positions of Dean of the Martial Soul Department and Master of the Sea God's Pavilion. However, given his circumstances, the Sea God's Pavilion had remained under Elder Mu's command.

Even after so many years had passed, the pain he felt was still buried deeply in the depths of his heart.

No one blamed him for the accident. However, he simply couldn't forgive himself.

Currently, only Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong, Xiao Xiao, Bei Bei, He Caitou, Xu Sanshi and Jiang Nannan were left inside the Soul Dueling Arena.

The seven of them quietly stood in a row. None of them bothered Elder Xuan, as they'd all been deeply affected by the sad atmosphere. Even though they'd prevailed over the others, their hearts felt extremely heavy at the moment.

Up until now, Shrek Academy's glory had never had anything to do with the outer courtyard disciples, which a lot of people felt was strange. However, they now realized why that glory belonged exclusively to the inner courtyard: The inner courtyard disciples had used their blood to gain their glory. Currently, a fire had begun to burn in their hearts. This was the so-called 'passing of the torch'. They too hoped to inherit a portion of the inner courtyard's glory.

Bei Bei, Xu Sanshi, and Jiang Nannan—who were already Year 5 students—had all fallen deep into thought. After all, they were very close to entering the inner courtyard.

Elder Xuan slowly turned around and said to the seven, "Every one of you should have heard about Shrek's Seven Monsters, right? In the front door of our academy, you can find the sculptures of the founders of the academy, and those of the original Shrek's Seven Monsters. Do you know how the original Shrek's Seven Monsters gained their reputation?"

At that time, none of them even thought of interrupting Elder Xuan. They chose to keep listening in silence.

"At that time, the head of the Golden Iron Triangle, the Four-eyed Eaglecat Flanders, had just established Shrek Academy," Elder Xuan said in a grave tone, "however, there weren't many teachers, and the number of students was even fewer than the number of teachers. As such, Dean Flanders proposed that the academy only accept monsters, and that they should disregard the average person.

Later on, this became the academy's slogan. Nonetheless, finding monsters wasn't an easy task. It was only when the original Shrek's Seven Monsters appeared that the academy had the opportunity to rise."

"They gained the title of Shrek's Seven Monsters for several reasons. One of them was because they were monstrous geniuses that hailed from Shrek Academy. Furthermore, they were also the only students of the academy at the time. However, the most important reason, and also the reason that caused our academy to become famous, is because they represented the academy at the Elite Continental Soul Master Tournament. When the tournament began, nobody thought much of Shrek Academy. Back then, the academy was still unknown. However, Shrek's Seven Monsters relied on their strength to defeat all of their opponents and to barge into the finals. The opponents they faced in the finals came from the then-powerful Martial Soul Hall. And then, even though they were weaker than their enemy, Shrek's Seven Monsters still managed to obtain the final victory under Ancestor Tang San's lead. That day, the foundation that would lead our academy towards becoming the number one academy on the continent was finally laid down. At the same time, the first generation of Shrek's Seven Monsters became famous."

"To thank the first generation of Shrek's Seven Monsters for their contributions, the academy chooses a new group of Shrek's Seven Monsters every five years. These seven will then represent the academy in the Continental Advanced Academy Soul Duelling Tournament, which is held every five years. The Elite Tournament part was changed to Soul Duelling Tournament alongside the appearance of soul tools. However, this great event has a different meaning from the past." *nove-Lb*)1n

"Originally, the Sun Moon Empire was defeated due to the coalition of our three great empires. However, our three empires also suffered heavy losses. For several thousand years now, the Sun Moon Empire has done its best to research and develop new soul tools. As such, their strength has continuously risen as a result. At the end of the day, the three empires are exactly what their names imply: Three different empires. The three of them aren't of the same mind. If the Sun Moon Empire hasn't made any moves yet, it's because they can't completely assure themselves that they'll win. As long as our Shrek Academy remains standing, they won't dare to act rashly."

"I'm absolutely not bragging when I say this. If the Sun Moon Empire really wants to dominate the continent, the one they'd need to deal with isn't the Star Luo, Heavenly Soul, or Dou Ling Empire, but rather our Shrek Academy. This is because only our academy has the power to rally the three empires together, and to make them resist the Sun Moon Empire. Only we have enough power to deal with the Sun Moon Empire's top-ranked soul tools."

"The Sun Moon Empire wouldn't dare launch a full-scale war just to test our strength either. However, they're constantly trying to probe it. And the best method for them to do so is exactly through the Continental Advanced Academy Soul Duelling Tournament. Therefore, our real opponent in this tournament is the Sun Moon Empire's Imperial Soul Engineering Academy."

#### Chapter 63.1: The Preparatory Team

After hearing the words 'Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy' Xu Sanshi blurted out, "Elder Xuan, are you saying that you'll let us participate in the Continental Advanced Academy Soul Duelling Tournament?"

Elder Xuan snorted. "Will you be able to win even if I let you go? The age limit for the Continental Advanced Academy Soul Dueling Tournament is twenty years. You have the qualifications to participate this time but today's qualification match was used to select a preparatory team. Our preparatory team has always been chosen before the Shrek's Seven Monsters go out to compete in the main competition."

Right! The main requirement for the qualification match held today was that participants needed to be under fifteen. They finally understood why this was the case now; the age requirement was there to ensure that they wouldn't turn twenty in five years, allowing them to participate in the next Continental Advanced Academy Soul Dueling Tournament.

Elder Xuan said, "I've chosen you lot for two reasons. Firstly, to be the preparatory team, and secondly, to be the main team's substitutes. Realistically, there's an extremely miniscule chance of you actually going out to fight, but as substitutes, you will have the qualifications to watch the matches from the front row. This will be an extremely precious experience for you. However, this qualification match doesn't decide everything. You will be examined continuously over the next five years and will only be allowed to represent the school if you're strong enough. In the meantime, you'll have to go through many tests. Thus, if you want to truly represent the school, you have to first ensure that you can enter the inner courtyard."

Although Elder Xuan had given them many restrictions, the seven of them were still overjoyed. Representing Shrek Academy to go out and fight as the new generation of Shrek's Seven Monsters was undoubtedly the highest honor they could obtain in the academy!

Before today, none of them would've expected that this seemingly simple qualification match would be the deciding factor for such an important event.

Elder Xuan said, "The fact that you lot are the preparatory team is a secret within the academy. Hence you're not allowed to reveal it to anyone or else you'll be stripped of your privileges. From now on, you'll train with me once a week. We're still one month away from the Continental Advanced Academy Soul Dueling Tournament so in the meantime I'll bring you along to train with the current Seven Monsters. I hope that you'll seize this precious opportunity to strengthen yourselves as much as possible. Okay, all of you can go now. Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong, you two stay behind for a minute."

"Yes." Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong had excited looks in their eyes. After all, it was public knowledge that among these seven students, the ones who were most unconforming with the requirements needed to become a member of the Seven Monsters were the two of them and Xiao Xiao due to their young age. Even five years later they would only be seventeen years old. At the very most, they would've just entered the inner courtyard. Under the age of twenty, a difference of three years in cultivation was an enormous gap. However, Elder Xuan had already decided to temporarily allow them to enter the preparatory team. This meant that, at least for the time being, their position in the team was relatively stable and they could even receive personal pointers from Elder Xuan. From the terrifying amount of strength that he had released in mid-air, how could they not see how powerful this seemingly sloppy teacher was?

After Bei Bei, Xu Sanshi, and the rest left, Elder Xuan waved towards Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong, who quickly ran up to him.

“Your performance today has stunned me. If I had to choose the most outstanding participants in today’s match, I wouldn’t choose Bei Bei, Xu Sanshi, Jiang Nannan, or He Caitou but the two of you. Your fusion skill is miraculous but it has a large drawback to it. It’s extreme strength is limited by its glaring flaw, the fact that it can only attack in a straight line. If your opponents are able to dodge it in time, you’ll have wasted an enormous amount of soul power for nothing. Because of that, however, you managed to give me an even bigger surprise. I care not about the strength of your skill, but rather, about the perfect timing you displayed. Tell me, was the fact that they were lined up together all due to luck or was it because everything was within your control? If it was in your control, how did you successfully coordinate it with your other teammates?”

Huo Yuhao wanted to be modest but Wang Dong spoke out, “Elder Xuan, he’s the one who planned and controlled everything during the battle. Ask him.” Wang Dong ‘sold’ Huo Yuhao out in a seemingly unloyal manner.

Elder Xuan lifted the disheveled hair in front of his forehead and revealed a pair of pitch-black eyes that were completely inconsistent with his age, “Tell me, Huo Yuhao.”

Huo Yuhao was somewhat bashful. “It’s nothing really, Elder Xuan. You’ll understand everything once I let you try it out.” With that, he released his Spiritual Detection Sharing and expanded its range out to the maximum limit.

Elder Xuan was slightly stunned when he initially received the spiritual undulations that Huo Yuhao had transmitted to him and instinctively resisted them, causing a large burst of spiritual force to block Huo Yuhao’s skill. However, he quickly realised what Huo Yuhao was trying to do, and hence hurriedly controlled the spiritual power he’d instinctively released. It was only then that he was able to truly sense Huo Yuhao’s Spiritual Detection.

Though Elder Xuan was already aware that Huo Yuhao was a spiritual-type soul master, he also knew that his first soul ring was only a ten year one. Because of this, he’d never paid much attention to him. It was only when Huo Yuhao obtained an Ultimate martial soul that he started to pay attention to him.

One of the most important reasons why the second year core disciples had been allowed to participate in today’s qualification match was because of Huo Yuhao, who possessed an Ultimate martial soul. A soul master who possessed an Ultimate martial soul couldn’t be viewed on the same level as an ordinary soul master. After all, the Martial Soul Department and the Soul Tool Department had even caused a ruckus during the conference held within the Sea God’s Pavilion for his sake. From that moment onwards, it was practically guaranteed that Huo Yuhao would have a place among the new generation of Shrek’s Seven Monsters. He just didn’t know it yet. n(-0veLB1n

As an elder of the Martial Soul Department, Elder Xuan naturally wouldn’t have an absolute trust in Huo Yuhao solely based on the conference held within the Sea God’s Pavilion. This qualification match was a way for him to judge what level of strength the latter had reached with his current cultivation.

In reality, Elder Xuan had never expected that he would be able to see Huo Yuhao distinguish himself in this qualification match. After all, he could make this qualification match redundant with just one word.



However, Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong had given him an enormous surprise. When he personally experienced the vast area that the former's Spiritual Detection enveloped, he was stunned. A mere second year student from the outer courtyard had managed to stun him.

When he looked back at Huo Yuhao, Elder Xuan's gaze completely changed. His originally apathetic gaze had become fiery and passionate, while his previously sentimental gaze was now full of astonishment.

#### Chapter 63.2: The Preparatory Team

He muttered, "An inborn Soul Commander! Is this the skill of a ten year soul ring? No, this is impossible, absolutely impossible."

Elder Xuan looked at Huo Yuhao agitatedly, then raised his left hand. When he did so, Huo Yuhao felt a burst of soul power enter his body, which caused the two white soul rings hovering beneath his body to become even more eye-catching.

Whenever he used his Spirit Eyes, the color of Huo Yuhao's soul rings was always white.

As Elder Xuan's soul power entered his body, his Imitation skill dissipated, which caused his second soul ring to reveal its original purple color. However, his first soul ring was still as white as jade.

"Tell me, what are your two soul skills?" Elder Xuan asked impatiently.

Huo Yuhao told him the truth. "The first soul ring of my Spirit Eyes has the Spiritual Detection Sharing skill while the second one has the Imitation skill."

"Elder Xuan continued in a grave tone, "If I'm not mistaken, you used the Spiritual Shock skill during the freshmen assessment. How did you obtain that skill?"

Huo Yuhao was startled. After all, he couldn't tell Elder Xuan his secret. Luckily, he had already thought of a way to explain it.

"Elder Xuan, I'm a disciple of the Tang Sect. Therefore, I practice the Tang Sect's Purple Demon Eyes technique. And when I combine it with my Spirit Eyes, I can use the Spiritual Shock skill."

After listening to his words, Elder Xuan's expression was even more bewildered, "Is this even possible? The skill of a mere ten year soul ring was able to reach this degree? Just... how? So soul skills can have mutations too?" Even after racking his brain, he was still at a loss. He was firmly convinced that Huo Yuhao couldn't hide the color of his soul rings under the probing of his soul power. And even if he were to bang his head against a wall, he still wouldn't think of the possibility that Huo Yuhao possessed a million year soul ring. After all, how could he know that its white color was also the same as that of a ten year soul ring?

After pondering over it for a while, he still wasn't able to find the answer. Thus, he said, "Fine. You can go too. Originally, even if they were to win, second year students like you wouldn't be allowed to join the competition as reserves. However, your performance was just too incredible. Remember, whether or not you can keep this position in the coming five years will depend on your efforts. There are many core disciples eyeing this position. Which means that the moment I see that you can't keep up with the competition, you'll be switched out immediately. Are we clear?"

“Yes.” Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong bowed respectfully to Elder Xuan following which they turned around and left.

As he gazed at their disappearing silhouettes, a faint smile appeared on his face, which was full of vicissitudes. “So what if they’re only second year students? Two twin martial souls, an Ultimate martial soul, and a fusion skill. Five years, huh? Who dares to claim that I can’t forge them into a team that will be unmatched among their peers? I hope you’ll bring me even more surprises.”

After leaving the Soul Dueling Area, Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong discovered that Bei Bei, He Caitou, Xu Sanshi, Jiang Nannan, and Xiao Xiao were all still waiting for them outside.

“Senior brothers! You haven’t left yet?” Huo Yuhao dragged Wang Dong along as hurried to greet them.

“We were waiting for you two. We wanted to thank you!” Bei Bei said with a faint smile.

“Thank us?” Huo Yuhao asked, astonished.

Bei Bei nodded and replied, “In that chaotic battle just now, strength alone wasn’t enough to obtain victory. After all, we had four rings. Sooner or later, we would have received a joint attack from the other students. It’s all thanks to the two of you that we were able to win so easily. Your Spiritual Detection and fusion skill with Wang Dong proved to be a crucial role in our victory.”

“Senior brother, aren’t we a family?” Huo Yuhao said shyly. “Without you, we wouldn’t have been able to pass the test either.”

“That’s enough.” Xu Sanshi interjected, “You two brothers should stop flattering each other. Little Yuhao, we stayed behind for another reason too. Since we have been selected as Shrek’s Seven Monsters’ substitutes, we should give our all. None of us is allowed to fall behind. Only then will we be able to represent the academy at the Continental Advanced Academy Soul Dueling Tournament five years from now.”

While speaking, he secretly shot a glance at the nearby Jiang Nannan. Right now, she was hanging her head and looking at her feet. Xu Sanshi was very happy to have passed the test with Jiang Nannan. Now, he had found the best excuse to be with her.

“Little Yuhao, Wang Dong, we discussed another thing while you were away. Since we’re going to be the new generation of Shrek’s Seven Monsters, we should decide on an order, like the first generation did. How old are you?”

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong told them their ages in years and months.

They then ranked themselves according to age.

Bei Bei was the oldest. He Caitou, Xu Sanshi, and Jiang Nannan and him all had a month’s difference between each other, just like Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong, and Xiao Xiao.

After Bei Bei, there was He Caitou. After that was Xu Sanshi, Jiang Nannan, Xiao Xiao, Huo Yuhao, and finally Wang Dong, who was the youngest.

Xu Sanshi spoke with a smile. "Previously, we used to refer to each other as upperclassmen. But in the future, we can just refer to each other as brothers and sisters. Wahahaha! I'm ranked third, just like Ancestor Tang San was back then."

"Having the same rank doesn't mean having the same ability," Bei Bei said ill-humoredly, "It's not a problem to call each other brothers. However, if you become part of our Tang Sect, you'll have to follow in his footsteps."

"Didn't I already tell you my conditions for joining your sect?" Xu Sanshi said with a smile. As he spoke, he looked at Jiang Nannan and puckered his lips.

At this time, unexpectedly, He Caitou laughed foolishly and said, "Bei Bei... Uh, I mean senior brother. Can I also join your Tang Sect?"

Bei Bei was dumbfounded when he heard that but quickly regained his composure. Naturally, he was overjoyed after all He Caitou was already a Class 4 soul engineer as well as Fan Yu's inheriting disciple. In the Soul Tool Department, his status was higher compared to that of Bei Bei's and Xu Sanshi's in the Martial Soul Department. He was someone that would surely enter the inner courtyard of the Soul Tool Department.

"Caitou, can I ask why you want to join our Tang Sect?" Although he was very happy, Bei Bei still wanted to make things clear.

"Yuhao used many concepts related to the hidden weapons of the Tang Sect when creating his soul tools." He Caitou said with a smile, "I was also thinking of studying them. Even if I'm a soul engineer, I'm not restricted from entering any sect. Moreover, what you said earlier was right! If I joined the Tang Sect, calling you senior brother would be more fitting."

Under these circumstances, how could Bei Bei refuse? He immediately agreed. Except for Xu Sanshi and Jiang Nannan, the rest of the substitutes for Shrek's Seven Monsters substitutes were now all disciples of the Tang Sect.

#### Chapter 64.1: The Ultimate Soldier Plan

He Caitou's choice to enter the Tang Sect was an absolutely overjoyous event to the previously five-man Tang Sect. Bei Bei had agreed to it, but Tang Ya was still the master of the Tang Sect. He immediately gathered everyone and went to inform her of the good news.

Tang Ya was overjoyed and naturally agreed. The Tang Sect had originally declined due to the large-scale appearances of soul tools. As such, they needed to start from the same field if they wanted to make a comeback. Outstandingly talented disciples could give the Tang Sect a certain amount of fighting power, but if they truly wanted to regain their past glory, they needed a source of income. Coincidentally, soul tools could not only give the Tang Sect a source of income, they could also cause their status on the continent rise once again.

The integration of soul tools and the Tang Sect's hidden weapons was naturally of the utmost importance. Even though Huo Yuhao had begun to display his talent with soul tools, he was still only a single person. He Caitou, on the other hand, was already a Class 4 soul engineer. At the same time, he

was also one of Fan Yu's inheriting disciple. As such, the Tang Sect's strength could be considered to have grown greatly with his addition.

Ever since the Tang Sect had declined, everything in it had been conducted in a rather simple manner; the induction ceremony that Tang Ya held for He Caitou wasn't complicated, and everyone was able to enjoy a celebratory feast once the ceremony had ended. Jiang Nannan and Xu Sanshi joined the festivities as well.

Once everyone had finished their meal, He Caitou called out to Huo Yuhao, who'd been about to head to his dorm room, "Junior brother, I'd like to talk to you alone."

"Ah? Alright!" Huo Yuhao stopped walking and looked towards the seemingly worried He Caitou with a somewhat astonished look in his eyes.

Wang Dong said, "I'll head back first. You two can chat." With that, he left.

Huo Yuhao walked towards the seemingly hesitant He Caitou, then asked "Senior brother He, what's happened to you?"

The sky had already become dark, and bright stars currently dotted the cloudless sky.

He Caitou looked towards the sky. Afterwards, the normally straightforward look on his face gradually changed into a grave one. The blankness that was usually present in his eyes subsequently disappeared, and a clarity that Huo Yuhao had never seen before in He Caitou's eyes slowly appeared.

At that moment, he seemed like he'd become a completely different person. His temperament had completely changed, to the point that Huo Yuhao almost couldn't recognise him.

He subconsciously took a step back, his face filled with astonishment. "Senior brother, you..."

He Caitou looked back towards Huo Yuhao. When his gaze met Huo Yuhao's, there seemed to be something else besides the clarity that had just filled them.

"Yuhao, you know, I'm truly envious of your talent. If I had the same amount of talent as you do, I'd work hard and do everything that I could to get everything that I deserve returned to me. However, I can't. Even if I do everything that I can, I'm still limited by my talent. My future accomplishments will, at most, tie with our teacher's. However, you're different: You have twin martial souls, with one of them being an Ultimate one. Your future is immeasurable. Even in a place like Shrek Academy, your radiance will still outshine everything."

Huo Yuhao was at a loss when he heard He Caitou's words. "Senior brother, what are you saying!?"

A pained look appeared on He Caitou's face. "You know, we've always had a plan in our Soul Tool Department. It was known as the 'Ultimate Soldier Plan'."

"The 'Ultimate Soldier Plan'?" Huo Yuhao asked, astonished.

He Caitou nodded. "It's also the most important plan that we have. It was created in order to allow us to compete with the soul engineers of the Sun Moon Empire on equal terms."

“The so-called Ultimate Soldier Plan refers to the Soul Tool Department creating a single person capable of changing the outcome of an entire battle by himself. Someone that possess this level of strength would thus be known as an Ultimate Soldier.”

Huo Yuhao asked, curious, “Shouldn’t a Titled Douluo be able to do that? What does this have to do with our Soul Tool Department?”

He Caitou shook his head. “No. Indeed, a Titled Douluo might be able to change the situation of a battle, but they can’t reverse the outcome of a large-scale battle. Won’t our enemies have experts on their level as well? However, the Ultimate Soldier is different. The Ultimate Soldier is an existence that would live for the sake of war. It wouldn’t just be limited to strength alone either; it would be specialised in both using and creating many different types of soul tools, and it would be good at concealing itself, subterfuge, and destruction. It would be sharp enough to find any node on the battlefield, and then capable enough to destroy targets or to provide assistance. The Ultimate Soldier isn’t a commander, but an artist who can change the outcome of a battle. A Titled Douluo is strong individually, but their use in a battle is far from planned power of the Ultimate Soldier. Originally, I was working hard as the focal point of this goal, and our teacher always relied on me to realize this plan. However, everything changed when you appeared. Not only are you more talented than me, you’re also stronger than me in both soul tool creation and individual strength. Yesterday, our teacher told me that I wouldn’t be nurtured as the focal point of the Ultimate Soldier anymore. Instead, I’m to become an Auxiliary Soldier to help you. If we’re to say that you’re the future Ultimate Soldier, then I’ll be your portable armory.”

Huo Yuhao was astonished when he heard this. He couldn’t help but cry out, “Senior brother He, I—”

However, He Caitou put his hand up to stop him from continuing. “Yuhao, don’t panic. Let me finish first.”

Huo Yuhao truly didn’t wish for a situation like this to occur. Ever since he’d begun to follow in Fan Yu’s footsteps, He Caitou had given him advice in many different aspects, and had selflessly passed on his experiences to him. The respect that Huo Yuhao had for He Caitou was no less than the respect he had for Bei Bei. However, he’d never thought that he’d be the one who’d rob his senior brother of his dreams. As such, he felt greatly pained.

It was precisely because of the fact that he’d lived in a hypocritical place like the Duke’s Mansion that Huo Yuhao valued relationships as much as he did. He’d finally managed to obtain both warmth and friendship inside of Shrek Academy, and he treasured these feelings greatly. At the moment, his first thought was to give up his studies in the Soul Tool Department.

He Caitou patted Huo Yuhao on the shoulder, and the look on his face became a little bit gentler. “Yuhao, don’t panic. I don’t have any intentions of blaming you. If it were someone else, I’d definitely be unwilling to accept it. In fact, I’d probably even rebel against teacher’s arrangements. However, I don’t feel unresigned at all, since I know that the person who’ll carry out the Ultimate Soldier Plan is you. On the contrary, I feel quite happy.”

“I know where my flaws lie. No matter how hard I work, I won’t be a suitable Ultimate Soldier. This is due to the innate flaws in my martial soul. Category wise, I’m a food-type soul master. Even though my martial souls’s auxiliary capabilities aren’t bad, my personal combat strength is limited; I’m far from comparable to battle-type soul masters like you. I’ve done all I can, but all I can rely on are soul tools.

However, oftentimes the effectiveness of soul tools falls short of martial souls. I've worked hard, but talent isn't something that you can get away with by relying solely on hard work."

"Do you still remember the first time we met? I've always been an extremely simple person in the academy. Furthermore, because of how special my name is, everyone's always called me a turnip (Caitou), or some other nicknam like 'blackie' or 'muscleman'. You're the only exception to this. The first time you met me, you called me 'senior brother'. The look in your eyes back then was extremely clear, and was also very sincere. I recognised you as my junior brother from then on."

"Once you began your studies, the talent that you revealed astonished even our fierce teacher. I can understand how he feels; after all, who wouldn't wish for one's disciple to exceed oneself? Furthermore, there wouldn't be the current 'me' without our teacher. Thus, junior brother, you don't need to feel burdened. I've already talked it over with teacher, and I'll do all I can to support you as the Ultimate Soldier. I'll be your Portable Armory."

Tears began to well up in Huo Yuhao's eyes. "Senior brother, I really didn't wish for this to happen. This isn't fair. Why don't I...?"

He Caitou stopped him once more. "Junior brother, don't speak nonsense. There are some things that simply can't happen. Furthermore, I have my own selfish motives for helping you out at all costs: I hope that you'll help me out with one single thing in the future. Once you've become successful with your cultivation in the future, I want you to help me out. Of course, only if it's within your means."

"Senior brother, tell me." Huo Yuhao hurriedly inquired.

A trace of deep pain appeared in He Caitou's eyes. "Yuhao, you know, in reality, even teacher Fan Yu doesn't know where I'm from, or my identity. This is because I don't want to bring him trouble, nor do I wish for him to feel disturbed. Since I've already told you this much today, I'll go ahead and tell you all of it; I've held back too much pain in my heart over the past several years."

"When teacher Fan Yu saved me that year, I was nine. When he first saw me, I was covered with blood, and I was completely powerless. Once he'd saved me, he inquired about my origins. I told him that my family were businessmen, and that all of them had been killed in an unfortunate encounter. I told him that I was the only one who'd escaped, and that I had already become an orphan. When I said this, I was afraid that I'd implicate him. However, I'd never expected that this would become my origin story."

"When teacher brought me back to the academy and taught me how to practice soul engineer, I cultivated diligently, which gradually revealed that I had a certain amount of talent towards soul tool creation. However, I hid an unforgettable piece of hatred in the depths of my heart."

"Huo Yuhao, I'm a person from the Sun Moon Empire. The only place where you can find a person as dark as me is in that place. Furthermore, I'm a member of the Sun Moon Empire's imperial family. I'm the nephew of the current Emperor."

"Ah?" Huo Yuhao was greatly astonished by what he'd just heard. Never in his wildest dreams would he have expected that his normally straightforward and simple senior brother He would have such an impressive origin. For a brief moment, he was completely flabbergasted.

Chapter 64.2: The Ultimate Soldier Plan

He Caitou smiled bitterly. "You're surprised, aren't you? It's no wonder, as I've kept this matter buried deep inside my heart for such a long time. My father was the previous emperor of the Sun Moon Empire. In fact, I had seven older sisters, and my mother only gave birth to me when my father had turned forty-eight. Back when my father was still the crown prince, his younger brother, who's also my uncle, had always tried to snatch the throne away from him. However, grandfather knew about uncle's vicious nature, and knew that giving him the throne would've only brought trouble to the country. Even though uncle's talent far surpassed that of my father's in every field, my grandfather still decided to deny him the throne."

"Once he'd inherited the throne, my father ruled the empire in earnest. He'd give his it his all to take care of national affairs, every day. As time went on, our empire became more and more prosperous beneath his rule. A large majority of the officials were moved by his earnestness, thus they pledged their loyalty to him."

"Right before his death, grandfather told my father to completely strip away uncle's power—only then would our country remain peaceful. However, my father was too kind-hearted; he couldn't bear to take away his younger brother's power. Therefore, he didn't fulfill grandfather's last wish, and thus left behind the root of all of the troubles that followed."

"Six years ago, when my father was in the prime of his life, he suddenly died in the middle of the night. My mother and my three unmarried elder sisters also died that same night. Later that same night, my uncle led the army and barged into the capital. Later, it was found out that my father, mother, and elder sister's food had all been poisoned. Everything changed from that night on. I still remember that terrifying figure entering the imperial palace and murdering everyone. I was only able to survive because my mother shoved me into a secret passage."

"When he didn't find my body, uncle sent some out some people to find and kill me. At the same time, he declared to the country that our entire family had died from food poisoning. He then took advantage of the situation and killed all of the subordinates and servants in the palace that were still loyal to my father, and then buried them with him. After this great purge, and due to the fact that he was the sole remaining heir to the empire, he began to rule over the country with an iron fist."

He Caitou's eyes had become red as he spoke, and he'd clenched his fists tightly. His usually kind and naive face had also become extremely sinister. His heart was currently full of hatred.

"Maybe it was thanks to father and mother watching over me from the heavens, but in the end, I managed to escape. However, I—who'd once been the crown prince—had been reduced to someone that was inferior to a beggar. And yet, I still didn't dare to return; I could only keep running. Afterwards, I managed to reach the borders of the Heavenly Soul Empire, which is where teacher saved me. Thanks to that, I was able to survive. However, I couldn't simply forget the deep hatred that's buried inside of my heart. Of course, I was clear as to what my limits were. In the end, I was still alone, and my power was insignificant by itself. The Ultimate Soldier Plan was my only hope of succeeding. However, I simply don't have enough talent to complete this plan."

He looked towards Huo Yuhao, his eyes red, and continued, "Yuhao. In the future, I really that you'll become the Ultimate Soldier. And once you do, I hope that you'll help me get my revenge. I know that this request might be too much. However, I'll do everything in my power to help you grow and become

stronger. I didn't join the Tang Sect today just for its hidden weapons. It was also for the sake of deepening our relationship as brothers. I won't force you to do something you don't want to do. However, I can't get my revenge by relying on my power alone. Therefore, are you willing to try your best to help me, so long as it doesn't endanger your life?"

Huo Yuhao looked towards He Caitou, his expression now somber. "Senior Brother He, I also carry a deep hatred within me. However, I can't give you a definite answer right now, as I don't have the qualifications to do so. As of right now, I'm too weak to deal with either of our enemies. However, I'll always be your junior brother. If there's someone that wants to injure you, I won't let them off."

"Before I entered Shrek Academy, my heart was full of hatred. The only thought I had on my mind was revenge. However, when I arrived here, I discovered that I was nothing but a drop in the ocean. In order to get my revenge, I realized that I needed to train harder than I'd ever trained before. Only once we've become powerful people in the academy will we have the qualifications to talk about revenge. We'll both have to keep our hatreds buried inside of our hearts until we're strong enough. When the time comes, not only will we be brothers, we'll also be comrades-in-arms. At that time, I'll fight side by side with you."

"Fine." He Caitou stretched out his large hand towards Huo Yuhao. His white palm created a sharp contrast with the tanned skin on the back of his hand. Huo Yuhao also stretched his hand out and tightly grasped his.

He Caitou said in a grave tone, "Junior brother, let's try to help each other. We'll get through this together. Even if we take our revenge in ten years, it won't be too late. Right now, we're both still very weak. But what about ten years from now?"

Once he'd brought Huo Yuhao back to his dormitory, He Caitou changed back to the kind and plain core disciple of the Soul Tool Department he'd always been. Huo Yuhao had also gone back to normal; it was as if nothing had happened between them. However, he'd buried He Caitou's secret deep inside of his heart. Unless they had absolute strength, it would be pointless to talk about revenge.

Once they received the status of Shrek's Seven Monsters substitutes, Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong, and Xiao Xiao dedicated even more time to their studies. They spent all of their time after class cultivating.

They were honored to act as substitutes. However, the pressure weighing down on them was much greater at the same time. They wanted to preserve Shrek Academy's honor with all of their strength. And, since they were the youngest of the group, they needed to expend even more effort to keep up with the others and to maintain their position.

In the blink of an eye, two weeks had passed. In that time, Elder Xuan had helped them with their training twice. His teaching methods were very direct and crude. He simply made them fight without any reservations.

Every time, the seven of them would be divided into different groups and made to fight each other. Elder Xuan had also told them not to hold back. With a powerful expert like him as a supervisor, they wouldn't be in any danger. Under Elder Xuan's assiduous training, Huo Yuhao fought while paired with several different teammates. And every single time, his team would end up on the weaker side.



As they studied and cultivated earnestly, Huo Yuhao could feel that himself improving every day. Moreover, he and Wang Dong had gotten better and better at using their Haodong Power. After half a month, Huo Yuhao could feel his soul power approaching rank 27. Soon, he'd break through again.

But the one that gave them the biggest surprise was Xiao Xiao. Her soul power had managed to reach rank 29. Just one more level and she'd be able to hunt a soul beast and become a rank 30 Soul Elder.

Today was one of the days that Elder Xuan was training them. Whenever this happened, Huo Yuhao and the others would skip their classes and come to the Assessment Area to take Elder Xuan's lesson. Today was no different.

However, as soon as they entered the Assessment Area, they saw some unfamiliar faces.

Bei Bei, He Caitou, Xu Sanshi, and Jiang Nannan had already arrived. However, there were also some other students alongside Elder Xuan.

Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong, and Xiao Xiao felt their heartbeat speed up when they saw the seven students, all of whom were wearing blood-red school uniforms. This color meant that they were students of the inner courtyard.

Huo Yuhao only knew one of those seven students: Ma Xiaotao. However, he hadn't seen her since that day.

Today, her long hair had been pulled up into a ponytail; she looked extremely neat. When she noticed Huo Yuhao, the corners of her mouth lifted to reveal a pensive smile.

Huo Yuhao was somewhat embarrassed, and he immediately blushed. He still clearly remembered the scene from that day! Moreover, Ma Xiaotao was the first woman to have ever had such an intimate relationship with him. As such, he remembered it even more clearly.

Besides Ma Xiaotao, there were six other people present, four of which were men, while the other two were women. Their age seemed to be about the same as hers. Bei Bei and the others had arrived a bit earlier, and they had solemn expressions as they stood there. From time to time, they'd shoot a glance at the inner courtyard disciples. Apart from their envy, there was also admiration and respect within their eyes.

These red-clothed disciples of the inner courtyard were the strongest students in the academy. It was also thanks to them that Shrek Academy could maintain its status as the number one academy on the continent.

Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong, and Xiao Xiao walked toward Bei Bei and the others; they too were very reserved. After all, today they were in the presence of several fellow powerful students. In addition to this, they had more or less guessed the seven's identities.

Elder Xuan nodded at their arrival and said, "You've all arrived. The next Continental Advanced Academy Soul Dueling Tournament will begin in ten days. Both of your groups should've guessed the identity of the other. Your guesses aren't wrong. On one side, we have those that will participate in the competition. On the other side, we have the reserves. Both of you are the old and new generations of the Shrek's Seven Monsters. There are two reasons that I've brought you to here to meet each other

today: The first is to get to know each other, while the second is to get you guys acquainted with each other's respective abilities."

With that, he turned toward Huo Yuhao and the other seven and said, "You couldn't have possibly thought that you guys would just act as spectators, right? On the contrary, unless something unexpected happens, all of you will probably have to fight. Whenever we encounter an opponent that's not too strong, it'll be your turn to go on stage. This way we can properly hide the main team's abilities."

When they heard that they would have a chance to go on stage, Huo Yuhao and the others were pleasantly surprised. At first, they had really thought that they would just be present as spectators! They hadn't thought that they'd have the opportunity to represent the academy! And this wasn't just any academy they would be representing; it was Shrek Academy!

Elder Xuan snorted and continued, "Don't get overexcited. It's inevitable that you'll have to go on stage. However, you're not allowed to lose. If one of you isn't careful and manages to lose a match... Hehe, you'll learn the consequences. So long as I'm alive, that person can forget about entering the inner courtyard. Moreover, you should adjust your mentality. In this session, you'll act as a support for the main group. You'll have to obey their every order. Do you understand?"

#### Chapter 64.3: The Ultimate Soldier Plan (Preview)

"Understood." The group of seven answered in chorus. With their current ages and cultivations, becoming the official substitutes for the main team was already enough to fill them with happiness! Furthermore, they might even get the opportunity to go out and fight. An experience such as this was already quite difficult to come by, yet the academy had done all of this in order to prepare them to become the next generation of Shrek's Seven Monsters.

Elder Xuan nodded. "Alright, everybody introduce yourselves so that you all can get to know each other. We'll start with the preparatory team."

After confirming how old they were, there was naturally no problem regarding the order in which the preparatory team started speaking. Bei Bei was the first to walk out, "I'm Bei Bei, a fifth year student from the outer courtyard. I'm a Rank 42 assault-type Soul Ancestor."

He Caitou was the next to take a step forward. "He Caitou. Fourth year from the outer courtyard. I'm from the Soul Tool Department, and I'm a Class 4 soul engineer." As a student of the Soul Tool Department, he evidently had no need to give out his own cultivation. On the contrary, he would use his Class to reveal his own strength.

Xu Sanshi was the third to come up. "Xu Sanshi. I'm a fifth year from the outer courtyard, and I'm a Rank 43 defense-type Soul Ancestor." In terms of soul power, he was still slightly weaker than Bei Bei.

The fourth in line was Jiang Nannan. Though she didn't want to stand next to Xu Sanshi and listen to him grumble on and on again, they were of a similar age. It wouldn't be good to reveal her thoughts at an important event like this.

"I'm Jiang Nannan. I'm a fifth year from the outer courtyard, and I'm a Rank 41 agility-type Soul Ancestor."

The gazes of a few male students from the inner courtyard immediately lit up after seeing her. Jiang Nannan was indeed extremely beautiful. Of the females present here, she was the most beautiful in terms of looks alone; Ma Xiaotao, on the other hand, had the best physique. As for Xiao Xiao, she was simply too young. As a result, she hadn't developed much of her womanly charms.

Xu Sanshi immediately tensed up, and he looked toward his seniors in the inner courtyard with a blazing look in his eyes.

The fifth person to step out was Xiao Xiao. "I'm called Xiao Xiao, greetings to my senior upperclassmen. I'm a second year from the outer courtyard, and I'm a Rank 29 control-type Soul Grandmaster."

The disciples of the inner courtyard who were enraptured by Jiang Nannan's looks involuntarily widened their eyes at hearing the words 'Rank 29'.

Rank 29? Did they hear something wrong? This was the preparatory team of the Shrek's Seven Monsters, but there was actually a second year among them? It was no wonder they looked so small. Heavens! What was Elder Xuan trying to do?

The next-in-line after Xiao Xiao was Huo Yuhao. He took a step forward to Xiao Xiao's side and said respectfully, "Greetings to my senior upperclassmen. I'm Huo Yuhao, and I'm a second year of the outer courtyard. I'm a Rank 26 control-type soul master."

Rank, Rank 26? Other than Ma Xiaotao, the expressions of the others in the inner courtyard became somewhat strange. However, seeing as they were able to become disciples of the inner courtyard, they had extremely calm temperaments. Though they were astonished, they didn't reveal any large changes on the outside.

The last in line was Wang Dong. He could naturally see the astonishment that the seniors in the inner courtyard had, and hence he proudly raised his little chest and said, "Wang Dong. Second year from the outer courtyard, and a Rank 31 assault-type Soul Elder."

Elder Xuan nodded and pointed towards the disciples from the inner courtyard, "Your turn."

The first one to walk out from among the group of disciples from the inner courtyard was actually Ma Xiaotao. She was evidently much calmer than before.

"Inner courtyard, Ma Xiaotao. Rank 67 assault-type Soul Emperor."

Though Huo Yuhao and the rest knew that she was powerful, they couldn't help but gasp after hearing her say the words 'Rank 67'.

The fact that she could participate in the Continental Advanced Academy Soul Duelling Tournament meant that she wasn't even twenty yet. However, her cultivation had already reached Rank 67. This couldn't even be described using the word 'terrifying'.

A male student stepped up after Ma Xiaotao. He was extremely tall, and standing together with the slender Ma Xiaotao was extremely fitting. Huo Yuhao felt a few traces of familiarity upon seeing him, but didn't know why this was the case. This man had a solemn temperament, and his gaze was as cutting as a blade. He said in a low voice, "Inner courtyard, Dai Yueheng. Rank 64 assault-type Soul Emperor."

Huo Yuhao finally came to himself after hearing the words 'Dai Yueheng'. He was greatly astonished, and his expression changed involuntarily. On the other hand, Dai Yueheng squinted his eyes as he looked at Huo Yuhao, and a faint chilly light flickered through them.

The White Tiger Duke had two sons. The eldest was the prince of the White Tiger Duke's Mansion, and also its future inheritor; he was called Dai Yueheng. Dai Huabin's talent was very outstanding, as shown by the fact that he was able to become a Rank 37 Soul Elder before even turning thirteen. However, he still had to live under the shadow of his elder brother.

Huo Yuhao had never expected to see Dai Yueheng in a situation like this. He was actually one of the current generation's Shrek's Seven Monsters. From the look in Dai Yueheng's eyes, he knew that his grudge with Dai Huabin was definitely known by the former.

The person who came up after Dai Yueheng was another male student. He wasn't as sturdily built as Dai Huabin, but his body was slender. He carried the trace of a warm smile on his face. "Inner courtyard, Chen Zifeng. Rank 57 assault-type Soul King."

Though the two previous Soul Emperors were shocking, a person who was able to become a Soul King before the age of twenty was similarly astonishing! It was extremely difficult to become a disciple of the inner courtyard, but he was actually able to stand out from the many disciples in the inner courtyard to go out and represent Shrek Academy. Their excellence could be seen from this.

The fourth person was another woman. She looked extremely normal, and her figure was also extremely normal. Moreover, she even had short hair. On the surface, she was a young girl who couldn't be any more normal. Even her voice was so normal that it was astonishing.

"Inner courtyard, Xi Xi. Rank 56 agility-type Soul King." She gave a similar introduction, but it didn't really give a deep impression. The moment she spoke, her entire person seemed to dim, as if she'd been completely overshadowed by the radiance of the people in front of her.

The fifth person was also a female student, and she was much prettier than Xi Xi. Unlike Ma Xiaotao's fierceness, she had a cool sort of beauty. She was also different from Jiang Nannan's gentleness; the cold and aloof feeling that came from her would easily give a person a deep impression. Her skin was very white, and she seemed completely weightless as she stepped forward.

"Inner courtyard, Ling Luochen. Rank 55 control-type Soul King." Finally, a control-type soul master came out after the other assault and agility-type ones.

The sixth person was a thin boy who was only 1.6 meters or so tall. He had a thin body, and was much shorter than Ling Luochen, but his eyes were bright and filled with expression.

"Inner courtyard, Yao Haoxuan. Rank 55, control-type Soul King." It was another control-type soul master, but were there any auxiliary-type ones?

The last disciple from the inner courtyard had an elegant set of facial features. Right, the word was 'elegant'. Though he was clearly a male student, he had a slender body and a jade-like face. His elegant appearance made one involuntarily fall in love with him, and even his voice was soft, "Inner courtyard, Gong Yangmo. Rank 59 auxiliary-type Soul King."

The seven from the preparatory team would never have thought that the last member of the Shrek's Seven Monsters would actually be ranked third in terms of cultivation. Second only to Ma Xiaotao and Dai Yueheng, he was at Rank 59. He only needed to take a single step to become a Soul Emperor-ranked expert.

After hearing his senior upperclassmen introduce themselves, Huo Yuhao etched their names, specialties, and soul ranks into his mind. Though they were only assisting them in the actual competition, there were evident benefits to memorising all of this.

Other than the gloomy feeling he had after Dai Yueheng's unexpected appearance, Huo Yuhao felt astonished after memorising the details of his seniors.

These competitors were all under the age of twenty, but they were all above Rank 50! Moreover, there were even two of them who were Soul Emperors. Was this actually something that could be achieved before the age of twenty? Though they were definitely consummate existences amongst their peers, since they were studying in Shrek Academy's inner courtyard, the fact that they were all Soul Kings and Soul Emperors still managed to startle Huo Yuhao. If he were able to reach the Soul King rank before the age of twenty, wouldn't that be a sight to behold?

It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that the inner courtyard disciples standing in front of Huo Yuhao were already at the very top amongst their peers. Would there even be a chance of losing in the Continental Advanced Academy Soul Duelling Tournament with a team like this participating?

Elder Xuan nodded slightly, "Okay, you all know each other a bit now. For the sake of getting you guys to know each other more, your first training task today is a friendly match. You should try and increase your familiarity with each other in today's match. You won't just be teaming up with your own teammates; I can switch the members of your teams any time I wish to during the match, so as to ensure that we can be the final champions of the Tournament. Ma Xiaotao, Dai Yueheng, you each take a team. Ma Xiaotao, your cultivation's higher, so you can only take two official members for your team. However, I'll let you choose a member from the official and preparatory teams first. Dai Yueheng, you can take three official members along with some people from the preparatory team.

Huo Yuhao's group of seven were still somewhat baffled, but the seven from the inner courtyard were clearly familiar with Elder Xuan's way of doing things.

Ma Xiaotao and Dai Yueheng took a step forward and put some distance between the two of them. The former said, "The first person I'll choose from the official team is Gong Yangmo." She had a total of three official members she could choose from, but the first person she chose wasn't the assault-type Cheng Zifeng, but the person who had the highest cultivation within the official team other than her and Dai Yueheng, Gong Yangmo.

With that, she paused, "The first person I'll choose from the preparatory team is Huo Yuhao."

"Huh?" The moment she spoke, both teams were greatly astonished, and even Elder Xuan revealed a startled look on his face.

Ma Xiaotao snorted coldly. "What? Can I not choose him?"

Wang Dong bumped Huo Yuhao, who then glanced back at him. Under Wang Dong's slightly inquisitive gaze, the former could only reveal a helpless smile.

Gong Yangmo walked elegantly over to Ma Xiaotao and smiled slightly. "Xiaotao, you truly have good eyes."

Ma Xiaotao revealed a loathful look and said, "Maintain a five meter distance between you and me. Otherwise, don't blame me for being impolite."

Gong Yangmo wasn't angered by this; he walked five meters away from her with a smile.

Ma Xiaotao waved Huo Yuhao over. "What're you waiting for? Quickly, come here."

"Oh." Only then did Huo Yuhao quickly walk over to Ma Xiaotao's side.

Ma Xiaotao raised her chin towards Dai Yueheng in a seemingly provocative manner. "It's your turn."n-  
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Chapter 65.1: Mix'n'Match Battle of the Seven Monsters!

Dai Yaoheng glanced at Ma Xiaotao, feeling a little dubious. In a low voice, he said, "Chen Zifeng, Xu Sanshi."

Both of them immediately arrived at Dai Yaoheng's side.

Ma Xiaotao immediately made her decision again, "Xi Xi, Bei Bei."

Hearing her say this, Huo Yuhao almost burst out laughing. Combining the characters from "Xi" and "Bei", wouldn't that form the word for fake goods?

As he was walking over, Bei Bei evidently thought of that as well, because the expression on his face was a little strange. He wanted to laugh, but he held it in.

Dai Yaoheng said, "Ling Luochen, Yao Haoxuan." He could choose three people for the starting lineup. After Ma Xiaotao made two of her selections, it was naturally important to decide the next two candidates at the first possible moment. The team would definitely be a little stronger with a Soul King amongst them, especially since their opponents were all inner courtyard students from Shrek Academy.

Ma Xiaotao naturally went ahead and chose two more people. This time around, she obviously chose the reserve members from the outer courtyard, "He Caitou, Wang Dong."

Both parties had finished making their decisions at this moment in time. In the end, Jiang Nannan and Xiao Xiao naturally went to Dai Yueheng's team, since they were the only two remaining from the reserve team. On Ma Xiaotao's end, the ones she chose were herself, Gong Yangmo, Huo Yuhao, Xi Xi, Bei Bei, He Caitou and Wang Dong.

On the other hand, Dai Yueheng's final decision was to go with Chen Zifeng, Ling Luochen, Xu Sanshi, Jiang Nannan and Xiao Xiao.

There were seven people on each end, but both teams had already been completely broken up.

This match was led by Ma Xiaotao and Dai Yaoheng with the intention to learn from one another. Even though this match was primarily meant for both parties to fiercely compete with each other based on strength alone, it was similarly testing their abilities to select their team members as well. In a team battle, one would display different combat strengths when put in different groups.

Elder Xuan hugged his huge alcohol calabash and laughed mischievously. He then said, "Very well. Since you guys have finished choosing your members, I will give you ten minutes to plan your tactics. After ten minutes, the match will start. The losing party... Well... You can just scream this sentence – 'I am a pig' and that'll be fine."

Sure enough, this was a peculiar punishment, causing Wang Dong to break out in laughter.

There were seven people on both parties. The distance between both parties naturally grew as they went to stand on each opposite ends of the assessment area.

Gong Yangmo spoke to Ma Xiaotao in a low voice, "Xiaotao, why didn't you choose a Control System Battle Soul Master? Didn't I say that you can't put Xi Xi in?! But you also know that if you don't have a control-type in a team battle, we will be at a huge disadvantage. We usually conduct drills together, so you should also be very clear as to how powerful Ling Luochen and Yao Haoxuan are together as control-types. Even though I can barely act as a control-type, I am not a true control-type after all is said and done."

Ma Xiaotao glared at him and said, "Do I need you to teach me what to do? You just need to do everything you can to assist everyone when the match starts. I'll take care of Dai Yaoheng, but I can't finish him off in a short period of time. I can only do my best and help the rest of you. Xi Xi, I'll hand Chen Zifeng over to you."

Xi Xi frowned a little. "Shouldn't I take care of Ling Luochen first?"

Ma Xiaotao shook her head and said, "Ling Luochen has Yao Haoxuan by his side. You will be at a disadvantage because Yao Haoxuan's ability can restrain you. Relax, I have a plan. Bei Bei, follow Xi Xi when the time comes. Both of you have lightning abilities, so you'll complement one another. You guys need to get rid of Chen Ziheng at the quickest possible moment, then you guys can focus on helping the others. Since we just put these two teams together, I know there isn't going to be much rapport between us in the upcoming confrontation. The most it's going to be is a battle between individuals. Caitou, I know that you're a very talented outer courtyard student from the Soul Tool Department. You don't need to hold back for later, and can shower them with omni-directional explosive attacks."

"Okay." He Caitou replied.

Only then did Ma Xiaotao shift her gaze to Huo Yuhao. There was an odd expression on her face as she chuckled. "Little Yuhao, elder sister did not pick you because we are personally on good terms. Elder Xuan only allowed me to choose two people from the starting lineup. You are the key as to whether we can win this battle or not, so you better go all out. I'll give you and Wang Dong the authority to battle as you please. Let me see just how far you can go. Moreover, I'll hand the team's control over to you. Even if you can't control your opponents, the best you can do is control the people on your team. Can you do that?"

Huo Yuhao couldn't help but avert his gaze, seeing as there was somewhat of a playful look in Ma Xiaotao's eyes. He had no choice but to nod and say, "I'll do my best."

Ma Xiaotao snorted and said, "Doing your best is out of the question. We must definitely win. If you let this old woman scream that line as punishment, then you better be prepared for the consequences." After she finished talking, she straightened her back and almost knocked into Huo Yuhao. A valiant aura suddenly rose around her as Ma Xiaotao turned around and looked at their opponents in the distance, "Is Dai Yaoheng not satisfied that I got to lead the team when I returned? If so, then this old woman will beat him up till he's satisfied."

"Elder sister Xiaotao, I have a question." Wang Dong suddenly spoke.

Ma Xiaotao glanced at him and asked, "What's the question?"

Wang Dong said, "I've heard that there needs to be a student from the Soul Tool Department amongst Shrek's Seven Monsters. But... there isn't one amongst your group."

Ma Xiaotao indifferently said, "We originally had one, but he was eliminated after I returned. No one is indispensable on this team; if we have to get rid of one person, we can deal with not having a Soul Tool Master."

Huo Yuhao and He Caitou frowned hearing her say that. Even though Ma Xiaotao didn't intentionally direct those words at the Soul Tool Department, it was extremely easy to discern from her tone that the Soul Tool Department didn't have a position in the inner courtyard.

The ten minutes were up quickly. Dai Yueheng had evidently made certain arrangements on his end too. Both parties faced each other from opposite ends of the assessment area.

Elder Xuan's voice rang out once more. "From now on, you are not students, but enemies. I don't need to tell you what to do to fight over the title of not being a pig. All of you don't need to hold back. Start!"

Both parties were still extremely far away from each other right now. When he shouted "start", both teams immediately moved.

Ma Xiaotao was the first to rush out. Once the tips of her toes touched the ground, she was like an arrow, shooting straight out at lightning speed. Fiery feathers suddenly appeared, and following that, a radiant glow burned fiercely in her eyes.

A strong reddish-gold flame burst forth, lighting up the whole field.

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong had personally seen how Ma Xiaotao was like when she launched an all out attack. When they saw the flames from her Evil Phoenix, they were suddenly fired up. They had never expected that they'd actually get to fight alongside Ma Xiaotao so soon.

However, Ma Xiaotao's opponent was Dai Yueheng's team. As a result of that, she clearly wasn't as fierce and quick compared to when she was when dealing with those soul masters who wanted to kill Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong last time. She intentionally controlled the speed at which she was advancing, and maintained the formation she had with her team members behind her.

Xi Xi also made a move at the same time Ma Xiaotao advanced forwards. She was much faster than the outer courtyard students anticipated, and was even faster than Ma Xiaotao. In a flash, she was right



behind Ma Xiaotao. It seemed as though her whole body had already fused into Ma Xiaotao's flames. However, the moment she disappeared, Ma Xiaotao's blazing phoenix flames seemed somewhat colder than before.

Two magnificent pairs of wings simultaneously appeared on the battlefield. One of them was naturally Wang Dong's Radiant Butterfly Goddess. Radiant rays of light flickered in blue and gold as he unfurled his wings. However, Wang Dong didn't take flight, rather he held Huo Yuhao's hand as they quickly dashed forwards with the help of his wings.

The other magnificent pair of wings didn't lose to the Radiant Butterfly Goddess' wings in terms of beauty. The other person had huge wings with feathers that comprised of all the colours of the rainbow. Starting with red feathers on the person's back, the colors spread out till the tips of the wings were purple. Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet. Those seven colours were pure and sparkled in the light. When he took flight, it was just as though a rainbow was hovering in the sky.

This gorgeous pair of wings belonged to the elegant Gong Yangmo. In this moment, his long hair had similarly turned into the colors of the rainbow. There was also white scales on his skin. On the whole, it was just like he'd turned into a huge colorful bird. The only difference between him and birds was that his legs seemed to have thickened a bit, with scales faintly flashing at his ankles.

What was this martial soul? The outer courtyard disciples had also learned about many martial souls, but they hadn't heard about a martial soul like Gong Yangmo's before. The rarity of said martial soul could be compared to the Radiant Butterfly Goddess.

He Caitou wasn't fast, but one shouldn't forget that he was a Rank 4 Soul Tool Master. Rays of light suddenly shone on his back, brazenly indicating that the propeller had been activated. Moreover, he'd dragged Bei Bei along with him and caught up to Ma Xiaotao, not slowing down in the slightest.

At this moment, their formation was as follows: Gong Yangmo was in the sky. Ma Xiaotao, Xi Xi, Bei Bei and He Caitou were in front with Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong behind them.

On the other end, Dai Yaoheng's team similarly got into formation. Dai Yaoheng took the lead and released the white tiger martial soul unique to the White Tiger Duke's Mansion. A netherworldly glint shone in his eyes that had two pupils in them. They were filled with an intense desire to fight. n-  
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Chen Zifeng was on his left, whereas Xu Sanshi was on his right. Jiang Nannan on the other hand, was behind Dai Yaoheng. Three Control System Battle Soul Masters were following them further behind the group.

Ling Luo Chen, Yao Haoxuan and Xiaoxiao were standing next to each other. The trio released their martial souls one after the other.

The seven on their end were arranged in a three-one-three formation.

Seven versus seven. A match between the students from the inner and outer courtyard as well as the Shrek's Seven Monsters was about to begin.

Amongst everyone present on the battlefield, the conspicuous ones weren't the two Soul Emperors who were charging forth, ahead from everyone else in their own pack. Rather, Huo Yuhao was the one who

caught everyone's eye as a Soul Master with only two soul rings. His two white soul rings were really too striking!

When Gong Yangmo saw Huo Yuhao's white soul rings as he flew in the sky, he almost fell down. He really wanted to question when the Shrek Academy had a student who had two ten-year-old soul rings. Moreover, this student could even become a core disciple. If that wasn't enough, this student was also part of the Shrek's Seven Monster's reserve team. It seemed as though Ma Xiaotao valued him highly too.

Chapter 65.2: Mix'n'Match Battle of the Seven Monsters!

As everyone else released their dazzling yellow, purple, and even black soul rings, Huo Yuhao's pair of pure-white ones naturally became the focus of the entire field.

Shrek Academy's assessment area took up a large amount of space, and though both parties were moving quickly, it still took a while for them to approach each other. At this moment, they were only a hundred meters away from each other. Huo Yuhao's first soul ring was the first to light up.

The halo created by the pure-white soul ring wasn't large, and it would be hard to attract anybody's attention with it. However, in the short period of time in which the halo expanded, the other six people in Ma Xiaotao's team were all astonished.

The sudden feeling of having an extra brain help them calculate and detect everything around them was simply too miraculous. They didn't even need to use their eyes to feel everything around them. The appearance of the three-dimensional image caused a large quantity of data to appear in their minds, causing them to feel much more confident. Though their opponents hadn't even entered the range of Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection, its sudden and powerful effect stunned the few members of the official team who weren't familiar with him.

Just why had Ma Xiaotao chosen Huo Yuhao? In reality, she wasn't very clear on Huo Yuhao's abilities, but his Ultimate martial soul had left too deep an impression on her!

The gap between her cultivation and Huo Yuhao's couldn't even be described using the phrase 'as wide as the difference between the heavens and the earth'. However, even in a situation like this, he was able to rely on his weak ability to completely suppress her Evil Fire within a full day. After that suppression, Ma Xiaotao could no longer feel that evil intent burning her anymore. Though she knew that this was treating the symptoms, and not the root cause of her problem, Ma Xiaotao knew that there would be no chance of a relapse occurring even if she cultivated and battled for an entire month.

Combined with that fact that she had personally witnessed Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong escape from the encirclement of a Soul Emperor and five Soul Kings, she knew that she couldn't treat them like ordinary two-ringed and three-ringed soul masters. Elder Xuan was extremely picky, but had still allowed the three of them to enter the preparatory team; their talent could be seen from this fact alone.

Because of this, Ma Xiaotao's first pick wasn't Bei Bei or Xu Sanshi, but Huo Yuhao. She hoped to be surprised by him.

And the facts had shown that Huo Yuhao had given her, Xi Xi, and Gong Yangmo an extremely large shock. The omnidirectional Spiritual Shock was essentially a fusion of a control-type and auxiliary-type skill, and its accurate scouting capabilities immediately gave them the initiative.

The midair Gong Yangmo revealed a look of surprise, then revealed his strength. After all, he couldn't fall behind his little junior disciples.

A dazzling seven-coloured light lit up, and Gong Yangmo's first and second hundred year soul rings lit up. He flapped his wings, causing a red and orange ring of light to soundlessly emerge from his body and envelop his allies below him.

Immediately, an astonishing scene occurred. A scarlet-red and orange ring of light appeared on the other six people led by Ma Xiaotao, and they were able to sense the strength of Gong Yangmo's auxiliary-type skill.

The first buff they were given was an increase in strength. It was admittedly true that soul power was important, but one's physical strength played a similarly important role. When the red ring of light appeared, the six of them felt as if they'd been given a cardiac stimulant. This increased their strength by more than 50%, thus increasing their speed as well.

However, the orange ring of light was even more miraculous. After it landed on Ma Xiaotao's team, they immediately felt as if they'd become a source of energy. The elemental undulations in the air became much clearer to them, before surging into their bodies like a river flowing into a sea. This was actually an auxiliary skill that could recover a person's soul power.

A supplementary ability on this level could be considered to be an explosive increase to the overall strength of their team. This was the most important use of an auxiliary-type soul master in a battle.

As an official member of the current participating team, Gong Yangmo's cultivation level could be imagined. The reason why he was ranked last wasn't because of a deficiency in his soul power or his martial soul, but because he was only an auxiliary-type tool soul master who didn't have any combat strength himself. Normally, a figure like him would tend to be ranked last in a team.

In terms of simple cultivation, however, he was second only to Ma Xiaotao and Dai Yueheng.

What Huo Yuhao and the rest didn't know, however, was that because Ma Xiaotao had been affected by her Evil Fire, she had had to temporarily leave the Shrek's Seven Monsters, and hence not be able to represent the school. At that time, the captain of the official team was Dai Yueheng, while the vice-captain was Gong Yangmo, who was ranked last.

Gong Yangmo's martial soul was called the Rainbow Dragon. This was a soul beast that actually existed, but was extremely rare. Its rarity was around that of Wang Dong's Radiant Butterfly Goddess.

The Dragon race had always been very powerful, and the Rainbow Dragon wasn't an exception to the case; after all, it had the word 'Dragon' attached to its name. Whenever a Rainbow Dragon appeared, it would be followed by the most powerful members of the Dragon race, as the companion of the Dragon King.

The Dragon King who was the partner of the Rainbow Dragon would generally be unshakeable. That was precisely because it had the terrifying assistance of the Rainbow Dragon.

Practically every single member of the Dragon race was powerful in battle, but the Rainbow Dragon was an exception to this rule. It didn't have a high level of physical strength, nor did it have a terrifying innate soul skill. However, it had the highest amount of magical power. Because of this, it was also referred to as the Magic Dragon.

Gong Yangmo was an auxiliary-type tool soul master, but his martial soul was actually a beast soul.

Of the many auxiliary-type martial souls, the strongest of the tool souls was the Seven Treasures Glazed Pagoda that Ning Tian possessed. Once it was able to enter the realm of Nine Treasures, its auxiliary capabilities could terrify even a Titled Douluo.

Gong Yangmo's Rainbow Dragon, on the other hand, was the strongest auxiliary-type martial soul within the category of beast souls; it was comparable to the Seven Treasures Glazed Pagoda. However, like the former, his Rainbow Dragon suffered a few limitations. Once he achieved the Seven Coloured Gamut, or the seven-ringed rank in other words, taking another step would be extremely difficult for him.

The Rainbow Dragon and the Seven Treasures Glazed Pagoda each had their own specialties. On a comprehensive scale, there were hardly any differences between their respective strengths. From this, it could be seen how strong the pinnacle five-ringed Gong Yangmo was in the auxiliary field. Ma Xiaotao had taken him as her first pick due to the 30% strength increase he would give to the entire team, allowing her to make up for the lack of an extra member from the official team.

Just as Huo Yuhao and Gong Yangmo released their control and auxiliary-type skills, the seven-man team led by Dai Yueheng began to release their soul skills.

A heaven-shaking roar rang out. The person who made the first move was the relatively unremarkable member of the official Shrek's Seven Monsters, Yao Haoxuan. His extremely petite body suddenly accelerated, and he stomped his right foot on the ground heavily.

"Boom——" A muffled, loud sound shook the entire Assessment Area, as if an Earth Dragon was rising to its feet. It was very difficult to imagine how Yao Haoxuan's petite body was able to release such an enormous amount of power.

Right after that, he borrowed the tyrannical amount of force from his stomp to shoot into the air. Then, Huo Yuhao witnessed a scene that he'd never seen on a soul master before.

Yao Haoxuan's petite body released a shattering sound in midair, tearing his school uniform to bits and pieces. As if he knew this was going to happen, he wore a dark-gold shirt under his uniform. This shirt was extremely elastic; it didn't have any signs of tearing even after his body suddenly expanded. n-  
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Normally, a soul master who possessed a beast soul would undergo a few changes when they activated them. For example, this was the case for Ma Xiaotao and Dai Yueheng. However, amongst the soul masters Huo Yuhao had seen before, a person could only double the size of his body at most. However, the current Yao Haoxuan had completely overturned his understanding.

While his body was in midair, Yao Haoxuan extended his four limbs. Then, his terrifying muscles bulged, and within the blink of an eye, he became an enormous and over-exaggerated adonis.

Every single one of his muscles swelled, and the surface of his skin was covered in a keratin and leather-like substance. His skin turned a metallic gray, and his eyes turned dark green.

Yao Haoxuan, who originally wasn't even as tall as Ling Luochen, was now over four meters tall as he landed on the ground with a crash. Right, four meters. This was a height that ordinary humans couldn't even grow to.

The more terrifying fact was that his shoulders were three meters wide. After landing, he became as thick as a small fortress. He took a deep, coarse breath, then raised his pectorals, which were as large as a chopping block.

He pounded his chest using his enormous, hammer-like fists, and two yellow soul rings lit up.

"Boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom..." Amidst the muffled booms, everyone could see yellow rings of light spread out from Yao Haoxuan's body. Every single member of the opposing team was covered with a layer of yellow light, and their auras became evidently sharper. On the other hand, Huo Yuhao's team began to feel slightly dizzy after hearing that muffled sound.

This was the auxiliary and control-type soul master, Yao Haoxuan! Just what martial soul did he possess?

Following Gong Yangmo's appearance, another martial soul which Huo Yuhao completely didn't recognise appeared.

Control-type soul masters would always make the first move in a team battle. They didn't just control their enemies, but their own teammates as well if they were able to. Control-type soul masters were always known as the commanders of the battlefield.

Because of this, Yao Haoxuan wasn't the only person from Dai Yueheng's team who made a move; the control-type Ling Luochen and Xiao Xiao made a move as well.

Chapter 65.3: Mix'n'Match Battle of the Seven Monsters!

Xiao Xiao knew that her cultivation was too low to play a decisive role in the battle. As such, she only used her Ninephoenix Worshipping Flute. When she did, a 'wuwu' sound echoed throughout the surrounding area, and Ma Xiaotao's speed was immediately reduced by a small margin.

Compared to Xiao Xiao, the nearby Ling Luochen was much more powerful. When she released her martial soul, all five of her soul rings began to move rhythmically, and a layer of ice crystals covered her entire body. Immediately afterwards, the layer of ice crystals began to shine as they merged with her second soul ring, which caused her body to be encased in light blue ice armor. When the light from her teammates' soul rings shone on it, the light was refracted and gave birth to a beautiful and radiant display of colors.

Her first soul ring was the next to light up. Ling Luochen raised her right hand when it did, and made a grabbing motion. When she did, a two meter-long magical staff made of ice crystals materialized from a blue light.

Unexpectedly, both of the soul skills she'd used so far had nothing to do with 'control'. One had caused a magical staff to materialize, the other a suit of ice armor. Despite this, neither of these abilities seemed weak!

However, Ling Luochen quickly displayed her strength. She pointed the staff towards the sky, and a layer of ice-blue light instantly enveloped the surrounding area. Afterwards, the ice-blue air rushed towards the enemy team. She didn't use any other soul skills.

As one might notice, her martial soul was nothing but 'ice'. She had an extremely rare elemental martial soul that let her control ice.

Ma Xiaotao was in the front. Therefore, she would have been the first one to suffer the effects of the wave of cold. Dai Yueheng and the others thought that she would use her phoenix flames to resist the attack. However, she did nothing of the sort. She just stopped.

Given her cultivation, Ling Luochen's ability to control ice wasn't really a threat to her. However, ice could restrain fire. With Ling Luochen here, her phoenix flames would be weakened, and her consumption of spiritual power would also increase.

But surprisingly enough, the irritable Ma Xiaotao didn't push forward. Since she had stopped, her teammates also quickly caught up.

"Huo Yuhao, release your ice element aura and suppress her." Ma Xiaotao shouted in a low voice. At this time, they were less than fifty meters away from Dai Yueheng and Chen Zifeng. And right now, they had already entered the range of Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection. The condition of their soul power, their speed, their movements, all the moves they were planning to do; nothing could escape Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection.

However, Huo Yuhao was still a little nervous. After all, the opposing team had four students of the inner courtyard! When Ma Xiaotao shouted that command, he mistook her intentions.

Suppress her? How exactly can I suppress her? If it were a Soul Grandmaster, maybe I would be able to suppress him. But a Soul King? This is impossible!

Ma Xiaotao was much more experienced than him. Therefore, she just wanted to make him release his Ultimate ice element martial soul. Even if Ling Luochen had a powerful elemental martial soul, it was still somewhat lacking compared to an Ultimate martial soul of the ice element. Just by releasing his Ultimate ice element, he would be able to protect his teammates from Ling Luochen's ability to control ice. Otherwise, if they were to be affected by this cold, their speed and power would drop drastically.

However, Huo Yuhao didn't know that his duty was so easy. He only had to release the martial soul of the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion and spread her aura in all directions. He had turned a simple task into something very complicated.

Sister Xiaotao, you're asking too much of me! How should I proceed now?

Would he allow them to say that he was a coward? Of course he wouldn't. At this time, Huo Yuhao recalled the words that Ma Xiaotao had left on the ground. This immediately ignited his fighting spirit. A golden light flickered through his eyes. Then, his second soul ring lit up.

Since Ma Xiaotao had stopped, everyone else stopped too. They all heard the order she had given to Huo Yuhao.

Huo Yuhao took a step forward. At this time, he was standing in front of his teammates. After that, he released a piercing shriek from his mouth, and at the same time, his body also disappeared completely.

At this moment, Dai Yueheng, Chen Zifeng, and the others saw that Ma Xiaotao had stopped. Therefore, they also reduced their speed. If you know both yourself and your enemy, you won't suffer defeat. There was surely a reason behind the other party's strange behavior.

Then, they saw the boy called Huo Yuhao taking a step forward. And after that piercing shriek, they saw his body disappear completely. All those rays of light connected to his body also lost their luster.

At this time, the wave of cold arrived where Yuhao and the others were standing. Except for Huo Yuhao, everyone else felt their bodies become cold. The temperature in the surrounding area also drastically fell.

Ma Xiaotao was dumbfounded. She was just about to curse that idiotic Huo Yuhao when the surrounding scenery changed.

A strange form appeared where Huo Yuhao was standing. And when it appeared, it caused the surrounding air to instantly congeal. Then, a burst of ancient, powerful and overbearing aura spread from its body.

Elder Xuan, who was overseeing the match from the sky, lowered his head and spurted out the alcohol in his mouth. His eyes were wide open, and almost seemed to fall from his eye sockets. Afterwards, he started to cough fiercely. The alcohol had almost caused him to choke.

Huo Yuhao's body had disappeared. And a beautiful and fearful form had appeared in his stead.

It was a scorpion. A very beautiful scorpion.

It was around one-and-a-half meters long, and its body had two colorations. One part had the same color as ice, while the other was a deep green.

At its front, there were four overlapping layers. Each layer was slightly longer than 15 centimeters, and the head was situated on the first one. Its silver-white mouth was emitting a cold light. Moreover, the first half of these four layers was covered with strange scales.

Each of these scales was hexagonal, and each and every one of them was emitting a bright light, just like protruding diamonds. Its six powerful long legs were also densely covered by these protuberances. Under the snowy radiance, they were emitting a blinding light. At this moment, it seemed as if its entire body had become a source of light; myriad different light shades were refracted from it.

The two pincers in the front were each a meter long. The pincers were also covered by those protruding diamond-like hexagonal scales. They were similar to its mouth, emitting a silver-white radiance like two mirrors.

However, the most eye-catching part was its two eyes. These eyes were yellow, and shining like a pair of crystals. They also had a hexagonal shape. They were emitting a bright yellow radiance, giving off an unusual feeling.

If you were to think that the first half was bright enough, you still had to see the latter half. A long and dazzling tail was sticking up from its back, and this was the core of the radiance it was emanating.

Unlike the many segments of a normal scorpion's, its tail only had five. Each joint had a charming dark green color. The glittering dark green color almost seemed lifelike. These five joints all had the same color, and the closer they were close to the body, the larger they were. Likewise, the farther they were, the narrower they got. At the end of the last joint was a diamond-like stinger that was standing high up in the sky. The tip of the stinger was also emitting a silver-white luster.

This soul beast, whose entire body resembled a shining precious treasure, was emitting an aura capable of making one terrified.

After all, it was soul beast that had moved unhindered in the Extreme North for nearly four hundred thousand years! It was ranked second among the three emperors of the Extreme North, the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion!

The six people from the outer courtyard weren't really affected. After all, they hadn't ever encountered a first-class soul beast, and they didn't know what the aura of a first-class soul beast looked like. In their eyes, this scorpion was nothing but a beautiful and dangerous beast.

However, the students of the inner courtyard were different! After entering the inner courtyard, their classes were different from those of the outer courtyard. They had a class that took place exactly in the Great Star Dou Forest. As soon as the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion appeared, they felt an immense fear. It was the pressure of a hundred thousand year soul beast. n/(Ovel&In

The aura of the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion exploded out, and a sense of coldness spread everywhere. That wave of cold immediately stopped midair, then began to slowly solidify. It turned into a white light that enveloped the tip of the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion's stinger. Those two bright yellow eyes were devoid of every emotion as they looked at the far away Ling Luochen.

Ling Luochen felt her body stiffen, and she couldn't move from where she was standing. If one were to look carefully, they would notice that the ice armor covering her body had started to show signs of abnormally hardening. In addition, her feet were glued to the earth by a layer of ice. She couldn't move anymore, and her body had started to freeze.

All of this happened in an instant. While everyone was still dumbfounded due to Huo Yuhao turning into the Ice Jade Empress Scorpion, Ling Luochen had already been completely subdued.

"Elder Xuan, this is a hundred thousand year soul beast." Ma Xiaotao was astonished. She quickly released her martial soul to protect the people behind her.

"Sister Xiaotao, what are you doing? Quick, attack them!" A form suddenly flashed. That terrifying Ice Jade Empress Scorpion had disappeared, and Huo Yuhao had reappeared in her stead. Moreover, he was impatiently pressing forward, unaware of the fact that everyone was about to attack him. Even Elder Xuan was preparing to fight him.

"Stop!" Elder Xuan shouted from midair. He descended from the sky and arrived in front of Huo Yuhao. Afterwards, he raised his right hand and grabbed him.

As for resisting it... it was completely useless. Huo Yuhao was nothing but an ant in front of someone like Elder Xuan.



Elder Xuan's hand held his shoulder. Then, Huo Yuhao felt a powerful soul power entering and probing every corner of his body.

The quantity of soul power was too large. But luckily, Huo Yuhao's meridians had gone through a lot of tempering, and were quite strong right now. And what surprised him the most was that after experiencing Elder Xuan's soul power, his own soul power that had reached the peak of Rank 26 suddenly broke through, allowing him to successfully reach Rank 27.