

Tang Sect 76

Chapter 76.1: I come from Shrek, and from the Tang Sect!

All of their hands trembled a bit when they heard themselves called up. When Bei Bei raised his head, the lazy smile that was normally present on his face had vanished. Resolute determination now filled his face as he took large strides towards the stage.

He Caitou followed immediately after Bei Bei, while Xu Sanshi, Jiang Nannan, Xiao Xiao, Huo Yuhao, and Wang Dong all trailed behind him.

Right. As of this moment, the seven of them were now representing Shrek Academy. As of this moment, they were the current generation of Shrek's Seven Monsters. The halo of their ancestors seemed to envelop their bodies, alongside the halo of the Tang Sect!

The radiance of the Tang Sect and Shrek Academy seemed to ignite within them at the same time, and when it did, their emotions reached an unprecedented level of excitement.

Their breathing had become somewhat rushed amidst the cheers that had encompassed them, and their faces had become flushed. Their soul power had also begun rapidly circulating throughout their bodies due to their excitement. As a result, they all felt as if they had an unlimited amount of energy.

Finally, they neared the tall stage that they'd be participating upon. However, when they did so, Bei Bei didn't rush to step onto it. Instead, he turned towards his companions and said in a low voice, "We can't just win this match; we have to do so overwhelmingly. We have to show the glory that belongs to Shrek Academy. Yuhao, we'll be relying on you."

Huo Yuhao forcefully nodded. He naturally understood what his senior brother was implying.

Only when he saw this did Bei Bei turn around and take large strides towards the tall stage in front of him.

The seven members of each team gathered at their respective corners of the stage and looked towards one another. When the students from the Tian Ling Advanced Soul Academy saw that Shrek Academy had actually sent out such a young line-up, they were involuntarily stunned. Has Shrek Academy sent its preparatory team up? But, but this is the knockout round! Aren't they scared that they'll lose?!

A similar question appeared in all of the spectator's minds as well, including those of the participating academies. Even the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy was left dumbstruck.

At this moment, even Xiao Hongchen was doubtful of his own judgement. Wasn't Shrek Academy being too brazen? Regardless of how strong they were, would they be able to beat a team of soul masters who were near twenty years old with a team that had an average age of fifteen? One that even had a few members that looked eleven to twelve years old? There were no second chances if they were to lose!

The Star Luo Emperor also had a stunned look on his face. He asked doubtfully, "Just what is Shrek Academy doing? Why aren't they sending out their main force? Why isn't Dai Hao's son coming up on stage?"

However, a competition was a competition. No matter how doubtful they were, the competition still had to go on.

The referee sent by the Star Luo Empire had already taken his position. He motioned for both parties to step forward.

The seven students from both teams gathered in the center of the arena. The closer they got to each other, the more the Shrek's Seven Monsters were able to see the unsightly faces of their opponents. Countless years of history before them had already proven this; the result of meeting Shrek Academy in the first round was obvious.

On the other hand, the interest of the students from Tian Ling Advanced Soul Academy were piqued by Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong, and Xiao Xiao as they got closer. What's more, Bei Bei and the rest were clearly very young! This was undoubtedly their preparatory team. Furthermore, it was a preparatory team that had an average age that was lower than fifteen. Sure enough, Shrek Academy was completely deserving of its nickname of an academy for monsters. Just what were they trying to do?

"The first round of the knockout round is a team fight." The referee said solemnly, "Both parties can use a large majority of their soul tools during the fight. However, if one party admits defeat during the course of the fight, the other party cannot continue attacking. Soul engineers cannot use stationary soul tools which have a high degree of killing power. Do you understand?"

"Understood." Bei Bei calmly took the initiative to respond.

The leader of the Tian Ling Advanced Soul Academy's team was a slender youth who looked around twenty. Among the seven they were pit against, his expression was rather ordinary. He responded as well, following Bei Bei.

Although they were only fighting against Shrek Academy's preparatory team, it was just as Ma Xiaotao had said. Shrek's reputation in itself was a powerful weapon. As they looked at the menacing gazes of Huo Yuhao's seven, the students from the Tian Ling Advanced Soul Academy felt even weaker.

The referee nodded, "Good. Both parties, move back to your corners. Once I give the command, the battle will start. Before I announce the start of this match, you are not allowed to release any martial souls. Otherwise, you will be punished."

Both parties started to slowly widen the distance between them. As they retreated, Huo Yuhao turned around and whispered, "Later, everyone stand according to my arrangements. After that, fight by following my Spiritual Detection."

Huo Yuhao had no confidence in commanding the team members of the official team. However, he was closely related to a large portion of the preparatory team. The team leader, Bei Bei, was his senior brother; the second eldest of the lot, He Caitou, was also his senior brother. There was no need to even mention Wang Dong and Xiao Xiao. He'd gotten closer to Xu Sanshi and Jiang Nannan over these past few days, but more importantly, everyone was convinced by his Spiritual Detection.

Over on the other side, the Tian Ling Empire were taking a very defensive formation. Quickly, both parties arrived at the edges of the arena.

The referee who stood at the center of the arena slowly raised his right hand. At this moment, the Star Luo Plaza filled with several hundreds of thousands of people instantly quieted down. Every single spectator was staring at the spacious stage with their eyes wide.

This was the first round of the tournament, as well as the first knockout round. Moreover, it was a match that had the continent's number one academy participating! Shrek Academy's participants were very young, but they still carried the glory of Shrek with them. Everybody wished to see what they could do.

As the referee raised his hand, both parties immediately took their positions. At the same time, the hundred and eight soul masters from the Star Luo Empire pressed their hands to the metal pillars in front of them.

The hundred and eight metal pillars lit up simultaneously, causing rays of white light to surge into the sky. They carved out arcs as they gathered in midair, twenty meters above the stage.

When the hundred and eight rays of light were gathered together, a white curtain of light rained down, covering the entire field. The protective barrier had been completed, signifying that the Continental Advanced Academy Soul Duelling Tournament was about to begin.

Over on the Tian Ling Advanced Soul Academy's side, the seven people quickly arranged themselves into a traditional battle formation. Three soul masters stood at the very front of the formation, and the fact that they were either assault or defense-type soul masters could be seen with a glance. The two soul masters who stood slightly behind them should be agility-type soul masters. The last of the soul masters stood in a single line, one in front and one in the back, and according to the traditional layout, it was clear that they were respectively control-type and auxiliary-type soul masters.

This was the best seven-man formation that had been devised after countless battles. If they were focused on attacking, the three people in front would be assault-type soul masters; if they were focused on defense and stability, there would be one or two defense-type soul masters.

A traditional formation like this one was called the 3-2-1-1 formation.

However, not many people were currently looking at the Tian Ling Advanced Soul Academy team. Practically everyone was focused on Shrek. Furthermore, they involuntarily cried out in surprise due to the scene in front of them. The ones who cried out the loudest were actually the hundred-plus Advanced Academies that were participating in the tournament. This was because Shrek Academy had revealed a formation that they were simply unable to comprehend.

Huo Yuhao stood at the very front of the formation, and his still-infantile face was currently filled with an arrogant look. On the other hand, the six people behind him maintained a fan-shaped formation behind him, making it seem as though the stars were cupping themselves around the moon. As a result, he was made the most prominent of the lot.

What was this formation even called? *noVEL-L&)*In

The Advanced Academies that could participate in this tournament all had a certain amount of reputation within the continent. They had each conducted research into military strategy with regards to soul masters, but not a single academy had ever created a formation like this one.

A formation like this made it seem as though the other six were just there to cheer for Huo Yuhao, as if they were letting him go out and fight by himself. This was an incomprehensible scene! After sending out its preparatory team, Shrek Academy was giving everyone another surprise.

Even the referee was somewhat dumbstruck. The fact that he was able to become a referee of the tournament showed that he was naturally a high-ranking soul master who had been specially chosen by the Star Luo Empire.

The host of every single tournament was an empire, and this was also a time where the various countries were able to reveal their strength to the outstanding elites coming from the various academies. Naturally, they would do everything to the best of their abilities. However, even this referee had never seen a formation like this in a team fight before! He even forgot to put down the right hand that he had lifted earlier.

“Referee, we can start now.” Huo Yuhao said to the referee in an extremely unperturbed manner.

He wasn’t old, and even his voice was in the midst of cracking. Thus, his puerile voice was somewhat coarse. However, he was now the main focus of the entire crowd after standing in front.

Only then did the referee come back to his senses. He swung down his right hand, then shouted, “Match, start!” No matter what formation they were using, all he needed to do was ensure that the match went smoothly.

Following the referee’s shout, both parties simultaneously released their martial souls.

The seven from the Tian Ling Advanced Soul Academy couldn’t be considered weak at all; their soul rings were mainly comprised of yellow and purple ones, and flashed with dazzling light. Of the seven, five of them had four soul rings, while the other two had three soul rings. The four soul rings of the youth who led the pack flickered dazzlingly. Clearly, he had already reached the later stages of the Soul Ancestor rank. Reaching a stage like this at the mere age of twenty was relatively decent.

However, simply nobody would pay attention to the state of the Tian Ling Advanced Soul Academy at this moment. All of the spectators were focused on Shrek Academy’s side. More accurately, they were all focused on Huo Yuhao, who was taking large strides forward.

At this exact moment, an indescribable yet terrifying aura impressively appeared on the tall stage.

In that instant, a blood-colored light lit up the entire tournament stage. Filled with icy, cruel, slaughtering, berserk, and other types of terrifying auras, it suddenly exploded out...

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One, two, three, four, five, six... a full six blood-red soul rings had appeared beneath the seemingly thirteen or fourteen-year-old Huo Yuhao.

Red. What did that represent? It represented the pinnacle of soul rings, a terrifying level of power. It represented... a hundred thousand year soul ring!

Six hundred thousand year soul rings simultaneously appearing on a single person was something that ordinary people would never dare to imagine. Cries of surprise and alarm rang out from the mouths of several hundreds of thousands of people like a raging wave. The ear-splitting sensation coming from Huo Yuhao was simply too strong. Even the emperor of the Star Luo Empire himself, as well as his empress and officials, simultaneously stood up from shock.

The first thought that appeared in their minds was that this was impossible. It was completely impossible for a situation like this, in which a soul master was completely filled with hundred thousand year soul rings, to occur, let alone in such a young child. However, the aura of his hundred thousand year soul rings was still so terrifying, and so real. Furthermore, Shrek Academy was already an existence akin to that of a legend in many of their hearts!

One of the six blood-colored soul rings suddenly lit up, and the seven students from the Tian Ling Advanced Soul Academy let out a muffled groan at practically the same time.

The sudden appearance of six hundred thousand year soul rings was already astonishing to the spectators below the stage, let alone to the originally nervous students from the Tian Ling Advanced Soul Academy who were standing on the stage itself.

The moment they felt that completely horrifying aura, practically all of them retreated hurriedly. As a result, they were all bunched up together. However, Huo Yuhao's mysterious Spiritual Interference appeared at this exact moment.

The students from the Tian Ling Advanced Soul Academy were originally tensed up. Combined with the visual stimulation caused by Huo Yuhao's soul rings, their minds were only a fine line away from collapse. After receiving another tiny stimulation, they were like startled birds; their reaction to his Spiritual Interference was much greater than he had imagined. Looks of terror simultaneously appeared in their eyes, and their bodies were directly frozen by his Spiritual Interference.

At this exact moment, an enormous pair of bluish-golden wings appeared behind the dazzlingly bright Huo Yuhao. The colors of blue and gold fused perfectly with each other, releasing a beautiful golden flare. Within the blink of an eye, it was the focus of the entire arena.

The two figures instantly merged together, and the blood-colored soul rings instantly vanished. Instead, an enormous, vertical golden slit replaced it.

The resplendent colors of blue, purple, and gold covered half the arena within the blink of an eye. The ray of light struck the seven from the Tian Ling Advanced Soul Academy who were bunched up together perfectly.

An instantaneous feeling of panic appeared in the hearts of every single person who saw that golden vertically-slitted eye. Right after that, the arena seemed to be cleaved in half by that dazzling ray of light.

This ray of light neared seventy metres in length, and was three metres wide. After bursting forth, the three differently-colored halos of light slowly rose into the air. None of the seven from the Tian Ling Advanced Soul Academy were able to dodge it. When the tricolored flare finally vanished, a long, two foot-deep Golden Road that flickered with a resplendent golden light had been left on the arena.

Of the seven from the Tian Ling Advanced Soul Academy, two three-ringed soul masters immediately fell to the ground. The various protective soul tools that they were wearing had exploded, causing a series of lights to blow up. The bodies of the other five had been fully dyed gold, transforming them into golden statues. Their soul rings had vanished completely, and their martial souls had been sealed.

The golden eye vanished, causing the six dazzling blood-colored rings of light to reappear. Not only that, but another person had appeared next to Huo Yuhao; this was a youth who had unfurled the dazzling

wings of the Radiant Butterfly Goddess. He looked even younger than Huo Yuhao, but two yellow, two purple, and two black soul rings flickered around his body. Six dazzling soul rings surrounded his body as well.

Huo Yuhao clasped his hands behind his back, his eyes filled with an arrogant look. He looked indifferently towards the completely flabbergasted referee and said, "This match is over."

"Ah?" Only then did the referee react to the scene in front of him. The students from Tian Ling Advanced Soul Academy had already grabbed the two fallen three-ringed soul masters before jumping down from the stage. Traces of golden light still remained on their bodies, and as they jumped off the stage, the hundred and eight soul masters who were in charge of protecting the arena cancelled the usage of their soul power. Clearly, the match had already ended.

The plaza filled with several hundreds of thousands of spectators, including the imperial family of the Star Luo Empire and its civil and military officers, along with more than a hundred advanced soul master and soul engineering academies, was completely silent at this moment.

The people who had previously been somewhat doubtful towards the preparatory team that Shrek Academy had sent out were now left staring wide-eyed as they stared at the deep, golden ravine that was now on the arena floor.

They were almost unable to breathe, and even swallowing their saliva was hard for them. n.)OveℓbIn

Practically everyone was inwardly screaming the phrase 'This is impossible!' at seeing these six hundred thousand year soul rings. However, the word 'impossible' now had hesitation, astonishment, and a terrifying and hysterical excitement to it.

Shrek. This was Shrek. The continent's number one, completely unparalleled Shrek.

Huo Yuhao slowly turned around, then looked towards the southern spectators in Star Luo Plaza. He shouted in a solemn voice, "Remember. I come from Shrek Academy, and the Tang Sect!"

With that, the six icy, blood-colored soul rings that made breathing itself difficult instantly vanished. He slowly walked down from the stage, returning to Shrek Academy's area along with the Seven Monsters. He didn't even wait for the referee to announce the results of the battle. The arrogance he possessed once again stunned the entire arena.

He came from Shrek! He came from the Tang Sect!

At this very moment, the most emotionally stirred person behind Huo Yuhao was Bei Bei. He forcefully suppressed the tears that were about to drip from his eyes, and thought to himself, Little Ya, how good it would've been if you were able to be here today to witness this scene. Right, we don't just come from Shrek. We come from the Tang Sect!

Wang Yan took the initiative to walk up to Huo Yuhao. When he walked forward, their eyes seemed to converse with each other instantaneously. Wang Yan used a seemingly rebuking tone to speak to him, "You were too vicious."

Huo Yuhao had already understood something from Wang Yan's gaze. He replied coldly, "I was already showing them some mercy by temporarily sealing their martial souls. If their men weren't able to save

them in time, they wouldn't have been able to walk down from that stage alive." His voice was very loud, allowing the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy and the other academies behind it to hear his words.

At this moment, Ma Xiaotao, Dai Yueheng and Ling Luochen were somewhat flabbergasted. They'd never thought that this match would end in such a dramatic fashion. Although they were able to determine that Huo Yuhao's seven would be able to win from the moment their opponents released their martial souls, they'd never expected that the preparatory team would win in such a manner.

Wang Yan and Huo Yuhao walked back, side by side. The former touched Huo Yuhao's left hand seemingly by accident, and his gaze flickered slightly. "Do you want to stay behind and watch the other matches?"

Huo Yuhao continued putting on a cool look and said coldly, "What's there to look at? Is there anything worth seeing? Let's go back." With that, he directly went outside.

When he walked past the representative teams from the various academies, Huo Yuhao swept his glance across them in a seemingly unintentional manner. Unexpectedly, nobody dared to meet his gaze. The current Huo Yuhao was like a king examining his citizens. The others from Shrek Academy all followed behind him, and they all left just like that after the first match had ended. They didn't even greet the Star Luo Empire's imperial family.

"Who is that person? Why have I never heard his name before? Go find out. Go find out what his name is, and do so at any cost." The Star Luo Emperor's gaze followed Huo Yuhao all the way out. Shrek Academy's immediate exit following the end of the battle caused the entire tournament to pause for several seconds or so, and their exit attracted the gazes of everyone present.

A fervent look gradually appeared in every single pair of eyes in the arena. Right! This was Shrek. This was the number one academy under the heavens, the existences akin to gods in their eyes! This was Shrek Academy's strength. One of their students even had hundred thousand year soul rings! That seemingly thirteen or fourteen year-old-youth was actually Shrek Academy's true leader in this tournament.

The most stunned of the lot was still the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy. They currently had hideous looks on their faces. Even the extremely arrogant Xiao Hongchen had an ashen look on his face as he clenched his fists tightly. A voice rang out unceasingly in his mind.

How could this be? How could this be? How could there be a person even more talented than I am? No, absolutely not. He's a fake, a fake, a fake!

He was naturally a fake.

Huo Yuhao maintained his cold expression as he led the students of Shrek Academy all the way back to the Imperial Star Grand Hotel, and until he opened the door. After standing in his room for a few seconds, the expression on his face suddenly changed.

Without any prior signs at all, his body went limp, and he fell straight to the ground. It wasn't just him; Wang Dong, who was behind him, did the same as the two tumbled down together.

Fortunately, Wang Yan had already prepared himself for this. One in each hand, he caught them by the arms. Jiang Nannan and Xu Sanshi helped support Wang Dong, while Wang Yan hugged Huo Yuhao and carefully set him down on the sofa.

The previously monarch-like Huo Yuhao was now as pale as a child; he'd already fallen into a deep sleep.

Just why would Wang Yan have asked whether he wanted to continue spectating? When he had touched Huo Yuhao's hand earlier, he had noticed that the latter's hand was cold and trembling. He knew that he was definitely in an extremely weak state. Sure enough, Huo Yuhao immediately agreed to bring everyone back the moment he asked for his opinion. By relying on his sturdy willpower, he made it all the way till the hotel before collapsing.

Wang Yan looked towards Bei Bei and asked, "Just how did you guys plan it?"

Right! Just how had they planned it all out? This was also the question in Ma Xiaotao, Dai Yueheng, and Ling Luochen's minds. They'd seen the strength of Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong's fusion skill before, but there was still a limit to their cultivations! It was simply inconceivable that their attack had succeeded against the elites of the Tian Ling Advanced Soul Academy... and they had drawn first blood! However, wasn't there some danger in this? Would their later opponents be so easily taken in?

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Bei Bei looked carefully at the unconscious Huo Yuhao who was now lying on the sofa as he said, "Our junior brother is really talented. Back then, our moods had already changed. As we bathed in Shrek Academy's glory, all our anxiety left us and we were only left with excitement. I told him that in the first battle under his command our objective wasn't just to win but to win by a landslide. In order to accomplish that, our junior brother made a series of arrangements and brought about an outcome that was beyond our expectations. Even Yuhao must not have expected that our opponents would be that pitiful. The main reason for their loss was fear. Senior sister Ma was right, our Shrek Academy's strongest weapon is our reputation."

"According to Yuhao's original plan, all of us had had a role to play. He was supposed to start by using his Imitation Skill to scare our opponents and follow that up by hitting them with the fusion skill. Once their martial souls were sealed, the rest of us were supposed to rush in and immediately conclude the battle with our strongest soul skills. But who would have thought that those students from the Tian Ling Advanced Soul Academy were such cowards? When Yuhao used his Imitation Skill to simulate six hundred thousand year soul rings, they were so scared that they even forgot to dodge. Upon being hit by Yuhao and Wang Dong's fusion skill, they unexpectedly jumped down from the platform, which directly gave us the victory. I think they weren't able to use even 10% of their real power and it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that they didn't fight at all. The first match of the tournament was such an easy victory."

Wang Yan was mildly confused, were things really as simple as Bei Bei's explanation? He was incredibly experienced regarding soul masters. At the time, he had also witnessed Yuhao release all those soul skills one after another and perform the martial soul fusion skill with Wang Dong. However, even if they were scared to death, those students from the Tian Ling Advanced Soul Academy should have been able to react when attacked!

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong's Golden Road Amidst Withering Resplendence was one of the most mysterious fusion skills Wang Yan had ever seen. Its power was incredible, but its disadvantages were also clearly evident. It could only be used to attack in a straight line. Therefore, unless the opponent was unable to move, there was no way it could hit seven people like that!

"It's not that simple." Dai Yueheng suddenly said. His words attracted everyone's attention. n).Ovelbln

He continued, "Didn't you notice? Yuhao and Wang Dong's fusion skill has gotten stronger than before. However, neither has their cultivation increased nor have they broken through any bottlenecks. This means that they pushed themselves to the extreme and used some special means to maximise the power of their fusion skill. This is how they were able to defeat the opponents in one move. Facing such a move, the enemy must have thought that they would suffer serious injuries. This thought scared them so much that they directly jumped down from the platform."

Bei Bei nodded and said, "Classmate Dai's words are reasonable. Given their current strength, the might of their fusion skill should be pretty high."

Wang Yan stood up, his face slightly flushed as he smiled. His gaze passed across Bei Bei, Xu Sanshi, Jiang Nannan, Xiao Xiao and He Caitou as he spoke, "They preserved Shrek Academy's honor, it doesn't matter how they did it. In fact, I dare claim that this is the most satisfying victory that has ever been obtained by Shrek Academy since their first participation in the Continental Advanced Academy Soul Dueling Tournament. You let everyone experience Shrek Academy's power, and silenced all those who were questioning you. I sincerely thank all of you on behalf of the academy."

With that, Wang Dong bowed toward Bei Bei's five and Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong that were sleeping on the sofa.

This victory was incredibly important for Shrek Academy! With this win, they hadn't been eliminated in the first round and had secured a place in the following elimination round. Now only time would tell how they would continue to fare, but Ma Xiaotao and the other two were bound to recover in middle of the elimination phase. Additionally, with the strength they had exhibited today, no matter which academy they would fight next, their opponents would surely be scared.

Bei Bei took a deep breath and said in a deep voice, "Teacher Wang, don't worry. As we wait for reinforcements from the academy and the recovery of our teammates, we'll try our very best to win every match."

Wang Yan nodded. "First go put Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong on the bed and let them have a good rest. They did very well today. I'll elaborate a strategy based on today's results. As long as you capitalize on this opportunity, you should have it easy in the next match."

Everyone thought little of it, but Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong ended up sleeping together in the same bed once again...

After recovering from the shock of the first match, the Continental Advanced Academy Soul Dueling Tournament advanced in full swing. However, Huo Yuhao's performance in the first match was still deeply engraved in the minds of the audience and the other competitors, along with his overbearing last sentence. The names 'Shrek Academy' and 'Tang Sect' had become hot topics in Star Luo City overnight.

When Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong woke up, it was already evening.

To be more accurate, Wang Dong woke up first, and Huo Yuhao was startled awake as a consequence.

When he woke up, Wang Dong discovered that another person was sleeping with him, and his first reaction was to kick that person!

Then, Yuhao's tragedy began. How could he not wake up once he fell to the ground on his butt?

"What are you doing?" Huo Yuhao exclaimed angrily as he climbed back onto the bed.

Upon seeing it was Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong replied somewhat embarrassedly, "I didn't know it was you! And why are you in my room anyway?"

Huo Yuhao was startled. He looked around as he hugged the quilt close to him and responded with even more indignation, "Nonsense! This is clearly my room. Not only did you sleep in my bed, but you also dared to kick me down. Do you not have a conscience?!"

"Ugh... I have no idea how I ended up here!" After a brief moment of awkwardness, Wang Dong opened his eyes wide and exclaimed, "What are you yelling for? It's not like you're going to die from falling off a bed, and you even want to be in the right after sleeping with me!"

"It's not like I want to be right; I am right. And so what if we slept together? It's not like this is the first time."

"You..."

Wang Dong discovered that he couldn't win this argument against Huo Yuhao. He quickly turned his body and pressed Yuhao beneath him while separated by the quilt. He relied on his superior soul power to hold his shoulders down and sit on his body.

"Do you surrender or not?" Wang Dong asked wickedly.

Huo Yuhao laughed. "Of course not. What are you going to do about it?"

Wang Dong was startled when he realised that he really couldn't do much to Huo Yuhao. While he was in a daze, Huo Yuhao quickly took advantage of the opportunity. His shoulders were held down, but he could still move his forearms! His small arm drilled out of the quilt and gently poked Wang Dong's waist.

Wang Dong retreated as if he had received an electric shock and started laughing. How could Yuhao let go of this opportunity? He pulled his arm free and turned around, pressing Wang Dong down.

Even though the quilt was still separating them, Huo Yuhao could still feel Wang Dong's soft body. He smiled wickedly as he spoke, "Your body is very soft and even works wonders as a pillow. Do you surrender or not?"

Wang Dong copied Huo Yuhao's previous appearance and replied, "Of course not. What are you going to do about it?"

Huo Yuhao's gaze started to wander from his face to the rest of his body, and a crafty look flashed through his eyes. Wang Dong became a little nervous as he asked, "W-What are you going to do?"

Huo Yuhao smiled. "If I'm not mistaken, someone is very ticklish." As he said that, his hands that were holding Wang Dong down went lower, poking at his waist.

"Hahaha..."

Immediately, Wang Dong started to laugh, and his body arched like a dried shrimp.

"I surrender, I surrender. Let me go. I won't argue with you again. I'm dying. Hahaha..."

Huo Yuhao suddenly stopped and looked at Wang Dong in a daze.

Wang Dong gasped for breath as he pushed Yuhao away from him, "J-Just wait and see! A gentleman can wait ten years to take revenge!"

However, it seemed like Huo Yuhao hadn't heard his threat. He suddenly raised his hand and said, "Wang Dong, how come your voice changed just now?"

Huo Yuhao discovered that when he was tickling Wang Dong, his voice had suddenly changed and become very pleasant to hear, reminiscent of the sweet sound of a silver bell. This was completely different from his usual voice. Huo Yuhao had known him for more than a year and during that year they were always together. Hence, he would immediately notice even the smallest irregularities,

Wang Dong was startled, a hint of fear that was very difficult to notice flashed through his eyes. He quickly said, "Nonsense. How is that even possible? You probably misheard. Moreover, I couldn't even breathe properly due to you; it's only normal that my voice became strange. You don't really think I'm someone else, right?"

Yuhao nodded seriously and replied, "That's also true. It would be difficult to imitate a stinky brat like you."

"Bullshit. I'm showering every day. My skin smells really good! You're the stinky one!"

When he saw that Wang Dong was beginning to get angry, Huo Yuhao hurriedly changed the topic, "Fine, let's stop arguing. We still have a match to win tomorrow!"

Wang Dong was momentarily at a loss. He recalled the scene where the entire nation was watching them. In particular, the Huo Yuhao that had proudly fought in front of hundreds of thousands of people... was this really the same person that was bullying him right now...? How would the rest of the competition go?

Chapter 77.1: This Daddy has a Rough Cigar!

Despite not even being thirteen yet, Huo Yuhao had still appeared tall and mighty when he'd been onstage earlier. He'd been filled with hot-blooded vigor, along with a seemingly astonishing amount of arrogance; some of that arrogance was of course faked however. Furthermore, there had also been his six blood-red soul rings. All of these things had been deeply branded into Wang Dong's mind; he couldn't forget any of them.

"Why did I have six soul rings when I was next to you?" Wang Dong asked.

Huo Yuhao replied, "My Imitation soul skill allows me to control everything within a three metre radius around me—that's why I waited for you to get close to me before I released it. The reason that you had six soul rings is that six hundred thousand soul rings is the limit of what our opponent's minds could withstand. Using my Imitation to make it seem as though we were both Soul Emperors was definitely already enough to frighten them. However... I didn't think that they'd be that weak. Along with the shock received by our soul rings, they were also sent into a daze for a moment when I used my Spiritual Interference on them. In addition to that, using your Golden Light to ignite our Haodong Power was quite effective; even though it didn't increase the strength of our Golden Road, its attack range was clearly increased by quite a bit. It seems that your left arm bone synergises quite well with our fusion skill."

Wang Dong shrugged his shoulders. "However, using an all-out attack like that instantly exhausted all of our Haodong Power. Just heading back was hard on us. Even though this fight was satisfying, we revealed our most powerful attack. Haven't we lost more than we gained?"

Huo Yuhao replied, "You can't look at it that way. This match was very significant to us, and just because it was our first match. Furthermore, it was also the first round of the knockout round. Right now we represent the glory of Shrek Academy, and everyone watching was able to see how old we were. If this had been a normal fight, we would've had to reveal everyone's true strengths. However, we did it differently today. The two of us don't even look fifteen, yet we displayed Soul Emperor-ranked cultivations. Wouldn't that astonish everyone? Now that we've astonished everyone, they'll overestimate our capabilities. As such, they'll feel nervous when they fight us in the future, and we'll be able to take advantage of their nervousness to win. Because of this, our chances of getting through the round-robin round before our seniors recover have become much higher. At the same time, revealing our strength allowed us to conceal the strength of the others! The most important thing we need to focus on is efficiency. Even though our Golden Road needs three days to recharge before we can use it again, we used it on day one in order to control our enemies. As such, we'll be able to use it at any time throughout the round-robin rounds. As you can see, we've achieved quite a few things in one move."

"From this match, I've truly come to understand how important Shrek Academy's reputation as the number one academy in the continent is. If it weren't for the fact that our academy's fame terrified them, our match definitely wouldn't have been so easy!"

Wang Dong muttered in response, "However, we still would've revealed it sooner or later. Our matches later on will definitely not be that easy either. Furthermore, your six hundred thousand year soul rings were too fake. I feel that if you'd only made your last soul ring a hundred thousand year one, it would've been much more believable. You used their knowledge of soul rings to fool them, but once they actually think it over, they'll realise that you must've used some sort of special method to fool them. A Soul Emperor who isn't even fifteen is already astonishing enough, but one with six hundred thousand year soul rings is another story. That's something that vastly exceeds common sense."

"Uh... you're right." Huo Yuhao shook his head. "My blood rushed to my head then; I was just trying to make Shrek Academy look even more powerful. Because of that, I made all of them hundred thousand year soul rings. Now that I think about it, I was definitely a bit foolish. But what's done is done; I can't do anything about it now. Let's just let them think whatever they want to think."

Wang Dong placed his hands behind his head and lay back down on the bed. He stared up at the ceiling and said, "Honestly, we don't need to think about it too much. Let's just do our best to win. In any case, it's definitely impossible for us to become champions by ourselves. Every single match counts."

Huo Yuhao lay beside him and placed his hands behind his head as well. "That's true. Do you think we'll have a chance at become champions once sister Xiaotao and the rest have returned?"

Wang Dong nudged him with his elbow. "Move a bit further away from me. And how am I supposed to know the answer to that? We might have a chance. Either way, Ma Xiaotao and Dai Yueheng are both Soul Emperors. Hmph, calling her sister Xiaotao is quite an affectionate term! I didn't think that you'd have an Oedipus complex."

"You're the one who has an Oedipus complex," Huo Yuhao unhappily replied, "I just don't understand why you're so hostile towards her."

Wang Dong turned towards Huo Yuhao and hit him on the forehead. "Don't forget, we almost died because of her last time! A fellow like you truly forgets all of his loyalties when he's lustful."

Huo Yuhao clutched his painful forehead and grumbled, "Hey, I'm only twelve! What do you mean by 'lustful'! Just what sort of thoughts is your brain filled with? They must all be unhealthy thoughts. At our age, we should just study hard and aim for the sky. Don't think too much about things, understand?"

Wang Dong snorted. "It'd be good if that really were the case. I'm heading back to my room." With that, he sat up to get off the bed. *n).Oveℓbln*

However, Huo Yuhao grabbed his hand. "Don't go back."

Wang Dong hurriedly retracted his hand, then hugged his quilt and stared back at him vigilantly. "What do you intend to do?"

Huo Yuhao rolled his eyes. "You're full of shit. Cultivate of course!"

Because they'd completed their knockout round on the first day of the round-robin round itself, the students from Shrek Academy were able to get a very good rest during the following two days. However, there were no traces of the backup team they were looking forward to during these two days.

The busiest person of them all during these two days was definitely Wang Yan, who entered and exited the hotel daily. He seemed to appear at one moment, then would disappear the next.

On the third night of the tournament, he gathered all of them together in a conference room and held a meeting.

"Xiaotao, how are your injuries looking?" Wang Yan's gaze fell on Ma Xiaotao, Dai Yueheng, and Ling Luochen.

Ma Xiaotao replied, "Since we were able to peacefully recuperate during the past few days, our recoveries have gone quite well. I should be able to make a complete recovery in about half a month. If I have to forcefully enter the tournament, ten days should be sufficient. However, I'm afraid that that would worsen my injuries."

An internal injury was the most serious injury a soul master could sustain. An attack to one's internal organs could cause a translocation, which brought about a series of injuries in succession. Fortunately, the three of them hadn't been poisoned when they'd been injured. If they had, this wouldn't have been a problem that could be resolved within a mere half a month. For example, the others—who'd been sent back to the academy to recover—wouldn't make a full recovery for at least three months. Even now, Ma Xiaotao's trio still felt somewhat indignant towards the events that had occurred within the Ming Dou Mountain Range. That evil soul master's ability had simply been too evil! They'd never seen a skill such as his, that would grow more powerful the larger the number of corpses present. They wouldn't have suffered such a large loss otherwise.

Chapter 77.2: This Daddy has a Rough Cigar!

Dai Yueheng said, "The same goes for me."

Ling Luo Chen also nodded and said, "I'm recovering as expected."

"That's good," Wang Yan said. He then looked towards the seven members of the preparatory team, who were led by Bei Bei. "In your first match, you showed your opponents just how powerful Shrek Academy is. To be more accurate, you increased Shrek's reputation even further. I've been observing the other academies' matches during the past few days, and listening to the reactions brought about by your first battle; the effects you all achieved were much better than we could've expected. Our Shrek Academy has become the manifestation of 'mysterious and powerful' in the eyes of the other academies. They have no idea what our true strength is, while Huo Yuhao definitely became the center of attention. Furthermore, thanks to the show orchestrated by Yuhao and myself that day, he's become the leader of the team in all of their eyes."

"To us, it's already like that!" Bei Bei said with a smile.

Huo Yuhao blushed as he said, "Senior brother, please stop joking. As weak as I am, how could I be the leader?"

"Even though strength is definitely the most important attribute in this tournament, not everything depends on it," Bei Bei resolutely replied, "wasn't your performance in the first match absolutely incredible? Who among those seated there could've done a better job than you? I don't think that even the three students of the inner courtyard could have defeated them with a single move like you did."

Ma Xiaotao smiled and said, "What Bei Bei says is right. Your performance that day was simply amazing. Even though your cultivation isn't that high, even we have to admit that that soul skill of yours is really quite incredible—especially when you use it play tricks."

Huo Yuhao would always get embarrassed whenever he was faced by Ma Xiaotao. However, the nearby Wang Dong definitely wouldn't be. "Senior sister Ma, how could you say that Yuhao played tricks? Wasn't what he did for the sake of letting the academy win?"

Ma Xiaotao smiled in response, but didn't say anything. She just looked ambiguously towards Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong.

Wang Yan waved his hand and motioned for everyone to keep quiet. He then continued, "During these past two days, I've carefully examined the matches between the other academies. This first elimination

round can only be described as 'fierce'. None of the other academies won as easily as we did. Even the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy struggled a bit with their opponents; it took them around ten minutes to conclude their battle. This means that we'll definitely have enough time to conserve and strengthen our energy. The round-robin phase of the tournament will begin tomorrow. In fact, the list matchups for the round-robin is already out. It seems to have been compiled based on the order of the teams that passed this elimination round. My next objective is to come up with a plan for tomorrow's match."

After their experience with the Hand of Death and having heard his instructions before the first match of the tournament, even the three students from the inner courtyard had completely accepted Wang Yan as the leading teacher of the team.

Wang Yan said, "Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong, and Xiao Xiao are all my students, as such I know quite a bit about their abilities. However, I don't know too much about you four. I hope that you all can tell me about your soul skills, as it will have an impact on the plan that I'm going to arrange for the match."

Normally, soul skills were a soul master's biggest secret. However, the situation wasn't the same inside the academy, let alone now that they were on the eve of an important match. Therefore, it was normal for Wang Yan to ask this question.

Bei Bei nodded and went first in order to set an example as their team leader. He said in a grave tone, "I have a total of four soul skills: Thunderous Dragon Claw, Vigorous Thunderbolt, Thunderous Fury, and Thunderous Dragon Head."

Afterwards, he carefully explained both the characteristics of his soul skills and their usage. Then, it was Xu Sanshi and Jiang Nannan's turn.

Xu Sanshi was considered the number one student in the outer courtyard alongside Bei Bei, and his four soul skills broadened everyone's horizons. As for Jiang Nannan, her soul skills were also quite good. In particular, if she were to use them in a one-on-one fight, they would surely leave a deep impression on her opponents.

At last, it was He Caitou's turn. He was also a Soul Ancestor like the others.

"Caitou, considering the fact that you're a soul engineer, there would usually be no need to inquire about your soul skills. However... the current situation is a bit special. We have to make use of everything at our disposition. If possible, could you please tell us about your martial soul?" Wang Yan asked He Caitou.

He Caitou nodded, but he had an embarrassed expression on his face as he said, "Actually, even my martial soul has a certain use. But I'm sure that none of you will be willing to use it. That's why I didn't bother to show it."

When Huo Yuhao heard these words, he suddenly recalled the time when he'd seen He Caitou with a long and black object in his mouth. His expression immediately became somewhat strange.

Wang Yan smiled and said, "It's alright, everything has its use. Come on, let us see your unique martial soul."

He Caitou looked around and, lacking self-confidence, said, "You aren't allowed to laugh."

Ma Xiaotao nodded seriously and replied, "Fine. We won't laugh at you. Now quick, don't waste anymore time. Come on and show us this soul skill of yours."

He Caitou dark face blushed as he said, "This daddy has a thick cigar."

Ma Xiaotao was dumbfounded, and she immediately got angry. "What did you just say?"

However, she didn't even have the chance to release her anger, when four soul rings, two yellow and two purple, suddenly appeared from beneath He Caitou's body. His first soul ring lit up, and that black and long thing that Huo Yuhao had once seen reappeared in Caitou's hand...

The room immediately went quiet. He Caitou looked around, and—save for Huo Yuhao—everyone was dumbfounded. He quickly remarked, "You're not allowed to laugh! You promised that you wouldn't!"

"Pfff—" The entire room immediately exploded into laughter. Everyone began to laugh; even Wang Yan was no exception.

Yes, it was indeed truly unique! He Caitou's martial soul was unique to the point that no one had expected it.

They laughed so hard that the sound could even be heard in the corridor outside. Their laughter happened to be heard by the leader of the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy's main team, Ma Rulong, who happened to be passing through the corridor. His expression immediately changed when he heard them. Why were these guys from Shrek Academy laughing so hard? The round-robin would begin tomorrow!

He Caitou became angry from the shame he felt. He struck back fiercely by immediately stuffing the long cigar he was holding into Xu Sanshi's wide open mouth.

Xu Sanshi's smiling face immediately stiffened. Then, a burst of flames appeared out of nowhere on the tips of He Caitou's fingers that were holding the cigar, which ignited the other end of the cigar...

Chapter 78.1: A Genius Food-type Soul Master?

"Cough, cough..." Xu Sanshi started to cough as he was almost choked by the smoke.

He Caitou snorted and said, "I had specifically told everyone that I didn't want to talk about it, but you guys still forced me too. Additionally, all of you said you wouldn't laugh, but none of you kept your promise."

Everyone stopped laughing with great difficulty. They had laughed so hard that even their bellies had begun to hurt, especially Ma Xiaotao. At first, she thought that He Caitou was cursing her, but who would have thought that it was just his soul incantation.

"He Caitou, tell me this! What category does your martial soul belong to?" Ma Xiaotao asked while trying to hold back her laughter. After asking her question, she couldn't bear it anymore and started to laugh again.

He Caitou was indignant and replied angrily, "You're a senior student from the inner courtyard, and despite that, you don't even know such basic information? Only food-type martial souls need a soul incantation to appear. Therefore, I'm a food-type soul master."

Just as He Caitou was explaining things, Xu Sanshi cried out in surprise. He took the thick cigar out of his mouth. Next, to everyone's surprise, he brought it to his mouth again and took a deep breath, exhaling a mouthful of smoke afterward. The meeting room was immediately filled with the smell of tobacco.

"This thing is not bad! My mind has become clearer after just smoking it twice, it feels really pleasant.

The nearby Bei Bei laughed as she interjected, "Sure! Holding Caitou's thick cigar in your mouth must surely feel good, right?"

Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong, and Xiao Xiao weren't too clear about the meaning of her remark, but everyone else burst out laughing. Xu Sanshi's face immediately turned red and the nearby Jiang Nannan lowered her head; her face even redder than Xu Sanshi's.

Xu Sanshi stomped furiously towards Bei Bei and tried to push the cigar into his mouth, "Since you keep repeatedly talking about me, you should also get a taste of it before speaking!"

But Bei Bei wasn't planning to open her mouth even if the alternative was death and so, he struggled with all his might. As the two of them were evenly matched in strength Xu Sanshi had no way to pin him down.

Wang Yan also stopped laughing with great difficulty and said, "Alright. Don't be noisy. Caitou, what're the effects of your food-type martial soul?"

He Caitou snorted coldly and didn't respond.

Wang Yan laughed and said, "Fine. I promise that no one will laugh at you, but you can't blame us either. Your soul incantation was just too strange, we couldn't help but laugh! Anyway, you should tell us. It might be important when fighting our enemies tomorrow."

He Caitou replied somewhat unwillingly. "The one I used just now was my first soul skill. It's called Mind Stimulating Thick Cigar. Each cigar can stay lit for around twenty minutes. When smoked, it will strengthen both the user's mind and spiritual power. This type of soul skill is rather fitting for someone like Yuhao. If he smokes the cigar, I can assure that his spiritual-type soul skills will experience an amplification of at least 10%."

After hearing his explanation, all the smiling people in the room looked at each other in dismay. Their smiling expressions disappeared and were slowly replaced with shock. n@Ve-LB-1n

Wang Yan was the most surprised. "It can strengthen spiritual-type soul skills? And it can amplify his skills by at least 10%?"

He Caitou nodded and said, "Yes. Isn't it quite normal for food-type soul masters? However, in the end, we are not as good as auxiliary-type soul masters. I've heard that there is a member of the Nine Treasures Clan in the second year whose soul skills have an astonishing level of amplification."

Wang Yan said, "Granted, but she needs to continuously consume soul power to maintain the effect. On the other hand, you don't have to expend any additional soul power after creating the cigar. And on top of that, food-type soul skills require the least amount of soul power. As if that wasn't enough, won't your soul skill also get stronger as your cultivation progresses?"

He Caitou thought about it for a bit and said, "That's true. My consumption of soul power isn't high. However, since I usually use most of my soul power on soul tools, I have never paid much attention to this useless amplification skill. The main use of my soul rings is to increase the rank of my soul power, and between my four soul skills, the only one I use regularly is the first one. And that's only because it has the ability to increase my accuracy when using soul tools. Since the other three aren't of any use to me, all I have is a vague idea about their effects."

Wang Yan looked at the crowd and asked in a grave tone, "Are you thinking what I'm thinking?"

Dai Yueheng replied, "It seems the Martial Soul Department has missed out on a very talented food-type soul master."

Wang Yan nodded in agreement. "Exactly"

"Ah?" He Caitou was bewilderedstartled, "Are you talking about me?"

Wang Yan smiled bitterly, "Who else could we be talking about? Caitou, you're aware that there was a food-type soul master among the first generation of Shrek's Seven Monsters, right? His martial soul was a sausage, and now that I think about it, he was similar to you in many ways. His soul incantation was also very funny. But in the end, he still managed to become a powerhouse and marry the successor of the Nine Treasures Clan. At that time, he also strengthened Ancestor Rong Rong's Seven Treasures Glazed Pagoda and turned it into the Nine Treasures Glazed Pagoda. You have to understand that food-type soul masters are in no way useless. If we consider Bei Bei as the leader of the group, and Huo Yuhao as its future brain, then you are the crucial backbone of the team with your food-type martial soul."

He Caitou looked at Wang Yan in disbelief. Up till now, he had believed that his martial soul was completely useless aside from the times he was practicing. Even Fan Yu didn't pay too much attention to his martial soul once he discovered that it was a food-type one and only trained him in the field of soul tools. In addition, that soul incantation was quite weird and was prone to causing misunderstandings. Therefore, he didn't use his martial skills too much. Today, or rather, now that Wang Yang had revealed the mystery of his martial skills, he discovered that even he could become a powerful soul master.

At this moment, He Caitou had the feeling that the Heavens were laughing at him. His brain went blank, and he didn't know what to say.

"No need to doubt your own abilities," Wang Yan said, "Once I'm done explaining things, everything will become clear. Do you know which type of soul master is the most demanded by an army? It's precisely a food-type soul master. What you've heard is correct. It's not the assault-type, defense-type, agility-type, control-type, nor the auxiliary-type, but it's the rarely seen and harmless food-type soul master."

"Why?" Wang Yan asked rhetorically, then answered his own question. "That's because a food-type soul master can act as backline support for an army, and can even increase the overall strength of the troops. If you're a battle soul master, the army can either look at you and act as spectators, or work as cannon fodder. But if you're a food-type tool soul master, you can integrate with the soldiers. For example, this thick cigar can increase spiritual power by 10%. If we compare it to an auxiliary-type soul skill, it is indeed not worth mentioning. However, you're considered a talent amongst talents if we're talking about food-type soul masters!"

"I-I don't understand," He Caitou replied, startled.

Wang Yan said, "Let me ask you this. Given sufficient time, how many cigars can you create with your current level of soul power?"

He Caitou replied, "A lot of them. At the very least a thousand, I think. However, if they are not used within two days, these cigars will expire and won't have any effect."

Wang Yan's eyebrows shot up. "Two days? You're saying that the cigars created by your soul skill can last for two days before going bad?"

He Caitou replied as if it were obvious, "Yes! However, if we compare them to normal cigars, they expire really quickly."

Wang Yan howled angrily after a moment of reflection, "Quick, your ass! Do you know that usually, the things produced by other food-type soul masters can only last for a few hours? A preservation time of more than three hours is already considered a major feat. If it can last for 12 hours, the soul master can be considered a genius. And you, who can preserve his creations for a whole 48 hours, are speaking of it as if it were something completely ordinary?! If we make full use of your abilities, your soul skill could allow an army of a thousand soldiers to increase their strength with your cigars over a period of several hours. Do you understand? And when it comes to your teammates, you can definitely provide them with one or more sets of cigars before every battle. When they smoke them during the battle, they'll receive a boost from your skill. However, you would have already recovered the soul power used to create the cigar long before the match. In other words, it'll be as though there was an additional soul master on our team."

He Caitou scratched his head and said, "Is it really that impressive? The effects of my other soul skills might be even better."

Wang Yan slammed the table and got up. "What are you waiting for? Quickly, tell us about your other three soul skills. Let's see what bomb you're going to drop this time."

At this moment, Wang Yan felt his heartbeat speed up. All this time, he had thought that the biggest shortcoming of this team was the lack of an auxiliary-type soul master. Without an auxiliary-type soul master, the team wouldn't have an opportunity to explosively increase its overall power during a match. And never would he have expected that a super talented food-type soul master like He Caitou would be hidden in plain sight. How could he remain calm after such a revelation?

Wang Yan's previous explanation had only mentioned some of the advantages of having a food-type soul master. Although auxiliary-type soul masters could amplify abilities to a larger degree, the amplification wouldn't last for too long. For a long drawn out team battle, a food-type soul master would surely be more useful than an auxiliary-type one. Despite the auxiliary-type soul master's short-term advantage, among tool soul masters, both of them had their strong points.

"This daddy has a large cigar!"

"This daddy has a long cigar!"

"This daddy has a thin cigar!"

Amidst everyone's violently twitching faces, He Caitou activated all three of his soul skills, causing three cigars to immediately appear in his hand. The form and the color were the same as the first cigar. However, all of them differed in size.

Chapter 78.2: A Genius Food-type Soul Master?

"Alright," He Caitou said in an obedient manner, "my large cigar, er, no, my second soul skill, is called the Strength Amplifying Large Cigar. I haven't used it much, so I don't know how much it can increase someone's strength by; you guys are free to test it out. As for my third soul skill, it's called the Defense Amplifying Long Cigar, and is a thousand year soul skill. Considering what level it is, I reckon that it's more effective than my first and second soul skills. Finally, my last soul skill is called the Soul Power Amplifying Thin Cigar. It has no use to me, thus I haven't used it yet."

Wang Yan forcefully swallowed a mouthful of saliva and stared wide-eyed at He Caitou. "In other words, your four cigars can strengthen spiritual power, strength, defense, and soul power? Heavens! Fan Yu, that bastard! He actually let a genius food-type soul master like you become a soul engineer? I... I really want to go beat him up now!"

"You aren't allowed to curse at my teacher," He Caitou angrily retorted. Fan Yu's place in his heart was akin to that of a father's; even though his usual straightforwardness covered up most of things hidden in the deeper recesses of his heart, nothing could replace the respect he held for Fan Yu. Without him, he probably would've died at the hands of his assailants long ago.

"I'm sorry, I just got a bit too excited," Wang Yan hurriedly said, "however, I just couldn't help but get a bit excited over your soul skills! Come on, let's not talk about this for now. I order you to create ten of each of your cigars right now, as a trial."

"Teacher Wang, can I not partake?" Bei Bei asked bitterly.

"No way," Wang Yan resolutely replied, "every single one of you has to try them out. If you have Caitou's soul skills supporting you, your comprehensive strengths will be increased by at least 10%! Furthermore, even though his cigars can't be used simultaneously, all of you can choose one according to your specialty. Combined with the fact that these cigars are good for two days, they'll be essential tools for you guys on the battlefield."

The advantages gained from having the support of a food-type soul master were quickly revealed; if He Caitou had just been an auxiliary-type soul master, he definitely wouldn't have been able to use any of his soul skills ten times in a row like right now. However, He Caitou was able to do so for all of his soul skills easily. The conference room table was rapidly filled with a pile of cigars.

There were thick ones, thin ones, large ones, and long ones. Truly, everything that they needed was there!

Xu Sanshi smiled mischievously at Bei Bei. "Come, brother, there's no need to be polite! Actually, they taste quite good. Just think of it as us enjoying our blessings together. Everyone, let's all enjoy Caitou's cigars together."

"Nobody will think that you're mute if you don't shut up!" Jiang Nannan suddenly flew into a rage as she looked towards the table full of cigars in front of her. Her charming face had become somewhat pale.

Only then did Xu Sanshi realise that his words had been a bit too harsh. He immediately shut up due to the embarrassment he felt.

Despite this, Wang Yan didn't even seem to notice the resentment on Jiang Nannan's face. He immediately lit one of the Spirit Stimulating Thick Cigar, then placed it in his mouth and inhaled deeply from it.

The three disciples from the inner courtyard were clearly much more resistant towards He Caitou's soul incantation, as even Ma Xiaotao lit up a cigar and inhaled from it without giving it too much thought.

Thus, the other members of the preparatory team had no choice but to unwillingly light their own cigars.

Huo Yuhao held a thick cigar in his mouth, which He Caitou personally helped light it. However, his eyes held a somewhat cheeky glint in them as he did so. When Huo Yuhao finally inhaled, the strong taste of smoke caused his throat to immediately dry up. He involuntarily began to cough, and he felt as if all of his apertures had instantly been filled with the dense smell of smoke. Despite this, it really didn't taste too bad.

At that exact moment, Huo Yuhao suddenly felt his spiritual sea shudder slightly. Immediately afterwards, an indescribable sense of relaxation spread throughout his body. When it did, his Spirit Eyes actually lit up involuntarily.

This feeling was unexpectedly joyful. To his astonishment, Huo Yuhao discovered that his spiritual power hadn't just been strengthened by a mere 10%. Currently, his spiritual power was at least 15% stronger than usual.

"Damn, how relaxing. Just what is this feeling?" The Skydream Iceworm seemed to have been almost immediately roused from its slumber.

At that moment, Huo Yuhao subconsciously inhaled another puff from the cigar.

The Skydream Iceworm became infatuated with the feeling. "Wah, wah, wah... how comfortable! It feels like all the pores on my body have opened up! This feels to great. What sort of soul skill is this!?"

The Ice Empress' chilly voice immediately attacked him, "Does a large bug like you even have any pores?"

"Icy, don't you think that this feeling is extremely comfortable too?" The Skydream Iceworm asked, infatuated. "This sensation has a great nourishing effect on our souls. There truly isn't anything more relaxing. It's even more relaxing than sleeping!"

The Ice Empress snorted. "Besides eating, all you do is sleep. Do you even know how to do anything besides those two things? I'm too lazy to even care about you. However, Yuhao, this sort of thing truly is quite beneficial for you. I suggest that you use it as often as you can over a long period of time. It'll help improve your level of control over your spiritual power."

The facts proved that He Caitou's cigars had much better effects than what he'd said earlier.

Huo Yuhao had felt a large increase in the strength of his spiritual power. On the other side of the room, when Xu Sanshi tried out the Defense Amplifying Long Cigar, he jumped up excitedly, and immediately

told everyone that his body felt as hard as a rock. He felt that his defensive capabilities had increased by 15 to 20% at the very least.

After continuous testing by everyone present, they discovered that identical cigars actually had different effects based on the person that used it.

For example, the thick cigar—which would amplify a person’s spiritual power—was most suited for the spiritual-type Huo Yuhao, while the long cigar—which would amplify a person’s defense—was most suited for Xu Sanshi. On the other hand, the large cigar was most suited for Bei Bei, since it amplified a person’s strength. The fourth cigar on the other hand, which boosted a person’s soul power, turned out to be suited for everyone. When they used it, the soul power required for them to activate their soul skills was actually reduced. This was equivalent to their total pool of soul power being increased by the same amount!

When they realized just how effective He Caitou’s cigars were, they gradually became numb to the embarrassing soul incantations that he had to recite. In any case, his soul skills lasted for two days, thus they wouldn’t need to listen to his incantations when he used them most of them. However, despite the evidence of their usefulness, there were still a few people who were still somewhat unwilling to use his cigars.

The person who was most opposed to it wasn’t Jiang Nannan or Xiao Xiao, who were girls, but was actually Wang Dong. No matter what, Wang Dong absolutely refused to test the effects of He Caitou’s cigars. Huo Yuhao tried to persuade him for an extremely long time, but he wasn’t willing to relent no matter what.

Even though Xiao Xiao and Jiang Nannan were unwilling, they still accepted a set of cigars.

Helpless, Huo Yuhao could only keep an extra set of cigars as a reserve.

Wang Yan gazed at the steadfast Wang Dong with a somewhat helpless look on his face. “It’s fine if you’re simply unwilling to try them. However, I suggest that you keep a set on you, just in case.”

Wang Dong shook his head forcefully. “No!”

Wang Yan furrowed his brows, but only said, “Alright then. Now then, let’s come up with a few plans for the upcoming round-robin tournament. Earlier, I said that there would be three types of combat during the round-robin section of the tournament. Considering the level of strength we revealed during the first round, there’s no doubt that our group will only contain eight teams. At least from the others teams’ standpoints, they’ll only be fighting for a qualifying spot in the tournament. To them, we’re guaranteed to qualify. We can use this mindset of theirs against them in order to make our tactics more flexible.”

“There will be a total of sixty-seven teams participating in the round-robin tournament, who will be split into a total of eight groups. Of these, three groups will have nine participating teams, while the remaining five groups will have eight teams. In other words, we’ll have to fight seven matches in our group. If we win a match, we’ll get two points, if we lose a match, we won’t get any points, and if we draw, each team will receive one point. Four groups will have a match every day, thus a cycle of matches will be completed every two days. After seven cycles and the remaining matches from the groups with nine teams are completed, the round-robin section will be done. I reckon that the round-robin portion

of the tournament will last for fifteen to sixteen days. Ling Luo Chen should be recovered by the fourth cycle or so, and if their recovery goes smoothly, Ma Xiaotao and Dai Yueheng should be recovered by around the sixth cycle. When that happens, our strength team's strength will increase dramatically."

"We'll know which group we've been placed into—along with who our opponents are—tomorrow morning. With our reputation, we'll most likely be the first ones up during the round-robin tournament as well. The most important thing you all have to do is ensure that Yuhao doesn't make a move."

When he saw the astonishment present in everyone's eyes, Wang Yan continued, "During the first round, Yuhao and Wang Dong revealed cultivations at the Soul Emperor rank. Yuhao even used his Imitation skill to give them them six hundred thousand year soul rings. That was truly extravagant, and ordinary soul masters would immediately be able to tell that this is simply impossible. However, we are Shrek Academy. Some of the other academies that don't understand us too well will have misunderstand. At the very least, they'll think to themselves, What if those youths from Shrek really have six hundred thousand year soul rings? What will we do then? This way, so long as Yuhao and Wang Dong don't make any moves during the round-robin tournament, they won't be exposed, and the fear in their hearts will persist. This will be extremely beneficial in our fights as a whole.

"In accordance with your cultivations and the understanding that I have of each you, I've divided you into some simple groups. There's no need to mention the team fight; Yuhao will simply command you with his Spiritual Detection. If we draw the 1v1 elimination fight, you'll start by going up based on your age, from the oldest to youngest.

"The 1v1 elimination fight isn't just fought by a single person. On the contrary, the loser of the fight steps down, while the winner continues fighting. This goes on until all seven members of a team have been completely defeated. Because of this, you must be wary of enemy soul engineers. If we draw a 1v1 fight, I'll do as much as I can to create the best lineup possible based on their abilities. You all will just have to do your best.

"The last mode of combat is the 2-2-3 fight. Normally, two 2v2 matches will be held before the 3v3 match. If we win both 2v2s, we won't even need to fight the third match. Because of that, I've tentatively put Bei Bei and Jiang Nannan on one team, and Xu Sanshi and Caitou on the other team for the two teams that will go out in the 2v2 matches. Huo Yuhao, Wang Dong, and Xiao Xiao work extremely well together, but we can't let them go out and fight. Because of that, they'll be the participants for the 3v3 match."

Chapter 78.3: A Genius Food-type Soul Master?

Xu Sanshi had a gloomy expression on his face as he said, "Teacher Wang, why didn't you put Jiang Nannan and me in a team together? The two of us know each other well, thus we'll definitely work well together as a team."

Jiang Nannan almond-shaped eyes widened. "Who's the one that's familiar with you? Stop trying to worm your way into being intimate with me."

Wang Yan interjected, "This is a competition, not the place for you two to murmur endearments to one another. The reason that I've placed you all together like I have is because your abilities are much more compatible with Caitou's; your focus is on defense, while his is on attack. As for Jiang Nannan, her quick-

wittedness is better suited when combined with Bei Bei's strong attacks. If she were to team up with you, I'm afraid that she wouldn't even be able to exhibit thirty percent of her true strength."

Jiang Nannan, who usually didn't talk much, immediately nodded without a shred of hesitation and said, "Teacher Wang is wise."

Xu Sanshi's expression immediately sank at, but since this had to do with their arrangements in the competition, he didn't think that it would be appropriate to harp on about this matter.

Wang Yan said, "The basic arrangements will thus be like this. Now then, the most favorable styles of competition for us are actually the 1v1 and 2-2-3 fights. On the other hand, team battles will be the easiest for us to reveal flaws to our opponents in. I have to emphasise this point once again: During the competition, all of you must pay attention to your opponent's soul tools, as competitors are allowed to utilise simple soul tools in battle. Yuhao definitely can't repeat his attack pattern after what happened in the first round, but the deterrent effect your team has is still present. Furthermore, Yuhao, you can't hold back with your spiritual detection either while the others are competing. We have to do everything in our power to emerge victorious and ensure that we uphold the academy's glory. When the time comes, I'll be commanding you guys on the field. I hope that you guys can carry out my commands at that time."

"Yes." The seven team members from the outer courtyard replied in uniform.

Wang Yan finally stood up and said, "Make sure to get some rest tonight everyone; you all need to ensure that you're in peak condition for tomorrow. None of you are allowed to leave tonight. Dismissed."

Once Wang Yan had finished speaking, everyone stood up and left the conference room. As Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong were walking towards Huo Yuhao's room together to cultivate, Huo Yuhao suddenly sensed something. His gaze instantly landed on the other end of the corridor afterwards.

A handsome youngster that appeared to be around fourteen or fifteen years old stood at the other end of the corridor, and was currently burning holes through Huo Yuhao as he stared at him.

Huo Yuhao's gaze immediately froze over. He was immediately able to tell, based on the white, skin-tight clothing that the other party was wearing, as well as from the direction that the other person had appeared from, that the other party was a student from the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy.

"You're known as Huo Yuhao, right? Remember my name: I'm Xiao Hongchen. I'll definitely defeat you!" The handsome youngster then made a thumbs down sign towards Huo Yuhao.

"You...!" A cold glint flashed through Wang Dong's eyes, but Huo Yuhao immediately stopped him from moving by placing his hand firmly on Wang Dong's shoulder.

Huo Yuhao raised his right hand, then hooked his thumb and middle finger together and flicked his own clothes. He frowned and said, "Where did this flea come from? It's so hateful! Whatever, I'll make sure to crush it to death sooner or later."

Once he'd finished, he opened the door to his room and entered with Wang Dong.

Huo Yuhao's voice had been very loud, while the acoustics in the Grand Imperial Star Hotel were also pretty decent. These two things caused Xiao Hongchen's face to twitch slightly as he squinted his eyes. However, he didn't seem angry; instead, a thoughtful look had appeared on his face. His strength wasn't the only reason that he'd been able to become the new commander of the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy's team. He also had a brain.

"Why did you stop me?" Wang Dong suddenly asked once they'd entered the room.

Huo Yuhao forcefully smiled and said, "What would you have done if I didn't stop you? Did you plan to suffer the consequences? I activated my spiritual detection the moment I saw that person, which he seemed to notice right away. Furthermore, the soul power fluctuations that his body was emanating far surpass ours. Based on his soul power fluctuations, I'm afraid that he has five soul rings."

"What?" Wang Dong was instantly taken aback. "No way! He doesn't even seem that much older than us. He ought to be a reserve member of the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy, but a Soul King at that? It can't be that he also disguised his soul power like you did, right?"

Huo Yuhao shook his head and said, "Is it really that easy for someone to mask the fluctuations of one's soul power? Anyways, he hadn't even released his martial soul yet."

Wang Dong frowned slightly, and a worried expression emerged in his large pinkish-blue eyes. "Just the reserve team is like that... It seems that the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy is much stronger than we could've imagined. Thankfully, we shouldn't meet them in the round-robin tournament, considering the fact that they were the runners-up last year."

Huo Yuhao's eyes twinkled. "Actually, the thing that we have to be more worried about is them being our opponents when we become official members of the team in five years and compete against them in the Elite Continental Soul Master Academy Tournament! He's a Soul King now, but what about in five years, considering his current cultivation speed?"

Wang Dong indignantly exclaimed, "But we're still young!"

"The tournament still gives all of us the same amount of time," Huo Yuhao retorted. "Come on, we have to work harder. Our true strength actually lies in our Haodong Power. As you know, my cultivation speed will most likely become slower once I get my third soul ring, due to the restrictions of my Ultimate martial soul."

Xiao Hongchen's appearance really did give them a sense of urgency. The duo immediately sat down on the bed, then placed their hands against each other's and began circulating their Haodong Power. n--o-
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Wang Dong had become less and less mysophobic towards Huo Yuhao as they spent more time together.

The warm Mysterious Heaven Technique intertwined with Wang Dong's light-attributed soul power, then quickly gathered to form their torrential Haodong Power. Once it had, it began to circulate throughout their bodies.

Following Wang Dong's breakthrough to Rank 30, Huo Yuhao had also broken through to Rank 27. Currently, when they joined hands and circulated the Haodong Power in order to utilise a soul skill, the

true might of their attack could compare to that of a Soul Ancestor. This was a massive amplification in terms of martial soul fusion.

Their cultivation was also close to each other's; the higher their cultivation level, the stronger the circulation of soul power, and in turn, the speed of their cultivation. Using their Haodong Power to cultivate was equivalent to them cultivating with the same speed as a Soul Ancestor; their cultivation was advancing by leaps and bounds.

Huo Yuhao had only broken through to Rank 27 around ten days ago, yet he already felt like his soul power was nearing the middle stage of Rank 27. If he continued at this cultivation speed, it wouldn't be a dream for him to break through at a speed of one rank per month until he reached Rank 30!

Wang Dong wasn't left in the dust by Huo Yuhao's speed, as his body seemed to be able to support more soul power than even Huo Yuhao's, who had twin martial souls. He felt no sense of blockage whenever he circulated his soul power, and he also felt as if he was growing stronger every day. In the few months since school had started, he'd already broken through to Rank 32, yet he was already charging straight ahead towards the Rank 33 bottleneck. With the help of their current Haodong Power, it was possible that he might break through to the Soul Ancestor stage within a year and half.

Currently, Dai Huabin was unquestionably the second year outer courtyard disciple with the strongest soul power, as he was currently at Rank 37. However, Wang Dong was beginning to feel more and more confident that he could surpass him in two years' time.

On the other hand, Xiao Xiao's cultivation was slightly slower than the theirs. Despite this, this was only because she was about to break through her Soul Elder bottleneck.

Once the first round of the knockout competitions finally ended, the spectators that had been watching the match in Star Luo City were all riding on an emotionally-driven high. Due to this, there would be people queuing up deep into the night every day of the tournament. Even though Star Luo Plaza had an extremely large surface area, there were still some limitations as to how many people it could contain; it couldn't satisfy the needs of the masses.

The government officials from the Star Luo Empire naturally increased the entrance fee in order to regulate the queue and to ensure that it wasn't too congested. Because of this, the empire made an enormous amount of profit, thus it was only natural for the Star Luo Empire to contribute to the rewards for the tournament. It was the same every year, however the rewards were never expressly stipulated. As no country would ever want to lose face, they'd always present very good things as rewards.

Why did the competition rules stipulate that the first cycle had to be a knockout competition? Besides the simple fact that it reduced the number of academies participating in the later matches, it was also in order to make the competition more exciting!

The Elite Continental Soul Master Academy Tournament had become the most important competition on the entire continent, and was thus conducted by the officials of every single country. The reason that this competition was so popular every year was also due to these exciting matches. It was only natural to use various means in order to ensure that this grand occasion, which was only held every five years, would run better than the last each time.

The knockout tournament made the entire competition extremely exciting. Even though the tournament officials tried their best to prevent any injuries, close to two hundred students participating in the match would sustain various degrees of injuries each time around. There were even several tens of students who'd died due to excessive injuries. The battlefield was drenched in blood, thus it naturally drew in more viewership. Of course, it also meant that any school whose student unexpectedly died would also receive a bountiful compensation.

However, the knockout round was now over, and the second phase—the round-robin tournament—was next. Even though the round-robin tournament wasn't as intense as the knockout matches, the former still had its perks, which mainly lay in the variety of rules that the competition had. There were three ways that matches could be held, and whichever one the students would compete with was decided through drawing lots. One could say that every single match had its own exciting aspects.

Moreover, after the first elimination cycle, the remaining teams would be much stronger, and thus the matches would get both much more exciting and more varied. As such, it was extremely difficult to get ahold of a ticket to watch this match in Star Luo Plaza, despite it being capable of accommodating more than two hundred thousand people. The entire plaza would be packed to the brim every day, while those who weren't able to get in that day wouldn't leave. They would continue waiting in line all the way until the next day; it was impossible for those who'd queued up on the first day and watched the competition to also watch it the second day, be it civilians, or the rich and powerful. This actually ensured that everyone was treated fairly.

When faced with such a situation, the Imperial family of the Star Luo Empire naturally wasn't able to conceal their happiness. Not only did they deploy five thousand soldiers in order to maintain order throughout the city, they also began to sell official match reports despite having trouble dealing with so many people. They would release a new match report would appear every day, which would only cost a few copper coins. There would be also be a detailed report released after every match too, which served as another form of income.

However, the Star Luo Empire knew how to conduct themselves well. They would cover all travelling and lodging expenses for the academies that had been eliminated, and even gave them a set amount of subsidies. They also provided medical treatment for those that had been injured, and provided financial support to relatives of those who'd died in the matches. In addition to that, all of the participating academies were highly praised during the event. The way that the Star Luo Empire had dealt with the lively crowd in such an orderly manner just three days into the tournament... it could be said that they were earning a profit at the same time as increasing their reputation.

Today was the fourth day of the tournament, and screams from the spectators had been constantly reverberating throughout Star Luo Plaza since early in the morning. There was only one reason for this: and that was because the team representing Shrek Academy was finally going to appear on the field again. Furthermore, they would be appearing in the first match. Even the emperor of the Star Luo Empire, who would only occasionally grace the city with his presence to spectate, had mounted the lead position in the imperial city at first light, and was currently quietly waiting for the match to begin. For the emperor to do such a thing, he was giving Shrek Academy quite a lot of face.

Chapter 79.1: A Genius Food-type Soul Master?

The weather wasn't great, being gloomy and somewhat oppressive, but the clouds in the sky weren't dark. However, the sun wasn't out but fortunately, the air was still fresh and clean, and there was no rain either.

The start of the round-robin tournament signified the opening of the participants' rest area. The round-robin tournament today was only the first part of the tournament and four of the eight groups would make an appearance today. However, all sixty-seven teams who qualified from the knockout round were sitting within the rest area with no exceptions.

They were here to spectate the tournament. More accurately, they wanted to once again experience the shock that occurred on the first day of the tournament. They wanted to see the youth who came from Shrek and the Tang Sect and see whether he really had six hundred thousand year soul rings.

Shrek was Shrek, the Shrek that had ten thousand years of glory. Practically every single academy had unconsciously set it as their target, yet deeply revered it. Even the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy wasn't an exception to this.

When the dark-green clad team from Shrek appeared in the participants' entrance tunnel, the atmosphere of the entire Star Luo Plaza started boiling. Loud cheers for Shrek began ringing out from the areas closest to the entrance tunnel.

Huo Yuhao walked expressionlessly at the very front of the team. Since they wanted to assume an air of power to terrify their opponents, they would naturally have to go all-out. Ma Xiaotao, Dai Yueheng, and Ling Luo Chen simply didn't bother turning up; they chose to stay in the hotel to recuperate and make their recovery as fast as possible.

Shrek Academy's resting area was located the furthest north, making it nearest to the city walls. Furthermore, their resting area was clearly larger than that of the other academies. The entire area had a total of twenty sofas and was staffed by an attendant. A table beside the sofas was filled with food, fruits, and drinks in order to cater to any needs the participants might have. Just how was this a tournament? It was practically a VIP spectator area.

In reality, the other academies weren't treated much differently than them. However, they didn't have any attendants. But more importantly, their areas were much smaller than Shrek's. Every resting area only had seven seats meant for the official team; the preparatory team or substitutes could only stand behind the others.

At this moment, the host was already building up the tension in the arena. He first announced the names of the academies that had already passed through the first round of the tournament and then proceeded to introduce each team in more detail.

It was just as Wang Yan had predicted, the group that Shrek belonged to only had a total of eight participating teams. Shrek Academy was naturally the most popular team in the entire tournament, overshadowing any and all other teams in the same group. After all, nobody had ever seen Shrek Academy put into an awkward situation where they had to put on a false strong front.

Other than the participants' resting area, there were also waiting areas located by either side of the enormous tournament stage that were used by the delegations of the various academies who would be fighting on stage.

After spouting a load of bullshit that stirred the emotions of the crowd, the announcer used his most impassioned voice to cry out, “Now, let us have the continent’s number one academy, the representative team from Shrek Academy, in addition to their opponents, the representative team from the Star Luo Empire’s Cloud Luo Soul Engineering Academy, enter the waiting area. May the leaders from both teams please step onto the stage to confirm the mode of battle.”

The difference between the two academies could be seen from their introductions. When the announcer introduced Shrek Academy, he didn’t mention the country it was located in. However, he would do this for the other academies. This was because no country would dare to claim that Shrek Academy belonged to it. Even the Heavenly Soul Empire, which Shrek technically belonged to, wasn’t an exception to this.

Shrek Academy had its own Shrek City, the status of which was so incredibly high that every country had to give it an extremely high amount of respect.

When compared to Shrek Academy, the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy was also comparably powerful. However, it had a much weaker foundation. Because of that, they could only compare themselves against Shrek during the Continental Advanced Soul Academy Tournament, and use that to stimulate the explosive growth of their students.

Bei Bei stood up and walked towards the stage after Wang Yan motioned for him to do so. The leader of the Cloud Luo Advanced Soul Engineering Academy’s team was a buff Adonis who was practically no different from He Caitou. He had a head full of short, golden hair, and the outlines of his thick muscles could be seen below his white school uniform.

The two walked up to the stage together. The lot-drawing process was very simple; the referee took a cylindrical lot-drawing tube and allowed the leaders of both teams to inspect it.

The lot-drawing tube was transparent to prevent any possible cheating. One of the tube’s sides had a small, round hole in it. The referee took three small balls that represented the three modes of combat and shoved them into the small hole, then turned the entire thing upside down. After that, he allowed each one of them to hold a side of the large sphere.

The referee shouted, “Three, two, one!”

Bei Bei and the opposing team leader simultaneously exerted force, throwing the large sphere into the air. If no small balls dropped out from the larger ball during this process, the referee would turn it over after catching it. The ball which dropped out then would be their mode of combat. If a small ball dropped out while the larger ball was in the air, that would represent their mode of combat.

This was the round-robin tournament’s first lot-drawing, and it was extremely successful. When the two leaders threw the large ball twenty meters into the air, a small ball dropped out.

There were three small balls, each with their own distinctive color. They were red, yellow, and blue respectively.

Red represented the team fight, yellow represented the 1v1 fight, and blue represented the 2-2-3 fight. This time around, a small yellow ball dropped out of the large ball.

The referee caught the small ball as he retrieved the larger ball, which was falling back to the ground. After allowing both leaders to take a look at the smaller ball, he looked towards the Star Luo Emperor, who was seated at the top of the city walls. The latter gave a signal, and the announcer used the soul loudspeaker to make an announcement.

“Shrek Academy’s fight against Cloud Luo Academy will be conducted via the 1v1 knockout mode. May both parties please send out a single member to take part in the competition.”

1v1? After hearing that the competition was to be conducted in such a manner, the audience’s eyes lit up. Every single member of the audience who could see him, in addition to the students from the various academies who had Huo Yuhao in their line of sight, cast their gazes towards him. They all hoped that Huo Yuhao would be the first person to come out and would complete a 1v7. Wouldn’t that be the most satisfying outcome they could watch!? Who wouldn’t want to feel the excitement and thrill that came from the appearance of six hundred thousand year soul rings again?

Both leaders glanced at each other, then stepped down from the stage. Bei Bei had already received instructions from Wang Yan before the lot-drawing. Wang Yan had told him to come back down after the lot-drawing, regardless of the format of the competition.

Bei Bei hurriedly returned to the waiting area, then cast an inquisitive gaze towards Wang Yan. “Teacher Wang, I’ll go.”

However, Wang Yan shook his head and spoke in a premeditated manner. “We should have a certain amount of assurance in this match. Out of the four empires, the empire that has the strongest soul engineering academy is the Sun Moon Empire. However, the soul engineering academies of the other three empires don’t lag behind by much. Although our academy’s Soul Tool Department isn’t the strongest, we’re definitely better than those from the Heavenly Soul, Dou Ling, and Star Luo Empires. This Cloud Luo Advanced Soul Engineering Academy comes from the Star Luo Empire, not the Sun Moon Empire. As a whole, I’m certain they won’t be too strong. Furthermore, since they’re soul engineers, I guarantee that they won’t have any Soul King-ranked students. I’m suspecting that they won’t even have too many Soul Ancestors. Assault-type soul masters will be put at a disadvantage against soul engineers, and we don’t have any substitutes. Thus, we need to guarantee that none of you suffer any injuries. Otherwise, we run the risk of you not being able to recover during the one day of rest that we have. Taking all this into consideration, Xu Sanshi, you’re up for the first round.”

As he spoke, Wang Yan pointed at Xu Sanshi and whispered, “A defense-type soul master is most suited to restrain a soul engineer, especially a low-ranked one. Remember, do your best to control the consumption of your soul power. Last a few rounds on the stage. The longer you endure and the later we reveal our students, the better. Go.”

The moment Xu Sanshi heard that he was going to go out first, he immediately stood up excitedly. Bending his right arm, he flexed his muscles and said proudly, “Just watch me.” With that, he took large strides towards the stage.

Bei Bei turned towards He Caitou and asked, “Don’t you think he’s a bit thick?”

He Caitou laughed naughtily. “A bit.”

Jiang Nannan snorted, “Extremely thick.”

Xu Sanshi, who hadn't walked far, stumbled and nearly fell down, but he clenched his teeth and walked up to the stage.

The first student sent out by the Cloud Luo Academy wasn't tall, but his shoulders were very wide; he was even somewhat fat. His nervousness was visible on his face as he faced the tall Xu Sanshi, beads of sweat could already be seen on his forehead.

Any academy would be nervous while facing Shrek Academy, this was to be expected.

At such a young age, Huo Yuhao had revealed such a prodigal amount of strength. Wouldn't the somewhat older person in front of him be stronger than his junior? This seemed especially true when he looked at Xu Sanshi's fierce appearance. He began to feel weak inside! He subconsciously wiped his sweat with his sleeve, causing the spectators to burst into laughter.

Huo Yuhao not coming up to the stage had disappointed a large number of people. But this was still one of Shrek Academy's matches and they quickly got excited again, prepared and curious to see how strong Xu Sanshi, who was decent-looking in terms of power, was.

The referee called the two of them to him and said in a low voice, "The rules of the 1v1 knockout round state that the loser has to immediately step down from the stage, while the winner can choose to either continue fighting or switch out. Each party has seven people, and the competition will go on until all seven people from one side are defeated. Understand?"

"Understood." Xu Sanshi replied in a very straightforward manner. However, his opponent was stammering. "Un-understood."

The referee said, "Okay. Both parties, return to your sides. The match will begin with my call. You're not allowed to use stationary soul tools or any soul tools that have a high degree of killing power."

As he spoke, the referee began to step back. However, the student from the Cloud Luo Academy squeezed out a smile and said to Xu Sanshi, "I-I'm called Ma Yingjun¹. Senior, please go easy on me."

The corner of Xu Sanshi's mouth twitched as he said proudly, "Are you as handsome as me?"

Ma Yingjun hurriedly shook his head to the point where his brain shook like a drum. "No, no."

Satisfied, Xu Sanshi nodded. "Fine. I'll go a little easy on you." n)OVeℓB1n

1. Yingjun means handsome.

Chapter 79.2: A Genius Food-type Soul Master?

Oh!" Ma Yingjun retreated with a delighted expression on his face. It almost seemed as if he had received the biggest gift of his life.

None of them was using a sound amplifying soul tool. Therefore, the audience couldn't hear what they were saying. But from what they could see, it seemed that the student from Cloud Luo Academy wasn't too eager to fight!

And in this case, they weren't mistaken. When Cloud Luo Academy discovered that Shrek Academy would be their opponent in the round-robin, and in the first match on top of that, they decided to

conserve all the strength they could. At the same time, they decided to not put up too much of a fight to keep a friendly relationship with Shrek Academy.

According to Wang Yan's info, Cloud Luo Academy wasn't very strong. They had paid quite the price just to get through the first round. As a result, many of their strongest students were injured. As if that wasn't enough, they had now encountered the strongest academy on the continent. It was no wonder that their fighting spirit was so low! Anyway, even if they lost to Shrek Academy during this round-robin, it wasn't something to be ashamed of. Therefore, they decided to go on stage and do their best, leaving the rest to fate.

To tell the truth, they weren't too happy that it had turned into a 1v1 fight. They would have preferred to go in as a group and get over with it as soon as possible.

The first match of the round-robin phase started under such premises.

Xu Sanshi arrived in front of the platform and put a thin cigar in his mouth. Afterward, he used a small lighter-type soul tool to light the cigar and started to smoke, holding it crookedly in his mouth. From his appearance, he didn't really seem like a good person.

Even the audience went into an uproar after seeing his behavior. Cloud Luo Academy was also angered. This guy was just too arrogant. He even pulled out a cigar just as the match was about to start. Was Shrek Academy so lax when it came to their students?

The referee also furrowed his brows. Nevertheless, he didn't take action. First, there wasn't a rule that forbade a student to smoke. Second, he didn't want to offend Shrek Academy.

"The match can commence!" The referee shouted as he retreated to the edge of the platform.

Cloud Luo Academy's Ma Yingjun had been waiting for these scary words all along. When the referee gave the signal, his short and stout body quickly reacted. He lifted his arms, and three metal pipes as thick as thumbs came out of them. Two metal pipes as thick as his arms came out of each shoulder. The wings on his back also quickly unfurled, and his two stout legs also produced six metal pipes. On his chest was a soul tool that resembled a heart-protective mirror. It was obviously a shield-type soul tool. It wasn't an exaggeration to say that he was armed to the teeth right now.

Xu Sanshi's body didn't change drastically like that. A somewhat unremarkable black tortoise shell appeared in his right hand. At the same time, four soul rings, two yellow and two purple, started to shine.

Four soul rings?

The spectators were quite disappointed. He had only four rings! Many of them were looking forward to seeing some hundred thousand year old soul rings!

Among the spectators, the ratio of soul masters was less than 1:1000! Most of them were only there for fun. Very few knew just how precious a hundred thousand year soul ring was.

The difference between Xu Sanshi's soul release and Huo Yuha'o's incredible performance from yesterday was the same as heaven and earth. Therefore, it was no wonder that the spectators were disappointed. But at this time, Xu Sanshi did something very unexpected.

He started to run.

Was he running toward his opponent? No! He turned around and ran in the opposite direction, just like a deserter leaving his post. He was running toward the edge of the platform.

At this time, that defensive soul tool made out of 108 pillars was active. But the defensive barrier generated by the soul tool wasn't directly attached to the ring; there was approximately a three meter distance between them. According to the rules of the tournament, if one were to fall from the ring, they would be disqualified; that was the purpose of the distance of those three meters.

Ma Yingjun had already made up his mind before going on stage. The tactic he was going to deploy was very simple: struggle and consumption. Even if the flying-type soul tool on his back couldn't allow him to fly too high, it was still good for dodging. As long as he could consume some of Xu Sanshi's soul power, he would be satisfied.

But when the match started, he saw Xu Sanshi turn around and start running in the opposite direction. Ma Yingjun was left speechless, and thought to himself, Boss, why are you running away?! Didn't you just say that you would go easy on me? What's the meaning of all this?!

No one knew what Xu Sanshi was thinking. Only his good friend Bei Bei, who quarreled with him every day, guessed his intentions correctly.

Bei Bei curled his lips and unintentionally revealed a strange smile. "This guy seems in the mood to play dirty tricks."

As soon as he finished speaking, Xu Sanshi arrived at the edge of the platform. Next, he unexpectedly jumped outside the platform!

It goes without saying, the audience immediately called out in alarm. Even the emperor of the Star Luo Empire was shocked.

According to the rules of the competition, if your feet were to land outside the platform, you would be disqualified!

Let alone Xu Sanshi, who was from Shrek Academy, even students of lesser known academies hadn't ever done anything like this! Admitting defeat without even trying? What kind of situation was this?

Indeed, what kind of situation was this? Xu Sanshi had a crafty expression on his face. Next, the fourth soul ring on his body lit up.

The radiance of his purple thousand year soul ring covered the arena. The spectators were still calling out in alarm when a strange scene played out in front of their eyes.

Xu Sanshi's black tortoise shell emitted a pale radiance. Soon after that, the one that was jumping outside the ring and was about to collide with the defensive barrier wasn't him anymore, but Ma Yingjun.

In other words, Xu Sanshi and Ma Yingjun had swapped places.

Ma Yingjun, who had been looking at Xu Sanshi jumping outside the platform with a stupid expression on his face, suddenly found himself in midair. He started to fall on the ground soon after, while Xu Sanshi was now standing in his previous position.

Even if Ma Yingjun wasn't too bright, he was still an elite student chosen by Cloud Luo Academy to participate in the tournament! If they sent him first, it meant that he wasn't that weak. After all, he too had displayed four soul rings, three yellow and one purple. And just as he was about to use his flying-type soul tool on his back to rise up into the air...

Xu Sanshi, who was still standing at his previous position, took the cigar out of his mouth and shouted, "Come forth, hundred thousand year soul ring!"

"Peng——"

Ma Yingjun was just too pitiful. Just as he was about to activate his soul tool, he was scared to death by Xu Sanshi's sudden yell. He directly fell to the ground.

A heavy soul tool covered his whole body. Therefore, when he fell from a height of five meters, he would be still reduced to a mess even if had thick skin and strong bones!

Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong, who were now in the waiting area, were completely stunned. They looked at each other and said almost at the same time, "It ended like this?"

When Ma Yingjun crashed to the ground, the spectators suddenly went very quiet. If time were to stop right now, one would notice that at least a hundred thousand of them had their mouths wide open. Even the emperor was no exception.

Huo Yuhao had been planning to use his Spiritual Detection Sharing to help Xu Sanshi, but just as he was wondering if it could bypass the defensive barrier, the match was already over.

The referee was also at a loss. It had been less than three seconds since he had shouted 'the match can commence'. And now, it was already over.

Xu Sanshi held the black tortoise shell in his right hand and used the left one to stuff the thin cigar back into his mouth. Afterward, he calmly said, "Next."

The purpose of this cool pose was to imitate Huo Yuhao, but the effect he obtained was completely different.

After that short time of silence, the audience went into an uproar once again. Over 90% of them had no idea what had just happened.

Was this Shrek Academy's mysterious power?

Standing beside the platform, Bei Bei explained what had happened to his teammates, "Sanshi's fourth soul skill is called Mysterious Underworld Replacement. With this skill, he can instantaneously swap positions with people in a certain range. This skill is quite good, and amongst defense-type soul masters, it can be considered almost godly. However, when used by him, it actually looks so lame. The way he uses his Mysterious Underworld Replacement leaves me speechless. I almost feel like crying."

He Caitou was stupefied as he said, "Brother Sanshi is really shameless!"

As the saying goes, while the laymen watch for fun, only professionals understand the workings. The students of the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy, who were seated not too far off from Shrek Academy, didn't feel like laughing at Xu Sanshi. They had more or less guessed the effects of this soul skill.

When he went on stage and showed his four soul rings, they had breathed a sigh of relief. Someone with four soul rings should only be a member of Shrek's preparatory team. But after seeing the shield in his right hand and the trick he had used, the students of the Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy started to become anxious once again.

The captain of the main team, Ma Rulong, said in a serious tone, "As you would expect from Shrek Academy, they aren't short of talented people."

When Xu Sanshi swaggering back to his original position, the referee finally reacted. He quickly went to the edge of the platform to check on Ma Yingjun, who had crashed to the ground and was now a mess.

Xu Sanshi also came over, and spoke while still holding the cigar in his mouth, "Little brother, are you alright?"

Ma Yingjun subconsciously replied, "I feel pain everywhere after falling. How did I even end up here?"

"Didn't I say I would go easy on you?" Xu Sanshi said with a stern expression, "Therefore, I used the easiest way to make you fall from the platform. Anyway, no need to thank me. You can go now." With that, he waved his hand to Ma Yingjun.

Ma Yingjun also unconsciously waved his hand and went toward his team's waiting area.

What could the referee even say at this point?

The winner of the first match of the 1v1 elimination phase is... Shrek Academy!"

Ma Yingjun arrived at his team's waiting area. After pondering for a bit, he confusedly said to his team captain, "Captain, was I just tricked?"

The captain of Cloud Luo Academy's team hit him on the head and howled, "Idiot! The academy completely lost its face thanks to you! Shang Yue, you're next."

"Yes." A girl immediately stood up from Cloud Luo Academy's team, quickly climbing up to the platform.

Chapter 79.3: A Genius Food-type Soul Master?

"Beautiful!" Xu Sanshi's eyes lit up as he stared at the military-looking girl in front of him.

Xu Sanshi outward appearance wasn't too bad; he had a square face and a normal-shaped nose and mouth. Even though he wasn't as elegant and scholarly as Bei Bei, he could still be considered good-looking. However, his attitude was completely different than what he looked like.

Shang Yue, who stood opposite him, was a 1.7 meter-tall lady who appeared to be about eighteen or nineteen years old. Even though she wasn't a peerless beauty, she still had an extremely slender figure; this was especially so for her long pair of legs, which stood out.

Her form-fitting robes further served to accentuate her exceptionally beautiful figure.

A pervert such as Xu Sanshi would start observe the lady in front of him from the bottom upwards. Thus, the first thing he saw was her slender, round thighs. When his sight reached her perky chest, his pupils instantly widened. His mouth widened slightly, and it seemed like he was about to start drooling.

Fortunately, he knew that Jiang Nannan was still looking at him. Thus, he forced his perverted gaze away from Shang Yue's chest and forcefully swallowed the saliva that had gathered to the side of his mouth.

Chang Yue wasn't much older than Xu Sanshi, but she did have a boyfriend.

She had clearly seen Xu Sanshi's 'performance' just now, thus she immediately raised her eyebrows and asked, "What're you looking at?"

Xu Sanshi almost subconsciously replied, "Steamed buns."

"You...!" Chang Yue immediately flew into a rage, then shot straight towards him.

Perhaps due to the fact that the referee couldn't bear to continue watching a certain person's vulgar display, he immediately shouted 'start', then retreated backwards.

Chang Yue's fighting style was completely different from Ma Yingjun's. She had a pair of long blades sheathed on her back, which she proceeded to unsheathe the moment that her body shot forwards. As she held one blade in each hand, the two four foot-long blades immediately lit up with a brilliant white light. Afterwards, two three foot-long beams of sword-light shot straight towards Xu Sanshi.

Wang Yan, who was in front beneath the stage, suddenly blurted out, "A close-combat soul tool! Pay attention to it. Most of the time, soul engineers who use close-combat soul tools are extremely formidable in close-combat. Their soul skills might be somewhat weak, but their close-combat fighting abilities are still relatively strong. The best way to deal with them is to not get close to them. If you do, you'll have a big problem on your hands."

Huo Yuhao's gaze remained fixated on Chang Yue's close-combat soul tool as he began to reminisce about his own soul tool. It was the only remnant he had left to remember his mother by—the White Tiger's Dagger.

When he'd fought against the Wind Baboon, it was precisely because of the White Tiger Dagger's special effect that he'd been able to escape being killed by the first soul beast he'd ever met in his life.

"Clang, clang—"

Onstage, Chang Yue's long blades viciously struck Xu Sanshi's Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle, which caused white sparks to immediately fill the surrounding air. At that moment, Chang Yue's soul rings were on full display. Just like Ma Yingjun, she had three yellow and one purple ring. Furthermore, her martial soul was somewhat strange, as her head was the most affected by her martial soul; her originally golden hair had begun to turn gray, she'd grown much taller, and her muscles were now so big that they were bulging. Her eyes had also turned a crystalline yellow. Her lips were jutting out slightly, revealing what seemed to be canine teeth.

A dog-type martial soul? Furthermore, this seems to be a very strong one.

A martial soul like this was relatively decent, as it strengthened its user by a large amount. Considering Chang Yue's ability as a close-combat soul engineer, it could be said to complement her very well. The only flaw of a martial soul like this was that her aesthetics would be ruined when she activated it.

When he saw this, Xu Sanshi evilly cried out as he blocked Chang Yue's attack with his shield, "Ghost!"

His cry made the already-seething Chang Yue immediately launch a storm of sword-beams towards him as she slashed madly at him. Although Xu Sanshi talked a lot of shit, he seemed to simply be an airbag at this moment. The only thing he did was unceasingly adjust the position of his Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle as he cowered behind it, which made it seem as if he had no intentions of attacking.

The violent booms coming from the stage, alongside the scene of Xu Sanshi being completely trashed once again, caused both an uproar and a general sense of puzzlement to spread amongst the spectators. From their point of view, Huo Yuhao and Xu Sanshi were both from the same academy. But if that was so, why was there be such a large gap between them?

The activation of a soul tool drained quite a bit of soul power. Furthermore, the drain on one's soul power was directly proportional to the might of the close-combat soul tool being used. Chang Yue's pair of blades were a Class 3 close-combat soul tool, thus they were relatively extraordinary in terms of strength. As she relentlessly poured down powerful blows with no regard for her soul power, Xu Sanshi gradually retreated, step by step.

However, despite her powerful cultivation, she still eventually ran out of energy. After yet another flurry of blows, she began to feel that she was overexhausting her soul power. Xu Sanshi, on the other hand, was still ten or so meters away from the edge of the stage, despite his constant retreating.

It wasn't as if Chang Yue hadn't attempted to find a flaw in Xu Sanshi's defense. However, the latter's use of the Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle was extremely clever. No matter what way she tried to attack him, he was always able to block it in time. More importantly, whenever she tried to attack him from another direction, the retreating Xu Sanshi would instead steady his footsteps, then retreat in another direction. This way, Chang Yue subconsciously chose to attack him in a frontal manner.

Due to the overexhaustion of her soul power, Chang Yue's blades began to slow down.

At that moment, the corner of Xu Sanshi's mouth curled into a smile. "Ah, ah... I can't hold it anymore! Quick, be more forceful, be more forceful!"

"Bastard!" Chang Yue's large eyes went round, then she fiercely inhaled a large mouthful of air. She forcefully gathered the soul power in her body, then re-intensified the power of the blades she was holding as she once again forced Xu Sanshi to retreat backwards.

Ten meters, nine meters, eight meters... five meters, three meters, one meter... Finally, under Chang Yue's unrelenting assault, Xu Sanshi was finally forced to the edge of the stage. Currently, he would fall off if he took just a single step backwards.

Chang Yue's four soul rings had continuously flickered during her previous attack, but she hadn't seemed to use any soul power on the surface. This was one of the unique characteristics of a soul engineer: When she'd chosen her soul rings, Chang Yue had chosen ones that would increase her strength and speed. This way, she could make up for the deficiencies that her martial soul had.

Furthermore, her combined fighting power after using a soul tool would be much greater than what it would've been if she'd remained a simple soul master.

Right when she was about to succeed and win the fight, her last two soul rings simultaneously lit up, while her twin blades that had previously emitted white light now had a faint, green luster to them. The strong soul power undulations they were emitting caused even the surrounding air to distort. Her blades then flashed forwards as struck towards Xu Sanshi with an all-out attack.

She's won!

When Chang Yue struck towards Xu Sanshi with her two swords, every single student from Cloud Luo Academy, including her, thought this exact phrase.

They all knew how strong she was; if she were to launch an all-out attack, even a Soul King-ranked expert wouldn't be able to take a direct blow from her, let alone Xu Sanshi, who had no path of retreat.

However, right when these thoughts of victory popped into their minds, they instantly transformed into thoughts of astonishment.

Just before Chang Yue's blades struck Xu Sanshi's Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle, Xu Sanshi's body suddenly flickered to the side. At the same time, he slanted the angle of his shield, which caused Chang Yue's twin blades to practically slide across the surface of his shield.

It was true that Xu Sanshi had been forced into the corner of the arena, but at the same time, Chang Yue herself had also been forced into that corner as well! When she felt her swords strike essentially thin air, the momentum carrying her immediately caused her to fly off the stage!

Her greatest mistake was falling for Xu Sanshi's plan; her decision-making skills had clearly been affected when she became angered by him. Combined with the string of attacks that had given her the absolute advantage in their battle, she'd forgotten the most important thing: Even though Xu Sanshi was a defense-type soul master, he didn't have to block everything; he could also dodge an attack!

Xu Sanshi hadn't dodged any of her attacks when she'd gone on the offensive, yet he'd suddenly changed his movements at this crucial moment... Chang Yue simply didn't have the time to react.

The moment that she passed Xu Sanshi, Chang Yue immediately came to her senses. However, it was already too late for her to thrust her blades into the ground to stabilize herself.

Xu Sanshi nimbly turned the Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle in his hand around, then lightly smacked the flat of it against Chang Yue's protruding buttocks. A crisp 'pa' rang out. Combined with the momentum that Chang Yue had from when she'd charged forward, this was the straw that broke the camel's back; Chang Yue immediately fell off the stage and rolled forwards.

This was the second match in a row where a dramatic change had occurred! Xu Sanshi had taken a beating from Chang Yue from the very beginning; in fact, he seemed like he'd collapse at any moment, yet he was still able to turn defeat into victory. Was this really just a fluke?

After falling off the stage, Chang Yue face had turned ashen. However, she was still somewhat drained from using all of her strength earlier.

On the stage, Xu Sanshi kept an innocent look on his face as he looked towards her. He shrugged his shoulders, then said, "You can't blame me. It's just that you were so bouncy that you got yourself bounced out. A mistake, that was definitely a mistake." However, his gaze was fixated on Chang Yue's protruding buttocks the entire time he spoke. Worse, once he'd finished speaking, his gaze turned towards Jiang Nannan, who was seated within the resting area. nove(L&/In

Jiang Nannan's expression became frosty, and she turned to retrieve a pair of scissors from somewhere unknown. She then grabbed an elongated fruit from the table in front of her.

Snip.

Xu Sanshi instantly felt a certain area of his body tighten up, and he immediately turned around. He now had a righteous look on his face as he said to the referee, "I've won. Let's move on to the next match."

The referee's gaze towards him became somewhat strange; he'd never seen such a strange competition in his life.

At that moment, the leader of Cloud Luo Advanced Soul Engineering Academy's team took the stage and took large strides towards Xu Sanshi.

From the viewpoint of the spectators, this leader should've been angry and lashed out at Xu Sanshi due to his previous actions. However, the fact that he didn't do so astonished even the referee somewhat.

Although he had a somewhat chilly and stern expression on his face as he faced Xu Sanshi, he didn't fly into a rage as he spoke. Instead, he bowed slightly to Xu Sanshi, then said, "Cloud Luo Advanced Soul Engineering Academy, Situ Yu."

Xu Sanshi seemed to have felt something as well. The relaxed look on his face vanished slightly, "Shrek, Xu Sanshi."

Chapter 80.1: A Genius Food-type Soul Master?

"I know that you have yet to use your real strength," Situ Yu said in a grave tone, "thus, as the captain of the Cloud Luo Academy team, I hope to have a fair match with you. I want to see the real difference between the two of us. If you manage to beat me, then there won't be a need to fight the remaining matches. As such, I hope that you'll use your actual strength to win my respect."

Xu Sanshi narrowed his eyes. Even though he was only fifteen years old, the environment he'd grown up in had allowed him to mature much faster than his peers. Even if Situ Yu was older than him, it didn't mean that he was more experienced.

"As you wish." Xu Sanshi said after pondering for a moment. He then smiled as he had been previously; he wouldn't let his opponent influence his mood.

The referee stepped forward at this point and said in a grave tone, "Both of you, retreat."

Situ Yu backed up while gazing carefully at Xu Sanshi. His eyes became fiercer and fiercer as he retreated. A sharp, threatening aura was now emanating from his body. How could someone that was able to lead Cloud Luo Academy through that terrifying first elimination round, and lead them to this robin-round phase, not be powerful? Situ Yu was both the captain and the core of their group!

Xu Sanshi also slowly retreated. More than half of the thin cigar in his mouth had disappeared by this point. However, he still had a lazy expression on his face as he withdrew. It seemed that he didn't attach too much importance to his opponent.

In the waiting area.

Wang Yan had a relaxed expression on his face. Since they were quite near the platform, they had heard the conversation between the two of them.

Huo Yuhao, on the other hand, felt a bit depressed. After several attempts, he'd discovered that his Spiritual Detection could indeed get past the protective barrier. Nevertheless, the spiritual power required to do so was enormous; the consumption rate of using the AOE Spiritual Detection through the barrier was the same as when he focused it in a single direction normally. If he were to use it to assist one of them, his soul power would rapidly deplete. As such, it was impossible for him to keep it active all the time.

However, Xu Sanshi didn't seem to be in trouble. Hence, he decided not to take any action. Even Huo Yuhao had yet to experience Xu Sanshi's real power.

Aside from Wang Yan, Bei Bei was also calm. However, the nearby Jiang Nannan was currently staring at the platform, the scissors in her hand continuously snipping. At this moment, her beautiful face was expressionless, and no one knew what she was thinking.

On the platform, Xu Sanshi and Situ Yu had already retreated to their respective sides of the arena.

The referee looked at both of them, then shouted, "Start!"

Situ Yu, who had been standing still a moment ago, suddenly appeared to grow a thousand hands in the blink of an eye, while his body began to emit several loud mechanical sounds. The scene that played out was similar to Huo Yuhao and He Caitou's first encounter: A large number of metallic pipes emerged from his body. Situ Yu's body almost doubled in size in just a few breaths' worth of time.

His stout and powerful legs now had three support-like metal shapes each. These three fingernail-like objects were as thick as a small arm, very sharp, and after popping out, immediately burrowed into the ground to form a very stable base. Afterwards, a large number of assault-type soul tools began to emerge from his calves.

Huo Yuhao was continuously monitoring the situation on the platform, thus when these soul tools were released, he discovered that six places on Situ Yu's body had begun emanating different types of lights. Next, a large number of soul tools began to pop up all over his body.

These soul tools hadn't been installed on his body beforehand, but instead were activated just now.

Three short metallic pipes proceeded to then grow out of Situ Yu's calves. At the same time, a thick and heavy metallic shell wrapped his body; he now looked like a fortress. Huo Yuhao was able to see at least thirty metallic pipes on his body. The largest number were concentrated on his chest, which were emitting a pale dark-gold light; it was a concentrated soul cannon with more than a 1.5 meter calibre.

Right now, Situ Yu looked even scarier than the fully armed He Caitou that Huo Yuhao had seen. In fact, he looked like a killing machine. Those pipes made of pure metal gave off a cool feeling. Four soul rings,

two yellow and two purple, had also appeared beneath his feet. A white light also appeared behind his body, then changed into a huge fan. It almost seemed as if he were carrying the huge fan on his back.

He Caitou moved next to Huo Yuhao, then said in a low voice, "Junior brother, take a good look. That's the fortress formation: The pinnacle of attack and defense amongst us soul engineers."

"The fortress formation?" Huo Yuhao asked, somewhat confused.

He Caitou nodded and said, "Yeah, that's the fortress formation, also known as the soul tool fortress. An armor-type soul tool is currently protecting his body, which sharply increases his defense. Furthermore, several more soul tools are equipped all over his body. Amongst these, there are also some auxiliary soul tools to recover soul power. Considering all of this, both the defense and attack of a soul engineer will skyrocket. They'll be able to utilize a great deal of power for a short while. Beneath seven rings, a soul master will hardly be a match for someone of the same rank using a soul tool fortress.

"Why didn't teacher tell me about this?" Huo Yuhao asked, surprised.

He Caitou laughed and said, "The soul tool fortress consumes a large quantity of soul power; only after obtaining your third ring will you be able to completely display its power. Your current level of soul power is too low; you can't use it quite yet. Furthermore, our teacher doesn't like this sort of thing very much."

Huo Yuhao eyes widened and he asked, "Why?"

He Caitou replied, "Junior brother, just think about it. Aside from the great offensive and defensive power, what other feelings do you gain from this fortress?"

Huo Yuhao thought for a bit, then said, "It's reliable and stable."

"But it lacks mobility," He Caitou continued, "a soul tool fortress has to display a lot of soul tools, including the formations to recover one's soul power. As such, the weight and volume of your equipment will greatly increase. Thus, if you want to equip the soul tool fortress and display its full power, you'll have to sacrifice your mobility. In times of war, it is indeed extremely useful, but if you lose your mobility in a 1v1 fight, you'll just be passively beaten. However, it's not too bad here, as the contestants can only act within the bounds of the platform. The Ultimate Soldier Plan, developed by our Soul Tool Department, will not make use of this kind of approach; after all, it isn't something that can last for very long. The radiance you see emanating from his arms, legs, neck, and chest belong to his stored up soul tools. However, it's very difficult for soul engineers specialized in this fighting style to advance. Just think about it; if you want to upgrade so many soul tools, it would take you at least one year's worth of time. How would they even have the time to increase their soul power? Furthermore, that large fan on Situ Yu's back should be his martial soul. I'm sure that it doesn't have any particular skill. All soul engineers specialized in this sort of style all hope that their soul skills will have the ability to increase their soul power and let them display the complete strength of the soul tool fortress."

Huo Yuhao was able to comprehend many things after He Caitou's explanation, and was enlightened. This time, a huge pressure was weighing down on their shoulders, but they were constantly learning new things from these real battles. After seeing Situ Yu stand on the platform equipped with a soul tool fortress, Huo Yuhao became lost in his thoughts. The world of soul tools was full of mysteries!

While these two were talking, the battle on the platform had also begun.

Compared to Situ Yu, Xu Sanshi seemed extremely frail. He was merely holding the Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle in his hand and was lazily standing still. He hadn't even released any of his soul skills when the referee had announced the start of the match. He advanced with large strides while still holding the thin cigar in his mouth and quickly reduced the distance between him and Situ Yu.

Situ Yu raised both his arms, then pressed his elbows against his ribs. The metal junctions began to combine when he did so. Once they'd connected, the six metal pipes on each of his arms began to emit a strong white light. At the same time, his four soul rings began to glitter in an alternating pattern. The huge fan on his back also released several layers of white light at the same time.

Countless balls of white light instantly shot outwards from him. Each ball of light was big enough to be a threat. In the next instant, all of them madly charged toward Xu Sanshi.

It was the six-barrelled miniature soul cannon. This gadget was extremely powerful amongst soul tools of the fourth rank, and was excellent at laying down suppressing fire. It was one of the preferred soul tools of armies, as even if there were only ten Class 4 soul engineers equipped with a six-barrelled miniature soul cannon, they would still be able to suppress several thousands of soldiers in a certain area.

However, the strong and weak points of this gadget were very clear. The strong points lay in explosive strength, wide coverage, and high attack power. However, there was only one notable flaw, which was a critical one: it consumed a large amount of soul power.

A Class 4 soul engineer could use a six-barrelled miniature soul cannon for five minutes at most before they had to stop to recover their soul power.

Facing this attack, Xu Sanshi used the most simple way to deal with it. Facing an all-out attack from a six-barrelled miniature soul cannon, the only way out for most Soul Ancestors was to run as far away as fast as possible. The soul cannon couldn't attack from too far away; its attack range was more or less only about a hundred meters. Therefore, if there was a certain distance between you and them, you wouldn't be in great danger. However, right now, they were on a platform, and there weren't really any places to hide. Furthermore, even if he started running, Xu Sanshi wouldn't be able to outrun artillery shells made of soul power.

He simply raised his Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle and placed it in front of his body. Afterwards, he squatted down and shrank behind it, completely hiding himself behind his shield.

Powerful explosions continuously struck the Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle; at the same time, a black halo spread out from it. Xu Sanshi seemed to have fallen into a passive state; he didn't budge from his original position. However, the Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle looked like an impregnable fortress; there wasn't even a scratch on it.

Chapter 80.2: A Genius Food-type Soul Master?

Shang Yue, who had reached her waiting area, opened her eyes wide and cursed, "Bastard!" She was absolutely furious! The attack power of the six-barrelled miniature soul cannon was even higher than that of her dual blades. In particular when all the attacks were hitting the target like in this situation.

However, even under this barrage, Xu Sanshi didn't budge. Therefore, when he was running away from her before, it had just been bait.

What incredible defensive power!

Situ Yu's pupils shrank as he felt a great pressure weighing down on him. They were both Soul Ancestors, he should have had a distinct advantage when fighting on the platform with his soul tool fortress. According to conventional wisdom, a soul master specialized in defense should have been completely suppressed and defeated. But even with this crazy barrage, he wasn't even able to make Xu Sanshi retreat.

Of course, this wasn't the limit of Situ Yu's skills. Three thick metal pipes came out of his shoulders and quickly adjusted their position thanks to his muscles. Next, several fist-sized white balls soared toward the sky with a 'puff' sound. These balls were moving slowly in a concentrated cluster. They assumed a parabolic trajectory, aiming at Xu Sanshi, who was hiding behind the shield.

One couldn't attack for too long when using two powerful soul tools simultaneously. Sooner or later, even Situ Yu would have to stop. Xu Sanshi took advantage of this pause and stood up.

At this moment, he couldn't rely on Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection. Therefore, he took action when he felt that no attacks were hitting the shield.

He dashed forward as soon as he stood up, and his second soul ring also lit up.

If those six white balls in the air had kept following their original trajectory, they would have completely missed Xu Sanshi. However, it seemed that they had locked onto their target. Now that Xu Sanshi was now leaving them behind, they changed their trajectory and started to pursue him. But Xu Sanshi, who was rushing forward hadn't yet realized anything.

I won!

Whenever Situ Yu would encounter this situation, he had always obtained victory. All the metal pipes forming his soul tool fortress suddenly lit up. His entire body was so brightly lit up that it seemed to be engulfed in white flames. Dozens of white lights exploded and shot toward Xu Sanshi.

At this time in the waiting area, Bei Bei suddenly said to Huo Yuhao in a low voice, "Look carefully." n.-
Ove**l**bln

His voice had yet to fade when something unexpected happened on the platform.

Facing this simultaneous attack from the front and rear, Xu Sanshi seemed to be at a dead end. If he were to use his shield to block the attack from the front, he wouldn't be able to defend the attack from behind properly. The strength of the white balls could be easily deduced by how concentrated they were.

What could one do in this situation?

Xu Sanshi gave the answer.

He doubled his speed in an instant. The spectators only saw a flash, and his body disappeared. He left behind dozens of afterimages, and two-thirds of the light beams and artillery shells coming from the

front missed. In addition, four of the white balls behind him were destroyed by the attack he had just dodged.

That wasn't all. The Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle 'broke' and split into many small shields the size of a palm as they scattered in all directions. Every shield accurately protected him from the attacks he couldn't dodge. The two white balls at the rear were no exception.

Thunderous explosions were echoing around him, and yet, not a single attack hit his body. With this sudden acceleration, Xu Sanshi had dodged the heavy fire and arrived in front of Situ Yu.

Situ Yu was extremely surprised. How could a defense-type soul master move so quickly? But he was still Cloud Luo Academy's captain, despite being surprised, he didn't forget to attack with his soul tool fortress.

That Rank 4 concentrated soul cannon lit up. He hadn't used it before due to its excessive consumption of soul power. But at this time, it hardly mattered. He mustered all the soul power in his body, which was amplified by the martial soul behind his back, and poured it inside the concentrated soul cannon.

Everyone could see the mouth of the cannon starting to light up. The white light coming out of the cannon suddenly began to turn darken. At the same time, the air on the platform started to become restless.

Situ Yu had a frenzied expression on his face. At last, he attacked.

At this moment, if one could see Xu Sanshi's expression from close up, they would notice that his carefree expression had disappeared. Instead, a cold light was flashing through his eyes.

All the small scattered shields reunited once again into the Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle. Then, when the Rank 4 concentrated soul cannon fired, he took a quick step to his left.

This single step changed everything. The concentrated soul cannon could lock onto an enemy, but with this move, Xu Sanshi wouldn't take the hit head-on, but from a slanted angle. At the same time, the Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle released a black light as it morphed into a shining mirror.

The terrifying attack of the concentrated soul cannon hit the shield. However, it did so at an angle. This caused the blazing white light to be reflected towards the protective barrier above the platform.

Xu Sanshi's feet were like two huge boulders as he stood firmly in place. But he wasn't done yet. After reflecting the attack, he pounced forward like a lion and ruthlessly smashed into Situ Yu's soul tool fortress from the side.

With a thunderous boom, Situ Yu, who was not far from the edge of the ring, was sent flying. The base he had dug into the earth was also uprooted. Situ Yu slammed against the light screen of the protective barrier and collapsed to the ground.

After using the soul tool fortress, Situ Yu's weight had surpassed 250kgs. But when Xu Sanshi hit him, he was immediately sent flying without the slightest resistance.

It was truly a beautiful collision, a showdown of pure brute force.

Xu Sanshi, who was standing at the edge of the platform, had that carefree smile on his face once again. He looked at Cloud Luo Academy's waiting area and said to the dumbfounded Ma Yingjun, "I didn't trick you. I went easy on you."

"Yes, yes." Ma Yingjun nodded repeatedly. There was nothing else he could do anyway.

Xiao Xiao said in a low voice, "Senior Xu was actually this strong."

Till now, Xu Sanshi hadn't left a deep impression on the other members. After all, he was a defense-type soul master. You wouldn't expect him to have any explosive or powerful skills, and on top of that, he spent most of his time pestering Jiang Nannan. Only today, after he defeated three opponents in a row, was everyone able to see his real power.

He defeated a Class 4 soul engineer while being a Soul Ancestor with four soul rings. This alone was enough to make his strength clear. Not to mention that he had easily defeated three opponents in a row.

Bei Bei smiled faintly and said, "Since he always acts shamefully, you guys must have forgotten that when you entered the academy, he was already in the sixth year. If you think about it, he should have already entered the inner courtyard by now. However, he was so dead set on Nannan that he lowered his grades on purpose. I remember that his teachers were so angry that they nearly spat blood. Moreover, he is the most talented defense-type soul master I've ever seen. Anyone would pay the price for looking down on him. Amongst our group of seven, he ranks first when it comes to cultivation level. After all, you can't measure the strength of Shrek Academy's students with the number of soul rings alone, right?"

Bei Bei was speaking the truth. You couldn't properly measure the strength of the students of Shrek Academy just by looking at the number of soul rings they had.

Xu Sanshi had entered the academy when he was very young, and when he was fifteen, he could have graduated from the outer courtyard and taken the test to enter the inner courtyard. One could imagine how high his cultivation was. How could someone that was hailed as the number one genius of the outer courtyard together with Bei Bei be so simple? When making a proper evaluation, you had to take natural talent, strength, fighting capacity, and other various aspects into consideration.

Xu Sanshi's Mysterious Xuanwu Turtle martial soul was one of the strongest defense-type martial souls in his generation. This martial soul allowed the owner to possess an eternal and everlasting defense. In all these years, Bei Bei had never heard of any fellow student being able to break through Xu Sanshi's defense.

"Brother, you should keep your word." Xu Sanshi told Situ Yu. Situ Yu had fallen from the platform and was slowly getting up with great difficulty.

What Situ Yu feared the most was exactly what had happened. The soul tool fortress covered his whole body, and many soul tools had been damaged after the fall. His own body had also received quite the shock as he was bleeding from both nose and mouth. With the help of his teammates, he was finally able to get out of the mountain of soul tools.

He carefully raised his head and looked at Xu Sanshi. Then, he nodded and said, "I lost, and I'm sincerely convinced. Our Cloud Luo Academy admits defeat."

Xu Sanshi laughed heartily, "You actually kept your word. You're a real man. Your offensive power is not half bad. However, I advise you to join the army. You won't be able to achieve much with this technique in 1v1 matches."

As soon as he finished speaking, he looked toward his own waiting area and raised his hands.

Shrek Academy had obtained victory in their first match. Just like last time, they had only used one person. However, the situation was a bit different from last time. This time, they had sent out a defense-type soul master with four soul rings.

This soul master had single-handedly defeated a soul engineering academy. Even if he had only faced three opponents, anyone could tell they were Cloud Luo Academy's strongest students. The remaining team members were merely Soul Elders with three soul rings and had no way of achieving victory.

Chapter 80.2: A Genius Food-type Soul Master?

Shang Yue, who had reached her waiting area, opened her eyes wide and cursed, "Bastard!" She was absolutely furious! The attack power of the six-barrelled miniature soul cannon was even higher than that of her dual blades. In particular when all the attacks were hitting the target like in this situation. However, even under this barrage, Xu Sanshi didn't budge. Therefore, when he was running away from her before, it had just been bait.

What incredible defensive power!

Situ Yu's pupils shrank as he felt a great pressure weighing down on him. They were both Soul Ancestors, he should have had a distinct advantage when fighting on the platform with his soul tool fortress. According to conventional wisdom, a soul master specialized in defense should have been completely suppressed and defeated. But even with this crazy barrage, he wasn't even able to make Xu Sanshi retreat. n./Ov**ELb**1n

Of course, this wasn't the limit of Situ Yu's skills. Three thick metal pipes came out of his shoulders and quickly adjusted their position thanks to his muscles. Next, several fist-sized white balls soared toward the sky with a 'puff' sound. These balls were moving slowly in a concentrated cluster. They assumed a parabolic trajectory, aiming at Xu Sanshi, who was hiding behind the shield.

One couldn't attack for too long when using two powerful soul tools simultaneously. Sooner or later, even Situ Yu would have to stop. Xu Sanshi took advantage of this pause and stood up.

At this moment, he couldn't rely on Huo Yuhao's Spiritual Detection. Therefore, he took action when he felt that no attacks were hitting the shield.

He dashed forward as soon as he stood up, and his second soul ring also lit up.

If those six white balls in the air had kept following their original trajectory, they would have completely missed Xu Sanshi. However, it seemed that they had locked onto their target. Now that Xu Sanshi was now leaving them behind, they changed their trajectory and started to pursue him. But Xu Sanshi, who was rushing forward hadn't yet realized anything.

I won!

Whenever Situ Yu would encounter this situation, he had always obtained victory. All the metal pipes forming his soul tool fortress suddenly lit up. His entire body was so brightly lit up that it seemed to be engulfed in white flames. Dozens of white lights exploded and shot toward Xu Sanshi.

At this time in the waiting area, Bei Bei suddenly said to Huo Yuhao in a low voice, "Look carefully."

His voice had yet to fade when something unexpected happened on the platform.

Facing this simultaneous attack from the front and rear, Xu Sanshi seemed to be at a dead end. If he were to use his shield to block the attack from the front, he wouldn't be able to defend the attack from behind properly. The strength of the white balls could be easily deduced by how concentrated they were.

What could one do in this situation?

Xu Sanshi gave the answer.

He doubled his speed in an instant. The spectators only saw a flash, and his body disappeared. He left behind dozens of afterimages, and two-thirds of the light beams and artillery shells coming from the front missed. In addition, four of the white balls behind him were destroyed by the attack he had just dodged.

That wasn't all. The Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle 'broke' and split into many small shields the size of a palm as they scattered in all directions. Every shield accurately protected him from the attacks he couldn't dodge. The two white balls at the rear were no exception.

Thunderous explosions were echoing around him, and yet, not a single attack hit his body. With this sudden acceleration, Xu Sanshi had dodged the heavy fire and arrived in front of Situ Yu.

Situ Yu was extremely surprised. How could a defense-type soul master move so quickly? But he was still Cloud Luo Academy's captain, despite being surprised, he didn't forget to attack with his soul tool fortress.

That Rank 4 concentrated soul cannon lit up. He hadn't used it before due to its excessive consumption of soul power. But at this time, it hardly mattered. He mustered all the soul power in his body, which was amplified by the martial soul behind his back, and poured it inside the concentrated soul cannon.

Everyone could see the mouth of the cannon starting to light up. The white light coming out of the cannon suddenly began to turn dark. At the same time, the air on the platform started to become restless.

Situ Yu had a frenzied expression on his face. At last, he attacked.

At this moment, if one could see Xu Sanshi's expression from close up, they would notice that his carefree expression had disappeared. Instead, a cold light was flashing through his eyes.

All the small scattered shields reunited once again into the Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle. Then, when the Rank 4 concentrated soul cannon fired, he took a quick step to his left.

This single step changed everything. The concentrated soul cannon could lock onto an enemy, but with this move, Xu Sanshi wouldn't take the hit head-on, but from a slanted angle. At the same time, the Shield of the Xuanwu Turtle released a black light as it morphed into a shining mirror.

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Chapter 80.3: A Genius Food-type Soul Master?

Under these circumstances, one could say that Xu Sanshi had defeated a team of seven people alone!

"The winner is... Shrek Academy!"

As soon as the referee announced the winner, the audience exploded in cheers. The disappointed masses had completely changed their attitude. Even if Xu Sanshi had resorted to trickery in the first two matches, he had fought fair and square in the last one! Although they didn't know what kind of ability he had used, the fact that Shrek Academy had obtained victory with just a single participant was undeniable.

No one sitting in Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy's resting area dared to utter a word. When they saw that the student sent by Shrek Academy was just a Soul Ancestor, they didn't take him

too seriously. Hence, they received a huge psychological blow when they saw his domineering performance.

Xiao Hongchen furrowed his brows; no one knew what he was thinking. Then, the young girl sitting beside him, who had a very similar face, whispered, "Elder brother, what are you thinking about? If we were to take his place, we would be able to do it too, right?"

Xiao Hongchen shook his head and said, "I don't know. We are both soul masters and soul engineers. When fighting, we'll continuously consume our soul power. In the 1v1 matches of the Continental Advanced Academy Soul Duelling Tournament, there is no time to take breaks. Do you really think you can defeat seven opponents despite continuously consuming your soul power?"

The young girl said somewhat unwillingly, "But he didn't defeat seven opponents either. He only fought three!"

Xiao Hongchen said, "But he still managed to win. Did you see the footwork he used just now?"

The young girl was startled. She shook her head and replied, "It was too sudden. I wasn't able to see."

Xiao Hongchen sighed and said, "Neither could I. And although he wasn't able to completely dodge the attack when he used that footwork, it sent chills down my spine. Moreover, during his three matches, he only used two soul skills. To be precise, his second and fourth skills. He didn't even need to use the remaining two. From start to end, he gave the impression of doing things half-heartedly, but despite all that, he still managed to win. A person of great wisdom often seems slow-witted. That guy is most definitely a top-level defense-type soul master. Five years later, we'll have to face this powerful opponent!"

The young girl pouted her lips, still unwilling to accept what he said.

Xiao Hongchen sighed once again. "Shrek Academy is really Shrek Academy. Both in this and the previous battle, they managed to deal a huge blow to my morale."

The young girl chuckled and said, "Give me a break. Your morale received a huge blow? I don't think your morale has ever wavered. No matter who your opponent is, you've always been confident in your own victory."

Xiao Hongchen laughed, "Alright. You're not wrong. I really want to have a good fight now. I wonder what the real strength of that boy from the first match is."

The young girl snorted and said, "That boy can't really have six hundred-thousand year soul rings, right?" "What do you think?" Xiao Hongchen asked with a smile.

The young girl stuck out her tongue and said, "I think it's impossible!"

Xu Sanshi returned to his friends with a satisfied expression on his face. Everyone warmly congratulated him. After all, it was their first win in the round-robin phase.

"Senior Xu, I didn't expect you to be so strong!" Xiao Xiao looked at Xu Sanshi excitedly. "Later, you have to give me a few pointers about defense. Even if my Threelives Soulcrush Cauldron is a control-type martial soul, it excels the most at defense."

“Sure. I’m always happy to help my fellow students.” Xu Sanshi said smugly.

Wang Yan stood up and patted Xu Sanshi’s shoulder, “Come, let’s go.” Following which, he led the team outside.

Shrek Academy’s members once again left Star Luo Plaza under the gazes of the masses.

On the city walls of the inner city, the emperor also stood up. He had a faint smile on his face as he muttered, “So it was this boy. I know who he is, and he really has huge guts! Despite embarrassing me like that, he still came to participate in the competition. Anyway, what a pity...”

After mumbling to himself, the emperor headed toward the innards of the inner city. It seemed that he too had no interest in watching the next matches.

Outside Star Luo Plaza, Huo Yuhao arrived beside Wang Yan and asked in a low voice, “Teacher Wang, shouldn’t we look at the next matches? At the very least, we should watch Sun Moon Imperial Soul Engineering Academy’s match. They are in the second group and will also be fighting today.”

Wang Yan shook his head and replied, “Instead of wasting time here, you should go back and cultivate. I alone am enough to observe the other teams. Right now, you should preserve your strength and stay in top condition. Xu Sanshi did a great job today. He allowed us to win the first match while simultaneously hiding our true strength either. We’ll have to maintain this secrecy for a few more matches. After Xiaotao and the others recover, things will be easier.”

Huo Yuhao had a weird expression on his face. He felt that there was something wrong with the current situation. It felt as if Wang Yan was hiding something from them, his sixth sense as a spirit-type soul master was telling him this.

After returning to the Grand Imperial Star Hotel, Wang Yan made them return to their respective rooms to rest. Huo Yuhao and Wang Dong went to the former’s room. Upon entering the room, Huo Yuhao furrowed his brows. Suddenly, a golden radiance flashed through his eyes. He gestured to Wang Dong to stay silent, then turned his body, facing the door of the room.

Powerful spiritual waves spread through the air. Then, that golden radiance quickly disappeared from Huo Yuhao’s eyes.

“As expected, there is something wrong.” Huo Yuhao said quietly.

“Yuhao, what’s wrong?” Wang Dong asked curiously.

Huo Yuhao said, “Don’t you think that that Teacher Wang is purposely not allowing us to watch the other matches?”

Wang Dong nodded and replied, “But didn’t we agree on that beforehand? We need to save as much time as possible to practice and must also continue to maintain our aloof status in everyone else’s eyes.”

Huo Yuhao shook his head and said, “No, it’s not that simple. Why can’t we just watch the matches? Now that we’re in the round-robin phase, matches will be fought 1v1. At the very least, he should have let us see the next three matches in order to gauge the abilities of our next opponents. However, Teacher Wang made us return to the hotel in a hurry. If things were really like he said, why did he immediately rush over to the plaza after delivering us here?”

Wang Dong was startled as he said, "Were you spying on Teacher Wang just now?"

Huo Yuhao nodded and said, "Teacher Wang said that he alone would be enough to observe the matches. Therefore, he could have stayed back, there was no need for him to accompany everyone till the hotel. On top of that, he was walking very quickly, and his mood seemed somewhat unstable. The reason he accompanied us to the hotel was to make us leave Star Luo Plaza and not let us see the other matches."

"Then..." after hearing these words, Wang Dong seemed to have thought of something, "We're not familiar with the names drawn through the lots. After all, this is our first time participating in the tournament. Even if we know that our opponent is from a certain academy, we won't know what their true strength is. Which means that Teacher Wang was planning to conceal the strength of our opponents? That seems like the only possible explanation..."

They looked at each other and said at the same time, "The teams we will have to face in this round-robin phase must be really strong."

After speaking their mind, they both fell silent. If this was really the case, Wang Yan's actions were reasonable. His purpose was very simple, to protect them from having their fighting spirit crushed.

If they wanted to get past the round-robin phase, they needed to obtain five or more victories. With six victories, they were guaranteed to pass. They would have to wait for two more matches for Ling Luo Chen to recover. And four matches for Ma Xiaotao and Dai Yueheng. Thus, if their opponents in the next few matches were very strong, they would be under a lot of pressure.

"Let's go and take a look." Huo Yuhao pulled Wang Dong along and left the room.

Wang Dong quickly stopped him and said, "We can't. Star Luo Plaza is under the protection of the army. If try to disguise ourselves, we won't be able to enter. And if we go back without a disguise, wouldn't we ruin our reputation? We cannot destroy the mystery that surrounds us."

Huo Yuhao shook his head and said, "I'm not planning to go back to Star Luo Plaza. Just follow me." With that, he brought Wang Dong out of the room. After confirming that there was no one around, he pulled him towards the window at the end of the corridor.

After opening the window, he pointed upward and said, "Fly, and take me to the roof."

Wang Dong's eyes lit up. He had already understood what Huo Yuhao was planning, "But isn't it too far?"

Huo Yuhao said, "The Grand Imperial Star Hotel is the tallest building around Star Luo Plaza. We should have a fairly decent vantage point. Even if it's a bit far, it shouldn't be a problem. Don't forget about the properties of my martial soul. Let's give it a try."

"Alright." Wang Dong replied. He lowered his head and exited the window. The wings of the Radiant Butterfly Goddess unfurled, and he started to float in mid-air.

Next, Huo Yuhao pounced toward him and wrapped his arms around him.

“Oi, why are you clinging to me like that? You’re heavy.” After being hugged by Huo Yuhao, it was unknown whether it was because he was flustered or because Yuhao was really that heavy, but Wang Dong’s body plunged. It took him a few moments before he was able to stabilize himself.

Huo Yuhao replied sourly, “Nonsense. If I don’t cling to you, I’ll fall. Anyway, you keep saying that you’re a man, but why is your body so soft? It feels like a woman’s body.”

Wang Dong got angry. “If you keep with that nonsense, do you believe I won’t fly up and throw you down?”

Huo Yuhao laughed, “Let’s go to the roof.”

Wang Dong flapped his wings and proceeded toward the roof. Since they were residing on the top floor, they already weren’t very far from the roof. But as soon as they got there, they were dumbfounded.

“Caitou, is this gadget even working? I can’t see clearly!” Bei Bei was standing on the roof and holding something in his hand while looking towards Star Luo Plaza.

Beside him were Xu Sanshi, Jiang Nannan, and Xiao Xiao. The roof was quite crowded.