

The Heavens 1121

Chapter 1121: 10,000 Miles, Peak of Second Tier

In order to stop the powerful strike that came from the sea of void, Shang Xia shattered the landmass they brought back from the Spirit Faith World when using it as a springboard for his launch.

The shattered landmass was instantly attracted to the Spirit Luxuriant World, and they quickly fell through the heavenly screen.

At the same time, the flame that struck Shang Xia's Stone Rod continued to eat away at his inner qi.

Even someone like Shang Xia, who had an extremely powerful foundation, wouldn't be able to last too long with such consumption.

However, he didn't feel pressured at all. Instead, he heaved a sigh of relief.

That was because he actually managed to block the strike!

With the efforts of every True Immortal of the Spirit Luxuriant World with the exception of Huang Jinghan, Shang Xia finally stopped the flame in mid air!

The intense flame continued to burn away his inner qi, but he understood that he couldn't back down the slightest inch!

Even though the flame was a lot weaker than before, if he allowed it to pass, it would quickly burn the shattered pieces of land to nothingness. It might even pass through the heavenly screen and cause a disaster on the Spirit Luxuriant World.

Also, it was fortunate they received the attack outside the Spirit Luxuriant World.

The power of the world contained in the You Continent was used by Shang Xia to its limit as it turned into the final resistance against the remnant flame.

The strange power was even able to enter the You Continent to burn away any trace of winter!

Eventually, Shang Xia got rid of all the remnant energy contained in it with all the power contained in the You Continent.

With the disappearance of the flame, nothing else stood wherever it passed. It was as though it burned everything to nothingness.

Shang Xia slowly loosened his grip on his Stone Rod, and he discovered faint smoke rising from his palms. The stench of burned flesh soon entered his nostrils.

His palms were actually completely burned from holding the weapon!

With the strong vitality of a Martial Void Realm True Immortal, they would be able to instantly recover even if they burned their palm completely. The physique of a True Immortal was monstrous, Shang Xia being even more so compared to experts of the same level. For his palms to still be burned... It only indicated how strong the flame was!

One had to know that every single True Immortal of the Spirit Luxuriant World worked together to stop it earlier. They drew on the power of their Elysiums and only weakened it along the way.

If they failed to react in time and didn't do anything to the flame that arrived, Shang Xia's Holy Artifact would probably turn to ash the instant it was struck!

Who could it be?! What existence had the ability to send out a powerful attack like that? Why would someone be plotting against the Spirit Luxuriant World?

With Shang Xia's back completely drenched in sweat, he used up all his energy and failed to maintain his composure above the heavenly screen.

Kou Chongxue rushed to grab him and just as Shang Xia was about to say something, Kou Chongxue muttered, "We'll take it after we return."

Before they descended past the heavenly screen, Shang Xia turned to stare into the void. He saw that the defense system that was made up of the asteroid belt and other landmasses had a giant hole bore through them.

Fortunately, due to Shang Xia's efforts, the spatial gate remained intact as dozens of Star Ships poured out from within.

"Looks like we didn't lose too much..." Shang Xia mumbled to himself before they entered the Spirit Luxuriant World.

The heaven and earth qi that blasted against him when he returned to the world invigorated him. His exhausted inner qi started to recover as and his incomplete Six Harmony Secret Art started to circulate slowly.

Kou Chongxue brought him back to the You Continent immediately. It was where Shang Xia advanced into a True Immortal and the moment he returned, he would receive assistance from the world itself.

However, Shang Xia also noticed that even though he shattered the landmass before sending it shooting into the Spirit Luxuriant World, they were quickly intercepted and slowed by many Martial Dipper Realm experts who remained behind to protect their world. However, there were still quite a few of them that fell into the ocean, causing a certain extent of damage.

That was actually the best everything could have turned out.

The strange strike that came from god knew where was clearly there for the 4 continents, and the moment it struck, everything would be turned to ash.

Fortunately, the Spirit Luxuriant World managed to maintain a good portion of world essence it contained, and the mortals or cultivators living on those continents were mostly preserved.

After Shang Xia entered the Tongyou Institution, he finally regained some energy. At the very least, he wouldn't embarrass himself. Bringing Shang Xia back into the Spirit Luxuriant World, Kou Chongxue then took his leave.

The continents might have entered the Spirit Luxuriant World, but they still needed to split the world essence according to their contributions.

More importantly, everyone wondered where the strange strike came from! They needed to get to the bottom of the matter as quickly as possible!

Even after exhausting a great deal of their energy to stop the attack, they didn't even know who their attacker was!

If they were unable to answer that very simple question, the True Immortals of the Spirit Luxuriant World would feel afraid to emerge from the heavenly screen in the future...

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Shang Xia didn't know what Kou Chongxue and the others discussed as he returned to the Tongyou Elysium to recover the moment he went back.

Even while in seclusion, Shang Xia clearly felt the foundations of the You Continent growing stronger. The continent also started to expand, and it eventually crossed the 10,000 miles mark.

Of course, what Shang Xia could feel wasn't just the expansion of the You Continent. He could also discover the changes to the world beside it.

With the exception of the expansion of land, the density of world origin the You Continent started to rise and so did the density of heaven and earth qi.

Be it the size of the continent, the density of world origin, or heaven and earth qi, nothing was more important than the blessing of the world. The moment the continent crossed the 10,000 miles mark, the blessing of the world descended on Shang Xia.

He could feel his foundations growing stronger, and it even seemed to reach a state of perfection in the second tier. He felt that he might even be able to take the final step and reach the level of External Fusion to become a rank three True Immortal!

Chapter 1122: Impossible to Unravel, Gloomy Situation

After being in seclusion for such a long time in the Tongyou Elysium, Shang Xia felt himself growing muddle-headed.

In order to prevent his Six Direction Origin from being assimilated into the Elysium, Shang Xia had been gathering heaven and earth qi from outside, which also allowed him to extend his divine soul out to observe the changes in the You Continent. The most obvious change was that the density of heaven and earth qi outside had grown.

After the You Continent extended past 10,000 miles, the world origin it contained wasn't the only thing that experienced a transformation. Shang Xia's origin soul that was branded into the world seemed to undergo some sort of strange transformation to freedom as the doors to a higher realm were slowly opened up.

Of course, even though it was open, he had to rely on his accumulations and foundations to step through it.

After a month of seclusion, he managed to restore his exhausted inner qi.

He remained there as the World's Will blessing arrived with the complete assimilation of the continents of the Spirit Faith World. He couldn't leave his state of seclusion easily.

The 13th year of the Spirit Luxuriant Calendar had already rolled about, and Spring was in full bloom.

With the blessing of the World's Will, Shang Xia's Six Direction Origin grew even stronger. With the You Continent's expansion, he also reached the peak of the second tier.

He was a step away from becoming a rank three True Immortal, and he even had a good understanding of how he should reach the level of External Fusion. However, he failed to pierce through the paper-thin layer no matter how hard he tried.

He couldn't understand why no matter how hard he tried to think about it.

One fine day, Kou Chongxue, who had been roaming about because Shang Xia took on the role of staying in the Tongyou Elysium, returned. He looked for Shang Xia who was thinking hard about his problem.

The moment the patriarch arrived, Shang Xia discovered the change in his aura. He actually reached the level of External Fusion and became the third tier True Immortal of the Spirit Luxuriant World!

Also, he was third because not too long after the descent of the World's Will blessing, Zhang Xuansheng, who had been at the peak of the second tier for a long time, also took the final step.

Tongue-tied, Shang Xia pouted, "How... How did you already enter the third tier?! How long has it been since you became a second tier True Immortal?"

Kou Chongxue was slightly taken aback by the sudden questioning, but he quickly raged after returning to his senses. "You little shit! Don't you feel bad when questioning me about matters like this?! How long has it been since YOU became a second tier True Immortal? You're already at the peak of your current level and would be able to step through the gates with a little push. Where did you find the balls to ask me this question?"

Shang Xia wasn't daring enough to start bickering with the patriarch of the Tongyou Institution yet and he immediately folded. He mumbled indignantly, "I ran into an obstacle and have no idea how I should reach the level of External Fusion... I gained nothing in my last month of seclusion..."

"Heh! Why didn't you focus on your rank six secret art then?" Kou Chongxue sneered.

Shang Xia created his own path, and Kou Chongxue knew about it. Also, Kou Chongxue knew how he named his cultivation realm after the path he was taking. It made it easy to understand.

The Four Constellation Realm corresponded to the Martial Extermination Realm, and the Five Element Realm was equivalent to the Martial Dipper Realm. The Six Direction Realm naturally referred to the Martial Void Realm.

Kou Chongxue's sudden reminder cleared the fog in front of Shang Xia and he grasped the crux of the problem. He finally understood what was stopping him from reaching the third tier.

Shang Xia's enlightenment was obviously noticed by Kou Chongxue and the patriarch snorted coldly, "Do you finally get it?!"

Scratching his head, Shang Xia chuckled softly, "I might have my direction. But I need some time to see if I can succeed..."

Kou Chongxue nodded and replied, "Alright, stay here in seclusion. I guess I'll head out."

"Hey!" Shang Xia stopped him before he left. "Patriarch, who was it who attacked us back then?"

“No clue. The Stargazers of the Heavenly Star Palace managed to track the attack over to a region of space, but nothing was left.” Kou Chongxue shook his head and sighed.

With a deep frown on his face, Shang Xia mumbled, “Are there no other clues?”

Thinking for a second, Kou Chongxue eventually continued, “Back then, the strike was so powerful that even the Star Origin City was alarmed. Before we could go and ask them for more information, they came knocking to ask about what happened.”

“That would mean that they also learned about us obtaining the continents of the Spirit Faith World. Since Star Origin City knew, the other Spirit Worlds and Azure Worlds would also know what we did.” Shang Xia grumbled softly.

In response, Kou Chongxue burst out laughing. “It’s impossible to hide something like that anyway.”

“Who did Star Origin City send? What did they ask?” Shang Xia followed up.

Kou Chongxue replied, “It’s someone we know. They sent the second tier True Immortal, Liu Jiuzhen. According to what he says, from what the Star Observatory of the Star Origin City discovered, the expert who made the move back then definitely surpasses the level of a fifth tier True Immortal. They might have even reached the level of Extreme Harmonization! As for who it was, they thought we were the ones who went out to offend someone of that level and they have no idea either.”

Even though they suspected that the strike came from an expert in the fifth tier of the Martial Void Realm, after obtaining a more accurate analysis from the Star Origin City, Shang Xia couldn’t help but feel a trace of lingering fear.

“A mighty fifth tier True Immortal, or even a sixth tier True Immortal... Why would they make things difficult for us, a Spirit World who barely reached our level for a little more than ten years? If they are really targeting us, why did they stop after sending out a single attack? From the looks of it, they’re just sending a warning after our growth. More importantly, the other side was able to accurately grasp the time the landmass emerged from the spatial tunnel to achieve their goal.” Shang Xia threw out every question he had.

Kou Chongxue also didn’t have the answers to his question. After all, the strike back then was completely unprovoked and they had no idea what was happening! From the looks of it, it was going to remain a mystery.

What they couldn’t deny was that all of them already developed a slight fear of what happened that day.

All of them knew that the chances of them being fully prepared like before to take on a similar strike was only probably not going to happen again.

Also, if the strike was aimed at any one of them... Their existence would have been wiped and their souls exterminated.

Actually, for some time after the incident, the True Immortals of the Spirit Luxuriant World used the excuse of integrating the continents and the people who remained on them to not appear above the heavenly screen. There wasn't even a need to mention running into the void...

What was even more embarrassing was that if not for Liu Jiuzhen coming to the Spirit Luxuriant World, the True Immortals of the Spirit Luxuriant World might not even have left their world!

Shang Xia seemed to have thought of something and he asked, "Oh right. Where did the Star Origin City track the attack? Is it the same place as the Heavenly Star Palace?"

"We can't hide the existence of the Star Observatory in the Jiao Continent, and Liu Jiuzhen also seems to have the intention of probing our Stargazers. However, our Stargazers are still pretty new and their method of reverse tracking is a lot more crude than the Star Origin City. If we use our discovery and their results, we would be able to slightly narrow down the source."

Shang Xia thought to himself for a moment and he continued, "With how powerful that strike was, Star Origin City shouldn't be the only one alarmed. The other worlds would also have learned of what happened. Did we receive any news from them?"

Kou Chongxue laughed, "At the moment, most of the other worlds are still taking joy in our misfortune. After all, we grabbed 4 continents from another Spirit World. It's impossible for them not to be jealous. Also, the Spirit Mammoth, Spirit Thistle, and Spirit Tinkle Worlds have been trying to secretly contact us hoping that we can join hands to launch an expedition against the foreign world. They also wish to obtain the location of the Spirit Faith World by paying us off."

Shang Xia snorted in amusement and sneered, "They have great schemes indeed..."

"They're not the only ones. Even Star Origin City hopes that we can reveal the position of the Spirit Faith World. They wish to establish contact with them and integrate them into their system." Kou Chongxue continued.

A little curious, Shang Xia asked, "Patriarch, what do you think the Star Origin City is up to? Could they really just be trying to remain a neutral ground to encourage the communication between different worlds?"

Kou Chongxue sighed, "Only the higher-ups of Star Origin City would know. However, from the news we received from Feng Ziying, there is something strange going on with the Star Origin Guards at the moment. It's said that Zhuge Xiang hasn't appeared in a long time."

Shang Xia was slightly taken aback by the revelation. "How long has it been?"

"Feng Ziying can't be sure either. After all, he's just a regular Star Origin Guard. The last time Zhuge Xiang showed his face was when Fourth Camp Commander Feng Ziyuan emerged from seclusion and became a True Immortal. They held a celebration then."

Shang Xia thought of something else and asked suddenly, "Has there been news about Tong Yutang?"

Kou Chongxue long expected Shang Xia to ask about it. He didn't even need to think about it and replied, "He has always been a mysterious one. Moreover, he's also a True Immortal and if you suspect he's a fourth tier expert, how are we supposed to be able to find him?"

"However... From how you crafted talismans for him and deduced that he would need other rank six Talisman Grandmasters to craft more talismans, we sent many people to ask around in the city about the other rank six Talisman Grandmasters and managed to find that they have been in close contact with the Starry Pavilion."

Shaking his head, Shang Xia sighed, "But this isn't conclusive evidence. After all, the Starry Pavilion is the best place to get high-level material."

Kou Chongxue agreed with Shang Xia. "Our foundations in Star Origin City aren't strong enough and as of now, we can only touch the surface. We don't know too much about other powers there and we need time to grow our influence."

Soon, both True Immortals fell silent.

Eventually, Shang Xia raised an eyebrow in realization and asked, "Right. Did you come back just to tell me all of this?"

"Actually, I was planning to tell you to leave seclusion and head over to the ruined world I discovered back then to take a closer look. I didn't expect you to touch on the level of External Fusion and I don't plan on hindering your cultivation for now." Kou Chongxue sighed.

"The ruined world?" Shang Xia thought back to what Kou Chongxue said before. "Are you planning to sneakily observe the secret art that person is using to enter the level of Dao Harmony?"

Chapter 1123: Six Harmony Flawless Rod Technique

When Kou Chongxue had been roaming the sea of stars, he ran into a ruined world where a mysterious cultivator was attempting to break through the bottleneck of a third tier True Immortal.

Unfortunately, he failed to fully conceal his presence and was discovered by the enemy. He was almost heavily injured by the other party!

He didn't manage to find out who the mysterious expert was, but luckily, his identity wasn't compromised either.

However... The strange reaction from the Star Origin City made Shang Xia and Kou Chongxue suspect Starry Pavilion Master Tong Yutang. They suspected that he was the mysterious expert, and their doubts grew deeper after Shang Xia learned that Tong Yutang's cultivation base at the second tier True Immortal was just a facade! It didn't take long for him to become their prime suspect after they dug a little more.

Shang Xia went over to craft talismans for Tong Yutang next, while Kou Chongxue started a secret investigation on the Starry Pavilion Master.

It was a shame it hadn't been long since the Spirit Luxuriant World came into contact with other worlds and the Land of Star Origin. The Tongyou Institution's rise was also something really recent and even if they wanted to expand their influence, they wouldn't be able to see results in the short term.

Fortunately, they had Feng Ziyang who managed to smoke his way into the Star Origin Guards. This super spy managed to gather a lot of secret information regarding the Star Origin Guards for Kou Chongxue and Shang Xia.

Connecting many different clues, Shang Xia and Kou Chongxue eventually discovered the relationship between Tong Yutang and the Star Origin Guards... No... More accurately, they seemed to have learned about the relationship between Tong Yutang and Zhuge Xiang. They didn't really like each other, and Tong Yutang might also have some sort of relationship with Xing Xingtian, the Seventh Camp Commander. Moreover, their relationship seems to be kept secret. Not even people in the Star Origin Guards knew about it.

Even so, Kou Chongxue and Shang Xia were still unable to be certain that the mysterious cultivator trying to break through to the fourth tier Martial Void Realm in the ruined world was Tong Yutang.

... However, the situation changed.

Back then, Shang Xia and Kou Chongxue moved about sneakily because Kou Chongxue suffered a loss at the hands of the mysterious expert. He knew that he wasn't a match for the other party and also suspected that there was a powerful backer behind them. As such, he chose not to make any rash decisions.

Now that he advanced to the level of External Fusion and became a third tier True Immortal, his abilities made a huge leap forward. Even though he might not possess the same cultivation as the mysterious expert at the peak of the third tier, and the strength that came with it, he was confident he could escape unscathed even if he was discovered.

Also, according to his original plan, he would also have Shang Xia, a monstrous existence at the peak of the second tier who possessed combat strength rivaling third tier True Immortals!

The reason he came back to the Tongyou Elysium to tell Shang Xia about everything he found out, was because he wanted to enlist his help to head over to the ruined world and discover the secrets of the mysterious expert!

Also, the main reason he decided to move out was because he received news from Feng Ziyang that there were rumors of Zhuge Xiang reaching the level of Returning to the Origin to become a fifth tier True Immortal. The moment the news started to spread among the Star Origin Guards, Xing Xingtian, who was the Seventh Camp Commander, seemed to have sent a lot more patrols out into the sea of stars. They also spent a lot more time outside.

Kou Chongxue thought that he had a great plan, but he didn't count on Shang Xia being so talented that he was a mere step away from entering the third tier.

The world was vast, and there were many things one could do to supplement their strength. However, one's cultivation was still the most important thing at the end of the day.

Even if Shang Xia was willing to take the trip over to the ruined world with him, Kou Chongxue wouldn't allow it and would force him to continue cultivating.

“What are your plans then?” Since he wouldn’t be of any help, Shang Xia naturally wanted to suggest that Kou Chongxue didn’t take the risk by going alone. Instead, he wanted to shift the patriarch's attention to something else.

Kou Chongxue understood that since the mysterious expert probably already raised his guard, even if he went over, he might not be able to take advantage of the situation. He might even alert the enemy to what he was planning to do.

After a short moment of contemplation, he muttered, “I’ll stay in the institution for the time being. I’ll take a look and see if there are any promising disciples. No matter what, we can’t possibly leave the Elysium empty if the both of us head out.”

“Senior Sister Sun should possess the qualification to enter the fourth element of the Martial Dipper Realm.... Are there any other candidates we can pick out?” Shang Xia asked.

“Little Sun has already started to refine her fourth fate dipper. As for other disciples with potential... From what we have right now, only Ge Qingzhu and Tian Mengzi might be possible candidates. They have reached the third element of the Martial Dipper Realm, but we only have a single slot to become an Elysium True Immortal...” Kou Chongxue explained.

Shang Xia mumbled in a low voice, “From what I understand about Senior Sister Sun, she is most likely going to attempt to become a Free True Immortal. As for Instructor Ge and Senior Brother Tian... We might have to choose between them if we have no other choice.”

“We’ll see...” Kou Chongxue sighed softly.

No matter how they looked at it, the Tongyou Elysium’s current state basically ensured that one of their potential candidates to enter the Martial Void Realm would be able to become an Elysium True Immortal.

Then again... If one was truly aiming for the stars and to not be shackled to their world, they shouldn’t be settling to become an Elysium True Immortal in the first place.

To the higher-ups of the Tongyou Institution, their slot to become an Elysium True Immortal was a real headache.

After Kou Chongxue left the Elysium, Shang Xia returned to cultivating.

Everything he planned to do continued as per usual, but he received pointers from Kou Chongxue. He decided to turn his attention to completing his Six Harmony Secret Art.

Perhaps it had something to do with what Kou Chongxue said, but Shang Xia approached his problem from a new angle. He was suddenly no longer interested in rushing to break through to the level of External Fusion to become a third tier True Immortal. Instead, he started to focus on his secret art and other techniques second tier True Immortals could do, such as splitting off a clone.

Actually, splitting off a clone wasn’t something extremely rare as cultivators would have already learned how to split off clones in the Martial Dipper Realm.

Of course, creating clones in the Martial Dipper Realm was more to ensure they would be able to remain alive by sacrificing them during critical moments.

In the past, their clones might have the strength of a Martial Dipper Realm expert, but the moment it was slain, one's cultivation would drop. As such, one wouldn't split off a clone unless they were in a desperate need to do so.

A True Immortal didn't actually have such concerns! Even after splitting off a clone, their cultivation wouldn't be affected even if it was destroyed! All they would lose would be some inner qi. Moreover, a clone with the strength of a True Immortal would be a very strong helper! It was more than worth it to create one.

After one became a second tier True Immortal. Most of them would choose to learn the technique to split off a clone. Among the True Immortals of the Spirit Luxuriant World, Shang Xia was the only exception as he was the only second tier True Immortal who hadn't learned how to split off a clone.

Before becoming a third tier True Immortal, Shang Xia was carried away by a sudden impulse and decided to learn how to do it.

Creating a clone was usually preceded by splitting off a portion of one's divine soul. It wasn't difficult for someone like Shang Xia who had a monstrous divine soul. The only issue he faced was the excruciating pain when separating his soul.

That was a trial every single True Immortal had to face if they wanted to create one.

After the soul came creating the body of the clone. It could be created with a small portion of their inner qi.

Next came its energy reserves. They had to store enough inner qi in the clone so that they would be able to fight for some time! When that happened, the portion of the divine soul possessed by the clone would be able to control its body and utilize the inner qi stored within to possess basic combat abilities in the Martial Void Realm!

Due to the fact that the soul was split off, after a clone was created, they would be able to make decisions on their own.

After finally creating one...

Shang Xia seemed to have thought of something and he chuckled while addressing the clone, "I haven't been out in a long time. Looks like I need you to go to the institution and clear the doubts of disciples who have any questions..."

Shang Xia's clone laughed in response, "I came from you, and we are one and the same. Is there a need to be so formal? Also, there are many disciples in the institution who chose to walk down your path. Most of them merely went through the process without understanding the principles behind it. It's true that I have to make a trip over to prevent them from walking down the wrong path..."

After the clone left, Shang Xia felt himself becoming a lot less restrained than before. Even the Crimson Soul Tablet wanted to fly out of his sea of consciousness.

His rank six secret art he had been working on for some time also started to circulate without him putting much thought into it. His flow of qi seemed a lot more natural than before.

His rank six secret art, that had been causing him a massive headache since a long time ago, seemed to undergo some sort of transformation. He had been working on it for a long time, and he racked his brains on how he should proceed. Who would have thought that he would be able to complete a full cycle of inner qi rotation as soon as he split off a clone?

Even though there were still many problems and areas of improvement, it could be said to have fully taken shape.

The next moment, Shang Xia felt as though the World's Will blessing had descended on him again as his divine soul could see the world around him with greater clarity.

With his rank six secret art finally taking form, he finally broke through the bottleneck and became a third tier True Immortal!

At the same time, he also came up with a name for his rank six martial arts that was also starting to take shape. He decided to give it a unique name, the Six Harmony Flawless Rod Technique!

Chapter 1124: Abyss Prison Emptiness Talisman

"How can you be sure your Six Harmony Flawless Rod Technique can be used all the way through the Six Direction Realm? You're only a third tier True Immortal at the moment, and there are still several more levels to go. You have to reach the level of Dao Harmony, Returning to the Origin, or even Extreme Harmonization in the future. The higher you go, the easier it will be to create techniques for those in lower levels, but we can't do that! We can only build our foundations and grow stronger slowly. Are you certain your technique won't run into any problems later?" Kou Chongxue was a little exasperated when he spoke to Shang Xia.

That was because it hadn't been long since he stepped into the third tier of the Martial Void Realm, but Shang Xia caught right up again! He was truly feeling a little embarrassed at the moment.

Shang Xia didn't know how he should explain... He couldn't possibly tell Kou Chongxue that he already had an understanding of the principles of the Six Directions, could he?!

Actually, there should be some geniuses in the Tongyou Institution who should possess some knowledge about how they should cultivate. Otherwise, Shang Xia's act of blazing down his own path would have long since brought suspicion on himself.

"Oh. I'll just change it when the time comes. Anyway, I only completed the general outline of it and there is much room for improvement." Shang Xia muttered.

He wasn't planning to argue with Kou Chongxue for such a small matter. Otherwise, a small argument would turn into a dao discussion. That was something that wouldn't end in a few days. Anyway, his technique wasn't in a perfect state. There was still a lot for him to work on.

Seeing how Shang Xia had taken his advice very modestly, he didn't have any other reason to pick an argument. He grunted once to show his appreciation of Shang Xia's humble attitude, but he was still feeling a little regretful he couldn't say more.

"When do you plan to head over to the ruined world with me?" Kou Chongxue asked. He had been paying attention to Tong Yutang recently, and he was evidently very

interested in getting his hands on the secret art to advance into a fourth tier True Immortal.

However, from what Shang Xia was seeing, Kou Chongxue looked to be in quite a rush...

In recent years, he could also tell that Kou Chongxue wasn't the only one feeling slightly anxious. The other True Immortals of the Spirit Luxuriant World were also feeling a little troubled.

Of course, the reason was none other than the mysterious strike that came from the depths of the sea of stars!

Shang Xia had been in seclusion for 2 whole years since then, and basically every single expert in the Spirit Luxuriant World who had the ability to traverse the sea of stars had been mobilized to try to look for traces of the attacker.

However, none of them found anything!

A foreign True Immortal who held clear hostility to the Spirit Luxuriant World, with cultivation in the fifth tier of the Martial Void Realm or higher... Such an existence was naturally feared by everyone!

Shang Xia even knew that half a year after the attack, not a single True Immortal left the heavenly screen!

In the end, Liu Jiuzhen came over and the True Immortals of the Spirit Luxuriant World seemed to come back to life.

Even so... Every time they left the heavenly screen, they would conceal their aura and act cautiously. They were afraid they would be targeted by the mysterious expert.

That was also why Kou Chongxue was so interested in getting his hands on the secret art to advance.

Since they didn't know who was targeting them, and for what reason, the high-level experts of the Spirit Luxuriant World could only focus on growing stronger.

Understanding their concerns was one thing, but Shang Xia still had his considerations.

"You should wait a little. Wait for me to craft a few more rank six talismans before thinking about going over." Shang Xia shook his head slowly.

Kou Chongxue couldn't help but ask, "What talismans are you going to craft now?"

Shang Xia knew how to craft 4 different rank six talismans. The first was his self-made Six Harmony Teleportation Talisman. The next was Tong Yutang's secret Formation Talisman. Another was the True Space Restriction Palm Talisman he obtained from Yun Hu back then. The last inheritance also came from the Spirit Faith World, and he was something he found in the remnants of the Guyuan Sect. It was called the Abyss Prison Emptiness Talisman. It was said that the Guyuan Sect obtained it from the Spirit Emptiness World in the past.

Shang Xia chuckled, "Of course I'm going to make Six Harmony Teleportation Talismans. We can use it to escape in critical moments!"

Kou Chongxue wanted to say something, but he stopped himself.

Shang Xia had 10 sheets of rank six talisman paper leftover from the Starry Pavilion. After such a long time, the Talisman Hall also managed to get their hands on 5 additional sheets. According to his estimates, Shang Xia planned to craft 2 Six Harmony Teleportation Talismans each for himself and Kou Chongxue. It was the talisman that gave them the highest chance to survive in life-threatening situations.

Due to the world ascension more than a dozen years ago, the Tongyou Institution managed to welcome a period of explosive growth. The You Continent also grew stronger and larger, allowing them to possess abundant cultivation resources.

With Shang Xia's friendly relationship with the Starry Pavilion, the Tongyou Institution would be able to buy batches of resources they were lacking. It was especially so when the resources required were related to talisman crafting. The Starry Pavilion seemed to give the Tongyou Institution priority when picking the stuff they needed.

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When Shang Xia entered his chamber in the Talisman Pagoda again, he discovered that everything had grown in quality. The arrangement would provide some assistance when it came to talisman crafting.

It was his third time crafting Six Harmony Teleportation Talismans. With the experience of previous times, his hands moved with practiced ease.

When he reached his goal of crafting 4 Six Harmony Teleportation Talismans, he only used up 9 sheets of rank six talisman paper.

The difficulty of crafting a Six Harmony Teleportation Talisman was higher than a True Space Restriction Palm Talisman and the Formation Talisman Tong Yutong commissioned.

"Strictly speaking, the Abyss Prison Emptiness Talisman should be a defensive type talisman. It's very practical for True Immortals to use and the moment the talisman was activated, the space in front of the user would turn into a mire of chaos that swallows up everything approaching. Attacks would enter the chaotic space created and would not hit its target. If used another way... The talisman would be able to eat away at the opponent's Void Origin when inside their domain and allow the user to obtain the initiative in battle." Shang Xia mumbled to himself before attempting to craft the talisman.

One had to say that Shang Xia's ability to craft talismans leveled up yet again after he reached the level of External Fusion. With a little bit of luck, the last 6 sheets of rank six talisman paper turned into 3 completed Abyss Prison Emptiness Talismans. He managed to achieve a success rate of 50 percent!

Chapter 1125: The Perfected Continents and Power Structure of the World

"Do you need me to give you some more time so that you can come up with your third move in your Six Harmony Rod Technique before we set off?" Kou Chongxue snorted.

By the time Shang Xia left seclusion, it was already the latter half of the 13th year of the Spirit Luxuriant Calendar.

It was clear that Kou Chongxue was feeling a little annoyed by how long Shang Xia had been crafting talismans. After all, Shang Xia didn't give him a good estimate of how long he needed to wait back then. His attention was quickly shifted away when Shang Xia handed 2 Six Harmony Teleportation Talismans and an Abyss Prison Emptiness Talisman over.

After leaving behind a clone each to watch the Tongyou Institution, they left the Spirit Luxuriant World sneakily. They didn't alarm anyone when they disappeared.

With their cultivation realms reaching the third tier of the Martial Void Realm, they were the only ones at that level who weren't shackled to their Elysiums. No one in the Spirit Luxuriant World could discover their tracks.

In the void outside the heavenly screen, Shang Xia intentionally slowed down to look at the Spirit Luxuriant World behind him.

He saw that the defense system that comprised many formations had been fully constructed. After taking on the mysterious strike back then, a good portion of them had been burned to nothingness. As a result, their progress was stalled.

However, what moved Shang Xia was the expansion of the Spirit Luxuriant World. Their heavenly screen grew even wider, and they would have to expand their defense system along with it.

Fortunately, their defense system hadn't been fully built. The Formation Grandmasters of the Spirit Luxuriant World were working together and refining the blueprint of enlarging their formations and defenses.

Looking back at the world itself, Shang Xia could see that the spiritual light emitted by the heavenly screen had surpassed what it was in the past.

Tsk, tsk...

Shang Xia clicked his tongue before asking Kou Chongxue who was standing beside him at the moment, "Patriarch Kou, after we integrated the continents, how many continents managed to grow larger than 10,000 miles?"

Kou Chongxue was no fool. He knew that Shang Xia didn't just mean a pure land area of more than 10,000 miles. He wanted to know how many continents reached the state of perfection.

After all, continents like that would allow cultivators who relied on them to advance into the Martial Void Realm to possess the qualification to go further on their path of cultivation.

Pressing his lips together, he muttered, "The continents that reached the state of perfection a long time ago are the Northern Sea Continent and Yong Continent. After so long, the Jing Continent, Jiao Continent, and our You Continents have also reached the same level.

Shang Xia couldn't help but sigh, "Our Spirit Luxuriant World has 23 continents, but only 5 of them reached the level of perfection. We can't even compare to the Spirit Faith World we plundered! Looks like there's a long road ahead..."

Looking at Shang Xia who was sighing like an old man, Kou Chongxue didn't know whether to laugh or cry. "Damn kid, why are you taking the words out of my mouth? Is this something a youngster like you should be saying?!"

Shang Xia also found it funny, but he muttered, "You should know that I not only went to the Spirit Faith World, but I also infiltrated the Spirit Abundance World back then. I have a certain understanding of peak-level Spirit Worlds. We're far too weak compared to them..."

Kou Chongxue grunted and continued, "There's actually several extremes when it comes to our Spirit Luxuriant World. For example, the Northern Sea Continent that had been managed by the Northern Sea Mystic Sect for close to 1000 years. Be it land mass or world origin reserves, it far surpasses any continent that reached a state of perfection."

"Hmm... With my estimates, even if the Northern Sea Continent doesn't harm its foundation of being a perfected continent and return a portion of their foundations to our world, we should be able to bring 2 to 3 continents to the state of perfection."

"There's also the Yong Continent. It houses the Eternal Palace and Divine Capital Sect, and they managed it for hundreds of years. They also plundered the spirituality of the border continents when our worlds collided back then. Their foundations might not be any weaker than the Northern Sea Continent. Conservatively, they would be able to push 2 pseudo-perfected continents to the state of perfection..."

"Actually, even our You Continent, the Jiao Continent, and the Jing Continent aren't continents that barely reached the standard to be considered perfected continents. Be it heaven and earth qi or accumulated world origin, we are a lot stronger than the others. Taking our You Continent as an example... I believe you can feel it. Even though the size of the continent just passed the 10,000 mile mark, the density of heaven and earth qi and the world origin accumulated far surpasses the standard of a barely perfected continent. The Jiao Continent is the same. As for the Jing Continent... It's a little more balanced. However, compared to the Northern Sea Continent and the Yong Continent, our continents are far from impressive." Kou Chongxue concluded.

"Pseudo-perfected continents?" Shang Xia caught on to the term and asked curiously.

Kou Chongxue added, "Those are continents that are about to reach the state of perfection. For example, the Liang Continent that the Eternal Palace has been developing in recent years. The inherently superior Shu Continent is the same and so is the Yi Continent where the Heavenly Star Palace resides. There is also the Sha Continent that has been managed by the Northern Sea Mystic Sect. All 4 of them can be considered pseudo-perfected continents. The Yu and Bing Continents are also growing rapidly in recent years and might have reached that level."

After thinking for a moment, Shang Xia asked, "It seems like the other Elysiums have already expanded into other continents and are managing them well..."

“Yes, they have. I believe you understand the reason why. It’s in preparation for their future True Immortals. There isn’t a need to mention the Ice Continent[1] at the moment. Its foundations were poor at the start, and Lu Wuzi could be said to have given it all for him to develop it into such a state. After all, he used the Northern Sea Continent when advancing.” Kou Chongxue nodded slowly.

He also added, “Right. The Divine Capital Sect is developing the Yu Continent...”

“Divine Capital Sect? How could it be them?” Shang Xia frowned. “Is the Great Observation Sect willing to allow the Divine Capital Sect to encroach on their territory?”

Kou Chongxue chuckled in response, “The Divine Capital Sect’s original target was the Bing Continent, but... Hehehe...”

Shang Xia gasped in amazement. As it turned out, the Tongyou Institution had been supporting the Five Mountains Alliance in the Bing Continent to suppress the Divine Capital Sect! In recent years, they were able to push the influence of the Divine Capital Sect all the way down south of the Bing Continent!

Seeing as there was no way to fight back due to the rapid progress of the Tongyou Institution, the Divine Capital Sect had no choice but to change their target to the Yu Continent.

Actually... The Yan Continent would be the most ideal location for the Divine Capital Sect to stretch their influence due to their close proximity.

It was a shame the Yan Continent was small and the Zhongxuan Sect had firm control over it. The moment the Divine Capital Sect tried to stretch their influence into the Yan Continent, they would face an all-out attack from the Zhongxuan Sect. Even if they won, they would have to pay a huge price to develop the Yan Continent. As such, they decided to go elsewhere.

However... Was the Yu Continent really the best choice?

One couldn’t forget that the Yu Continent was right beside the Jing Continent where the Yuanchen Sect established their dominance. They wouldn’t sit back and allow the Divine Capital Sect to do as they wished!

As one of the 3 Elysiums with the longest heritage in the Spirit Luxuriant World, the Divine Capital Sect seemed to be on the back foot in recent years. Not only were they surpassed by peak-tier combat strength by the Yuanchen Sect and Tongyou Institution, they also lost to the Eternal Palace, their old rival! After all, in terms of pure cultivation level, Yang Taihe was still the strongest expert in the Spirit Luxuriant World at the moment.

Of course... A skinny camel was still larger than a horse. The Divine Capital Sect was still one of the 5 great Elysiums of the Spirit Luxuriant World. Lu Jidao was also an existence second only to the 4 third tier True Immortals. He could be ranked the fifth strongest expert in the Spirit Luxuriant World, ahead of Liu Jingsheng who was similarly at the level of Inner Fusion!

1. Changed the name of Lu Wuzi’s continent since it has the same name as another continent and it’s going to be extremely confusing if I don’t do something 🙄

Chapter 1126: 33 Slots

Of course, the growth of the Spirit Luxuriant World didn't stop with the Martial Void Realm True Immortals. With the strengthening foundations of the 23 continents, it wasn't as though all of them were garbage. Some of them just grew faster than the others.

Before the Spirit Luxuriant World took shape, there were only 13 factions with their respective Holy Lands among the Azure Origin World and Azure Spiritual World.

Of course, that didn't include the Northern Sea Mystic Sect, Eternal Palace, and Divine Capital Sect that already possessed an Elysium.

Along the way, the Yuanchen Sect managed to establish their Xiangyang Elysium, and the Tongyou Institution also evolved to produce the Tongyou Elysium during the world ascension.

With that, the 5 great Elysiums were formed.

Even with 2 factions with Holy Lands growing to an Elysium, the number of Holy Lands didn't drop! Instead, it grew to an impressive 16!

There were also approximately 90 cultivators who managed to reach the Martial Dipper Realm, increasing the number of experts at that level to more than 200!

One had to know that that was also after the Spirit Luxuriant World had been through several great battles and lost many Martial Dipper Realm experts. Otherwise, they would have even more!

Even though so much had happened, it had only not even been 14 years since the Spirit Luxuriant World took shape.

"In order to become an Azure World, one needs at least 12 continents. They also need to be filled with the world origin of an Azure World. To become a Spirit World, one needs 18 continents at the very least, and most of them need to complete their transformation. As for Essence Worlds... A world needs at least 24 continents and all of them have to reach a state of perfection in order to possess a strong foundation to advance..." Kou Chongxue muttered as he stared at the heavenly screen in the distance.

He continued, "Of course, it might not be a hard requirement. When the Azure Spiritual World collided with us in the past, they probably had less than 10 continents. However, they can be considered a peak-tier Azure World due to the Northern Sea Continent storing most of their world essence..."

"Of the 23 continents our Spirit Luxuriant World has, the strongest continents have been growing too rapidly and their growth is much more obvious than the barren continents like the Bing continent..." Kou Chongxue sighed.

Shang Xia couldn't help but ask, "How is the Bing Continent considered barren?"

"Huh...? Even if they aren't barren, they're pretty close to being considered one. After the formation of our Spirit Luxuriant World, our institution has been fighting the Divine Capital Sect within the borders of the Bing Continent. Since we can't be sure

who will be able to gain control of it, do you think either side will pour resources into the Bing Continent to grow it? In fact, it didn't even manage to gain much from the many events that transpired."

Shang Xia continued to ask, "We have 23 continents at the moment, and the Spirit Abundance World also seems to have 23 continents. Since the minimum requirement to become an Essence World is 24 continents, is it a coincidence for us to possess the same number of continents?"

"Actually... In the time you had been in seclusion, the various powers have been fighting non-stop about the 24th continent..." Kou Chongxue hesitated slightly before replying.

"Why?"

Kou Chongxue eventually explained, "The Northern Sea Mystic Sect actually hopes to split the Northern Sea Sect in half. Zhang Xuansheng even proudly proclaimed that even with the split, both continents would remain in a state of perfection. With that, our world would possess 24 continents! Naturally... Lu Wuzi wouldn't agree to that!"

"The Eternal Palace and Divine Capital Sect also seem to be willing to split the Yong Continent in half. Liu Jingsheng is also entertaining the idea of separating his Jing Continent. However, he hopes that I will split off a portion of the essence contained in the Jiao Continent after the separation."

"Heh... The Yuanchen Sect has great schemes..." Shang Xia snorted once before he continued, "Actually, I pretty much understand the situation. This is probably so that they can obtain another continent for members of their later generations to rely on to ascend, right?"

Kou Chongxue nodded in response. "Now that our world has a greater understanding of what it takes to become a peak-tier Spirit World, we are viewing things with the perspective of one. A Spirit World can contain 9 Elysiums at most and 24 continents! That would mean that the maximum number of True Immortals in a Spirit World wouldn't exceed 33 after counting Elysium True Immortals!"

One couldn't see that the Spirit Luxuriant World only had 10 True Immortals... 5 of them were Elysium True Immortals and they were far from reaching the limit.

Also... If an expert wished to break through to the Martial Void Realm in a certain continent, it wasn't going to be easy if it contained a faction that possessed its own Holy Land!

The reason was simple. Any power that possessed a Holy Land would be able to disrupt the expert when they were trying to brand their origin soul into the world by relying on the spirituality of the continent. Once that happened, failure was assured!

Because the Holy Land's foundation was built on the foundation of the world, they could communicate with the World Origin Source to a certain extent. As such, even if a power that possessed a Holy Land didn't have an expert who had a True Immortal, they would still be

considered half a master of the continent. They wouldn't be considered completely unstoppable, but they could foil the plans of anyone who wanted to use the continent to advance!

That was also why Kou Chongxue chose the Jiao Continent when he broke through back then. With the Tongyou Institution in place, they already had control of the You Continent. As such, he could leave it for someone else when they advanced in the future.

Going by the same logic, the Tongyou Institution would rather completely destroy the Bing Continent in their conflict with the Divine Capital Sect than pour their resources into it. They also wanted to prevent the Five Mountains Alliance who had basically gained the upper hand with their support from establishing a Holy Land.

A similar situation played out with the Liang Continent where the Eternal Palace had set their eyes on, the barren Sha Continent the Northern Sea Mystic Sect wanted to build their foundations on, and why those factions were willing to break off a part of their continent just to gain another region of land.

Shang Xia reacted quickly. He noticed that the True Immortals from 7 different factions basically joined in the discussion of the 24th continent, but Kou Chongxue didn't mention anything about the Heavenly Star Palace or the schemes of their institution.

They could put the Heavenly Star Palace aside for the time being. Yin Jingxu barely broke through to the Martial Void Realm, and he relied on the Earth Star that was eventually integrated into the Yi Continent to advance.

The Yi Continent was far from a state of perfection, and it couldn't even be considered a pseudo-perfect continent. They were barely doing better than the Ice Essence Sect as things stood, and there was no way they could split off their land. Moreover, the borders of the Yi Continent pushed against other continents and they couldn't expand easily.

As for the Tongyou Institution... With Shang Xia's understanding of Kou Chongxue, there was no shot they weren't planning anything. It clearly wasn't Kou Chongxue's style.

"So... What are you planning to do?" Shang Xia asked.

With a smile slowly forming on his face, Kou Chongxue chuckled, "Looks like you're starting to understand the way I do things."

Shang Xia pressed his lips together and really wanted to mock Kou Chongxue. However, he managed to hold his intrusive thoughts in.

Looking at Shang Xia with slight surprise, Kou Chongxue didn't expect him to remain quiet at that. Eventually, he laughed and explained, "I was planning to split off a portion of the world essence contained in the Jiao Continent and fuse it with the islands off the coast of our You Continent. I will call it the Sea Continent after it forms. What do you think?"

Shang Xia was slightly taken aback. "Sea Continent? The Tianya Pavilion repaired their Holy Land and Lady Yu isn't an easy person to deal with."

Kou Chongxue merely smiled without saying anything else.

Seemingly having thought of something, Shang Xia turned to look at Kou Chongxue in shock. "You didn't set your sights on the Tianya Pavilion, right?! The Hundred Weapons Mill have already

joined them and they have at least 2 Blacksmith Grandmasters there. They also have a near-perfect smithing inheritance and our institution has been falling behind in recent years... Hehe... Looks like you're planning to hit many birds with one stone! I really have to give it to you... Your schemes are truly amazing!"

Kou Chongxue burst out laughing in an exaggerated manner after hearing what Shang Xia said. However, he raised his brows and snorted casually, "I really have a scheme against the Tianya Pavilion. It would be best if they agree with my plan and go along with it. However, it's fine even if they don't. As long as someone from our institution needs to rely on the Sea Continent to enter the Martial Void Realm in the future, all will be well as long as they don't interfere."

"What are you relying on to convince them? You can't possibly be threatening them, right?" Shang Xia gasped.

"To be able to combine the islands into a single continent, the Tianya Pavilion will benefit big time from our actions. At the very least, their Holy Land will be able to patch up their greatest weakness with a complete continent and it greatly helps with their progress. Also, with their current foundations... How are they supposed to find a disciple with qualifications to break through to the Martial Void Realm?" Kou Chongxue dismissed Shang Xia's concern.

However, Shang Xia wasn't planning to let the matter end there. He continued, "How can anyone be sure of what will happen in the future? They might agree to not interfere if we use the Sea Continent to produce another True Immortal for fear of our overwhelming strength, but grudges will definitely form. When that happens, it might lead to a disaster in the future!"

"Heh." Kou Chongxue snorted before he added, "In the future? Without our support, the Sea Continent wouldn't exist! What future can they have?"

A grin also appeared on Shang Xia's face. "Yeah, that's true!"

Seeing as Shang Xia had agreed with his schemes, Kou Chongxue quickly explained, "Right... Then again, we need to give them enough hope. There can only be 33 True Immortals in our Spirit Luxuriant World, but what happens when we ascend to become an Essence World? The number of True Immortals might not be limited then! When that happens, our Tongyou Institution would be more than capable of supporting the Tianya Pavilion to reach the next level and obtain their own rank six inheritance!"

Shang Xia nodded slowly. He could see that with the empty promises the Tongyou Institution would be making, the Tianya Pavilion would most likely agree to their terms while also siding with them.

With that, the You Continent, Jiao Continent, Sea Continent, and the Tongyou Elysium would be able to produce True Immortals! Before the Spirit Luxuriant World ascended to an Essence World, the Tongyou Institution would already be able to possess 4 True Immortals!

Chapter 1127: Ruined World

As they continued on their journey, the Spirit Luxuriant World had been left a long way behind.

Shang Xia had been flying for so long that he couldn't estimate the distance between himself and the Spirit Luxuriant World. He could only recall that he traveled through 8 spatial tunnels while following Kou Chongxue.

"Speaking of which... How did you find this place again?" Shang Xia asked when they finally took a break after passing through their ninth spatial tunnel.

Even with Kou Chongxue and Shang Xia's deep reserves, traveling such long distances through the vast sea of stars wasn't something they could do endlessly. They would take a break after every 3 spatial tunnels they created and passed through.

It wasn't that they were completely exhausted after creating 3 spatial tunnels. It was just that danger was everywhere in the vast sea of stars. They had to keep their guards up and maintain their vigilance. As such, they needed to maintain some form of combat capabilities along their journey.

At that moment, they had arrived on a giant meteorite that had an odd shape and they placed a Five Element Spirit Gathering Formation Disk around themselves as they took their break.

That was a special formation artifact Chu Jia specially made for Shang Xia. Even someone like him who didn't know how to lay down formation would be able to utilize a Five Element Spirit Gathering Formation once he activated the artifact with essence crystals. It was extremely convenient.

As Kou Chongxue felt himself recovering rapidly, he couldn't help but praise even though it wasn't his first time experiencing it. "Little Chu's achievements in the dao of formations are getting more and more exquisite. However, she actually gave you the formation disk! Even as your patriarch, I'll have to leech off you in order to recover my inner qi... Where has my prestige gone?"

Kou Chongxue's original tone of praise transformed into a grumble when he got to the very end.

Shang Xia couldn't help but roll his eyes. "Come on... Damn old man, why don't you mention how you're using my essence crystals every time we activate the formation for you to recover?"

Kou Chongxue sneered decisively as though it was only fair for him to be doing it. "You're just doing your part! This old man here is the patriarch for crying out loud! Aren't you supposed to be doing all these things for me? Moreover, what about that Spatial Pouch you're using? If I remember correctly, the Spatial Pouches made from Swallow Fur in the institution should only possess ten square feet of space... From the look of it, the space contained in your pouch should have far surpassed that, right?"

Shang Xia helplessly retrieved his Spatial Pouch that looked similar to the previous one he had been using and muttered, "This Spatial Pouch was created with the skin of the rank six Star Beast. Also... There was only 1 piece and I gave it to them to play around. Anyway, this is one of the only treasures our Weapons Hall can show to the world. If you really want it, feel free to take it. However, you're going to provide the essence crystals required to activate the spirit gathering formation from now on."

"No, no, no. Absolutely not." Kou Chongxue snorted derisively in response. "As the mighty patriarch of the Tongyou Institution, I only use the best treasures. Keep this test product for yourself!"

With the rapid advancement of the Spirit Luxuriant World in recent years, the amount of resources they harvested grew. At the very least, Shang Xia and Kou Chongxue were no longer strapped for essence crystals.

After they fully restored their energy, they didn't actually make more spatial tunnels. Instead, Kou Chongxue concealed his aura and Shang Xia quickly followed suit. They hid their presence and Kou Chongxue led the way into a chaotic stream of meteorites.

"Seriously... How did you discover this place in the past?" Shang Xia asked.

After dodging a region of space that collapsed without warning, Shang Xia felt a trace of lingering fear in his heart. He looked at Kou Chongxue who was skillfully dodging the incoming chunks of rocks while skirting past dangerous plots of space and couldn't help but grumble.

"Shut up! We're about to arrive!" Kou Chongxue was locked in and he looked a lot more serious than before. Influenced by him, Shang Xia also became solemn.

After passing a giant rock that was a third the size of an Earth Star, the space in front of them cleared up.

On the other side that was almost the limit of where Shang Xia and Kou Chongxue could see, an area of disorderly space could be seen. It seemed to contain a scattered mass of land that strangely made up a spherical shape.

They could also see that the strange region was detached from the meteorite belt they passed through earlier.

Shang Xia heard the soft sigh of relief that left Kou Chongxue's lips and he couldn't help but laugh, "Are you worried the Ruined World has already been used by them?"

Glaring at Shang Xia from the corner of his eye and growled, "If not for you dragging your feet, I would have been able to make better preparations here. We might even have been able to complete them all before they got here!"

Kou Chongxue might sound like he was blaming Shang Xia, but they knew that what he did was also to prepare for whatever might happen. Also, he brought it up because when they arrived, they could see large Star Ships passing through the area from time to time.

Shang Xia chuckled in response, "Haste makes waste... Also, I was making preparations for us in case anything went wrong! How can you of all people not know this?"

Kou Chongxue snorted softly twice. "Since they already started surveillance on this area, that would mean that the mysterious expert can enter the fourth tier any time... What do you think we should do?"

In the past, Kou Chongxue had already alerted the other side to his presence. They would definitely increase their forces in charge of security in the region. Kou Chongxue was afraid that they would be discovered before they could get close.

Then again, the other side hadn't given up on the Ruined World even though they had been alerted to Kou Chongxue's presence. That would mean that the mysterious cultivator is too lazy to look for somewhere else due to his advanced cultivation level, or that he was in a rush to break through.

There was also a possibility that finding another Ruined World would prove to be difficult. Naturally, it was likely both reasons were true.

After a short moment of contemplation, Shang Xia knew that even though they had hidden trump cards, their opponents would also possess the same. As for hiding from experts of the same level... He wasn't too confident since the other side seemed prepared for it.

"If nothing else works, just break in with brute force. You were alone back then, and you were a second tier True Immortal. Now, both of us are here, and we're third tier True Immortals, we can both be of use!" Shang Xia threw out an idea that didn't seem too much like a plan.

"Are you planning to shift their focus?" Kou Chongxue raised an eyebrow in confusion.

Scratching his head, Shang Xia mumbled, "Well... That works too?"

Since they decided on their course of action, they had to move separately. As for who would become bait... That would depend on who was discovered first.

After splitting off, Shang Xia decided to act before Kou Chongxue.

It wasn't that he was ruining their plan on purpose, but with their cultivation levels being at the level of External Unity, Shang Xia's combat strength had already surpassed Kou Chongxue.

Even though the depths of one's foundations aren't fully related to one's strength, it was a very important factor.

As such, Shang Xia decided that even if he was the one discovered, he would be more likely to be able to escape unscathed than Kou Chongxue.

Moreover, he had the Man and Heaven Synergy Chapter that allowed him to conceal himself. A rank five Abyssal Emptiness Talisman could also allow him to travel through space without causing too much disturbance. As long as he wished, he would be able to quickly leave the region.

Passing 10,000 miles quickly, a Star Ship passed in the distance but because of the huge distance between them, they failed to discover Shang Xia's presence.

Very quickly, he traveled 20,000 more miles. The Ruined World that looked like a blip in the distance started to grow larger. It seemed to become 10 times bigger than before and Shang Xia could even see the land masses drifting about chaotically around each other. At the same time, he managed to close a third of the distance between himself and the Ruined World.

...

Soon, another 30,000 miles passed and Shang Xia traveled two-thirds of the distance to the Ruined World. He could start to see the shape of the land masses floating about.

That was also how he discovered that the shape of the Ruined World was a little different from what Kou Chongxue described in the past.

Even though everything looked like it was drifting about chaotically, the Ruined World managed to maintain its shape with everything being in a very casual state of suspension. They would gather

together slightly because of the presence of some external force, but it would push back once the external force disappeared.

More importantly, compared to what Kou Chongxue said before, the Ruined World was a lot smaller than he described!

Shang Xia was still racing towards the Ruined World, and he couldn't help but glance in the direction Kou Chongxue should be in. He didn't know if the patriarch had already discovered the strangeness with the Ruined World.

The first thing Shang Xia could think of was that the mysterious expert had already started the process of breaking through, and they might have even succeeded!

If that was truly the case, Kou Chongxue was a step too late!

Also... If the other party already broke through to become a fourth tier True Immortal, they might be in danger.

It wasn't that Kou Chongxue and Shang Xia wouldn't be able to fight a fourth tier True Immortal who just broke through, but the moment they fought, their identities would be revealed and they would bring unnecessary trouble to the Tongyou Institution.

Whatever it was, it was too late to turn back. The arrow was nocked and the bow was drawn. Shang Xia could only brace himself and go all in.

The distance between the world and himself had shortened to less than 20,000 miles by then. The Star Ships had made 4 to 5 passes but failed to detect his presence.

Shang Xia was surprised, but he couldn't help but feel slightly more afraid. He didn't wish to fall into a trap.

As his thoughts spun, Shang Xia arrived in a 10,000 mile range of the Ruined World. The next moment, a giant Star Ship started drifting towards him and rapid chimes started to ring.

Soon after, Shang Xia could see that the experts on the Star Ship started to rush to take up their posts. Dozens of high-level experts rushed about and a formless barrier appeared to cover the entire ship.

At the same time, the sail on the Star Ship started to move even without the presence of wind. It started to accelerate and it didn't take long to reach its top speed. It quickly drew hundreds of miles away from Shang Xia as it attempted to flee to the Ruined World.

Shang Xia naturally understood that they had already discovered him, but because of how decisively they ran, he failed to react in time and didn't know if he should stop them or not.

When he was still hesitating, the Star Ship traveled more than a thousand miles away. The formless barrier around it seemed to fuse into its surroundings before turning into a spatial gate.

Finally, Shang Xia discovered that even though the Star Ship had a certain level of concealment, it was most definitely a Star Ship that belonged to the Star Origin Guards.

That was something he learned after hearing detailed descriptions from Feng Ziying.

The only thing he was surprised by was the fact that the Star Ship could create its own spatial tunnel.

By then, Shang Xia could guess that there was no True Immortal on board with how decisively the Star Ship turned to run. As such, Shang Xia couldn't allow them to leave easily.

Before Shang Xia could make a move, a powerful black line tore through the void. It sliced the fleeing Star Ship in half before it dissipated. It turned into a multitude of sword qi before stabbing countless holes into the halves of the Star Ship.

As for the dozens of experts stationed on it... None of them could survive the tyrannical sword qi!

With things progressing to that point, how could Shang Xia not understand that even though he had the idea of making the first move to become the bait so that Kou Chongxue would have an easier time looking for the answer, Kou Chongxue was thinking the same thing!

Scratching his head slowly, things turned a little awkward.

It was then that Kou Chongxue's voice rang in his mind. "Go take a look at the remains of the ship before rushing over to the central region of the Ruined World. I found something new!"

Shang Xia was jolted to his senses. Even though he didn't know why Kou Chongxue wanted him to rummage through the remains of the Star Ship. However, since there was a new discovery in the central region of the Ruined World, his interest was piqued.

Chapter 1128: Squeezing Out Every Last Drop!

Shang Xia thought that Kou Chongxue wanted him to look for the secret behind the ship's ability to create a spatial gate.

He was sure that there was no True Immortal on board, and even if Martial Dipper Realm experts wanted to travel through space, they would only be able to bring a few people with them. However, if they wanted to transport the massive Star Ship... There was no way it was happening.

What was more, when facing a True Immortal who could disrupt the void with a single thought, there was no way Martial Dipper Realm experts could run.

Looking at the Star Ship that was riddled with holes, Shang Xia didn't think that anything would be left behind.

Hmm... Well, other than corpses that is.

After all, the Tongyou Institution rose not too long ago, and Shang Xia had been a part of the time when they were still mere weaklings. He was used to looting corpses and it was a habit ingrained in him. Even though he was a third tier True Immortal and most random treasures couldn't impress him any longer, he still did it.

When he was done, he got rid of the corpses completely. Even though the Star Ship was disguised to prevent its true identity from being revealed, there was no doubt it was a Star Ship used by the Star Origin City. Neither Kou Chongxue nor Shang Xia wanted to take the risk of leaving clues for the enemy, especially when it was just a mere Star Ship.

After gathering the belongings of 30 or so cultivators on board, Shang Xia discovered that a secret cabin still remained intact despite being hit by Kou Chongxue's sword qi. He was immediately intrigued by it.

With the ability of his inner qi, the last thing he was afraid of was formations and restrictions of the like.

The secret cabin was quickly broken into and other than several ordinary treasures he didn't quite care about, he discovered a stack of sealed spiritual chests measuring several 2 feet wide that were piled on each other.

He ignored the artifacts that might have been used to lay down the secret formation to allow the mysterious cultivator to break through to the fourth tier of the Martial Void Realm, and he went straight for the stack of sealed spiritual chests. He pressed his palm on one of them and quickly broke the seal. Opening the lid, he saw rows upon rows of essence crystals emitting bright spiritual light before him.

“This batch of low-grade essence crystals are extremely uniform, and even though there are a lot of them, they are of pretty rough quality... What are they planning to do with them?” Shang Xia couldn't understand what was going on, but he tossed them all into his Spatial Pouch. He didn't leave anything behind when he left.

When Shang Xia found Kou Chongxue again, they were already in the central region of the Ruined World. Kou Chongxue was completely focused on a strange formation platform that boasted an extraordinary look.

There were several corpses around it, and there were also 2 unconscious unknown members.

“Did you find much?” Kou Chongxue asked without turning his head.

Shooting Kou Chongxue a curious stare, Shang Xia asked, “Do you know what's going on?”

Pointing his chin at the formation platform, he mumbled, “Take a look. It's coming...”

Actually, Kou Chongxue didn't need to remind Shang Xia. He could feel traces of heaven and earth qi gathering from all directions.

The heaven and earth qi was extremely faint, and it was so weak that Shang Xia's divine soul nearly failed to detect it. By the time he felt the world origin around him, hundreds, if not thousands of strands of the faint heaven and earth qi had already gathered.

Shang Xia wondered how there could be traces of world origin in the Ruined World...

When he was still surprised, he noticed a faint glow emerging from the platform as more and more world origin gathered.

Only then did he notice small notches arranged in a circular shape around the platform that had been filled with high-grade jade stones.

As world origin continued to gather, they seemed to be sapped away by a power in the platform before entering the prepared jade stones. They also slowly started to transform into essence crystals.

Even though Shang Xia once saw how essence crystals formed in the Tongyou Elysium, it was nothing compared to the massive scale at which it was happening before them! Compared to the powerful formation and the huge scale at which it was taking place, the Tongyou Elysium could only be described as poor losers! Their utilization of world origin was also horrifyingly low compared to what he was seeing.

The only fortunate thing about producing essence crystals in the Tongyou Elysium was that even if the efficiency was low, they wouldn't lose too much world origin as it would simply remain in the system.

Shang Xia also learned where the essence crystals he found in Star Ship came from.

Looking at the high-grade jade stones on the platform that were slowly stained with world origin, he could tell that they weren't at the level of becoming low-grade essence crystals yet. It would take a long time for them to complete the transformation. He couldn't help but ask, "Can we bring this back? If we manage to get our hands on a formation like this, this trip will be worth it anyway."

Even though Shang Xia didn't know too much about formations, he had been in contact with several rank six formations because of his interactions with Chu Jia. His judgment of formations was passable at the very least. He could tell that the formation he was looking at was at least a rank six formation.

Kou Chongxue glanced at him before muttering helplessly, "Aren't you curious about what happened here?"

Shang Xia was slightly taken aback by the question. "It was just an idea! Anyway, if we don't leave soon, the Star Origin Guards will probably send someone over."

Even though he didn't know what mixup there was and why Tong Yutang didn't appear, the Star Ships present still belonged to the Star Origin Guards. Even so, none of the experts on board were Star Origin Guards.

Whatever it was and no matter how confusing things were, Shang Xia was sure that after those people were killed, experts in Star Origin City definitely learned of their deaths and might be rushing over at the moment.

With their identities, it wasn't appropriate for Shang Xia and Kou Chongxue to clash with the Star Origin City at the moment.

It was just that the formation platform was just too...

Even if Shang Xia had a massive Spatial Pouch, he couldn't possibly contain the entire formation!

They didn't know enough about formations to deconstruct it either!

"This formation platform is definitely the key to that mysterious expert's entry to the fourth tier.." Kou Chongxue concluded suddenly.

Glancing at the 2 unconscious cultivators on the ground, Shang Xia knew that Kou Chongxue probably forced the truth out of them earlier. However, he couldn't hold himself back and asked, "Do you mean to say that the mysterious expert has already succeeded?"

Kou Chongxue's expression was getting gloomier as they spoke, but he nodded in affirmation and explained, "Since the mysterious expert is nowhere to be seen, while the formation is active with the protection of a few Star Ships nearby, they are probably trying to drain the last bit of value from this place..."

"What do we do now?" Shang Xia frowned.

Kou Chongxue sighed softly. “We don’t have any other options. We can only break this down with force and bring back whatever we can. You’re right. Experts from the Star Origin City might be arriving soon. We need to leave before they get here. After returning to the Spirit Luxuriant World, we can only see how much Little Chu can deduce from the pieces we bring back.”

After he spoke, he raised his Hidden Frost Sword and started slashing at the platform.

Shang Xia exclaimed suddenly, “Can these 2 be of help?”

After thinking for a moment, Kou Chongxue mumbled, “You can try. However, it’s like you said. We don’t have much time.”

Shang Xia raised his arm and gestured into the air, and he woke them up immediately.

“Enough. You’re both in the Martial Extermination Realm at the very least. Stop pretending to be dazed to waste my time.” Shang Xia exposed them instantly. “I will split you up after this and only 1 of you will be able to live. Depending on the amount of information you provide, I will allow the person who gives me the most useful information to live. Anyway, I’ll only give you the time it takes to burn half a stick of incense. The person who lives will be brought away with us and your safety will be guaranteed.”

After he spoke, he nodded to Kou Chongxue and they shrouded one each with their domain.

When the time it took to burn half a stick of incense had passed, Kou Chongxue’s sword qi accurately slashed at parts of the formation with the assistance of the Formation Grandmaster who revealed the most information.

With Shang Xia and Kou Chongxue making as much space as they could in their spatial artifacts, they were only able to take away the core portion of the formation.

As soon as they brought it away and the formation lost its effect, the Ruined World started to experience a strange transformation.

Kou Chongxue and Shang Xia knew that it wouldn’t be wise to linger and they brought the defector with them away.

Once they reached a certain distance away from the Ruined World, they turned around to observe the Ruined World only to see that even though the land masses still drifted about in the shape of a sphere, they were no longer restrained by the formless power. They started drifting further and further apart as several fragments became so weak that they started to crumble.

What crumbled along with the land masses was the remains of the Star Ship Kou Chongxue destroyed and the corpses on the platform.

“They should have sucked all the value out of this Ruined World, right?” Shang Xia mumbled while looking at the scene of destruction before him. Everything was slowly turning to dust, and they looked similar to the nebula he would occasionally run into in the vast sea of stars.

Not too long after Shang Xia and Kou Chongxue left, spatial gates opened around the remains of the Ruined World as several clearly marked Star Ships of the Star Origin City emerged. They quickly formed a battle formation as they got ready to fight as 2 Star Ships at the very front were covered in the horrifying aura of a Martial Void Realm True Immortal each!

Chapter 1129: Essence Refining Void Returning Formation

Everything in the Ruined World was completely destroyed, and they slowly crumbled into dust. Even the Star Ship that was riddled with holes from Kou Chongxue's sword qi was nowhere to be seen.

Under such circumstances, no one knew if the squads that arrived could find anything useful.

Shang Xia and Kou Chongxue also started to make their way back to the Spirit Luxuriant World by then. As they had to bring someone else along, they were no longer able to move as quickly as before.

Through the journey, they managed to gain a lot of information from the rank four Formation Grandmaster. He was called Gu Qing, and was a wandering Formation Master who managed to arrive at the Star Origin City. Since he defected and revealed the secrets to Kou Chongxue and Shang Xia in order to live, he might as well go all the way. He found no need to hide anything from them and said everything he knew.

According to him, after he wandered his way into Star Origin City, his status as a Formation Grandmaster was revealed and he was secretly recruited by a faction in the city.

He was deployed to the Ruined World next to assist a rank six Formation Grandmaster in laying down the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation. The formation covered the entire platform Shang Xia and Kou Chongxue destroyed back there.

To be more accurate, the platform was actually just the core of the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation.

After completing the formation, they stripped away the tools they used to build it. The only reason they left the formation there was to squeeze out every last bit of value from the Ruined World.

“Are the tools used to lay down the formation contained in the secret cabin in the Star Ship?” Shang Xia asked impatiently.

Gu Qing's reply caused Shang Xia to be slightly disappointed. He said, “The main purpose of the Star Ship was to collect the completed Essence Crystals and bring all of us back. It only contains a small portion of the tools and resources required to lay down the formation. The most valuable part of the formation had already been brought away by Mister Xigu a long time ago.”

“Is Mister Xigu the rank six Formation Grandmaster? Is he someone from Star Origin City?” Kou Chongxue asked.

Gu Qing shook his head in response, “Mister Xigu's art of formation is truly amazing and it's something we can only dream of achieving. However, he is extremely mysterious and has never shown his face. I have been working under him the entire time, but I don't know who he is exactly. I don't even know if he's someone from Star Origin City...”

Kou Chongxue exchanged a glance with Shang Xia, and Shang Xia eventually continued, “What is the true use of the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation?”

Naturally, he avoided mentioning their suspicions as he continued to question.

“As my knowledge in formations is limited and I have not seen the full effects of it, I cannot give a complete description. However, I can tell that the formation is extremely sinister. It’s used to extract every last drop of essence from the Ruined World and the final trace of World’s Will before infusing it into a high-level cultivator to assist in a breakthrough.” Gu Qing explained.

Shang Xia’s senses jolted instantly and he followed up, “Was the activation of the formation a success? I mean... Did you notice a high-level expert breaking through?”

Nodding, Gu Qing continued, “It was almost half a year ago... After the formation was activated and reached its peak state, a majestic aura descended. Because of my inferior cultivation, I was completely suppressed by it. Soon after, I heard a loud roar and someone breaking out into maniacal laughter. Soon after, I fell unconscious. By the time I woke up the mysterious expert had left and we started to dismantle the formation. Only the formation platform was left and we started to gather low-grade essence crystals. Well... You guys came next.”

“As for the mighty figure who let out the loud roar, I believe he succeeded. Otherwise, he wouldn’t have been so happy.”

Kou Chongxue and Shang Xia nodded slowly. Gu Qing’s explanation made it clear. He spoke in a very concise manner and as a Formation Grandmaster, his judgment wouldn’t be too bad.

That also meant that the mysterious expert Kou Chongxue discovered back then they suspected that the Starry Pavilion Master would have broken through!

That also proved that the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation could assist an expert in successfully entering the fourth tier of the Martial Void Realm!

Since they got the intelligence they wanted, Kou Chongxue turned his attention back to Gu Qing.

Regardless if the mysterious expert was Tong Yutang or not, to be able to deploy the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation meant that they definitely had strong backing.

At the very least, be it the Tongyou Institution or the Spirit Luxuriant World, none of them would be willing to become enemies of that mysterious expert.

Also... Gu Qing, who was the last survivor, was the only person left who could expose Kou Chongxue and Shang Xia as the people who messed with the plans of that mysterious expert!

When Kou Chongxue and Shang Xia fell silent, Gu Qing seemed to have thought of something and he instantly fell to his knees. “I... I can still be of use to you! I am willing to hide my identity and fade away silently without being discovered by anyone! Please... Seniors, please spare my life!”

Shang Xia glanced at Kou Chongxue and saw that the patriarch was chuckling.

Eventually, Shang Xia asked, “You claim that you were a wanderer who found the Star Origin City, but where did you come from? How did you manage to find your way there? If we know nothing about your true origins... How should we trust you?”

Gu Qing saw a ray of hope after hearing Shang Xia's question and he quickly replied, "I came from a world called the Azure Ring World. We were attacked by Space Bandits and I was captured by them. Because I knew a thing or two about formations, I managed to keep my life. Soon after, the group of Star Bandits that call themselves the World Connecting Gang was plotted against by several worlds and was broken up. They started to flee however they could and the Star Ship I was in managed to enter a spatial tunnel created by a high-level Star Beast in order to shake off our pursuers. However, we were attacked by a Star Beast out of nowhere and we retaliated desperately. We managed to run away from it eventually, but we were lost in the vast sea of stars. Because the Star Ship suffered heavy damage and all of us were exhausted and out of supplies, some people decided to break off from the group. Internal conflict broke out. Helpless, a few of us who reached the Martial Extermination Realm joined forces to venture out into the sea of stars to look for a way to survive. Along the way, some people died and some people chose to leave. When all of us were able to give up, we ran into a patrolling Star Ship from the Star Origin Guards. That was how we were brought back."

Even though Gu Qing's origins were slightly questionable and it was the first time Kou Chongxue and Shang Xia were hearing anything of it, Shang Xia seemed to zoom in into another problem.

"Do you know which camp the Star Ship that saved you back then belonged to?"
Shang Xia asked.

After thinking for some time, Gu Qing muttered, "If I recall correctly, there were members of the third squad of the Seventh Camp on board. The captain was called Zhou Sidao, and he's an expert in the Martial Dipper Realm."

"Zhou Sidao?!" Kou Chongxue and Shang Xia gasped in unison. The name was just too similar to the deputy pavilion master of the Starry Pavilion!

"Did they ask about your origins? After you were sent to the city, did you interact with the Star Origin Guards?" Shang Xia pressed.

"In order to stay alive, we wouldn't dare to reveal our identities as Space Bandits! We said that we were being hunted down by our enemies and ran into a spatial tunnel created by a Space Beast before running away from it after being discovered." Gu Qing answered.

Shang Xia raised an eyebrow and asked, "Did you tell them that you were a Formation Grandmaster?"

"Of course I did." Gu Qing mumbled, "After all, I was only able to stay alive in the hands of the Space Bandits because of my knowledge in formations. I had to do everything to keep my life and hoped that the people who saved me would also value my skills."

He seemed a little embarrassed, but he still continued, "I didn't think that after they heard I was a rank four Formation Grandmaster, they would merely chuckle and not pay me too much mind. Only after I was brought to Star Origin City did I realize how backward my thinking was. A rank four Formation Grandmaster is nothing in the city!"

He sighed regretfully after thinking about what happened back then.

He didn't stay in the city for long as he was recruited by the mysterious power and brought to the Ruined World after he arrived. However, his short stint in the city allowed him to gain a better understanding. He understood how powerful the Star Origin City was. It was surrounded by Azure and Spirit Worlds, and there were no Space Bandits anywhere! Even Star Beast Nests were cleared out the moment they were found. Compared to his world back then, the difference was huge!

“Seniors... Is there something wrong with Captain Zhou Sidao and his squad?” Gu Qing finally realized that it wasn't time to reminisce about the past as his life was in their hands. He started to think about their reaction and guessed something from Shang Xia's reaction.

Shang Xia chuckled softly in response, “It's nothing much. There are many things you left out and after getting back, you better start describing everything about your Azure Ring World and your journeys. In the future, you are definitely going to hide your identity and you will focus solely on this Essence Refining Void Returning Formation.”

“Yes, yes, yes... I will make it as detailed as possible and I won't leave anything out!” Gu Qing yelled in haste. Eventually, he realized that what they said also meant that they were letting him live, and he started to thank them profusely.

Ten or so days passed and Shang Xia and Kou Chongxue returned with a rank four Formation Grandmaster whose cultivation wasn't that impressive.

However, his experience was anything but shallow.

What Shang Xia and Kou Chongxue didn't know was the undercurrents stirring in Star Origin City because of their actions!

Chapter 1130: The Strange Situation in Star Origin City

When they returned, they sneaked Gu Qing into the Tongyou Elysium. They also quickly looked for their clones.

“We received news from Star Origin City 2 days ago.” Kou Chongxue's clone reported the moment he arrived. After handing a secret transmission over, he left with Shang Xia's clone.

The secret transmission needed to be opened by a special method in order for its contents to be read. Otherwise, even if one's cultivation was terrifyingly strong, they wouldn't be able to see what was written.

“20 days ago, one of the Star Ships sent out by the Star Origin Guards was destroyed. Even though there were no traces left behind, they can be sure that tens of experts had been killed.” Kou Chongxue described while passing the transmission to Shang Xia.

He continued, “That's what's strange... The Star Ship they said was destroyed belonged to the Seventh Camp and it was sent out on patrols regularly. There shouldn't be anything strange about it.

However, all 49 members of the Seventh Camp should have been in Star Origin City when that happened. Here comes the problem... How can the Star Ship appear so far away from the city while carrying experts of mysterious origins? Who are those people? The Star Ships of the Star Origin Guards can't be used by any random person out there. Without a Star Origin Guard to release the seal, no one would be able to use it. Also... How would a Star Ship belonging to the Star Origin Guards leave the city unnoticed? What is the true reason they were sent out and does the Seventh Camp know anything about it?"

Shang Xia finished the contents and slowly lowered it while mumbling, "Looks like we managed to knock our way into some trouble without us knowing..."

Nodding Kou Chongxue continued, "Feng Ziyang pointed the arrowhead at the Seventh Camp in his report and the other Camp Commanders seem to be waiting for Xing Xingtian to give them an explanation. From the looks of it, they wish to settle the problem internally..."

Shang Xia shook his head and sighed, "It's going to be difficult. If this is an ordinary matter, nothing will happen. Even if it's related to some smuggling, or illegal immigration practices, it could be suppressed. Even if someone tried to use the Star Ship for themselves, things wouldn't turn out so complicated. The only problem is that the Star Origin Guards managed to detect the presence of mysterious experts on board. That's where the problem lies. The death of several high-level experts didn't cause too many waves in the city either. It's even said after investigation, they didn't discover traces of many missing experts in the city. That's how interesting things are!"

"A power that is completely out of the Star Origin Guards' control. They are even able to use Star Ships that belong to the Star Origin Guards to travel out into the sea of stars... Hehe... Anyone with a little sense of awareness will be able to detect how great the implications are!" Kou Chongxue chuckled.

Shang Xia laughed along with him. "Looks like we managed to do the Star Origin Guards a great favor and open up something they missed. We're in for a treat now."

"No, no, no." Kou Chongxue waved his hands suddenly and stopped Shang Xia. "Do you remember the previous reports Feng Ziyang sent? Zhuge Xiang is still in seclusion and rumors have it that he's trying to enter the level of Returning to the Origin! He can't pay attention to matters like this!"

Shang Xia frowned in response. "Do you mean to say that the Star Origin Guards are a bunch of wolves without a leader right now? Will this end without a proper conclusion? Or are you saying that this matter will distract Zhuge Xiang and force him to emerge from seclusion?"

"If our guess is right and Tong Yutang is the person behind this, he will definitely be plotting something. From how he has been avoiding the Star Origin Guards the whole time, his goals might not be aligned with theirs at all. Now that such a huge problem has surfaced, how do you think he will deal with it?"

Even without Kou Chongxue saying more, Shang Xia seemed to have understood. "He's going to have to risk it all and take action before Zhuge Xiang emerges from seclusion..."

Kou Chongxue nodded slowly. “Don’t forget... The mysterious expert who used the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation in the Ruined World most likely succeeded!”

“What about us...” Shang Xia hesitated slightly. He couldn’t visualize all the implications immediately and how the Tongyou Institution would benefit from the matter.

“Let Little Chu analyze the formation and try to restore whatever we brought back. If we are able to produce essence crystals with it, we can slowly start to reverse engineer the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation.” Kou Chongxue explained.

Actually, he hadn’t come up with a complete plan either. However, they knew that there was a Ruined World not too far away from their Star Beast Nest and the Spirit Faith World.

Shang Xia knew that even though everything seemed to be on fire, that didn’t mean that they had to react immediately. Since there would be changes in the Star Origin City, that would mean that the effects would eventually cascade down to the worlds connected to them. If they were even a little careless, they would be attacked on all sides! They had to consider every angle before trying anything.

Fortunately, with the situation in Star Origin City going out of control and the other worlds being thrown into a state of panic, the Spirit Luxuriant World... No. The Tongyou Institution would be able to start coming up with a plan of action before shit went down.

Shang Xia eventually broke out laughing after thinking everything through. “I’m afraid Grandmaster Chu is placing all her attention on the rank six grand formation around the institution... If we ask her to shift her focus to the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation, she’s going to go crazy!”

Kou Chongxue also snickered, “Even if she’s mad, what does that have to do with me? Both of you can deal with your problems... Don’t bring me into this.”

After he spoke, he ran away without so much as a goodbye.

“What does this have to do with us?” Shang Xia mumbled to himself. Helpless, he could only look for Chu Jia alone. He couldn’t let too many people know about the matter either. Gu Qing’s presence also had to remain hidden.

With Kou Chongxue back to take charge of the institution, they seemed to be making some sort of preparation without much knowledge about what they were preparing for. At the same time, Kou Chongxue and Shang Xia paid attention to what was happening in Star Origin City.

With many of them kept in the dark, members of the Tongyou Institution were deployed into Star Origin City. Information started to flow back to the Spirit Luxuriant World and with Feng Ziying, their super spy, as an insider in the Star Origin Guards, the Tongyou Institution received many secret transmissions that were personally analyzed by the deputy patriarchs.

As for Shang Xia... he had been restoring the platform with Chu Jia within the Tongyou Elysium when everything was going down.

Surprisingly, Chu Jia didn't rage when he brought the task over. When she learned that they brought back a portion of a rank six formation on their journey and a rank four Talisman Master who was responsible for laying down a part of it, she became unnaturally excited. She immediately requested Shang Xia to study the formation with them.

"I am barely able to lay down a rank six formation, but that is because I had the help of the Five Element Ring. If I complete the formation with the Formation Artifact, it will be difficult for me to take it away without affecting the formation..." Chu Jia explained the situation with the institution's rank six grand formation she was responsible for.

Naturally, laying down a formation on such a grand scale wasn't something that could be done in a short period of time. Not to mention the fact that Chu Jia wasn't considered a true rank six Formation Grandmaster due to her reliance on the Formation Artifact and that there were no high-level Formation Grandmasters to assist her in the institution...

If they wanted to understand why Chu Jia was stretched so thin, the weak foundations of the Tongyou Institution would eventually surface as the number 1 reason again.

Actually, the rank six formations that covered the other Elysiums weren't things that appeared out of nowhere either. All of them were only created after hundreds of years of hard work...

"Hmm..." Shang Xia mumbled softly. There was something he wasn't quite sure of. "Are you planning to use the Five Element Ring as the foundation of our grand formation?"

"I have no choice. It's the quickest way I can think of. However, along with my advancement in cultivation, my abilities will also rise and I will eventually be able to improve it such that the Five Element Ring no longer has to serve as the foundation." Chu Jia explained.

Shang Xia caught her drift and he muttered, "Is that why you are so interested in restoring this formation? If you manage to restore it, you will be able to take another step in the dao of formations and be able to free the Five Element Ring from being the foundations of our grand formation..."

"It's just a possibility. What if I fail to gain enlightenment from restoring the platform?" Chu Jia asked with a strange smile on her face.

"How is that possible?" Shang Xia grunted with a weird expression. "You're the Formation Hall Master of our Tongyou Institution! You have the highest level of mastery and the greatest talent... How can you fail to obtain anything after restoring the formation platform?"

He seemed to recall something and quickly added, "Oh right, I also brought back a small portion of the tools and resources required to lay down the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation. I looked at them and felt like they were of pretty good quality. Can you use them?"

Chu Jia immediately revealed an expression of joy. However, she couldn't help but fall deep into thought for a moment. "We'll use them to restore the platform first. I'll keep the rest. After all, restoring the platform is of the highest priority. It will be extremely beneficial for me too."

Shang Xia grunted twice in response. "Yeah, you're the boss here. Also, Gu Qing, the rank four Formation Grandmaster we brought back took part in laying down a portion of the formation. He might only be at the fourth rank, but he definitely has some knowledge about it. It's a shame Patriarch Kou and I don't know too much about formations and failed to gain anything from his explanations. You can only rely on yourself to see how much you learn..."

Chu Jia nearly jumped in joy. "In that case, our institution would have our third rank four Formation Grandmaster, right?!"

Shang Xia didn't know whether to laugh or cry after seeing how she was focused on something completely unrelated.