

The Heavens 121

Chapter 121: Coral Forest

The screen of light seemed to break the tunnel in two.

With amazement filling his heart, he double-checked to make sure that the area was safe before approaching the light screen.

Gasping softly to himself, he reached out his hand to flick the light screen softly.

A tiny ray of energy emerged from the tip of his finger and struck the light screen, causing soft ripples across its surface. The ripples disappeared in an instant.

“This looks more like a protection screen instead of some sort of restriction! There’s no way the Coral Forest contains its own protection formation, right? Even though they say that the Coral Forest is a giant maze, there are no records of it containing a protection screen to restrict entry...”

When Shang Xia tried to think of the implications, his Delicate Jade River Sword slashed towards the screen. A ray of sword light emerged.

The sword light created a deep gash in the barrier, but it recovered in the blink of an eye.

As his attack this time was much stronger, the ripples across the screen expanded much more than before. Rays of light twisted around each other to quickly restore the barrier.

Shang Xia knew that it was practically impossible for him to break the protection screen through brute force. At the very least, not with his current cultivation realm.

His thoughts turned to the water that disappeared from the bottom of the mine previously. With its sudden disappearance, it could only mean one thing. It was possible that the protection screen would open after some time. That was how the water either drained or entered the mine. When that happened, he would be able to cross the screen easily!

Well, that was what he thought. He didn’t know how long it would take for the barrier to disappear. The only thing he knew for sure was that the rank three undead corpse came from inside the barrier.

Right before he returned, a flash of inspiration struck. He retrieved the Vermillion Plaque he obtained from the corpse and started to play around it with it in his hand. After hesitating for some time, he sliced the barrier open with the plaque.

The protection screen that he failed to open with his Delicate Jade River Sword was ripped open easily.

His expression changed slightly, but before he could congratulate himself on his genius idea, water burst forth from the gap in the protection screen.

Fortunately for him, he had been on guard the whole time. He twisted his body to the side to avoid the stream of water that was gushing out of the barrier and he retrieved the Vermillion Plaque.

It didn’t take long for the protection screen to repair itself, stopping the flow of water completely.

“Looks like there’s a reservoir of water located behind the protection screen... From the looks of it, it isn’t small either!” Shang Xia thought about it before tearing a larger hole in the barrier with the Vermillion Plaque.

As the water poured out of the protection screen, Shang Xia forced his way through. The vortex created by the water spilling out of the protection screen threatened to pull him back towards the tunnel, but he stabbed his sword into the wall, preventing him from being pulled back.

As the protection screen slowly restored itself, the area of the tunnel outside the protection screen was flooded completely. Since the tunnel consisted of a gentle incline towards the mine, a giant reservoir of water formed on the other side of the barrier without any signs of flowing away.

Shang Xia held his breath as he waited for the current to die down while the barrier restored itself.

When everything finally settled, Shang Xia started to look around him. The water was extremely clear, and there wasn’t much sediment at the bottom.

Looking around again, Shang Xia noticed that he was currently under a massive rock in the underground reservoir. From the size of the rock, it seemed as though the tip had already broken through the surface of the giant reservoir he was in.

Shang Xia suddenly thought about the origin of the Coral Forest’s name.

Retrieving his Jade River Sword, he followed the side of the rock as he slowly ascended. It didn’t take long for him to feel something different. It seemed as though there was a giant spiral flight of stairs leading upwards, and despite its rough appearance and uneven steps, it was clear someone planned to connect the stairs to the tunnel.

Due to his cultivation level, he was able to hold his breath for a long time. Instead of rising all the way to the top as quickly as possible, he decided to follow the steps to see where they led.

He moved quickly along the steps of the sunken staircase, and he rose tens of feet in a few seconds. Raising his head to look at the faint glow that came from the surface, it seemed as though he had quite a distance to go.

After rising several more feet, Shang Xia noticed that the stairs were leading to a hole in the structure beside. Glancing at the light coming from the surface, Shang Xia made a bold decision. He chose to enter the dark hole that the stairs led to, and after swimming for close to twenty feet, he finally emerged.

Shang Xia looked cautiously around him only to discover that he had entered a stone chamber. There were fluorescent stones inlaid in the walls, providing a trace of light in the otherwise pitch-black chamber.

Stepping out of the small pool in the middle of the chamber, Shang Xia circulated his inner qi immediately. The heat produced by his inner qi dried him off completely. In the time it took for him to dry off, Shang Xia had already looked around the room.

The room he was in didn’t seem like a high-level cultivator’s chamber. It didn’t contain much either. There were only several pieces of digging equipment laid at the corner, and most of them were broken.

Secret tunnel!

That was exactly it! The people who used the digging equipment there were definitely trying to create a secret tunnel!

However, that created even more doubts about the appearance of the undead corpse. There was no way it had been hiding in the stone chamber all along.

There were endless possibilities. Did the undead corpse fall into the giant body of water and cross the protection screen unknowingly with the Vermillion Plaque in its possession? That was one possibility...

After flipping through all the tools laid in the corner of the stone chamber, Shang Xia got to his feet in disappointment and tried looking for an exit to the stone chamber.

As the air in the chamber wasn't exactly damp, Shang Xia knew that there had to be another way to leave the chamber.

Scouring the walls of the chamber, Shang Xia's gaze eventually landed on a sculpture of a beast that could be seen on one of the walls.

Dusting off the sculpture, its sparkling eyes were revealed and they resemble brilliant jewels.

As soon as he pressed his hands on the sculpture, a sharp cry came from behind the wall.

"Who's there?!"

Shang Xia froze instantly. The sound of several weapons soaring through the air could be heard, followed by the clash of metal against metal.

"Not good... It's the members of the Rose Party! Hurry up and leave!"

A miserable cry echoed through the chamber, and it was clear that the person who yelled had met his fate.

"Martial Brother Lao!" Another scream tore through the air.

"Rumble..." As the battle continued, the sounds of fighting entered the stone chamber Shang Xia was in.

"Run!"

"Hehehe, None of you will escape today!" The person who spoke seemed a lot stronger than the others.

Another cry rang through the air. It was obvious someone else had died.

"Don't kill them all! Leave a few of them for interrogation. We need to know where the Zhu Family's mansion is!" Yet another different voice sounded. Even through the stone wall, the voice rang clear in his mind. Shang Xia's heart sank and he quickly lowered his hand.

"There's three of them... Two of them died. Perfect. There's one left!"

A pained shriek could be heard as the sound of a body hitting the floor filled the stone cavern.

“Alright. Ask him whatever we need. I’ll go take a look somewhere else. Catch up after cleaning everything up. I received news that the beast tide outside the Coral Forest had already subsided. The experts of the Tongyou Peak might show up any minute now.” His voice grew softer and softer and Shang Xia could tell that he had left the area.

“Brother Yu Wen told us to leave one of them alive, but he doesn’t seem to care what we do to him now...”

“The disciples of the Tongyou Peak are really weird. Why did they send so many Martial Realm disciples into the Coral Forest?”

“Hehe, they’re just chess pieces that have been abandoned. They’re probably here to disrupt our senses. Otherwise, why would Brother Yu Wen leave without saying anything?”

“Since this brat doesn’t know anything, why should we keep him alive?!”

A sinister laughter rang through the skies. “What if he actually knows something? Hehehe, brat, you definitely heard what I said. You’ve been abandoned by Liu Jitang. Do you really wish to help your precious Tongyou Institution that ditched you without a second thought? Tell me everything you know. Your granddaddy Ouyang here will give you a quick death.”

“I... Don’t know anything!” As soon as the words left his lips, another miserable cry rang through the air.

“Huh? This brat is pretty resilient. Brother Dongfang, step back a little. My ice and poison dao reached the large completion stage and I’ll give him a taste of my Soul Cruising Needle!”

Shang Xia could no longer sit still. Pressing the eyes of the beast sculpture on the wall, he revealed the passage to the room behind.

The cultivator whose back was facing Shang Xia barely turned his head when he was swallowed by an endless amount of sword light.

Chapter 122: Second Stone Chamber

“Who?!” The other cultivator yelled. It was obvious they didn’t expect anything to appear from behind them.

As Shang Xia didn’t know how strong they were, he went all out immediately.

One had to know that their leader had barely left earlier. If Shang Xia used his Chaos Essence Lightning Palm, the disturbance would be too large! He might alarm the one who left. In order to ensure the kill as silently as possible, Shang Xia chose to use his Cloud Drizzle Sword Art.

“Be careful!” The cultivator at the side wanted to rush over to help, but it was too late. No matter how hard his companion tried to struggle, he was swallowed by the torrent of sword lights. His blood painted the air a dull red.

The figure that wanted to help realized his mistake, and he jerked his body back as soon as possible. He ran towards the disciple of the Tongyou Institution who was lying on the ground.

“Too late.” Shang Xia’s voice rang in Ouyang Fengxuan’s ear.

The tip of his sword appeared in front of Ouyang Fengxuan all of a sudden and it started to tremble violently. There was no way for him to guess where Shang Xia’s sword would strike.

Circulating his inner qi desperately, a wall of ice started to form around his body. That was the first time he managed to achieve such great control over his inner qi to create a barrier so quickly.

A smirk appeared on his face. Not even experts who were at the Martial Extremity Realm who had reached the grand completion stage in their cultivation of qi would be able to kill him through the barrier!

As long as he could stall the opponent for a single second... “Yu Wen...”

As he yelled, a needle appeared between his fingers as he got ready to counterattack.

It was too bad Shang Xia’s sword pierced through his wall of ice directly. It stabbed straight towards the space between his eyebrows.

Ouyang Fengxuan panicked and the words became stuck in his throat. He couldn’t believe that his defenses were broken apart so easily!

The other party was clearly only at the Martial Extremity Realm. Moreover, his cultivation was a little lacking compared to his own!

How?!

Even though he knew that there was no avoiding death, the needle in his hand shot towards his target.

Shang Xia’s Delicate Jade River Sword tapped lightning in the air as a trace of softness and strength qi pierced into Ouyang Fengxuan’s mind.

With his eyes widening in shock, the spot between his glabella started to enlarge, slowly swallowing his head.

The needle he released flew through the hole pierced in his wall of ice, towards the set of eyes that appeared on the other side.

It was too bad Shang Xia’s sword curved at the very last moment, blocking off the approaching needle.

“Clang!” As the needle struck his sword, it was deflected away.

Ouyang Fengxuan’s eyes slowly lost their color as he fell to the ground.

Before he completely lost consciousness, he managed to force himself to utter the words, “Weird...”

Without his support, the wall of ice started to crumble and it splashed all over the floor.

Shang Xia retrieved his blade and ran over to the disciple who was struggling to get up.

“Shang... Xia?!” Shang Xia quickly assisted the struggling disciple and he asked, “Do you recognize me?”

“I didn’t think that you also entered...” From the disciple’s robes, Shang Xia could tell that he was an inner disciple of the institution.

“Brother, you can rest assured that the experts of the institution are coming to back us up. Hold on! You can’t give up now!” Shang Xia tried to reassure the disciple while examining his injuries. From the looks of it, the disciple suffered serious injuries. There was nearly no chance of survival.

A flash of light crossed the disciple’s eyes, but it dimmed as quickly as it came. “Don’t worry... I know that I won’t be able to make it out of here... Leave quickly! This place isn’t safe!”

Shang Xia continued, “Where are the rest? Where’s Deputy Patriarch Liu?”

As soon as the name of the deputy patriarch left his lips, a flash of hatred appeared on the disciple’s face. “He... He gave up on us! All disciples in the Martial Realm have been sent out as cannon fodder to waste their time!”

Shang Xia’s expression sank and he continued to ask, “Where are they now?”

The disciple’s eyes dimmed even more and he muttered softly, “Deep in the willows... Zhu Family Manor... Enter... Vermillion... Plaque...”

“What is your name? Is there anything I can do for you?” Shang Xia hurried.

“Guan... Guan Shangyue... Kill... Help me take revenge...” As soon as the last word left his lips, his head tilted to the side powerlessly.

Shang Xia slowly placed Guan Shangyue’s body on the ground before declaring softly, “Fellow Brother Guan, rest assured. I’ll take revenge for you!”

Turning around, he examined his surroundings once again. Even though he took care of the two of them in a split second, the other experts of the Rose Party might rush over after hearing the commotion.

There was no way he could remain in the area!

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He quickly dragged the corpses of the two disciples of the Rose Party back into the stone chamber he came from and tossed them into the pool of water.

Next, he brought the corpse of Guan Shangyue over. He looted the bodies of the members of the Rose Party, but he kept the items on his fellow martial brother intact. He wasn’t going to rob the corpse of someone who came from the Tongyou Institution.

Finding the mechanism to close the entrance to the stone chamber on the other side where the battle took place, Shang Xia activated it immediately.

As the mechanisms consisted of several rocks, no one would glance at them a second time unless they knew that it activated the entrance to a secret chamber. Shang Xia decided to leave them as they were.

Next, he released a wave of energy that melted the ice shards on the ground. He cleaned up the battlefield as immaculately as he could as there was no way he could allow anyone else to discover his presence. When he was done, he left hastily.

Only then did he manage to calm himself down and observe the situation around him.

The first thing he discovered was the density of heaven and earth qi around him. It was even denser than on the Tongyou Peak!

Next was the bottomless reservoir beneath him. There were countless huge mountainous rock-like structures on the surface of the water, and countless stone formations under the surface.

Shang Xia stood on one of the massive stone structures, but he didn't know where it came from nor where it led to.

Luckily for him, his only objective now was to leave the area.

Spying another interesting rock formation beside him, Shang Xia's jerked to a stop. He discovered two pieces of rocks placed in a weird location, and he thought about how he activated the entrance to the hidden room earlier.

Carefully pressing down on the rock formation, it started to sink slowly. Shang Xia gasped in his heart.

Holy crap I'm actually right!

Shang Xia leaped to the side quickly as a hidden entrance appeared in front of him. A gust of moist and turbid wind hit him in the face. After ensuring that the room was safe, he quickly entered. A soft rumbling behind him signaled that the entrance had shut.

The chamber he entered had the same size and layout as the one before. The fluorescent stones on the wall allowed him to see everything clearly.

However, he noticed that there wasn't a pool of water in the middle of the room unlike the one previously. There were also no stairs to the hidden underground tunnel.

Disappointed, he could only look for other things. He soon noticed that there were many other things contained in the chamber.

On one of the wall faces, there were tiny little shelves in the wall that contained various items.

Walking over, Shang Xia opened one of the scrolls.

The scroll was obviously something special to be able to survive for such a long time. When he opened it, he discovered that the scroll was merely damp and the color had faded a little.

"Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram?" Shang Xia's eyes lit up slightly before dimming again. It was possible that he was standing in an area contained in the great formation, but it was too bad the formation wasn't working any longer. The Mountain

and Sea Fantasy Diagram was a powerful formation. However, without anyone to activate and maintain the formation, it stopped working a long time ago.

The Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram wasn't merely an introduction to the great Mountain and Sea formation! It was its core!

In the event that the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram was reactivated, Shang Xia would have complete control over it!

What a waste...

Even though he couldn't use it now, he still kept it in his sleeves after rolling it up carefully.

Before Shang Xia could reach for the second item, he heard voices coming from outside. Walking towards the hidden entrance, Shang Xia strained his ears to hear what they were saying.

"Brother Murong, did you find anything?" The voice was extremely familiar. It seemed as though it was the person who commanded the two he killed earlier.

"Nope. There's nothing here at all. Brother Changtian, are you sure Dongfang Mingrui and Ouyang Fengxuan ran into trouble?"

Yuwen Changtian sighed, "They might have run into some enemies... Didn't they say that the outer regions of the Coral Forest only had abandoned cultivators of the Tongyou Institution? Who would have thought that they would leave an expert behind?"

"Could it be an undead corpse? Brother Changtian, don't forget how we discovered this place..."

As the voice grew louder and louder, Shang Xia could tell that they were approaching his location.

Yuwen Changtian's voice rang through the air. "Are you referring to the rank three undead corpse that has the Vermillion Plaque on him? It's not possible."

"Why not?"

"That's because an undead corpse wouldn't know how to hide its tracks after the battle!"

Bang!

After he spoke, Yuwen Changtian slammed his fist angrily into the wall beside him.

Chapter 123: Forbidden Region

Bang!

The enraged Yuwen Changtian slammed his fist against the wall beside him, and two cries rang through the skies.

"Hey!"

"Be careful!"

The other person seemed to have pulled Yuwen Changtian away, and they fell into silence all of a sudden.

In the instant his fist hit the wall, Shang Xia felt a trace of light illuminating his sleeves.

Shang Xia couldn't be bothered with the flash of light at all. When Yuwen Changtian hit the wall, his heart leaped into his throat.

He didn't know what was happening outside, and neither did he know why Yuwen Changtian hit the wall. He could only pray that they didn't discover his presence.

“Brother Danran, what's wrong?”

Murong Danran, the other person who pulled Yuwen Changtian away earlier, explained, “This is the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World. It's a region located in the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Formation. It's said that it's one of the four spiritual lands in the Zhu Family Mysterious Coral World! As the grand formation had weakened, the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World was revealed and it's where we are right now.”

“Mysterious Coral World? The Zhu Family possessed their own mysterious world?”

Murong Danran hadn't completed what he wanted to say when he was interrupted by Yuwen Changtian.

He continued his explanation, “That's right. The Zhu Family wasn't hailed as the strongest power in the You Continent for nothing! It's not surprising for them to possess their own mysterious world...”

Yuwen Changtian was too stunned to speak. As Murong Danran continued, “In fact, the entire Coral Forest came from the Zhu Family's Mysterious Coral World. In the past, the Zhu Family still had control over their territory and the Coral Forest was hidden from the world. Today, all of them are dead and there's no one capable of maintaining their formations. The Coral Forest was revealed to the world. Even though the formations are no longer working, the Coral Forest still contains a lot of mysteries hidden by the Zhu Family. Not even Fourth Order Primary Realm experts can enter as they wish.

“Brother Murong, how did you learn all these?” Yuwen Changtian asked suddenly.

Murong Danran chuckled in response, “Relax. I heard all these from the various elders. Because of my talent in formations, the ancestor of my family taught me about the Coral Forest.”

Yuwen Changtian praised, “Brother Murong, I really admire you... It's no wonder you would receive more information from the elders in your clan. You are knowledgeable indeed!”

“Brother Changtian exaggerates!” Murong Danran waved his hands in response before adding, “We cannot underestimate the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Formation. Even though it lost its power for quite some time now, the foundation of the formation is still active. It might counterattack when faced with a threat. That's why we shouldn't go around hitting things.”

Yuwen Changtian finally realized how rash he was and he quickly heaved a sigh of relief, “The light that appeared when I hit the wall...”

Shang Xia might not be able to see their expressions, but he could estimate what was going on outside.

“That’s right. Luckily, the formation on this wall only stopped you from damaging it. It didn’t actually counterattack. Brother Changtian, please be careful around here. No... In fact, please be cautious when dealing with anything in the Coral Forest. The Zhu Family controlled this region for countless years, and there might be a lot of hidden dangers lying around.”

“I’ll heed Brother Danran’s advice then! Many thanks!” Yuwen Changtian thanked Murong Danran before asking, “Then... What is our current goal? Are we here to hunt down the rank three undead corpse?”

“I can’t hide anything from Brother Changtian!” Murong Danran chuckled. “Even though the Vermillion Plaque rarely appeared in the past, it’s the key to opening the manor. We’ve been here for so long, and other than killing the disciples Liu Jitang abandoned, we managed to obtain three of them.”

“This... Brother Danran, is your real goal the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World?” Yuwen Changtian guessed.

Murong Danran chuckled in response, “Since Brother Changtian managed to guess my true goal, I won’t hide it anymore. My real goal isn’t the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World either. It’s the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl!”

“Fantasy Spiritual Pearl?”

Another voice appeared all of a sudden.

“What’s the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl?”

Shang Xia’s heart trembled slightly. It seemed as though a change happened outside.

“Young Lady Like of the Sima Family... Hahaha, We’ve been waiting for quite some time now.” Yuwen Changtian said.

Shang Xia’s heart sank as Murong Danran repeated everything to the newcomer.

“The moment we find the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl, we should be able to find the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram! Then, we’ll be able to control the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World!”

Murong Danran declared confidently.

In the hidden room, Shang Xia’s heart thumped in his chest. He brought out the scroll from his sleeves slowly.

He finally discovered that there was a spot on the scroll that lit up. However, the glow quickly died.

Shang Xia gasped. Did the spot on the map show the location where Yuwen Changtian struck the wall?

If that was really the case, it wouldn't be difficult for him to leave the area!

Murong Danran's explanation had been happily taken in by Shang Xia while he hid in the hidden room beside them.

After he was done explaining the second time, he discovered an unnatural expression on Yuwen Changtian's face.

"Brother Changtian, what's wrong?"

Waving his hand slightly, Yuwen Changtian asked, "I'm not questioning your ability, but why would the elders entrust such a large task to us cultivators at the Martial Extremity Realm? This seems a little out of our abilities."

Sima Like spoke before Murong Danran could say anything. "They have no choice. Brother Changtian, you should know that the beast tide around the Coral Forest had already subsided. The cultivators of the Azure Spiritual World and the Azure Origin World should be making their way here as we speak. We don't have enough manpower in the battlefield between the two worlds to do much. The real experts on our side have to suppress Liu Jitang and consider many other things. It's no wonder they left us with such a huge task."

Murong Danran smiled. "Young Lady Like is right. The pearl might be special, but we can suppress it with moonlight. The disciples of the Tongyou Institution at the Martial Extremity Realm have already been dragged to the Zhu Family Manor by Liu Jitang. We won't have to worry about the rest."

Yuwen Changtian sighed, "Brother Murong, did you forget what happened to the two of them? We can't even find their corpse at the moment..."

"What happened to the two of them?" Sima Like asked.

Chapter 124: Unstable Rock

"So that's what it shows..." Shang Xia thought in his heart and heaved a sigh of relief.

Just a moment ago, he didn't dare to breathe loudly in the hidden chamber for fear of being found. Of course, he didn't dare to move recklessly now, but he felt much more at ease.

The three members of the Rose Party continued to discuss their next actions outside the hidden room, not knowing that everything they said had been heard by Shang Xia, a disciple of the Tongyou Institution.

Through their conversation, he heard a lot of secrets regarding the Coral Forest and the mysteries behind the Zhu Family.

For example, the Zhu Family really deserved its reputation as the strongest cultivation family in the You Continent! It had the power to hold the fate of the continent in its hands. None of the other clans or powers even came close!

Also, he learned of one of the most important goals of the Rose Party. They wanted to gain control of the forbidden region owned by the Zhu Family, currently known as the Coral Forest!

Even though a forbidden region was called a mysterious world, it wasn't a naturally formed cosmos. It was a space that had been enlarged several times and contained its own grand formation!

That was one of the reasons behind the Coral Forest's appearance in the battlefield between the two worlds.

Even so, the Coral Forest contained many dangerous regions. There were many undead corpses roaming the lands. Even though twenty years had passed since the formation of the battlefield between the two worlds, the Four Spiritual Peak and the Tongyou Peak didn't understand much about it. They only managed to cover the outer regions of the Coral Forest all that while.

Twenty years ago when the worlds collided, every single great family or power banded together to deal with their enemies. However, they also left a route of retreat for themselves. The only difference was the Zhu Family. They felt that they had the protection of their forbidden region, along with their deep accumulations. As such, they chose to remain where they were. They had the confidence to survive.

Most of the members of the Zhu Family chose not to leave, staying in their territory to face the threat. Only several cultivators left because of their reasons.

Who would have thought that the two worlds would collide, leading to the current state of things?

The chaos that ensued along with the various origin tides tore through the battlefield between the two worlds, trapping and killing every single member of the Zhu Family in the Coral Forest.

That wasn't all. Shang Xia learned that there were three other special regions in the Coral Forest. They were the Willow Forest, Dual Season Land, and the Unstable Floating Region.

Every single one of them contained their respective protection formation. With the addition of the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World, they formed semi-independent spaces around the Zhu Family Manor.

Due to the destruction, the core to control the Zhu Family Manor landed in the Willow Forest.

Out of the four regions in the Coral Forest, the Dual Season Land and the Unstable Floating Region had already fallen under the Rose Party's control.

As for Liu Jitang, he rushed straight for the Zhu Family Manor and the Willow Forest.

"As long as we obtain the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World, we'll control three of the four special regions of the Zhu Family! Even if Liu Jitang manages to locate and control the core of the Willow Forest, we'll still be able to suppress him! He won't be able to do anything against us!"

Murong Danran seemed to have explained their entire plan.

Sima Like frowned slightly and continued, "The Tongyou Peak won't sit by and abandon Liu Jitang. Didn't Shang Bo heavily injure Elder Yuwen earlier? The Tongyou Institution's strength is growing too quickly these days!"

"If the Tongyou Peak won't remain quietly in their territory, what about the Four Spiritual Peak?" Murong Danran sneered and he continued, "The Tongyou Institution's increase in strength is exactly the reason behind our elders making the decision to forcefully enter the battlefield between two worlds!"

Yuwen Changtian nodded, "That's right, their rapid increase in strength probably has to do with their gains in the battlefield between the two worlds... We can't allow them to keep everything for themselves!"

"I... I get it!" Sima Like's eyes widened in shock.

Yuwen Changtian seemed to also have reached a whole new level of understanding after listening to what Murong Danran said. "So that's the real reason... I thought that the elders were only interested in the advancement formula to the Martial Dipper Realm that might be hidden in the Zhu Family!"

Murong Danran chuckled, "Don't forget, the Coral Forest itself might be a mysterious world that contains spatial formations..."

What the fuck does that even mean?? Shang Xia thought to himself as he played with the items on the stone shelf in the hidden room. He had been paying attention to their conversation the whole time, but he had no idea what some of what they said meant.

It was obvious that they had much more information than Shang Xia.

"Alright. Tell us how to find the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl!" Sima Like asked all of a sudden.

"This is easy. The pearl is suppressed by moonlight, and we just have to wait for the moon to be overhead and it will appear by itself."

"Please... This is the battlefield between two worlds we're talking about. Who knows when the moon will appear? Even if it does, what happens if the moon belongs to the Azure Spiritual World? Will it work too?" Sima Like interrupted him all of a sudden.

Slightly taken aback, Murong Danran muttered, "This... Well, we'll never know till we try. Anyway, it's like you said. We won't know when the moon will appear. It might take a long time, but it might also appear the next second."

"Will the pearl really appear when the moon rises?" Sima Like continued.

"That's right! As long as we obtain the pearl, we'll be able to locate the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram! Then, we'll gain control over the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World!"

Yuwen Changtian sighed at the side, "I think... I think we should deal with the disappearance of our fellow brothers before looking for the pearl..."

"What happened?!" Sima Like frowned.

Yuwen Changtian and Murong Danran told her what happened earlier when they ran into the disciples of the Tongyou Institution.

"The two of them might have already met their end... I agree with Brother Changtian's evaluation. There's no way the rank three undead corpse did it. Either the last disciple hid his cultivation and dealt with the two of them after you left, or other people arrived. Since they managed to kill Dongfang Mingrui and Ouyang Fengxuan

in an instant, there are two possibilities... One. More than one expert arrived. Two... The person who came has pretty impressive cultivation. At the very least, he's as strong as Brother Changtian!"

Yuwen Changtian couldn't help but frown.

"Brother Changtian is at the grand completion stage! His cultivation has touched on the Martial Intent Realm! Don't tell me that the Tongyou Institution allowed their stronger disciples to roam about outside the Zhu Family Manor..." Murong Danran gasped.

"There's definitely a possibility of that happening..." Sima Like tutted.

However, Yuwen Changtian brought a new suggestion to the table. "What if... What if someone entered from the outside?"

"That's not possible. The outer regions of the Coral Forest are filled with our men. No one can possibly enter the Coral Forest without alerting us." Murong Danran stopped him immediately.

Sima Like analyzed, "The three of us are more than capable of dealing with a Martial Intent Realm cultivator. Even if someone managed to get in without our sentries noticing, they shouldn't be stronger than the Martial Intent Realm if they chose to remain hidden for so long. Even so, we should still act more cautiously from now on."

Yuwen Changtian continued, "Their goal might also be the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl. The moment the moon rises, they'll definitely appear to fight us for it!"

"Relax. I'll think of a way to call over a Martial Intent Realm expert to assist us."

Murong Danran reassured them.

After Yuwen Changtian grunted, he continued with another question, "Sister Sima obtained a rank three spiritual treasure in the Dual Season Land, and Brother Dongfang Mingrui managed to get an advancement formula in the Unstable Floating Region. However, we don't know if it's for the second or third order of the Primary Realm. Wonder which bastard managed to benefit from that after killing Brother Dongfang Mingrui..."

Once again, their words made no sense to Shang Xia.

Initially, he wanted to fight with them for the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl. However, thoughts of retreating formed in his mind after he heard their plan.

Shang Xia might be confident in himself, but he wasn't stupid enough to think that he could fight a Martial Intent Realm expert. In fact, there wasn't even a need for a Martial Intent Realm expert to arrive. The three of them outside were more than enough to kill him.

No matter how big the urge he had to retreat, he knew that it wasn't really possible. He had the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram, and unless he threw it away right there and then, they would be able to find him the moment they obtained the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl!

The only problem was that the three of them were still standing outside the damn hidden chamber! Shang Xia couldn't leave even if he wanted to!

If they remained there to wait for the appearance of the pearl, he would be trapped like a turtle in a jar!

Now, all he wanted was for the three of them to leave!

Suppressing the uneasy feeling in his heart, Shang Xia turned his attention to the two other objects on the stone shelf. After all, he couldn't possibly go out and scream for them to leave.

He turned to a giant egg-sized pearl in his hand. Thinking that he lucked out by finding the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl along with the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram, he was about to jump in joy. However, he soon discovered that it was nothing more than an ordinary Water Repulsion Pearl.

Well, at the very least, his clothes wouldn't get wet when he dove back down into the tunnel...

The second item was a little more refined.

From the looks of it, it was an ordinary stone! Other than a few tiny holes on its surface, there was nothing special about it!

However, Shang Xia discovered something special about it as soon as he held it in his hand. It could speed up the circulation of his inner qi!

He tried injecting some yang qi into the rock in his hand, but the moment he did, the stone became as light as a feather. In fact, it seemed to float in the air before him.

Removing his hand, he was shocked to see that the rock remained in mid air.

Putting some yin qi into the stone after grabbing it for the second time, it became denser than before! It became so heavy that Shang Xia's hand sank downwards.

"Oh! Hey! It's actually an Unstable Rock!" Shang Xia heard about it from his grandfather, Shang Bo, when asking for pointers in the past.

Shang Bo felt that Shang Xia only had two medicines to choose from when he advanced into the Martial Extremity Realm. He could use either the Powder of Purification or the Unstable Powder!

He could remember the expression on his grandfather's face in the past.

"Ever since the Zhu Family was exterminated, Unstable Rocks hardly appeared in our You Continent. The recipe for the Unstable Powder is available in the Tongyou Institution, but it's not as optimal as the one in the Zhu Family's collection. Don't bother thinking about the Unstable Powder anymore. Focus on getting your hands on the Powder of Purification."

That was what Shang Bo told him!

Who would have thought that he would obtain a piece of Unstable Rock?

Even though he had no use for it now, he could easily sell it away in the outside world! With how rare it was, it would easily reach a price of five hundred silver essence!

One had to know that a complete set of medicine to advance into the Martial Extremity Realm was worth close to eight hundred silver essence! That was how precious a piece of Unstable Rock was!

Shang Xia suddenly thought about what Yuwen Changtian said! Wasn't Dongfang Mingrui one of the disciples he killed? There was an advancement formula on him!

Chapter 125: Inner Qi Transformation

Earlier, Shang Xia grabbed everything that seemed to be of value from the two corpses before leaving in a hurry. Then, he arrived at the hidden chamber that contained the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram. Distracted by the appearance of Yuwen Changtian and the others outside the hidden chamber, he completely forgot to check what he obtained from the two!

Now that he thought about it, he realized that he should look through what he obtained.

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When he laid out everything on the ground before him, he thought that he should really start looking for a spatial artifact.

Of course, he could stop dreaming about a spatial pouch. He might have enough Swallow Fur to create one, but no one could create one with absolute certainty!

Shang Xia sighed silently. Well, he didn't really care at that moment. It would be great even if he had an Embroidered Cloud Case!

There were three cloth bags that jingled when he placed them down on the ground. Even without opening them, Shang Xia knew what was inside.

Piling all the silver essence and bronze boards in the cloth bags together, he created a small stack. He decided to keep them in the hidden chamber for now. No one would be able to find it in a short amount of time anyway, and bringing so much silver essence with him would only hinder his movements.

Initially, only the Tongyou Peak used silver essence and bronze boards as currency. No one knew when, but the Four Spiritual Peak did the same, causing an unspoken unified currency in the battlefield between the two worlds.

That made the silver essence mines possessed by the Tongyou Peak even more valuable.

Next, Shang Xia turned to a rank three ingredient he laid out. The fellow called Ouyang Fengxuan actually had quite a few valuables on him! Not only did he possess the rank three ingredient, he also had two rank two ingredients! One of them was the Black Jade Whisker, the other was called the Silver Scale Sand.

Shang Xia wasn't unfamiliar with the Black Jade Whisker. He heard his uncle, Shang Quan, bring it up once. The Black Jade Whisker wasn't extremely valuable, but it was a great ingredient to use to create rank two ink!

The body of the Black Jade Whisker was completely black as the name suggested, but the surface shone like jade. Even though there wasn't a lot of it, it was more than enough to create rank two ink for Shang Xia to be used for a long time.

As for the Silver Scale Sand, Shang Xia wasn't too familiar with it. However, he heard that it was something that could only be obtained in the battlefield between two worlds and it was used in

some medicine for cultivators to advance to the Martial Extremity Realm. It could also be used when creating graded weapons! It was worth quite a bit!

Shang Xia wouldn't mind obtaining a few more of these precious ingredients.

However, the two rank two ingredients dimmed in comparison when he placed them beside the rank three one. That was a rank three ingredient they were talking about! Even Shang Xia hadn't seen many of them!

Of course, he couldn't recognize the ingredient in front of him. There were too many treasures in the world, and his knowledge was limited. He only managed to tell that it was a rank three ingredient from the heaven and earth qi it emitted. Of course, the talisman pasted on its surface helped a lot with his evaluation.

He once heard from his uncle that herbs that reached the third rank would develop their own consciousness or spirituality. If they wanted to maintain the effectiveness of the herb, they would have to suppress and store the spirituality of the herb with a suppression talisman. Otherwise, the spirituality of the herb would start to dissipate after being dug out from its original position and it would start to degrade!

Keeping the three treasures on himself, Shang Xia's gaze landed on a piece of beast skin he obtained from Dongfang Mingrui. His eyes lit up again.

There was a complete advancement recipe into the Martial Extremity Realm. It was the exact formula Shang Bo told him to forget about, the Unstable Powder!

How coincidental was that?!

Even though he already guessed as much, he was still pretty surprised when he obtained the complete formula.

He might have already advanced to the Martial Extremity Realm and had no use for the formula, it was still a complete formula produced by the Zhu Family after countless years of research! Of course, the Powder of Purification he used during his advancement might not be worse than the Unstable Powder...

If he brought the formula out and handed it over to the Shang Clan or the institution, it would bring about a whole new level of benefits! It would collectively benefit all future cultivators!

Moreover, both sides would be extremely interested in an inheritance from the Zhu Family. Shang Xia wouldn't have to worry about getting ripped off by either side!

After looking through the formula, he noticed that the Unstable Rock was the only main ingredient used in it.

Unlike the Powder of Purification which required several main ingredients, the Unstable Powder only had one main ingredient, the Unstable Rock!

That would mean that the Unstable Rock itself possessed the qualities of being both light and heavy! That was what really interested Shang Xia

After entering his current cultivation realm, Shang Xia gained a better understanding of cultivators at the Martial Extremity Realm. Training both types of qi was an incredible feat in the eyes of many cultivators, much less transforming his qi at will.

However, the Unstable Rock was an existence that contained both light and heavy qi! Shang Xia didn't know if the Zhu Family had already learned about the true fusion of both types of qi, but the moment he released the formula, there would definitely be cultivators who managed to gain a better level of understanding behind training both types of qi.

Keeping the formula well, a flash of inspiration appeared in his mind.

Even though his Yin Yang Essence Qi could change to fit different attributes, what if he tried to use the properties of the Unstable Rock to learn a new type of transformation? At the moment, he could only transform his Yin Yang Essence Qi to possess the attributes of fire and ice, softness and strength, and void and reality!

After his experiment with the Unstable Rock earlier, he felt that it was actually possible.

The moment he poured his Yin Yang Essence Qi into the rock, he managed to feel the properties of both lightness and heaviness. He managed to transform his Yin Yang Essence Qi to replicate both properties easily.

Well, it seemed as though other than looking for a sword technique to fit his cultivation in fire and ice qi, he would have to look for another cultivation method!

The more he progressed down the path of cultivation, the more Shang Xia felt he didn't know. After discovering lightness and heaviness qi, his journey towards the Yin Yang Sword Formation seemed to become even longer.

Whatever the case, he managed to progress a little on his path of cultivation! He was pretty pleased with himself.

All of a sudden, he discovered that the movements outside the hidden chamber had disappeared. He could no longer hear their conversations.

Pressing his ears against the hidden wall, he failed to hear their presence.

However, Shang Xia wasn't in a hurry to leave. Their silence might just be a trap! He remained patiently in the hidden chamber.

The only thing he was afraid of was the appearance of the moon. If the moon were to rise, his location would definitely be exposed once they obtained the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl!

Wait a second...

The moment they managed to obtain the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl, they would be able to obtain the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram... Wouldn't that mean...

Retrieving the scroll, he started to pour his Yin Yang Essence Qi into it.

Chapter 126: Appearance of the Moon

Since the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram controlled the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World, there was no way it was as simple as it seemed!

Shang Xia's thoughts returned to the time when it glowed when Yuwen Changtian struck the wall protected by the formation. He poured his inner qi into it quickly.

It wasn't long before he discovered that there was something stopping him from pushing his qi into the scroll.

Raising an eyebrow slightly, Shang Xia transformed his qi into lightness and heaviness qi before trying again.

Even though the dao of lightness and heaviness didn't belong to the Zhu Family, it was the key to creating one of the most perfect advancement formulas produced by them! Moreover, the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram was placed beside the Unstable Rock. Shang Xia believed that there was some sort of connection between the two.

The only thing he didn't know was if the Water Repulsion Pearl had anything to do with it.

As his inner qi entered the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram, different colored lights started to emerge.

The Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram started to pulsate, and it started to come to life.

Shang Xia reached towards the surface of the scroll, and he discovered that the scroll could show him different regions of the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World as long as he willed it. It could even enlarge or shrink the image of the region he was looking at as he pleased! With it, he could observe many small details others might have missed.

As he played with the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram in his hand, he quickly noticed several flashing dots on the diagram. There was one bright yellow dot and four other smaller red dots. One of the red specks was right beside the bright yellow one, and Shang Xia wasn't too surprised.

He guessed that the yellow dot represented the location of the hidden chamber he was in. The red dot that coincided with the yellow one might represent his current location, or it might be more accurate to say that it showed the location of the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram he was holding.

What could the other three dots mean?!

Looking at the diagram closely, it seemed as though the other three dots represented three other rock formations in the Coral Forest. There were countless rock formations in the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram, and Shang Xia didn't understand why the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram would mark out several specific ones!

Were those where the formations were active?

However, Shang Xia quickly rejected the idea. After all, Murong Danran said that the formation covered quite a large area. There was no way it only covered four rock formations.

Soon, he noticed something strange about the location marked by the four dots.

One of them represented the location of the hidden chamber he entered when he first appeared in the Coral Forest.

Could it be?!

The red dots on the diagram represented hidden chambers in the Coral Forest!

A burning idea came to his mind, but Shang Xia managed to remain calm. He didn't rush out of the hidden chamber because of a moment's greed to locate the other hidden chambers.

He started to analyze the situation.

They were currently in the Coral Forest, and his presence hadn't been discovered. The Rose Party was the one who had sent out their disciples to comb the area, and he was merely a weakling at the Martial Extremity Realm.

"It's a pity I'm no formation master. I have no idea what this diagram actually holds. It might have other uses, but I have no idea how to figure them out!" Shang Xia couldn't help but think of other ideas.

Perhaps, the best thing he could do was to leave the Coral Forest as soon as possible and report back to the higher-ups of the Tongyou Institution. They could bring several experts into the Coral Forest through the underground tunnel, and they would definitely be able to gain the upper hand. After all, the moment he brought in one of the Martial Extermination Realm experts through the tunnel, the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World would definitely fall into their hands.

The only problem was that he had no idea how many people he could bring with a single Vermillion Plaque.

He knew that if he continued to move around alone, he would be able to gain a lot more treasures. However, the risk he was taking would increase by several folds.

After all, he was a mere disciple at the Martial Extremity Realm!

When he was still thinking of what he should do next, a massive blast brought him back to reality. No one knew where the giant explosion came from, but the hidden chamber started to shake. Even with the protection of the stone wall, he could feel the violent waves of heaven and earth qi.

There were people fighting out there! With the commotion going on, it had to be experts at the Martial Extermination Realm!

Shang Xia's heart trembled slightly. He pressed his hand against the mechanism to open the hidden room before leaving his position. The entrance closed up quickly, as if it never existed in the first place.

The huge disturbance was bound to draw a lot of attention. Shang Xia's actions wouldn't be too eye-catching with everything that was going on.

The Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World might be a giant maze, but with the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram in his hand, Shang Xia wasn't afraid that he would lose his way.

Luckily for him, he didn't meet anyone after he left. However, he could feel that the battle in the distance was getting more and more intense.

Clearly, there were more than two experts at the Martial Examination Realm fighting!

Shang Xia also discovered something weird. He could tell that the battle was happening quite a distance away. But when he tried to determine the direction of the battle, he couldn't!

Well, he didn't have the luxury to think about all that now. When he arrived back at the hidden chamber he was once at, he grabbed the Water Repulsion Pearl and dove instantly.

Even though he could have entered the water from anywhere, he chose to return to his original location as he didn't wish to get lost.

As he went down the submerged stairs, he moved a lot quicker than before due to the effects of the pearl.

After diving for quite some time, he discovered the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram glowing in his sleeves. The light was growing ever more brilliant, and the area around him lit up like a giant lightbulb.

Opening the scroll, he discovered a dot of light moving quickly across the diagram.

“This...” From the looks of it, the dot of light just shot past him.

Looking all around, he noticed a streak of light moving quickly across the water. It was so quick that Shang Xia couldn't react in time.

“Don't tell me... Is that the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl?!”

Shang Xia looked at the position of the flashing dot again and he seemed to realize a pattern. The dot would only move about within the confines of the four red specks of light, and a bold guess emerged in Shang Xia's mind. “Are the four rock structures really used to trap the pearl?!”

Sweeping his gaze around, he continued to descend. He looked around him before slashing the protection screen with the Vermillion Plaque.

Unlike before when it tore easily, this time, the protection screen didn't show signs of budging!

Shang Xia couldn't believe his eyes and he continued to strike the barrier a few times. No matter how hard he tried, he failed to open the barrier.

Shit! Can I enter but not leave?!

Well, that was one of the uses of a protection formation... If cultivators ran into trouble outside, they would be able to enter the protection formation easily. However, leaving was a whole other matter. They would have to wait for the protection formation to lift naturally.

It was the same for the protection formation around the Tongyou Peak.

Wait... How was he supposed to explain the appearance of the water in the essence qi stone mine then?! Was he supposed to wait for the barrier to open up by itself before he could leave?!

When he was thinking of what to do, another change occurred. The light that came from the surface of the water seemed to intensify by quite a bit! Raising his head to take a look, he saw a giant moon rising slowly into the air!

Chapter 127: Blood-red

Just as he was about to execute his flawless plan of bringing in backup from the Tongyou Peak, the appearance of the moon disrupted his scheme.

Shang Xia quickly made his way back up as he saw the ball of colorful light frozen in place. The light that covered it started to fade, revealing a translucent sphere that was the size of a fist.

Was that the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl?

Shang Xia rushed towards the item as quickly as he could.

Who would have thought that the pearl would disappear all of a sudden? It seemed to have teleported away from its location, causing Shang Xia to grab at air.

Raising his head, he could see the pearl floating slowly into the air. It seemed to resonate with the moon hanging high above their heads.

“Quick! The moon has appeared! Find it!”

Murong Danran exclaimed. It seemed as though he was in a hurry to find it!

In order to look for the pearl, the three of them decided to split up to search.

“This way! Quick!” Sima Like’s voice rang through the air to gather the rest.

At the same time, she leaped into the air to grab at the ball of light that was rising up from the water surface.

“Wait! Don’t grab it now! You have to wait for the white glow to fade before it will reveal its true body!” Murong Danran’s anxious cry came from the side.

Like Shang Xia, Sima Like ended up with a handful of air.

“Brother Danran, why didn’t you say so earlier?!” Sima Like rebuked immediately.

Murong Danran walked to the closest platform he could find and his expression finally loosened up a little after seeing the pearl. Heaving a sigh of relief, he turned to Sima Like and revealed an awkward smile, “I... I forgot...”

By that time, Yuwen Changtian had also arrived. He glanced at Murong Danran and muttered, “Brother Murong, we’re all working together now. I don’t care what selfish motives you have, you better tell us everything you know. Otherwise, you can’t blame us for the misunderstanding.”

A bitter smile formed on Murong Danran’s face.

As Yuwen Changtian turned to look at the ball of light that was slowly dimming, he frowned, “Brother Danran, what is your plan exactly? Are you still unwilling to tell us now?”

A light flashed in his eyes, and he seemed to struggle with himself for a moment. Finally, he sighed, “Indeed... Other than controlling the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World, I require the pearl to deepen my understanding on void and reality qi. I hope to comprehend an illusion-type marital intent to reach the grand completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm.”

Sima Like sneered, “I might not know much about formation, but I know that the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl is an illusion-type treasure. If you really plan to comprehend void and reality qi, you will have to wait for the pearl to appear. Not only would we have to wait for you to complete your comprehension before using the pearl to look for the diagram, but we also have to protect you when you’re deep in comprehension. Am I wrong?”

Murong Danran could only chuckle awkwardly, “I hope you can help me out...”

Sima Like sneered softly without speaking.

Yuwen Changtian sighed at the side, “It makes sense for the elders back in the organization to want to support people of our generation. He probably taught you about the illusionary martial intent too. However, why did you hide it from us?”

Murong Danran's expression twisted unnaturally.

A snort left Sima Like's lips and she explained in his stead, "Of course it's because his cultivation will damage the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl... He might need to draw on its origin power, causing the pearl to shatter!"

Yuwen Changtian's expression sank and a cold light flashed through his eyes when he looked at Murong Danran.

"It will not! At worst, the pearl will be weakened slightly. I won't destroy it!"

Murong Danran saw the smirk on Sima Like's face and he couldn't help but grumble silently in his heart.

Yuwen Changtian thought about it for a moment and he continued, "What about the core diagram for the formation? You said that after the pearl appears, we'll be able to follow it to obtain the core diagram."

"The moment it appears, the two of you can go ahead and retrieve it. Even if I fail my comprehension or if the moon starts to set, the pearl won't disappear immediately." Murong Danran explained.

"So... The diagram can also restrain the pearl?" Yuwen Changtian asked.

Murong Danran continued his explanation, "It doesn't restrain the pearl. Instead, the two items attract each other. The reason the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl managed to run about itself is because the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Grand Formation stopped working. Once you find the core diagram, you will be able to obtain the pearl with its assistance."

Yuwen Changtian and Sima Like looked at each other silently for a second.

Finally, Sima Like broke the silence with a cold snort. "Murong Danran, you owe us for this!"

Murong Danran could only nod helplessly.

"Alright. It's decided. You can see if the pearl is still as useful after so many years of the formation's deactivation..."

A smile finally appeared on Murong Danran's face.

When the three of them were negotiating with each other, the glow around the pearl had almost fully faded. Its true form was revealed to the world.

There seemed to be rainbow-colored lights swirling within.

"Please!" Murong Danran tried his best to hide his excitement and a jade pendant appeared in his hand. Crushing it, it seemed to summon a ball of smog that dragged his body over to the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl.

"Floating Talisman! Hah... He planned for this a long time ago!" Sima Like sneered in contempt. After Yuwen Changtian looked at the thick mist under Murong Danran's feet, he swept his gaze across the surroundings. "We need to find the core diagram right now!"

As the words left his lips, a white pulse of light emerged from the pearl.

They felt their souls trembling slightly before returning to their body. The effects were weirdly satisfying.

“Relax. This is an effect of the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl. It’s trying to call out to the core diagram.” Murong Danran’s voice echoed through the air.

“There!” Sima Like pointed towards the pool of water beneath them.

Yuwen Changtian’s gaze followed her and saw a giant scroll flickering under the surface.

“It’s actually down below!” An unsightly expression appeared on Yuwen Changtian’s face.

All of a sudden, Murong Danran’s voice rang in their minds again. “You need to obtain the core diagram as quickly as possible. Otherwise, the pearl will disappear once the moon sets and we’ll have to wait for it to appear again!”

Yuwen Changtian looked at Sima Like helplessly. “I’m really bad with water... Even though I can forcefully hold my breath and travel underwater, my actions will be slow and clumsy...”

A chuckle left Sima Like’s lips. “It’s fine. I’ll head down then!”

Yuwen Changtian heaved a sigh of relief. “Be careful. I’ll be here in case anything happens.”

“I have a Water Walking Talisman on me...” Murong Danran’s voice came again.

“It’s alright. The talisman won’t be of much use to this young lady over here.” As soon as she spoke, she tossed down some clothes before diving deep into the water below.

Yuwen Changtian looked at her graceful figure swimming through the water and couldn’t help but admire her curves.

Watching her approach the diagram quickly, Yuwen Changtian heaved a sigh of relief. His gaze returned to the land as he started to inspect his surroundings. He didn’t forget that there was a hidden expert out there who killed two of their fellow disciples.

With this much disturbance, the killer would definitely appear!

“Are you still wary of the killer?” Murong Danran’s voice rang in his mind. A wisp of inner qi emerged from his finger and wrapped around the pearl.

Noticing the cautious expression on Yuwen Changtian’s face, he continued, “Do you want me to summon a Martial Intent Realm expert over?”

Ever since Sima Like entered the water, an uneasy feeling gathered in his heart. His gaze jumped from one rock structure to another, but he failed to catch anyone.

Murong Danran couldn’t help but continue, “Even though he was extremely strong previously, he suffered some injuries. He hid somewhere in the Coral Forest all this time to treat his injuries. Nothing can go wrong here. He’s the only one who can reach us in time if I call him now.”

Yuwen Changtian could no longer take his incessant chatter. “Can you shut up? Did the elders in your clan teach you how to be distracted when cultivating?”

Murong Danran’s expression sank and he couldn’t be bothered with Yuwen Changtian anymore. He focused all his energy on comprehending his martial intent.

All of a sudden, faint ripples came from under the surface. The fluctuations became stronger and stronger, and the waves crashed against the structures around them.

The commotion drew the attention of both cultivators on the surface.

“Did Young Lady Sima obtain the core diagram?” Yuwen Changtian glanced at Murong Danran before turning his gaze into the water down below.

“Do you think... Do you think it’s possible for the killer to be hiding underwater?” Murong Danran asked.

No longer able to bear with his nonsense, Yuwen Changtian raised his head to snap at Murong Danran. He held his tongue when he saw Murong Danran’s shocked expression.

His heart sank as he quickly tilted his head downwards. He saw a giant explosion coming from below as crimson-colored water filled the air.

Chapter 128: Exquisite Grass

Murong Danran was no fool. Other than the fact that he didn’t know when to shut up, his understanding of the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World far surpassed the other two.

His excuse of comprehension was fake. It was yet another layer of lie to cover his true motive from the other two.

The Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World contains much more mysteries than what they can see. None of the Martial Extermination Realm elders in the Rose Party believed that Murong Danran could see through the mysteries, allowing him to enter as he wished. Now, the chance of a lifetime landed directly on his lap.

Even though everyone in the Rose Party seemed to have underestimated him, he wasn’t willing to work so hard just to let the Rose Party reap the gains. Initially, he could have accomplished everything without anyone noticing. Who would have thought that things would change so suddenly?

...

Shang Xia was originally shocked that the scroll would open up on its own. However, that didn’t mean that he wasn’t prepared for it.

When the scroll lit up and unrolled itself, he felt that a chance had arrived!

He saw a figure diving into the water before rapidly approaching the scroll.

An idea formed in his mind. Using the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram as cover, he hid right under it.

As Shang Xia poured his qi into the scroll earlier, he could still gain a faint idea of what it was doing despite it resonating with the pearl.

Once Sima Like entered the water, she dove straight for the scroll.

She wasn't brainless either. There was no way a scroll would appear tens of feet under the water. She knew that the glow of the scroll covered too large an area. She had to locate the actual item in the light.

The closer she got, the clearer her vision became. She quickly noticed the scroll and swam desperately towards it.

As she approached, joy filled her heart and she swam faster and faster. She threw caution to the wind as the item she was looking for was right in front of her!

The instant she reached out to grab the scroll, brilliant rays of sword light filled her vision and swallowed her whole.

Ever since Shang Xia learned the Cloud Drizzle Sword Art, he became more and more adept at using it. If he were to evaluate it based on strength, the sword art might not be better than the Vigorous Sword Art and the Formless Sword Art. There was obviously no need to mention the Flexible Sword Art that was stronger than both of those! However, there was one property the Cloud Drizzle Sword Art possessed, and that was to drain his opponent's blood!

Each individual sword strike didn't possess too much power, but who would care about it if they attacked multiple times? If one strike doesn't work, I'll use two! If two isn't enough, four should do the trick. Still not enough? Just increase the number of attacks till you kill the opponent!

No matter what, his opponent wouldn't be able to block all of them! After all, they had close to the same cultivation level...

The moment a single ray of sword light made a wound on his opponent's body, a weird strand of qi would prevent the wound from closing up, causing the blood to flow constantly.

Of course, the requirement to use the technique was harsh too. The user would need to exhaust a great deal of inner qi.

Shang Xia was able to withstand the usage of inner qi due to his extraordinarily large dantian. The amount of inner qi he had was much higher than cultivators of the same level!

Even though Sima Like was at the large completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm, facing so many sword lights, she panicked and nearly forgot to defend herself.

Well... By the time she realized she was being ambushed, no amount of defense from someone at her level would be enough.

The sword light flashed past her body, giving her close to thirty new wounds.

At the very last second, she managed to shatter her protective bracelet to protect her heart from being pierced through.

Her pretty little body was mutilated in a split second. As blood gushed out of her body, she tried screaming. It was too bad all she released was a giant water bubble.

She wanted to struggle to the surface, but her movements only caused more blood to escape her body. Her face turned as white as a sheet due to the loss of blood and her inability to breathe.

All of a sudden, the water in her surroundings was blown away and she managed to suck in that sweet gasp of air. As relief washed over her body after she took in her first breath of air, her body froze all of a sudden. After that... Well, there was no after that for her anymore.

...

As the bloodied water sprayed up into the air, something looked like it was about to burst out of the surface.

“Be careful! It’s about to appear!” Yuwen Changtian yelled.

Murong Danran who had been floating in the air gasped in fright, “That... Young Lady Like, she...?”

Yuwen Changtian’s gaze was fixed on the surface of the water, and he growled at Murong Danran without turning his head. “You should take care of yourself. Can you leave with the pearl?”

Murong Danran’s expression sank. “I’m afraid not. Now that the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl is calling out to the core diagram, the moment I cut off the connection, I’ll waste all my effort. The loss of my inner qi isn’t the problem here. The moment I sever the connection, the pearl will disappear!”

“...”

With a loud grunt, three short sticks appeared from behind Yuwen Changtian. He grabbed them in his hand before joining them to form one long silvery white staff.

His body started to turn illusory in mid air, and it was clear he didn’t choose to give up. He tore up a talisman in his hand and a flame soared through the air. “I notified my martial uncle! He should be here soon!”

After he spoke, he added a piece of news to stop Yuwen Changtian from interrupting him, “Anyway, I have news on the Exquisite Grass!”

Yuwen Changtian’s body trembled and he raised his head in shock. He forgot about the commotion happening underwater.

Murong Danran heaved a sigh of relief when he noticed Yuwen Changtian’s response. “Brother Changtian, you already reached the peak of your current realm. Your clan might have prepared all sorts of medicine for you, but rank three herbs are incredibly difficult to find. Your Yuwen Clan might be strong, but they won’t be able to gather all the required herbs! I’m sure Brother Changtian has been looking for the Exquisite Grass for some time now.”

Yuwen Changtian growled in response. “Looks like you know quite a lot...” The feeling of having one’s secrets known to others wasn’t nice.

Forcing a smile, Murong Danran explained, “Haha... Our families are greatly interconnected. It’s normal for us to exchange information for the things we need. Even though our inheritances are strictly confidential, we won’t hide other things from each other. I learned a lot just by paying attention...” Pausing for a second, he continued, “So... Brother Changtian, do you agree with my plan?”

“I’ll agree on one condition. As long as my life isn’t threatened, I’ll do my best to stop the person under the water until Senior Yuntian arrives. However, you need to tell me the news of the Exquisite Grass now.”

“Looks like Brother Changtian’s information sources aren’t bad either. You already knew that Martial Uncle Yuntian will be the one to come...”

Murong Danran continued to talk about random things and he started to drag the time out. It was evident he was having second thoughts about revealing the news. The Exquisite Grass was really something special. It was rarely seen, and it was said that the herb was used even in rank four medicine! If not for the fact that they were in such a critical situation, he would never have chosen to share the news.

“Senior Yuntian remained as a spy in the Tongyou Institution for so long... His actions are worthy of our respect. However, you best remember who brought him back from the Tongyou Peak!” Yuwen Changtian growled as he continued to look below. Noticing the abnormal fluctuations below the surface, he warned, “You better hurry up. The person should be coming up now.”

An explosion seemed to occur underwater as a black figure charged up at them.

“It’s on a cultivator at the Martial Extremity Realm of the Tongyou Institution!”

Murong Danran continued in a haste. “In the Dual Season Lands, I saw him retrieving a stalk of Exquisite Grass with my very own eyes! However, there were Martial Intent Realm cultivators by his side and I didn’t dare to fight him for it!”

“Martial Intent Realm bodyguards... Who is he? Is he Kou Chongxue’s illegitimate son?”

Yuwen Changtian spun his staff around, storing up his energy.

“It’s possible that he has a Vermillion Plaque on him!” Afraid that Yuwen Changtian would think that he was lying, he continued, “I told you everything I know! I swear on my family that everything I said is true! Brother Changtian, you have to believe me!”

Yuwen Changtian might be dissatisfied, but he could only swallow his grievances.

“Crash!”

As water sprayed into the air, a figure broke through the surface of the water.

“Die!” Yuwen Changtian roared and his staff came crashing downwards. The powerful strike caused a huge crater to form on the water surface.

“Be careful! That’s Young Lady Sima!” Murong Danran yelled in midair.

Yuwen Changtian harrumphed as he pulled his staff back immediately. He made a graceful leap through the air as though he had been expecting it. He displayed his amazing movement art in that instant.

At the same time, another figure emerged from another side.

“I’ve been waiting for you for a long time!” Yuwen Changtian grunted as a ray of silver light shot out from his staff towards the figure who just appeared.

The dao of length! He could extend and shorten his staff at will!

In that instant, he displayed his full strength.

“Bang!”

The figure that appeared was blown apart in an instant!

Chapter 129: Obtaining the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl

Actually, Shang Xia had half a mind to leave after killing Sima Like.

He gained an understanding of their strength after hearing their conversation outside his hidden chamber earlier.

Sima Like and Murong Danran were at the large completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm. In other words, they were infinitely close to reaching the large completion stage. As for Yuwen Changtian, he was already at the grand completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm! He had comprehended his martial intent!

Even though Shang Xia was confident in his strength, he estimated that he would be able to take one of them on at best.

If he had to fight Yuwen Changtian, he would still be able to ensure that he could retreat unscathed. However, if the two of them joined hands, he would definitely lose.

He managed to kill Sima Like due to her carelessness, but the other two seemed to be extremely on guard. It wouldn’t really be smart of him to show himself at that moment. Moreover, he had the Water Repulsion Pearl on him and if he chose to leave from under the water, neither of them could do a thing.

However, he realized that he had no way of secretly bringing the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram away when he tried to leave!

Due to the resonance with the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl, there was some sort of formless connection between the two. No matter how far he got, his location would be revealed like a shining beacon!

The only other way was to leave the diagram behind and escape!

However, he recalled the conversation they had. The Mountain and Sea Fantasy Grand Formation was what controlled the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World. The Rose Party had already controlled two of the four special regions in the Zhu Family Territory, and the moment they obtained the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram, they would control three of the four regions! If that happened, the Tongyou Institution wouldn’t be able to do a thing to them anymore!

There was no way he could allow the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram to fall into their hands!

Since he couldn’t leave the scroll, he wouldn’t be able to escape alone!

Well, there was only one thing left to do! He had to risk it all!

Even though he wasn't well versed in the art of formations, he would still be able to make the Rose Party suffer a great loss if he grabbed the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl.

With the pearl to open the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World and the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram to control the grand formation, he would basically control the entire region alone!

There was no need to think about it anymore. Pulling his sword out of Sima Like's body, he pressed his palm against her waist. His Yin Yang Essence Qi released a frightening blast, sending her body towards the surface with the speed of a rocket.

At the same time, he took several steps in the water and found a large boulder that was the size of a small human. He wrapped a set of clothes around it before sending it up the same way he sent Sima Like's body.

The turbid water stained red with blood managed to obstruct the vision of those at the top.

When Sima Like's body flew out of the water, Yuwen Changtian was able to display his proficient control over his inner qi and change his target to strike at the second object that emerged not too far away.

Shattering the second figure that shot out from under the water, a smile nearly formed on his face. However, he was wrong once again!

The shards that exploded outwards destroyed the set of robes Shang Xia wrapped around it. In an instant, dirt and pieces of cloth filled the air.

Shang Xia emerged finally, and his position was right under Sima Like's body! Was it a coincidence for them to appear right under the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl? Probably not.

"Die!" Shang Xia's sword stabbed towards Murong Danran who was in midair as he tossed out a talisman in the next second.

A ray of golden light surrounded the talisman before turning into a sword that shot at Yuwen Changtian.

That was the rank two Golden Sword Talisman!

His timing was perfect. Shang Xia unleashed the talisman the instant Yuwen Changtian retrieved his weapon, causing him to be unable to react swiftly.

"Outrageous!" Yuwen Changtian yelled, but that was about all he could do. He raised his staff hastily to protect himself from the incoming golden sword.

Shang Xia knew that his Golden Sword Talisman was far from enough to injure a cultivator at Yuwen Changtian's level. As such, his only goal the entire time was to distract the man for a moment. As long as Yuwen Changtian couldn't assist Murong Danran in time, that was enough!

Everything happened as he expected.

In mid air, the Yin Yang Diagram in Shang Xia's dantian started to spin as he transformed his inner qi to possess the attribute of strength.

He unleashed the Unstoppable Strike, a move that was part of the Vigorous Sword Manual, and a ray of sword qi emerged from the top of the Delicate Jade River Sword.

Murong Danran's expression changed slightly, but he wasn't overly alarmed.

He reached out to gently tap the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl that was in front of him!

As the pearl trembled slightly in mid air, Shang Xia felt his surroundings shaking. His vision was clouded by multicolored lights and he lost sight of his target.

The change happened too quickly, but Shang Xia wasn't flustered in the slightest. The sword in his hand continued to stab forward as a ray of red lightning flashed in his eyes.

The veil of light before him was ripped apart instantly. Murong Danran who thought that he managed to avoid the strike panicked when he noticed the tip of the sword advancing towards him.

"You..." A trace of rage and worry flashed past his eyes. There was nothing else he could do and he finally chose to scatter the cloud he was standing on as he fell to the ground below.

The connection he built with the pearl disappeared completely, and his plan went up in smoke.

"How dare you! You disrupted all my plans!"

"Yuwen Changtian!" Murong Danran roared in anger.

He chose to reveal the news of the Exquisite Grass to Yuwen Changtian in hopes that he would be able to stall the attacker for some time. Everything was so that he could control the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl!

In the end, he was attacked by the mysterious attacker, and Yuwen Changtian seemed completely useless! Even though he was held back by the enemy, it didn't change the fact that he failed to protect Murong Danran!

Yuwen Changtian snorted angrily in response. He wasn't in a great mood either. It seemed as though the agreement with Murong Danran had gone up in smoke. He was afraid that Murong Danran would fight with him over the Exquisite Grass when he went to obtain it.

If the two of them were to fight over it, Yuwen Changtian's chances of obtaining the treasure would be greatly reduced!

Luckily for them, the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl didn't disappear. Murong Danran still had a chance to obtain it.

Yuwen Changtian struck out with his staff once again, and it created a dense web of shadow staffs that covered the entire surface of the water.

This time, he unleashed his martial intent! Heaven Concealment Staff!

Shang Xia, who was stuck in the air, had nowhere to run!

"Don't hit the pearl!" Murong Danran's voice boomed through the air.

Shang Xia never planned to obtain the pearl when he attacked Murong Danran. It would be much better for him if the pearl disappeared.

Hearing Murong Danran's yell, Shang Xia thought of something. He grabbed the corner of the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Diagram and unfurled the scroll. When the scroll appeared under the pearl, the pearl vanished.

Curling his wrist, Shang Xia retrieved the scroll.

At the same time, the staff light appeared. They came crashing down towards Shang Xia's back, but he was prepared for it. He crushed the protection pendant Shang Quan handed him before he left.

Despite the frightening power contained in Yuwen Changtian's Heaven Concealment Staff, it wasn't enough to shatter the protection barrier produced by the pendant.

Since Yuwen Changtian's attack covered a wide area, many rock formations and structures at the side were struck, and they were destroyed in an instant. Huge waves were swept up from the impact.

Yuwen Changtian didn't stop there. His attack continued as the protective barrier around Shang Xia started to dim. When the barrier seemed to have used up all of its energy, several staff shadows superimposed on each other and slammed heavily into his back.

"Bang!"

Spitting out a mouthful of blood, Shang Xia was sent flying.

Amidst the chaos, an enraged cry rang through the air. "Fantasy Spiritual Pearl! Where's my pearl?!"

Shang Xia was sent flying into the distance and he took several deep breaths to recover. He circulated his Yin Yang Essence Qi around his body and he reached out to stop himself from flying further. He clung on to one of the rock formations and turned to stare at the two.

"It's you! You stole my Fantasy Spiritual Pearl!" Murong Danran roared. He thought about Shang Xia's actions earlier and he realized what had happened. "You actually managed to cultivate the Zhu Family's special technique! That's how you managed to control the core diagram and steal my pearl! Speak! Are you one of the remnants of the Zhu Family?" Murong Danran yelled as he ran over.

The dispirited look in his eyes from losing the pearl had long disappeared. Instead, he looked at Shang Xia with a burning gaze. He couldn't hide the greed in his eyes!

Not far behind him was Yuwen Changtian.

All of a sudden, Shang Xia waved his hand towards the two of them before loosening his grip. He fell directly into the water.

"You can't escape!" Murong Danran tossed out an item and a ray of light shot towards Shang Xia.

Too bad for him, Shang Xia had already determined the trajectory of whatever he threw out the moment it left his hand. He didn't bother dodging in the slightest.

As the ray of light brushed past him, it stabbed deep into one of the rock formations under the surface. A layer of frost covered the surface and a thick layer of ice was formed.

Realizing that he wouldn't be able to break through the sheet of ice beneath him, he made a perfect tumble when he landed. The air around him seemed to distort when he rolled to his feet, and his figure disappeared completely.

Chapter 130: Essence Jade

"You damn clown! How dare you show off your pitiful illusion skills in front of your granddaddy here?" Murong Danran's figure arrived close to the place Shang Xia disappeared and a jade bottle appeared in his hand.

Opening the bottle, he poured some of the liquid onto his finger before dabbing it lightly in the space between his eyebrows.

"Break!" The illusion in front of him shattered as Shang Xia's figure started to become clear once again.

Pointing towards one of the regions on the ice sheet, he yelled, "There!"

Yuwen Changtian, who wasn't too far away from him, didn't say a word. His staff swept towards the place Murong Danran pointed at, and the resulting staff light shattered one of the rock formations nearby.

"Plop!" The sound of something dropping into the water told Yuwen Changtian that he missed.

The thing that infuriated Murong Danran the most was that the kid waved to him again before jumping into the water!

"Who is that brat?!" Murong Danran was truly distressed this time. He panicked when he saw that they had lost him.

"Could he have entered from the outside?" Yuwen Changtian guessed.

Both of them seemed to reach a tacit agreement to not chase Shang Xia underwater.

After all, Sima Like's ugly end was still fresh in their minds. The two of them were much worse than her when it came to moving in the water. They would only be sending themselves to death if they tried.

"Impossible. He's not even at the Martial Intent Realm. He won't be able to get past our guards at the border!" Murong Dantian snapped. "He might be someone who came in with Liu Jitang..."

"Didn't you say that all of them entered the Zhu Family Manor in the Willow Forest?!" Yuwen Changtian frowned.

"Well, we can't rule out the possibility that he broke off from their group! He might even be sent out by Liu Jitang to complete some sort of secret mission... Everything is possible." Murong Danran sighed.

The frown on Yuwen Changtian's face only deepened. "What do we do next?! Are we going to report the matter that happened here?"

Murong Danran shook his head and sneered. "There's no need for that. Martial Uncle Yuntian will arrive soon. Even if he hides underwater, we'll fish him out and kill him!"

"That kid grabbed the core diagram and the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl! Is it possible for him to use it against us?!" Yuwen Changtian threw out another possibility.

After thinking about it for a moment, Murong Danran grunted, "Unless he's a formation master... Even if he manages to use the core diagram, you should be fine if you stay by my side. He can't deal with us together. The longer we drag this out for, the higher our chances of victory. After all, my martial uncle is coming over."

Noticing Yuwen Changtian looking around as he spoke, he couldn't help but ask, "Brother Changtian?"

Yuwen Changtian snapped out of his daze for a second and a bitter smile formed on his face. "Previously, Brother Ouyang and Brother Dongfang met their ends here. I didn't think we would find him here again!"

Raising an eyebrow slightly, Murong Danran gasped in shock. "Is this the place? Wouldn't this mean that he was the one who killed them?"

"This might be where he's hiding!"

...

The moment he dove into the water, he went straight for the bottom.

In order not to let the two of them notice anything suspicious, he didn't use the Water Repulsion Pearl immediately. He only used it when he was sure no one could see him.

With the help of the pearl, he quickly located the sunken stairs. Grabbing several items he obtained from Sima Like earlier, he went straight towards the first hidden chamber he found.

He heaved a sigh of relief when he finally arrived. Feeling the throbbing pain from the strike he took earlier, aches filled his body.

Luckily for him, Shang Xia's inner qi had extraordinary properties. While it could suppress the injuries in his body, it also allowed him to heal a lot faster than others.

Pulling out a Dry Rain Talisman that he saved previously, he tore it apart. Even though it was a rank one talisman, the effects were pretty good. A ball of mist entered his body and assisted his recovery.

Even though it didn't allow him to recover completely, it was better than nothing!

Shang Xia started to sort out everything he obtained from Sima Like while he was healing.

Looking at a round jade bottle in his hand, his eyeballs nearly popped out of their sockets!

He knew that the disciples of the Rose Party had been roaming around the Coral Forest for some time now and they definitely reaped a lot of rewards.

That was why he didn't forget to search through her belongings after killing her earlier.

It seemed as though his luck was pretty good this time. She actually had medicine to treat his wounds!

“Spring Rain Powder!” Shang Xia exclaimed after smelling it. He immediately recognized the rank two medicine that was great at treating injuries!

Without hesitation, he swallowed the powder. He felt a refreshing feeling washing across his entire body. Life force poured out of his body and he felt much better than before.

He could tell that his injuries were healing at a frightening speed.

Heaving a sigh of relief, he felt that he would be able to continue fighting!

To his surprise, that wasn't all she had! He quickly found an interesting wooden box on her.

“This seems like something from the Zhu Family... I wonder what's in here!” As the insignia of the Zhu Family was imprinted on the box, Shang Xia recognized it right away.

There were signs of broken restrictions around the box. From the looks of it, Sima Like broke the seals forcefully to look at the contents. That only proved that the items contained within were pretty valuable.

The instant he opened the box, a wave of essence qi hit him in the face. There was an irregularly shaped object within, and it glowed milky white. “This... This is an essence jade!”

Shang Xia gasped in shock. He took the item out to confirm its authenticity. Even though it was his first time looking at one, it didn't seem unfamiliar to him.

Essence jades were formed from the coagulation of the heaven and earth qi. It fell under the classification of third rank treasures! However, it could be used everywhere! Regardless of weapon creation, medicine making, or increasing one's cultivation directly. They could even create talismans, and create formations!

Back when Shang Xia was on the Tongyou Peak, he heard that someone managed to obtain a grape-sized essence jade while hiding from the beast tide. He managed to raise his cultivation from the beginning stages of the Martial Realm all the way to the large completion stage!

The essence jade in Shang Xia's hand was undoubtedly larger than that! It was half the size of an egg!

He wondered if he could reach the large completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm after using it. All of a sudden, he heard voices coming from outside the hidden chamber. “... Martial Uncle Yuntian will arrive soon. When that happens, it's useless even if he hides under the water!”