

## The Heavens 251

### Chapter 251: The Garbage Tier Low-Grade Weapon

In the building beside the plaza, Ji Wenlong was collecting his winnings from the other four with a serious expression on his face.

Chang Huaiwu passed an empty rank three talisman paper over to Ji Wenlong while sighing, “Are our juniors really so terrifying now? Man and spear as one, he managed to make huge progress towards comprehending a martial intent at the Martial Intent Realm. Are you sure he only entered the Martial Intent Realm a while ago?”

The corners of Ji Wenlong’s lips curled upwards as a wide grin slowly formed. “The newer generation will have to replace us one day. I can’t wait for the day those little brats manage to defeat us. Why are you so worked up about it?”

Shaking his head, Chang Huaiwu revealed a bitter smile.

Ji Wenlong continued after seeing his reaction, “Those below might not know how the kid won, but we do. If he didn’t pull out such dirty tricks during the last few seconds, he would have been kicked out by the three of them.”

An Baimei added at the side, “No matter what, the rules didn’t say that he can’t use multiple weapons, right. After his display of strength, Brother Ji, you’ll definitely be rushing to shower him with rewards, am I right?”

“Rewards? What the hell can I reward him with?! That little brat has more graded weapons than me! Do you think he lacks anything right now?” A helpless smile appeared on Ji Wenlong’s face.

An Baimei continued, “Hah, don’t act like you’re blind over here. Can’t you see that his spear is about to shatter?”

“The little kid’s inner qi is too strange. Half the reason his weapon is about to be destroyed came from him!” Ji Wenlong explained. “Moreover, our patriarch had already heard of his name. Even if we wish to reward him, I won’t have anything to do with it. The patriarch can do as he sees fit.”

A trace of light flashed across Yu Chengjin’s face. “Is Patriarch Kou planning to pull the kid over to his side?”

“Maybe?” Chuckling slightly, Ji Wenlong shifted the attention to the wagers they made. He stretched his hand out and his gentlemanly appearance was nowhere to be seen. “Little Han, hand over the piece of Heart Jadeite.”

Reluctantly tossing it over, Han Chongwei grumbled, “Patriarch Kou has always been biased towards the Shang Clan. Shang Ke managed to enter the Martial Extermination Realm so quickly. Not to mention the fact that Shang Bo had already broken through to the fourth layer Martial Extermination Realm... If Patriarch Kou really chooses to nurture the kid, won’t the Shang Clan tower over everyone else?”

The chuckle that left Ji Wenlong's lips turned weird and he didn't bother with Han Chongwei any longer. He turned to Wei Zhongwen. "Old Man Wei, don't think that I forgot about you. Hand it over."

...

Shang Xia remained seated in his unsightly manor under the eyes of everyone present.

Even though the protection barrier had already scattered and the plaza had returned to normal, Shang Xia wasn't bothered by the gazes he was getting.

In fact, no one would dare to laugh at him because of his weird appearance. Instead, their eyes were filled with worship and respect when they looked at him.

Even Dou Zhong, who didn't like Shang Xia and even had some enmity with him, couldn't help but admit Shang Xia managed to regain the reputation of the Tongyou Institution with the battle that just passed.

Unbothered with anything else, Shang Xia's attention was on his dantian and the huge amount of Origin True Qi that had just transformed.

Deep down, he knew that he only won because his remnant qi transformed into Origin True Qi at the critical moment. Otherwise, he would have exhausted himself and retired from the battle.

Taking a closer look now that the battle was over, Shang Xia was surprised to see that close to half of his Yin Yang Essence Qi had completed its transformation.

As his Origin True Qi slowly started to recover, Shang Xia discovered that it nearly doubled. However, he also discovered that transforming more of his Yin Yang Essence Qi became more difficult.

Only if he experienced an improvement in his spear art would he be able to complete a higher level of conversion of his qi.

At the same time, the urge to sink his entire consciousness into his dantian filled his mind. He wasn't foreign to the feeling as he felt it once during his breakthrough. He also knew that it was the sign that his divine sense was about to reach new heights.

He was clearly taken aback by the sudden changes. He had barely broken through to the Martial Intent Realm. However, the signs of breakthrough came again, and it signified that he had already reached the requirements to enter the large completion stage of the Martial Intent Realm.

That was where the problem was. According to the rules of cultivation, a Martial Intent Realm cultivator who was about to break into the large completion stage would have completed more than 80 percent conversion of their remnant inner qi from the Martial Extremity Realm. Currently, Shang Xia had only converted close to half of his inner qi.

"This might have something to do with the properties of my Yin Yang Essence Qi... It's the only explanation." Shang Xia sighed softly as he got to his feet slowly. He recovered some energy after sitting there for some time, and when he pulled the spear out of the ground, he saw several chips in the tip. His expression sank instantly.

The Waning Moon Spear wasn't the only weapon that was damaged. The other graded weapons on him had also suffered varying degrees of damage.

The silver staff he obtained from Yuwen Changtian back in the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World was shattered into countless pieces that scattered around the battlefield. It was close to a graded weapon, but it was still somewhat lacking. It failed to withstand Shang Xia's Origin True Qi. At the very last second, he threw out every single weapon he had towards the three of them after filling them with his Origin True Qi.

Along with his final move, Flashing Meteor, he defeated Song Yushu, Ma Jianfan, and Tan Xinya. The three elite disciples from their respective institutions were suppressed just like that and Shang Xia felt a trace of smugness filling his heart.

Before falling to his butt earlier, he retrieved all the weapons while the flashes of lightning obstructed the view of the disciples outside. Naturally, his little actions couldn't be hidden from Ji Wenlong and the rest. Even so, the situation was exactly as they had said. The rules didn't forbid him from using multiple weapons.

"Waning Moon Spear... Damn it! This low-grade weapon was just completed by Master Duan Hong. Now, it's close to being destroyed!" Shang Xia howled in his heart after the joy of defeating the others died down. That was a low-grade weapon they were talking about. However, it was about to be scrapped after enduring the battle he just went through.

Shang Xia's initial thought was that Duan Hong made a mistake when converting the Waning Moon Halberd to the Waning Moon Spear. However, that didn't really make sense. Shang Xia wasn't a noob. When he received the spear from Duan Hong and his apprentices the other day, he could tell that the spear was somewhat in an acceptable condition.

It was still a low-grade weapon at the end of the day, but seeing as it couldn't withstand his qi like the rest of his weapons, he came to a serious conclusion. Despite being a graded weapon, the Waning Moon Spear could be considered a garbage tier low-grade weapon!

Chapter 252: Meeting Dou Zhong Again

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Kou Chongxue's injury was no longer a secret. The news had already spread through the Azure Origin World.

The various powers were concerned with where exactly Kou Chongxue was hiding in seclusion. The most likely and suitable place would be the secret region in the Tongyou Institution. However, that crafty old fellow behaved unpredictably.

As such, many experts who harbored their own thoughts tried breaking into the Tongyou Institution in order to verify the news. In response, they were met with strong retaliation from the Tongyou Institution. Regardless of where they came from, most of them were pretty much killed. Their bodies were thrown outside the city to serve as a warning for those harboring evil thoughts.

That happened during the intense battle on the Tongyou Peak. It was also the reason why Yun Jing had to remain back in the institution to control the situation in order to avoid any displays of weakness.

The four other institutions came over on their own accord to provide reinforcements soon after that, but Yun Jing stopped them with the assistance of the Hidden Frost Sword and native cultivators of the Tongyou City.

There was no other reason than to protect any news of Kou Chongxue from leaking. He was the hope of the Tongyou City. With his presence alone, he intimidated both the Azure Spiritual World and those in the Azure Origin World with nefarious intentions.

The prestige of a Martial Dipper Realm expert and a divine weapon...

...

“What?! Patriarch Kou really wishes to see me?” Shang Xia stared at the person in front of him incredulously and a trace of suspicion was heard in his voice, “Right now?!”

Not too long after he left the training plaza, he was stopped by a terrifying figure who brought him the news.

No one knew when Shang Lubing returned to the institution, but he was precisely the one who stopped Shang Xia. He couldn't be bothered with Shang Xia's suspicions and he chuckled in response, “Looks like you were already ready to meet him though?”

Realizing that his words were a little disrespectful, Shang Xia quickly apologized. “Instructor, please do not misunderstand. Aren't there many people who are trying to find out where Patriarch Kou is hiding in seclusion right now? If I visit him now...”

The reason why Shang Xia was still entertaining Shang Lubing was because he was Kou Chongxue's sworn brother. If it was anyone else, Shang Xia might even suspect that it was a weird plot from the Rose Party in order to lure him into a trap.

The smile remained on Shang Lubing's lips as he continued, “Don't worry about it. Those losers won't dare to show their face. They can try to track us or make an attempt on your life. But when that happens, we'll be able to capture them in one fell swoop.”

The f...?

A look of surprise appeared on Shang Xia's face, but a trace of reluctance filled his heart all of a sudden.

“What the hell? Aren't you just using me as bait to catch all of them? Why am I supposed to do something like that? Those who dare to scheme against Patriarch Kou are definitely in the Martial Extermination Realm. Those weaker won't have the guts to do anything like that! I just entered the Martial Intent Realm! I might be strong, but I'm nothing more than a worm in the eyes of those Martial Extermination Realm freaks...” Shang Xia thought to himself.

After all, Shang Ke said something about it to him previously. In fact, the Shang Clan was also taking part in the plan.

However, Shang Xia heard Shang Lubing's explanation soon enough. "Actually, you're not the only one who received an invite from the patriarch..."

Widening his eyes in shock, he asked, "Who else?"

"Dou Zhong, Mu Qingyu, Zhang Jianfei, and Meng Tianzi. Including you, that's five people." Shang Lubing maintained the smile on his face.

Shang Xia nodded as several thoughts flashed through his mind.

Even though he had been in seclusion since he came back, he learned about some matters going on in the institution from Yan Qi.

The people Shang Lubing mentioned were those who came up mostly victorious when up against the elite cultivators of the other institutions.

Moreover, Shang Xia was pretty well-acquainted with most of them.

As he followed behind Shang Lubing, they walked towards the depths of the institution. From the looks of it, they were heading towards the secret region where the cultivation chambers were built for disciples to break through.

That was also where Shang Xia comprehended his Chaos Essence Lightning Palm in the past. Due to a series of fortunate, or unfortunate, events, heavenly lightning was drawn over to his location. Well, everything that happened after was pretty well summarized.

The only problem was the suspicion that lingered in Shang Xia's mind. The heavenly lightning that struck him didn't seem to be the work of nature. It seemed like someone had drawn it over intentionally.

In the past, the incident drew a lot of attention, especially from the Shang Clan. However, no proper evidence was found and they could only conclude it as an act of nature eventually.

Soon after, the battle on the Tongyou Peak happened. The spies the Rose Party placed in the Tongyou Institution were revealed...

With the little history lesson playing out in his mind, he eventually arrived before the entrance of the secret region. He saw the four of them already waiting for him.

One of them stood out slightly and Shang Xia noticed the trace of vigor flashing through his eyes from time to time. It seemed as though he wasn't someone to be looked down on, and he was none other than Dou Zhong.

Seeing Shang Lubing, Dou Zhong greeted in excitement, "Teacher!"

A smile appeared on Shang Lubing's face and he nodded slightly.

When the rest heard the way he addressed Shang Lubing, looks of envy could be seen on their faces.

It seemed slightly different from the way anyone else would address the custodians and instructors in the institution. It seemed as though Shang Lubing had really taken Dou Zhong in as his disciple. (Gonna change the way Dou Zhong calls Shang Lubing to 'Master' after this. Keeping this here for accuracy's sake)

Such a situation couldn't be said to be common in the Tongyou Institution, but it wasn't exactly rare either. There were instances of it happening sometimes.

Once their master-student relationship was formed, it was much more solid than the ordinary teacher student relationship between those in the institution.

That wasn't all. Shang Lubing was a Martial Extermination Realm expert. There wasn't a need to mention his strength and authority among the five institutions. Even in the Azure Origin World, he could be considered one of the top tier existences.

Being taken in as a student of such an expert was a fortunate thing alright.

Just based on that fact alone, anyone could tell how talented Dou Zhong was. Otherwise, he would never be able to catch Shang Lubing's eye anyway.

His achievements when battling against the disciples of the other institutions only served to back him up even further. He even caught Kou Chongxue's interest!

Compared to the shock experienced by Mu Qingyu and the rest, Shang Xia looked a lot more calm than expected.

Shang Xia had his suspicions back in the Tongyou Peak. After all, Dou Zhong's rise was too abrupt. After greeting his master, Dou Zhong turned to look at Shang Xia before nodding slightly to indicate his greetings.

As the corners of Shang Xia's lips curled upwards, he felt a trace of amusement in his heart. "Large completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm. I heard that you were only in the small completion stage several days ago. Looks like you broke through recently. You haven't consolidated your foundations and your inner qi is leaking out of your body unconsciously."

"Senior Brother Tian, Junior Brother Zhang! You came back from the battlefield between the two worlds!" Shang Xia turned to greet the other two after addressing Dou Zhong.

Chapter 253: Depths of the Thousand Leaf Mountain Range

"Senior Brother Tian, Junior Brother Zhang! You came back from the battlefield between the two worlds!"

Shang Xia chuckled softly.

Zhang Jianfei was Shang Xia's competitor for the position of the leader of the outer division in the past. He was a genius in his own right, and now, he had entered the large completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm. He was on the cusp of comprehending his martial extremity intent.

However, his confidence took a huge hit when he thought about how Shang Xia had already entered the Martial Intent Realm.

Hearing Shang Xia's greeting, he couldn't help but sneer in response, "Hah, we had to clean your ass after you caused all that trouble back then. Do you know how unreasonable that was?"

Zhang Jianfei's main purpose in returning was to comprehend his martial extremity intent in peace. He didn't expect for so many challengers to come knocking on the Tongyou Institution's door. Because of the constant battles, he managed to advance his cultivation to a huge degree. He benefited greatly from it, but he still wanted to mess with Shang Xia a little. Regardless, they had been rivals in the outer division and a small bicker like that was nothing out of the ordinary.

Compared to Zhang Jianfei who communicated with Shang Xia in his own unique way, Tian Mengzi acted a little more differently. A bitter smile appeared on his face. "Junior Brother Shang, your cultivation speed really leaves me in awe."

"Senior Brother Tian, if not for the fact that you took some time off to recuperate, you would have already stepped through the gates of the Martial Intent Realm!" Shang Xia smiled in response.

Tian Mengzi chuckled bitterly in response.

"Senior Brother Shang."

Compared to the rest, Shang Xia couldn't help but feel a little awkward when facing Mu Qingyu. Back in the Zhu Family Manor, he ditched her in the hidden chamber and forgot about her completely.

Only when the Tongyou Institution attained victory did someone rescue her from her precarious predicament. She spent countless nights trapped in the secret chamber, unable to take even a step outside.

"Junior Sister Mu, I am truly sorry about the incident in the Coral Forest. I should not have left you there alone." Shang Xia said.

Mu Qingyu replied with a soft chuckle. "Senior Brother Shang, there's no need to apologize. If not for your help, I would have suffered a fate worse than death. It's nothing more than spending a few more days trapped in a room. Moreover, you left so many resources back there for me to enter the Martial Extremity Realm. It can be considered some sort of fortunate encounter for me."

It was true that the resources belonged to him. Zhu Ying didn't keep all of them due to the lack of space in his Embroidered Cloud Case, and Shang Xia gained ownership of them after chasing the man away. It was too bad his spatial artifact was also limited in space and after taking a few herbs and treasures that caught his eye, he left everything else in the room.

After that, Shang Xia went out to hunt down Zhu Ying and left Mu Qingyu behind. Due to her limited strength, she couldn't leave due to the presence of the undead corpses. Helpless, she could only choose a few resources to continue her cultivation. Eventually, she broke through.

Shang Lubing finally interrupted their pleasant conversation. "Since all of you know each other, things will become much easier! Let us proceed!"

After he spoke, he led the way into the secret region as the five disciples followed closely behind.

Shang Xia looked at all of them and saw the looks of confusion on their faces as well, but no one dared to ask Shang Lubing anything. He chose to take one for the team and asked, "Instructor, has Patriarch Kou always been in the institution?"

That was a question many people wanted to know the answer to.

Turning around to look at everyone, the smile on Shang Lubing's face remained, "You'll know when we arrive."

After hearing his reply, no one dared to continue with their questions. They could only follow obediently behind Shang Lubing deeper into the secret region.

Along the way, they saw lush greenery and several creatures roaming around freely. It seemed like paradise compared to the outside world.

"This is a good place to enter seclusion indeed..." Shang Xia gasped softly in his heart. When he looked around, he could even see several birds flying from tree to tree.

"I haven't been here all my life. Seems like only the true upper echelon members of the institution will be allowed to enter this place. The heaven and earth qi here is definitely comparable to the Coral Forest..." Shang Xia continued.

However, he felt that something was off the deeper they went.

As they traveled deeper into the secret region, the trees in the surrounding got taller and thicker. From the looks of it, they were at least hundreds of years old.

The ground beneath their feet also turned rugged, and their pathways became more and more narrow. It was clear that not many people came and went.

Shang Xia noticed several structures cultivators used for seclusion when he first entered the secret region, but there was nothing since. The dense forestry blocked out most of the sunlight as they ventured deeper, and only spots of light could be seen.

The six of them traveled more than a dozen miles since they entered, and there was no way the institution was so huge. Even if they had a space expanding formation around the area, Shang Xia felt that there was no way they could expand it to such an extent. Even the four spiritual lands in the Coral Forest weren't as large as that!

There were only two possibilities left. One, the Tongyou Institution was like a mysterious world comparable to the Coral Forest. Two, the group of them had already left the Tongyou Institution at an unknown time.

It wasn't exactly possible for the first option to be true. That left the second. They left the Tongyou Institution at an unknown time and arrived in a foreign land!

After realizing what had happened, Shang Xia turned to look around him. Dou Zhong, Mu Qingyu, and Zhang Jianfei were equally as surprised. The only person who seemed to have grasped an understanding of the situation was Tian Mengzi.

Noticing the species of the wood around them, Shang Xia couldn't help but ask, "Instructor Shang, have we entered the depths of the Thousand Leaf Mountain Range?"



Shang Lubing didn't bother turning his head, but he hesitated for a second before replying, "What makes you think so?"

"Instructor Shang might have forgotten. I entered the Coral Forest previously. Don't tell me our institution had the ability to contain a mysterious world?" Shang Xia smiled in response.

Without slowing down, Shang Lubing continued, "Alright, since you already figured it out, there's no point in hiding it. We are currently in the depths of the Thousand Leaf Mountain Range."

Dou Zhong gasped in shock, "Has Patriarch Kou always been away from the institution?"

Shang Lubing snickered in response, but he didn't give an exact reply. However, the silence was all they needed.

At that moment, the faces of the others changed drastically. The Tongyou Institution had always been putting up an act!

As thoughts swirled around in their minds, Shang Lubing stopped and whispered softly, "We're here."

His words were like a giant sledgehammer that slammed into their minds to bring them back to reality.

The elusive figure that no disciple of the institution had ever met before was finally about to appear!

Chapter 254: Illusory Tea

"We're here!" Shang Lubing's voice came from the front as the five behind him snapped back to reality. They got ready to meet the legendary Patriarch Kou Chongxue of the Tongyou Institution they heard so much about.

Among the five, Shang Xia felt the most at ease. It wasn't just because of his status. Instead, his cultivation had more to do with it.

After all, not even Shang Lubing's disciple, Dou Zhong, could hold his composure like that.

When Shang Xia saw how Shang Lubing took two steps forward, he did the same and he couldn't help but gasp in shock.

When the others heard him, they ran over in unison. Noticing the beautiful scenery, they were completely taken aback.

Since it was already late autumn, dried up leaves were falling from trees and they made up most of the foliage as the group of six made their way deeper into the Thousand Leaf Mountain Range.

However, the region before them was nothing like that. They were greeted with a sigh of lush greenery and the region was full of life!

"Is this really the Thousand Leaf Mountain Range we know?" Zhang Jianfei asked.

He wasn't the only one who was confused. There were others who found it inconceivable.

Regardless, Meng Tianzi found it unbelievable. Kou Chongxue's act of hiding in the Thousand Leaf Mountain Range might be surprising, but there had to be someone who guessed as much. It didn't

make sense for no one to check the Thousand Leaf Mountain Range when they were looking for him.

The region before them might seem special, but it wasn't exactly a separate space. It didn't make sense for no one to locate it. Naturally, that was only applicable if they were truly in the depths of the Thousand Leaf Mountain Range. Earlier, they left the institution without even knowing it. The same situation might be happening right now.

Unlike the others, Shang Xia's thoughts weren't focused on the region in front of them. Instead, he was thinking about how the institution managed to create a spatial tunnel to the depths of the Thousand Leaf Mountain Range. He knew that the institution's foundations were sufficient for them to do something like that. Otherwise, the institution wouldn't have started their conquest for the Coral Forest after twenty long years.

It was obvious they were focused on something else before.

Regardless, that couldn't explain how Kou Chongxue's hiding spot was undetectable by the outsiders.

Like what Meng Tianzi thought, the various powers would definitely send their experts to scour every inch of the lands. It didn't make sense for them to miss the Thousand Leaf Mountain Range.

A possibility flashed through Shang Xia's mind all of a sudden. He couldn't resist the urge to speak up, "Is this... Is this another entrance to the battlefield between the two worlds?"

Zhang Jianfei snapped at him the moment the words left his lips. "How is that possible? The only entrance to the battlefield is located at the main entrance of our institution!"

Shaking his head slowly, Shang Xia muttered, "Did you forget how the Rose Party entered the battlefield between the two worlds?"

"Could there be more than one path into the battlefield between the two worlds?" Tian Mengzi muttered to himself.

Mu Qingyu, Zhang Jianfei, and Dou Zhong turned to look at Shang Lubing as they anticipated his reply.

A gentle voice rang in their ears before Shang Lubing could say anything. "I didn't think that you would be able to think of this. Impressive. You're not exactly correct, but you're close."

Creaks came from a small wooden hut nearby as a middle aged man clad in loose white robes emerged.

His appearance was pretty clean, but there was a weary look in his eyes. A short stubble remained on his chin and the roots of his hair were starting to turn gray. His appearance was unassuming, but from the moment they laid eyes on him, he seemed to turn into the heavens and the earth. Nothing else mattered other than that middle aged man.

Zhang Jianfei nudged Shang Xia slightly and he muttered in a soft voice, "Did you... Did you see that wooden hut earlier?"

Shang Xia whispered in response, "Nope. But I can confirm that the wooden hut has been there all along. It's not covered by any sort of camouflage formation. Seems like we didn't notice it."

Perhaps that was the reason no one was able to locate Kou Chongxue's tracks?

"Haven't you kids been thinking about meeting your patriarch? Why are you acting like fools now that he's standing right in front of you?" Shang Lubing chuckled after nodding towards the middle aged man that just appeared.

Shang Xia and the others felt their bodies trembling violently as they snapped back to reality. They greeted Kou Chongxue hastily.

From the look on Kou Chongxue's face, it seemed like he had just woken up from his afternoon nap. He led the group into the courtyard and towards a small table carved from an entire chunk of wood. Gesturing for everyone to sit, he poured out a cup of tea for everyone.

The several disciples were naturally too awkward to respond. Only Shang Lubing downed the entire cup of tea the moment Kou Chongxue was done pouring his tea. Narrowing his eyes, he smacked his lips before muttering, "What great tea! If not for the fact that I'll get to drink this, I wouldn't bother bringing these kids all the way here."

When he was done, he ignored the bitter smile that was forming on Kou Chongxue's lips. Turning to the five disciples, he continued, "There's no need to stand on ceremony with him. Your patriarch's Illusory Tea is good stuff. It's really famous outside the You Continent too. You have to drink it while it's hot. Otherwise, it will lose all its effects."

Hearing what he said, the five disciples quickly raised their cups to their lips. Even though they drank it like Shang Lubing, their reactions were different. They didn't narrow their eyes to savor the taste like the old expert. Instead, their gazes turned hazy and they seemed to fall into some sort of illusory world.

Kou Chongxue addressed Shang Lubing when he saw their reactions. "How was it? Did anyone follow you here?"

Shang Lubing shook his head in response. "We might have thought about things too simply. The members of the Rose Party and the other powers wouldn't choose to follow me at this time."

Kou Chongxue wasn't surprised by that at all. Instead, he laughed softly in amusement. "Of course they won't. However, that doesn't mean that they won't make a move on the kids when you return. It won't take long for them to figure out where I'm hiding after this too."

"Are you really planning to leak this location out?" Shang Lubing frowned.

The smile on Kou Chongxue's face remained, but he didn't give a proper answer.

A trace of irritation appeared in Shang Lubing's heart. "You can't! Your injuries..."

The smile on Kou Chongxue's face faded and he turned serious. "There's no time. If we don't do this, how can we merge the Coral Command into the Tongyou Institution?"

Shang Lubing wanted to continue his persuasion, but Kou Chongxue raised his eyebrows slightly and gasped in shock before turning to look at the five disciples. "Wow, these kids are really talented. Practically every one of them managed to gain some enlightenment from my tea."

The words barely left his lips when Shang Xia's consciousness trembled. His eyes snapped open and he glanced all around him. It was a force of habit after encountering so many dangerous situations in the past, and when he was sure that it was safe, his taut nerves finally relaxed.

"I embarrassed myself in front of Patriarch Kou and Instructor Shang..."

Shang Lubing spoke before Kou Chongxue could say anything. "It's alright. You should think about what you just comprehended. Otherwise, you'll waste the effects of the tea."

Shang Xia nodded before closing his eyes once again to think about what he just experienced.

Soon after, the other four disciples also started to awaken.

Chapter 255: Impressive Gains

Shang Lubing's tip for Shang Xia to continue pondering over his gains earlier was perfectly in line with his intentions. Previously Shang Xia downed the whole cup of tea and felt a trace of fire running down his throat. Next, he seemed to have sunken into a dream.

Even though it took less time to boil a cup of tea for Shang Xia to awaken, he felt that a long time had already passed in his dream.

In the time that passed, he spent a lot of time thinking about the battles that passed and his cultivation in the Triple Providence Chapter and the Providence Spear.

When he first woke up, it was because of his habit after experiencing so many dangerous situations in the battlefield between the two worlds. After closing his eyes again, he continued his contemplation. When he woke up for real, the experiences, comprehension, and insights he obtained remained in his mind. If he could absorb all of them in time to come, his cultivation would take a huge leap forward yet again. He could save at least a year or two worth of time.

At the very least, his path of cultivation all the way to the peak of the large completion stage of the Martial Intent Realm would be smooth sailing.

The others also eventually regained consciousness, and they gathered their thoughts after a quick reminder from Shang Lubing.

The air around Shang Xia transformed slightly due to the insights he digested. Tian Mengzi and the others were unable to notice the subtle change as they were focusing on their own gains, but Shang Lubing was different. He glanced at Shang Xia as a soundless chuckle left his lips.

With their minds finally clear, they noticed that only Shang Lubing was left in the courtyard. Kou Chongxue had already left at an unknown time.

"Instructor Shang, where is the patriarch?" Tian Mengzi asked.

He was at the verge of a breakthrough and all he needed was a little push to start consolidating his divine sense. He had been looking forward to receiving Patriarch Kou's pointers.

Shang Lubing pointed at the wooden hut they had neglected when they first arrived and said, "Actually, he was planning to give general pointers to all of you. However, he eventually decided to respect your paths of cultivation. Due to the difference in your cultivation levels and secret arts you cultivate, everyone will have to walk down their own path. He decided to teach you guys one by one. Anyone who is ready can go ahead and enter the wooden hut."

As soon as he spoke, Tian Mengzi was the first to rush towards the wooden hut. Taking a deep breath, he greeted, "Upper Division Disciple, Tian Mengzi, greets the patriarch!"

He seemed to have received some sort of instruction as he opened the doors of the hut to enter.

The moment the doors closed, the wooden hut seemed to be separated from the rest of the world.

Seeing as the situation had quietened down, Shang Xia chose to sit down cross legged in the courtyard as he continued his cultivation.

When he tried to circulate the inner qi in his body, he felt the heaven and earth qi in the surroundings gush towards him. He felt slightly suffocated in that instant and nearly jumped in fright.

Circulating the Triple Providence Chapter hastily, Shang Xia tried his best to absorb them into his body. Only then did he realize that the ball of formless chaos in his body had grown even more. The amount of Yin Yang Essence Qi that remained in his dantian decreased yet again.

The feeling of his divine sense's second transformation approaching overwhelmed him. So did traces of uncertainties. He also felt that even though the principles of the Triple Providence Chapter were placed in front of him, he was unable to see them clearly.

"These things feel familiar, and they seem to originate from my comprehension in my dream after I drank the Illusory Tea. Once I fully digest it, I will truly enter the large completion stage of the Martial Intent Realm. From the looks of it, I should be comprehending the second chapter of the Triple Providence Chapter. Understanding the first chapter gave me a sense of familiarity towards the second, but it's not enough to fully catch the meaning behind it." Shang Xia started to feel a sense of anticipation towards the future after realizing the fact.

"If I manage to transform my divine sense a second time in such a short amount of time, the sense of familiarity might actually disappear. Rushing into it won't seem smart. When that happens, I might forget my insights completely and would have to start comprehending the second chapter from scratch..."

As his thoughts spun, it became clearer and clearer. However, they were eventually disrupted by the creaking sound of Tian Mengzi leaving the wooden hut.

A look of unbridled joy could be seen on his face. He was muttering something to himself as he approached the group.

Stopping all of a sudden, he raised his head to stare at all of them in confusion and a trace of hesitation flashed in his eyes. Eventually, he turned to leave from where they came from without addressing any of the other four.

When everyone was confused by his actions, Shang Lubing's voice rang in their minds. "Who's next?"

Zhang Jianfei had been waiting for his chance earlier, but Tian Mengzi was a step faster than him. This time, he got to his feet and bowed towards Shang Lubing before heading towards the wooden hut.

It didn't take long before his ecstatic figure emerged. He also returned without speaking to the rest. After Zhang Jianfei went Mu Qingyu, and Dou Zhong went next.

The two of them received their pointers from Kou Chongxue and left happily towards the institution. Shang Xia was the only one left.

By that time, more than four hours had passed.

Shang Lubing glanced at Shang Xia from the corner of his eye and muttered in amusement, "Kid, you're something else alright. You took the chance to cultivate while waiting..."

Exhaling a breath of turbid qi, Shang Xia replied, "The heaven and earth qi in this place is extremely dense. It might be due to Patriarch Kou's presence, but the heaven and earth qi in this place is a little different from other places. I realized that cultivating here will be extremely beneficial, and I didn't dare to waste my chance."

Shang Lubing roared with laughter. "Kid, you're really lucky alright! Too bad they haven't formed their divine sense and are unable to receive any additional benefits."

Shang Lubing's response basically solidified Shang Xia's guess that the heaven and earth qi in the surroundings was beneficial to the development of his divine sense, and that was enough.

"What are you standing around here for? Do you think that your patriarch is really free? Hurry up and enter."

Chapter 256: Casual Conversation With Bossman

"Enter." Kou Chongxue's gentle voice rang in Shang Xia's mind and he opened the door to the hut.

From the outside, the wooden hut wasn't large at all. It was several feet wide at best, but everything changed the moment he entered. It was several times larger on the inside!

Shang Xia obviously knew that Kou Chongxue used some sort of space expansion ability on the hut, but he didn't know if it was through the use of a formation or Kou Chongxue's personal abilities.

At that moment, Kou Chongxue was sitting cross-legged on a straw mat while smiling at Shang Xia.

Due to his oversized robe, Kou Chongxue looked a little fat when he sat cross-legged on the mat.

Shang Xia didn't know if he was mistaken, but he thought he saw a trace of weariness cross Kou Chongxue's face when he looked at the man.

"Patriarch." Shang Xia greeted.

"There's no need for such formalities." Kou Chongxue chuckled softly. "I saw you many times when you were still a wee little brat. You were too young then, and you

probably don't remember. In the past few years, this old man had been cultivating in seclusion here. I rarely showed my face in the institution and not just you, many instructors and custodians might not be able to recognize me."

Shang Xia quickly spoke up. "Patriarch, even if you don't show your face outside, your prestige can suppress everyone inside and outside the You Continent."

Kou Chongxue laughed twice before pointing at Shang Xia. "Your grandfather and your father aren't as glib tongued as you." Pausing for a second, he continued, "Anyway, with my relationship with your elders, you should be calling me granduncle."

"Shang Xia greets Granduncle Kou!"

Chuckling softly, Kou Chongxue nodded his head before saying, "How did you manage to guess that this was the depths of the Thousand Leaf Mountain Range and that it had something to do with the battlefield between the two worlds?"

Thinking for a second, Shang Xia arranged his thoughts before replying, "Disciple took part in the battle for the Coral Forest and I became familiar with spatial formations and passages then. From the looks of it, this place is completely different from the outside world. It somewhat resembles the four spiritual lands of the Coral Forest."

"Just that?" Kou Chongxue raised an eyebrow in response.

"Well... Our Tongyou Institution borders the Thousand Leaf Mountain Range and the battlefield between the two worlds. A portion of it seemed to also have disappeared into the battlefield between the two worlds after the collision of the worlds. If Patriarch Kou has been recovering in the Thousand Leaf Mountain Range all this while without being discovered, it can only be located in the battlefield between the two worlds."

Kou Chongxue nodded slowly as Shang Xia continued, "This disciple thinks that there are some people who have already thought of this point. However, none of them possess the ability to tear open the spatial barrier between our Azure Origin World and the battlefield between the two worlds to verify their guesses."

Kou Chongxue roared with laughter after hearing his conjecture but sighed the next moment. "They might not have been able to do it previously, but the Rose Party managed to force their way into the battlefield between the two worlds in order to carry out their schemes on the Coral Forest. It's just a matter of time before someone locates this place."

"Patriarch, do you mean..." Shang Xia seemed to have heard the meaning behind Kou Chongxue's words and he asked.

However, he was uninterrupted before he could finish his sentence. "The spatial barrier between our world and the battlefield between the two worlds is growing thinner and thinner. This can only mean that the fusion between our worlds cannot be stopped. We don't have much time left!"

A thousand thoughts ran through Shang Xia's mind and he realized that Kou Chongxue just revealed a massive secret to him.

Before he could allow his thoughts to go wild, Kou Chongxue's voice brought him back to reality. "How have you progressed on comprehending your Triple Providence Chapter and your Providence Spear?"

Seeing the look on Kou Chongxue's face, Shang Xia wasn't surprised at all that the patriarch knew about his inheritance. He replied quickly, "I comprehended the first chapter of the Triple Providence Chapter, and I managed to develop three moves from the Providence Spear."

"Not bad, not bad at all. This old man can tell that your foundations are solid despite your quick progress in your cultivation level. That's the real benefits of your Shang Clan's Triple Providence Chapter. As long as you have a strong foundation, your cultivation can increase extremely quickly. It doesn't disgrace itself as a technique that originated from the upper worlds..." Kou Chongxue chuckled.

Giant waves battered against Shang Xia's heart. "Patriarch, what do you mean by the 'upper worlds'?"

"Haha, you've been to the battlefield between the two worlds. You should know that our Azure Origin World isn't the only world out there. Our Azure Origin World, and even the Azure Spiritual World, are merely two tiny worlds in the vast universe. There are greater worlds that have already progressed further down the path of cultivation. Those are what we call the 'upper worlds'." Kou Chongxue completed his explanation.

Shang Xia quickly followed up with another question. "Are we... Are we able to travel to those upper worlds?"

His idea was simple. Since the upper worlds were more advanced, he thought that they could easily ask them for help. Once they receive inheritances and assistance from the upper worlds, their path of cultivation would become much smoother.

His question was met with a shake of the head from Kou Chongxue. "Heh. It's not that easy to travel to the upper worlds. Even if we do, we have to hide our identities. If we're not careful, we might even draw a massive disaster on our world."

Shang Xia gasped in shock. He wanted to continue his line of questioning, but it seemed Kou Chongxue wasn't planning on speaking more about it. The patriarch eventually closed off the topic with a final statement. "In the future, you definitely have a chance to head out there to take a look. Of course, that will only happen after you enter the Martial Extermination Realm."

Was entering the Martial Extermination Realm the lowest requirement to explore the world outside?? Shang Xia fell deep into thought.

Kou Chongxue eventually changed the topic. "Do you know how many different moves your grandfathers came up with when they tried to comprehend the Providence Spear?"

"How many?" That was also a question that had been bugging Shang Xia since he stepped into the Martial Intent Realm.

"Shang Bo developed seven moves while Shang Ke came up with five."



Realizing that Kou Chongxue wouldn't bring up a topic like that for fun, Shang Xia decided to dive deeper into it. "What are the differences between the two of them?"

"You should look for them for a better explanation. It's not appropriate for me to divulge too much, but I have to say something now that you have drunk the Illusory Tea. Otherwise, the effects might be wasted." Pausing for a second, Kou Chongxue continued, "I heard Shang Bo say that anyone who manages to develop six moves after comprehending the Providence Spear would have achieved a high level of understanding. The moment one manages to develop six moves or more, their chances of comprehending a martial intent in the Martial Intent Realm would increase greatly. For Shang Bo to develop seven moves of his own, his strength could be said to have reached a terrifying level. His attacks have the ability to damage other cultivator's soul, hence the name, Soul Tearing Spear. Shang Ke's talent might not be as great as Shang Bo, but he is also a force to be reckoned with. Due to his fighting style, he was named the Suspended Spear."

Chapter 257: To Shine Like a Diamond

Shang Xia clearly didn't know the details of the cultivation path of those in the older generation of his clan. Now that Kou Chongxue was willing to speak openly about it, he quickly gained interest in it.

"The reason I'm telling you this is for you to take note. You have to focus more attention on your Providence Spear. It's great that you managed to develop three moves from what you already comprehended. You need to come up with three more by the time you enter the large completion stage of the Martial Intent Realm. Only then will you have hopes of comprehending your third martial intent." Kou Chongxue advised.

He only continued when he saw Shang Xia nodding his head. "In your Shang Clan, it doesn't matter if it's the Triple Providence Chapter or the Providence Spear. Both possess limitless talent. If you enter the upper worlds in the future, you should look for the origin of these techniques. The moment you find the source of your inheritance, your future will be limitless!"

Shang Xia thanked Kou Chongxue for his guidance, but the patriarch wasn't done. Waving his hand to stop Shang Xia, he continued, "There's no need more for me to talk about your 'Providence' inheritance series. However, you're at the edge of your second divine sense transformation. I wonder if it's possible for me to assist you in the last part for you to break through the bottleneck..."

A look of joy appeared on Shang Xia's face. "Patriarch, please give me your guidance."

However, Kou Chongxue waved his hand again to stop Shang Xia. "There's no need to rush things. Before this, I have some questions I wish to ask you."

"I was rude, please forgive me..." Shang Xia muttered in response.

Chuckling slightly, Kou Chongxue didn't bother with his polite act any longer. Instead, he asked, "What are your views of the Martial Intent Realm?"

Widening his eyes in shock, Shang Xia didn't know how to answer the question.

Kou Chongxue seemed to have expected his reaction and a smile appeared on his lips. "There's no need to answer me right away. After all, you barely entered the Martial Intent Realm. Your cultivation rose like a rocket, and now, you're close to reaching the next level once again. Even though most of it can be explained with your comprehension of the Triple Providence Chapter, your solid foundations in the Martial Extremity Realm should also play a part. If I have to guess, you're slightly lacking when it comes to understanding the essence behind the true meaning of training at the Martial Intent Realm."

Stunned, Shang Xia didn't know what reaction to give. He could only remain silent to wait for Kou Chongxue to continue.

"Training steadily is definitely the way to go. However, knowing the outcome without knowing how to get there is a whole other problem. You won't be able to get far that way. That is what I learned in all my years of cultivation."

"Patriarch, please guide me." Shang Xia said in response.

Grunting once, Kou Chongxue added, "After a cultivator refines his advancement medicine in the Martial Extremity Realm, they would be able to condense their divine sense. It's considered the first transformation of one's divine sense. Do you know what that means for the cultivator who just entered the Martial Intent Realm?"

A puzzled look appeared on Shang Xia's face and he guessed, "Doesn't that mean that they would experience an increase in strength?"

Kou Chongxue shook his head in response. "No. That's too vague. In fact, a cultivator who enters the Martial Intent Realm would gain the ability to influence the heaven and earth qi around themselves to a certain degree."

Shang Xia seemed to have thought of something similar and he asked, "Does that mean that we can use our divine sense to affect the heaven and earth qi around us?"

"You can think of it that way. What happens after the second transformation?" Kou Chongxue nodded and continued his line of questioning.

Shang Xia didn't bother hiding his ignorance anymore. He simply shook his head.

"The divine sense of a Martial Intent Realm cultivator will start fusing with their inner qi. It allows them to become more connected to the world. That isn't all. It's something like the interaction between the heavens and the cultivator." Kou Chongxue continued speaking as he explained all his insights in his years of cultivation to Shang Xia. From the formation of divine sense, to the second and third transformation. Finally, entering the grand completion stage of the Martial Intent Realm by comprehending one's third martial intent. He went into great detail and even used his personal experience to back his explanation up. When he spoke about

more complex points, he took his time and even went through it several times up to the point where Shang Xia finally understood what he was talking about.

All of a sudden, Kou Chongxue added, “Originally, you would be able to comprehend all of this from your Triple Providence Chapter. However, what I said should be able to save you some time. I hope you don’t find me too naggy...”

“Patriarch, you must be kidding. This disciple cannot be happier to receive your guidance.” Shang Xia replied.

Those words came from the depths of his heart.

Because of what Kou Chongxue shared, Shang Xia managed to learn one important fact. After stepping into the Martial Intent Realm, his previous guess of transforming essence to qi, training qi to achieve the divine, and returning from the divine to the void seemed to make sense. Now, he had to add one more layer at the end. It was to refine the void into the dao.

Transforming essence to qi was what happened during the first transformation. Training the qi to achieve the divine was probably the second transformation, and according to Kou Chongxue, the key to that level was fusing his divine sense with the world. At the same time, he had to keep his will steady.

Next came returning from the divine to the void. That corresponded with the third transformation, and refining the void into the dao would allow him to step into the grand completion stage.

As his thoughts spun in his head, Kou Chongxue’s sigh broke his train of thought. “A cultivator’s path is full of uncertainties and difficulties. One can even say that it’s a road that is undiscovered. All of us are exploring as we go along. From there, we’ll carve out a proper path. As the pioneers of the path, we hope that we can look for ways to let people in your generation take fewer winding paths. Hopefully, you understand the effort I put into this. After all, the time we are given is diminishing as we speak.”

Doubts filled Shang Xia’s mind, but he felt a terrifying pressure descending on him in the next moment. His body seemed to have turned into stone, and his divine sense froze over.

He wanted to speak, but he discovered that he couldn’t open his mouth no matter how hard he tried. He wanted to look around, but his eyeballs wouldn’t spin.

“Luckily... My... Origin... True... Qi... Can... Still... Circulate... Now... Change... To... Fuse...”

Shang Xia understood that it was an opportunity for him to transform his divine sense a second time.

Kou Chongxue seemed to be using his terrifying strength to force Shang Xia into breaking through. The feeling Shang Xia had when he first entered the Martial Intent Realm returned to him.

A familiar light swallowed him from inside out, and his consciousness accepted it without any struggles.

Chapter 258: Risky Operation

When Shang Xia's consciousness entered his dantian once again, he could feel his Origin True Qi running wildly through his body. A comfortable feeling swept over his soul and he felt wholly enlightened.

If Shang Xia's breakthrough to the Martial Intent Realm allowed him to grasp the feeling of his divine sense forming, his breakthrough now gave him the full experience.

He seemed to be able to observe the full breakthrough from the space inside his dantian.

A flash of inspiration struck him when he was feeling the changes. That was probably the effects of his second divine sense transformation anyway.

Wanting to see the full range of his divine sense then, Shang Xia chose to conduct his experiment then and there. He extended his divine sense as far as he could, and it quickly left the wooden hut. When it did, he felt as though he had forgotten something but the thought quickly left his mind.

His divine sense went further and further as it eventually entered the courtyard from before. He could even see Shang Lubing who was preparing to pour himself another cup of tea. As the old expert raised the teapot in one hand, he seemed to have detected something amiss as he glanced at his surroundings.

Shang Xia's divine sense didn't stop there. It continued to extend outwards, and when he reached a radius of 30 feet from himself, he felt a wave of dizziness threatening to overwhelm him. Realizing his limits, he started to withdraw his divine sense and the sick feeling of nausea started to fade.

As his divine sense returned to his body, he discovered that Shang Lubing was nowhere to be seen.

Realizing what he had forgotten, Shang Xia tried to locate the old patriarch and eventually found him casually conversing with Shang Lubing not too far away from where he was cultivating.

He couldn't help but recall the scene where they just arrived. None of the disciples noticed the courtyard and Kou Chongxue's wooden hut.

They were right in front of them, yet none of the disciples noticed them!

Was that an ability of Martial Dipper Realm experts?!

His train of thought was interrupted by the conversation between Kou Chongxue and Shang Lubing. "Why is he taking so long?" Shang Lubing asked.

Turning to stare at Shang Xia, the corners of Kou Chongxue's lips curled upwards to form a sneer, "This brat's cultivation is higher than them to begin with. I have to spend a little more effort on him compared to them."

Shang Xia noticed that Kou Chongxue had discovered his sneaky behavior the moment he stared at him. Deciding to test the limits of his abilities, he no longer bothered with the two old experts and his divine sense condensed around him.

He found out that not only could he observe his surroundings, he was also able to 'see' himself sitting in the hut.

"You shouldn't expand any more of your fate dipper. Your injuries will only become more serious!" Shang Lubing's voice was low, and his words were like a warning to Kou Chongxue.

In response, the patriarch chuckled. “It doesn’t matter. I can still hold on for now...”

“The kids are talented, but there’s no need for you to exhaust your fate dipper to help them! Just give them some pointers and impart several sets of martial arts to them if they’re really talented. If you want to take it a step further, you can easily give them a few advancement formulas. At the very worst, just reward them with a graded weapon. You’re a Martial Dipper Realm expert. Do you really lack stuff like that? Why do you need to exhaust your fate dipper like that?”

Kou Chongxue revealed a bitter smile in response. “You should know that the greatest effects of my Illusory Tea will only be brought out when taken in conjunction with the source energy from my Eternal Spring Fate Dipper. In order to lower the risk of anything happening during his cultivation and breakthrough, I have to use it...”

Shang Lubing muttered softly, “Don’t you know that your injuries were caused because of the imbalance between your fate dippers?! Now that you weakened it further, your injuries are only going to get worse!”

“There’s not much time left... The speed of fusion between our two worlds has reached a terrifying level. The spatial barrier is also growing too weak. The mere presence of the Rose Party in the battlefield between the two worlds is enough proof of that. In the future, entering the battlefield between the two worlds will start to become a common occurrence. We need to ensure the later generations grow as strong as possible before that happens.” Kou Chongxue sighed.

After staying silent for some time, Shang Lubing asked, “How long do we have left?”

“Soon... The fusion should be done in less than five years. In fact, it might be much sooner than we think.” Kou Chongxue revealed a bitter smile.

“How is this possible?!” Shang Lubing gasped. He only managed to suppress his shock when he noticed Kou Chongxue’s lethargic appearance. “If that’s really true, how can we be ready for it?”

Kou Chongxue’s appearance slowly returned to normal. “Even if we don’t have enough time, at least we can leave behind a seed of hope. Don’t you think so?”

Shang Lubing sucked in a long breath and continued, “It’s no wonder we took the risk to reclaim the Coral Forest even when faced with the alliance of the Rose Party and the Four Spiritual Peak... Luckily for us, the risk paid off. Today, we have complete supremacy over the battlefield between the two worlds. Even if our worlds fuse together, our You Continent will be the one controlling everything.

“Hah. If only things are so simple. Don’t forget, the Qing, Bing, Shu, and Liang continents are right beside us. That’s how we formed the five border institutions anyway. Even if our You Continent managed to gain control of the battlefield between the two worlds now and we formed an alliance with the other four institutions, there

are many other continents out there in the Azure Origin World... No matter how great our accomplishments are now, we might not be the eventual winner!"

Kou Chongxue's words were like a bucket of cold water that was splashed over Shang Lubing's head.

"Even so, it's better than doing nothing." Kou Chongxue added after noticing the look of exasperation on Shang Lubing's face. "Once we merge the Coral Forest into our institution, we'll be able to gain another trump card. Even if the situation takes a turn for the worst, we will have another way out."

"If that's true, won't you have to..." A worried look appeared on Shang Lubing's face after hearing what he said.

Raising his hand to stop Shang Lubing from saying anymore, Kou Chongxue turned to stare in Shang Xia's direction. "Brat, since you're done, it's time to come out. Why are you learning all your dad's bad habits? Stop eavesdropping on your elders!"

Opening his eyes, Shang Xia turned to look at Kou Chongxue in shock. "My father?"

"How's your breakthrough? Was it smooth?" Kou Chongxue changed the topic suddenly, diverting Shang Xia's attention.

Turning his attention to his dantian, Shang Xia noticed that the amount of Yin Yang Essence Qi left in there decreased once again. The feeling of becoming one with the world grew stronger. Nodding his head, he replied to Kou Chongxue's question. "It went amazingly smooth..."

"Oi brat, did you spy on me with your divine sense earlier?" Shang Lubing interrupted all of a sudden.

"I was trying out my abilities... I failed to restrain myself because of the sudden increase in strength..." Shang Xia explained himself hastily.

Before Shang Xia could complete his explanation, he saw Shang Lubing's expression changing. "It really is you! Are you crazy? You expanded your divine sense and fused it with the heavens and earth to observe your surroundings the moment you completed your breakthrough. Aren't you afraid that you would lose your mind and turn into an undead corpse?"

With his jaws dropping in fright, Shang Xia didn't know what he should say.

Luckily, Kou Chongxue stepped in. "It probably has something to do with the Shang Clan's Triple Loop Coalescence Needle. It strengthened his soul during his advancement to the Martial Intent Realm."

Shang Lubing nodded slowly in response.

However, Shang Xia felt that the Triple Loop Coalescence Needle was only a part of the reason behind his strengthened soul. After the optimization by the blood red tablet, his advancement to the Martial Intent Realm was significantly different from those who used it before.

A smile appeared on Shang Lubing's face as he decided to talk about something else. "Kid, your cultivation was the highest among the five and the reward you received was the greatest. What are you still doing here? Why aren't you returning to the institution to consolidate your foundations?"

Pausing for a second, Shang Xia explained, "Disciple heard from Instructor Shang that Patriarch Kou's injuries are getting worse. I wonder if there's anything I can do to help him?"

"Haha, your intentions might be good, but your cultivation isn't high enough. He's a Martial Dipper Realm expert and even I can't do anything about his injuries, much less you." Shang Lubing chuckled.

Despite what he said, Shang Xia could tell that Shang Lubing wasn't really mocking him for having a low cultivation. As such, he decided to try again. "This disciple heard that Patriarch Kou's injuries were due to the imbalance between his fate dippers. One of his fate dippers is called the Eternal Spring Fate Dipper and it's the one that allowed me to break through to my stage. I wonder what the other one is called?"

The moment the words left his lips, Shang Lubing's expression turned weird. "Kid, you're a sneaky one alright, What else did you hear?"

Shang Xia shook his head and sighed. "That's about all I heard."

Naturally, that's not all he heard. However, there was no need to reveal it explicitly. Anyway, Shang Lubing's question was merely a formality.

Glancing at Kou Chongxue, Shang Lubing asked, "Kid, do you know that anything regarding the patriarch's cultivation shouldn't be revealed to anyone else? Even if you're Shang Bo's grandson, it doesn't matter. What if the secrets are revealed to our enemies? When that happens, our patriarch will be in a great deal of trouble!"

"Of course I understand." Shang Xia muttered without a change in expression.

Snorting softly, Shang Lubing intentionally turned a little more serious. "Since you understand, why aren't you leaving?! Don't tell me you're thinking of asking even more questions about your patriarch's injury?"

Any other student of the institution would have given in to the formless pressure coming from Shang Lubing and left. However, Shang Xia was no ordinary student. He looked at Kou Chongxue dead in the eye and asked, "I wonder if Patriarch Kou is willing to share more?"

Chapter 259: Illegitimate Son Of Luck

"I wonder if Patriarch Kou is willing to share more?" Shang Xia asked.

Hearing his question, Shang Lubing was about to erupt with anger as his expression sank. His tone turned frosty and he growled, "Brat, are you deaf? Didn't you hear what I said? Do you really think that I won't dare to do anything to you because you're Shang Bo's grandson?"

One couldn't forget that Shang Lubing was in charge of the Contribution Division in the Tongyou Institution. He had the authority to punish and reward the disciples of the institution as he saw fit.

Another terrifying wave of pressure came crashing down on Shang Xia. Even though it wasn't comparable to what Kou Chongxue used when he broke through earlier, it was more than enough to force a Martial Intent Realm cultivator into the ground.

However, he clearly underestimated Shang Xia. Shang Xia remained standing despite the frightening amount of power pressing down on him, and the ground beneath his feet was starting to sink. His veins were clearly visible as they bulged out from his forehead, and it was clear that he was resisting Shang Lubing's aura with everything he could.

If they looked at it from another angle, it would prove a terrifying fact. Shang Xia actually had the capabilities to stand against Martial Extermination Realm experts!

Even though there would only be one outcome if he tried anything, that was enough! Being able to resist the aura of a Martial Extermination Realm expert placed Shang Xia far above the crowd.

Just as Shang Lubing was starting to feel awkward about the situation and the thought of teaching Shang Xia a lesson crossed his mind, Kou Chongxue's soft chuckle broke the weird stalemate.

A look of amusement could be seen in Kou Chongxue's eyes as he looked at Shang Xia. "How are you so sure that you can help me?"

"Hmph, help my ass." Shang Lubing sneered angrily.

Naturally, Shang Xia chose to ignore Shang Lubing as he addressed Kou Chongxue directly. "This disciple doesn't dare to promise anything, but two brains are better than one. Even if I can't think of a solution now, it doesn't mean that I will never be able to think of one."

"Hah, do you really think this is a problem that can be solved through discussion and brainstorming?!" Shang Lubing snorted at the side.

Waving casually towards Shang Lubing, Kou Chongxue stopped him from dissing the kid any further. A profound gaze appeared in his eyes and he looked into Shang Xia's eyes. He seemed to be able to see through any secrets Shang Xia was hiding, and the kid twisted his body subconsciously.

Chuckling slightly at Shang Xia's response, Kou Chongxue continued, "Alright. It's nothing too important anyway. We'll just take this as a casual chat. It can serve as a guide to your cultivation in the future and help you avoid some critical problems."

Shang Lubing shot a strange look at Kou Chongxue before turning to Shang Xia. "I don't know what to say anymore. You're really lucky... What are you waiting for? Thank the patriarch! Even your grandfather hasn't learned what he's about to tell you."

Despite being a little annoyed by Shang Lubing's repeated comments, Shang Xia still put on a respectful expression to thank Kou Chongxue.

Nodding slowly, a look of melancholy appeared on Kou Chongxue's face. He seemed to be thinking about the past but he eventually spoke up, "Kid, do you know how a cultivator enters the Martial Dipper Realm?"

Obviously, Shang Xia wasn't expecting such a question. He was stunned for a moment, but he threw out a guess. "Is it not through the use of an advancement medicine?"



Shang Xia wasn't the only one who was taken aback. Even Shang Lubing didn't understand why Kou Chongxue would ask such a question.

"Hehe, my question probably came as a surprise. After all, this is something neither of you have experience with." Pausing for a second, he continued, "Everyone knows that I entered the Martial Dipper Realm and they think that I have a complete advancement formula. That is one of the greatest foundations that holds up our institution. However..."

Kou Chongxue stared at the two of them with a complicated look in his eyes. "... This advancement formula isn't complete."

"What?!"

"Not complete?!"

The two of them basically yelled in unison. Turning to look at each other, they saw the look of worry in each other's eyes.

The rank five advancement formula said to be owned by the Tongyou Institution wasn't complete! If the news ever got out, the entire Azure Origin World would be shaken by the news. In fact, the backlash might be so terrifying that it could shake the foundations of the Tongyou Institution.

"How did you..." Shang Lubing asked.

Kou Chongxue wasn't surprised by their reactions at all. He replied calmly, "It's the Origin Tide."

"Origin Tide?!" Shang Lubing gasped. "How did you..."

Shang Lubing was clear about what happened during an Origin Tide in the battlefield between the two worlds. Even the strongest family that existed before the collision between the two worlds wouldn't be able to resist the energy that came from an Origin Tide. It was said that a giant Origin Tide erupted during the collision, turning the entire Zhu Family into a bunch of undead corpses.

How in the world did Kou Chongxue survive?!

"During the initial phase of creation of the battlefield between the two worlds, I encountered an Origin Tide and saw that a strand of Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper was swept up in it.

"Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper?!" Shang Lubing gasped. "That's a top-grade fate dipper!"

"Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper?" Shang Xia muttered to himself. It seemed as though he was thinking of something.

Shang Lubing turned to look at him and asked, "Do you know what that is?"

"Nope." Shang Xia shook his head. However, a distinct guess remained in his heart. From the sound of it, it has something to do with the element of gold among the five elements...

Kou Chongxue added, "Under such circumstances, I know that there was only one thing left to do. Since both ways pretty much resulted in death, why not take my chances? I used the incomplete advancement formula I had and used the strand of Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper to enter the Martial Dipper Realm."

Sucking in a cold breath, Shang Lubing whispered, "In the end, you succeeded!"

"Yeah." Kou Chongxue nodded. "In fact, I have no idea how I managed to succeed. I used my advancement medicine that was created with two missing ingredients and swallowed the Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper. In a daze, I took in a large amount of energy from the Origin Tide. When I woke up, the Origin Tide was gone. I also managed to fully refine the strand of Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper."

Kou Chongxue might have told his story casually, but the two of them knew how dangerous the situation actually was. He basically handed his fate over to the heavens by doing that.

One had to know that there was another person who tried charging into the Martial Dipper Realm. His preparations were much more complete than the patriarch, but he suffered a miserable fate. He turned into a rank five undead corpse who died under the bombardment of several Martial Extermination Realm experts.

Shang Xia's thoughts went a level deeper.

When the Tongyou Institution launched an offensive against the Coral Forest, Shang Xia felt that their actions were a little hasty. Even though the Tongyou Institution eventually came out on top to achieve an overwhelming victory, the truth of the matter was that things could have turned out a lot differently.

They even lost a Martial Extermination Realm expert like Liu Jitang!

If not for the fact that Liu Zhiyuan, Kang Ci, and Shang Ke broke through during the entire episode, their victory would have been pathetic. The three of them managed to replenish the fighting strength that the institution had lost!

The higher ups of the institution might have gone all in for the Coral Forest because they discovered that Kou Chongxue didn't possess a complete advancement formula. Since the Zhu Family was the strongest family before the calamity, they were the ones with the highest chance of possessing a complete advancement formula.

Shang Xia couldn't help but think of the time when he entered the secret chamber and saw the stone grave. No matter how hard he tried to recall the words that appeared, he was unable to do so.

A strange feeling filled his mind at that instant. It seemed to originate from the depths of his mind, and it felt as though a hidden memory was about to be unlocked. Unfortunately for him, he failed.

Was that a memory seal?

Shang Xia's heart trembled slightly. The feeling appeared when he thought about the words on the stone coffin, and Shang Xia was sure it had something to do with the advancement formula inscribed in it.

Since the seal on his memory wasn't broken earlier, it probably had something to do with his cultivation. When his divine sense transformed for the third time, he might be able to loosen the seal on his memory. However, he didn't know how strong he would have to be to completely destroy the seal and unlock the memory of the rank five advancement formula.

When Shang Xia was still stuck deep in thought, Shang Lubing continued to ask about the origins of Kou Chongxue's second fate dipper.

Shang Xia's attention was finally drawn back to reality.

"... This is the place I managed to refine my second fate dipper." Kou Chongxue gestured at the wooden hut around him. It seemed as though he had built his residence at the location where he located his second fate dipper.

"Here?" Shang Lubing's eyes widened in shock. He clearly didn't expect such a reply.

"You should remember how I left to explore the world after the institution started running properly twenty years ago. After exploring the regions around the spatial barrier around the battlefield between the two worlds, I found this place." Kou Chongxue explained.

Shang Lubing added, "Yeah. I remember you saying something about locating a secure region to cultivate. You even requested for Ma Mingfeng to assist you in creating a spatial passage connecting this place to the institution."

"That's right." Kou Chongxue continued, "When I discovered this place, it was teeming with life, completely unlike anything else. It was the perfect place to cultivate."

"After absorbing the vitality in the area, I started to cultivate. With the assistance of my inner qi, I managed to create a second strand of fate dipper after ten years of cultivation. That was my second fate dipper, the Eternal Spring Fate Dipper."

Shang Lubing shook his head and sighed, "God damn. I thought that we used up all our luck when the calamity struck us. Who would have thought that all the luck landed on you! What the hell... Are you the son of lady luck or something?!"

Chapter 260: Shang Xia's Suggestion

"... What the hell... Are you the son of luck or something?!" Shang Lubing couldn't help but curse under his breath.

Shang Xia discovered that Shang Lubing's personality was completely different after meeting Kou Chongxue.

In the past, he felt that Shang Lubing had always been a strict fellow who would never joke around under any circumstances. It probably had something to do with his position as the head of the Contribution Division.

After the meeting with Kou Chongxue, Shang Xia discovered that this sworn brother of Kou Chongxue was actually an interesting character. Even in front of Shang Xia, he behaved extremely casually. He even seemed somewhat like a common street thug.

Shang Xia's interest was piqued once again after hearing what he said. He didn't know much about fate dippers, but from Shang Lubing's tone, it seemed as though both fate dippers were really high grade ones.

Even though Shang Xia hadn't heard of the Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper, he heard about the Origin Yang Mysterious Copper before. He learned from Shang Ke that it was a rank five treasure that could be used to refine divine weapons. Since the Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper had 'Primal Yang Copper' in its name, it was on par, if not better than the Origin Yang Mysterious Copper.

It wasn't hard to imagine how Kou Chongxue's strength took a huge leap forward after refining it.

One had to know that Kou Chongxue stopped the Azure Spiritual World alone after entering the Martial Dipper Realm. At the same time, his reputation was so striking that even those in the Azure Origin World didn't dare to act recklessly.

"Oh right, about your Hidden Frost Sword..." Shang Lubing seemed to have thought of another matter and he quickly brought it up. The origins of the Hidden Frost Sword was also something he was curious about.

Due to many factors impacting the development of the Tongyou Institution, Kou Chongxue didn't share the details of his incomplete advancement formula, even to his sworn brother.

"The Hidden Frost Sword is mainly made up of Origin Yang Mysterious Copper. With my fate dipper, it managed to display even more power compared to other divine weapons. That's how I gained an advantage over the others who were fighting over the Tongyou Peak previously."

With the effects of Kou Chongxue's Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper out of the way, it was time to talk about his Eternal Spring Fate Dipper. It wasn't particularly effective in battle, but it was mainly used to increase one's longevity.

Shang Xia once heard about the lifespan of cultivators. Before one entered the Martial Extermination Realm, they would be able to live for 120 years at most before their vitality would be completely used up. Only after entering the Martial Extermination Realm would their body and soul experience a fundamental transformation.

Because of the effects of the extermination origin, a cultivator's lifespan would increase, and they would be able to live for approximately 200 years.

Even though entering the Martial Dipper Realm wouldn't cause such a huge transformation to one's body and soul, their lifespan would definitely increase a little. However, the increase was pretty much negligible. Cultivators who wished to live longer could use some methods to increase their longevity.

Refining an Eternal Spring Fate Dipper was one way, but it wasn't easy to do so. Once a cultivator managed to create and refine an Eternal Spring Fate Dipper, their lifespan would increase by 100 years! They would be able to live for nearly 300 years!

To cultivators, the longer they lived, the higher their chances of breaking through to the next level of cultivation.

Other than the increase in lifespan, a Martial Dipper Realm expert would also discover that their injuries healed faster than others their level. When they exhausted their inner qi, they would recover quicker.

“This doesn’t seem right...” Shang Lubing frowned. “Since you created and refined the Eternal Spring Fate Dipper, why are your injuries getting more serious instead of recovering?!”

Shang Xia’s gaze quickly landed on Kou Chongxue as he didn’t understand why his injuries were getting worse too.

Only then did he discover that Kou Chongxue looked a lot more haggard than when they first met.

Even though there was a trace of lethargy in Kou Chongxue’s eyes earlier, he didn’t look too bad. Now, he looked like he was about to collapse at any given moment.

Shang Xia could vaguely guess that his worsening injuries had something to do with him giving the five of them pointers and assisting his breakthrough. He was clear that what Kou Chongxue did for him earlier ate up a lot of energy.

A bitter laugh escaped Kou Chongxue’s lips. “That’s because my Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper is currently clashing with my Eternal Spring Fate Dipper. The Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper is too strong and it’s suppressing the other fate dipper.”

“Huh?!” Shang Lubing cried. “Clashing against one another? Didn’t you discover something wrong when you first started refining your Eternal Spring Fate Dipper?”

“I kept them both at an equilibrium when I cultivated, and with my inner qi, I was able to forcefully stop the suppression by the Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper.” Kou Chongxue explained.

“Then, after you suffered your injury...”

“Yes. Due to my injuries, my Eternal Spring Fate Dipper was weakened and the equilibrium between the two broke. My inner qi was also considerably weakened, and I couldn’t resist the Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper’s suppression over the other.” Kou Chongxue sighed.

Shang Lubing sucked in a cold breath in response. “The road of cultivation is long and unpredictable. For you to reach your current level by pioneering your own path, it’s a miracle.”

A self mocking smile appeared on Kou Chongxue’s face. “Yeah. The path of cultivation is certainly unpredictable. I’m really lucky to be able to get where I am.”

Shang Xia had been listening carefully to everything Kou Chongxue said. Even though he was ballsy enough to ask Kou Chongxue about the details of his injury, he discovered that the patriarch was using this chance to share his path of cultivation to the two of them. Otherwise, his story wouldn’t start when he was breaking through to the Martial Dipper Realm anyway.

According to Shang Xia, there were too many details he couldn't understand. Of course, that didn't mean that Shang Lubing didn't know what Kou Chongxue was talking about. As such, Shang Xia chose to keep quiet. He used every second he had to think of a way to help Kou Chongxue, and he seemed to have an idea of what to do.

Even though he was only in the Martial Intent Realm, his knowledge of cultivation was a lot more than anyone could imagine. When he just transmigrated, he drew many parallels between the cultivation level in the Azure Origin World and the knowledge left behind in his previous world.

The only reason he wasn't able to apply all the knowledge he had to his own cultivation immediately was because of his lack of understanding. He had to take things step by step to ensure that nothing went wrong.

Compared to the stuff he knew from his previous world, the four layers of the Martial Extermination Realm resembled the four divisions of the twenty eight constellations. To put it in a more well known term, the four divisions represented the White Tiger, Azure Dragon, Black Tortoise, and the Vermillion Bird.

The Martial Dipper Realm seemed similar to the five elements of wood, water, fire, earth, and metal.

Following that line of logic, that was the reason why Kou Chongxue's injuries were getting even worse. Metal was a natural counter of wood.

His first fate dipper, the Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper, was of the Metal element. It wasn't hard to understand as it was implied in the name.

His second fate dipper, the Eternal Spring Fate Dipper, was of the wood element.

They were only able to coexist in his body due to his overwhelming inner qi. After his injury, the balance between the two was broken. From a certain angle, the clash between the two elements in his body could cause his situation to further deteriorate.

The Eternal Spring Fate Dipper was supposed to extend a cultivator's lifespan, but in Kou Chongxue's case, it would cause him to die a lot earlier.

What made things worse was that Kou Chongxue decided to act all strong and mighty as the patriarch of the Tongyou Institution and use his Eternal Spring Fate Dipper to make tea for the five promising disciples and to help Shang Xia break through. It was no wonder his injuries were getting worse.

A plan eventually formed in Shang Xia's mind. Just as it did, Shang Lubing's chuckle entered his ears. "Kid, you heard him. Have you thought of any ideas to help your patriarch recover?"

Kou Chongxue smiled at Shang Xia, and he seemed to have forgiven Shang Xia for his impulsiveness from earlier. After all, he felt that it wasn't a problem solvable by Shang Xia.

Who would have thought that Shang Xia would reply with the most serious expression they had seen on the kid's face since he arrived. "Actually, I do."

Turning to look at Kou Chongxue, Shang Lubing was about to burst into laughter. "Oh? Let's hear it."

“I thought of two approaches. The first might be able to solve your problem completely, but the second can only fix the problem temporarily.”

The greatest chemist in the Tongyou Institution, Ge Muchen, had no idea where to start when faced with Kou Chongxue’s injuries. Now, a mere Martial Intent Realm brat had the guts to tell Kou Chongxue and Shang Lubing that he came up with two ideas!

If not for the fact that Shang Xia was a disciple of the institution, and probably the most promising one at that, Shang Lubing might have already sent him flying with a kick. Oh right, his grandfather being one of the deputy patriarchs also had something to do with Shang Lubing’s restraint.

Kou Chongxue found it slightly amusing, unlike Shang Lubing, and an encouraging grin appeared on his face. “Alright, tell us your ideas. Don’t worry if you’re wrong, no one will beat you up after this.”

Unlike the tense expression they were expecting, Shang Xia looked incomparably at ease as he explained, “The first method, which would cure your problem from the root, is for you to find a water-attributed fate dipper and refine it immediately. The other is for you to cultivate near a water source or some water-attributed spiritual land. You might be able to ease the suppression of your Eternal Spring Fate Dipper.”