

# Splitting the Heavens

## *Chapter 3: I'm Not Showing Off...*

The cultivators who entered the Tongyou Institution would be separated into different batches and nurtured differently!

Those who entered would be considered freshmen, and nearly a third of them would be able to awaken their talent for cultivation to enter the Martial Realm! Those who entered the late stages of the Qi Gathering Realm would be eligible to enter the inner division in their second year.

As for the remaining two thirds, half of them would be rejected from the institution due to their lack of ability to cultivate. The remaining half who had a little talent would be able to remain in the outer division as 'retainees'.

Naturally, they wouldn't be able to enter the inner division the moment they broke through to the late Qi Gathering Realm. They had to enter the Martial Realm in order to qualify!

If they were unable to do so, they would be expelled from the institution at the end of their second year.

Those expelled that way were able to use their identity as students who were once from the Tongyou Institution to introduce themselves to the outside world. As such, many disciples would work extremely hard to just remain in the institution for another year.

Naturally, the end goal was to enter the inner division. None of the retainees would bother with the freshmen. All of them wanted to use their remaining time to advance!

Since that was the case, the leader of the outer division became a mere title. It didn't signify the strongest disciple in the outer division.

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After the incident in Zhu Ying's courtyard, all six divisions caught wind of it and chaos broke out among the student body.

As one of the three main characters in the rumors that were going around, Shang Xia was relaxing under a tree. A pot of tea was steeping beside him, and he didn't seem to have a care in the world.

When the entrance to his courtyard opened, Yan Qi's footsteps rang through the air.

Waking up from his nap, Shang Xia asked, "Are you done with the investigation?"

"Young master, there's something off about Zhu Ying!" Yan Qi's expression turned extremely solemn and he reported.

Unfazed, Shang Xia seemed to have already expected something like that to happen. He gestured for Yan Qi to sit before pouring him a cup of tea. "Tell me about it."

Downing the cup of tea in one gulp, Yan Qi explained, "Zhu Ying is the only survivor of the great Zhu Family, but the resources he received were non-existent. He entered the outer division last year, and he failed to qualify for the inner division with his talent."

Shang Xia patiently waited for Yan Qi to get to the point.

"There was nothing weird about his strength initially, and he only managed to enter the late Blood Qi Forming Realm half a year ago. Things seemed to change all of a sudden and he managed to enter the Martial Realm in a single month after the short holiday given by the institution!"

A look of interest appeared on Shang Xia's face and he asked, "Entering the Martial Realm in a month? That's interesting..."

Yan Qi's expression sank once again. "That's not all. According to students in his division, he managed to successfully cultivate the Scarlet Blood Palm by the time the evaluation started two months later."

"Entering the Martial Realm in a month and learning the Scarlet Blood Palm in two... Looks like his life was a mess before that!"

Yan Qi sighed, "According to Liu Zhifei, Zhu Ying managed to awaken his hidden potential!"

"Hehe..."

"Two months passed since he learned the Scarlet Blood Palm. He might have already learned another move! That might be the reason behind his desire to challenge you." Yan Qi thought out loud.

"There's no need to worry. I won't let my guard down. Especially not against him." Shang Xia smiled.

"Right, with your strength, there's not much to worry about." Yan Qi tried to form the same smile as Shang Xia but failed miserably.

Turning to look at Yan Qi, a mischievous glint appeared in Shang Xia's eye. "Seventh Uncle, do you know how creepy you look? What you just said doesn't suit your brutish features at all..."

With the corners of his lips twitching slightly, Yan Qi snapped, "Young master, Liu Zhifei is someone from the Liu Family. When Zhu Ying entered the institution, the Liu Family's shadow seemed to be behind him. Do you think this has anything to do with them?"

Thinking back to the crazed look on Zhu Ying's face, Shang Xia shook his head slowly. "It's too obvious. The possibility is there, but the Liu Family isn't stupid enough to use such an obvious method."

Yan Qi nodded silently in response.

Thinking deeper, Shang Xia realized another important point. Weren't there novels where the protagonist was born due to their broken engagement?! Was there an old grandpa living in Zhu Ying's mind or did he manage to obtain some weird ass treasure?

One had to know that he met two experts with the glow of a protagonist since he arrived.

To make matters worse, he was someone the two of them hated! Was he supposed to be the villain they stepped on in order to grow stronger?! Wouldn't that mean that his time left was limited?! The more he thought about it, the worse his mood became.

"Seventh Uncle, what about Dou Zhong? Did you manage to dig up anything on him?"

"He's just a wimpy brat. He managed to reach the late Qi Gathering Realm, and he's considered a little above average in the outer division. According to an instructor, he's extremely disciplined and determined. It's a little difficult to meet someone like him, but in the end, he's just a weakling. There's no need for young master to focus on him."

Disciplined?! Determined?! As long as he didn't die, he was destined for greatness! The only thing he needed was motivation to grow stronger...

Shang Xia frowned slightly and he muttered, "Regardless, keep an eye on him. Take note of everything he plans to do."

Even though Yan Qi didn't know why Shang Xia was so interested in the kid, he acknowledged the order.

"What about Mu Qingyu? What is she up to now?"

When he asked about her, his tone seemed to harden slightly. Shang Xia wasn't a fool. The current Shang Xia wasn't someone who would be blinded by her beauty.

He didn't care if she invited him over intentionally, but it was true that she threw him under the bus.

As the person who started everything, she didn't even show her face after the incident. If not for the fact that she was just a little girl, Shang Xia would think that she planned everything out in order to frame him.

"She is currently cultivating. She might break through to the Martial Realm soon." As Yan Qi stood at the entrance to Zhu Ying's courtyard, he didn't know anything that happened inside.

"Do you know the reason behind her actions?" Shang Xia asked again.

After Zhu Ying ripped up the letter of engagement, he flew into a rampage. Mu Qingyu didn't reveal the reason behind her actions either, leaving all of them clueless.

Rumors were even going around that Mu Qingyu broke off the engagement because of Shang Xia!

A strange look formed on Yan Qi's face and he glanced at Shang Xia from the corner of his eye. "Currently, all I know is that she doesn't wish to be bound by the engagement..."

"I have nothing to do with this! What's with your expression?!" Shang Xia snapped when he noticed the look he was getting.

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On the 1st day of the 6th month 843rd year of the Divine Martial Calendar, the examination of the Tongyou Institution ended. According to the rules, they would be given 2 months of holiday.

However, things were different that year due to a challenge made by a student in the first outer division for the position of the leader of the outer divisions. Everyone was looking forward to the match.

"How is it? Are you confident?" Sun Haiwei's impression of Shang Xia decreased tremendously since the incident, but since he was the most outstanding disciple of the third outer division, she couldn't help but ask.

"You should ask Zhu Ying that..." Shang Xia chuckled.

A frown formed on Sun Haiwei's face and she muttered, "You better not get careless. Zhu Ying is a second year student after all..."

“Just three days ago, you failed to break through... You were definitely injured by the backlash... In fact, I was planning to stop you from taking part in the battle today.” She continued.

Shang Xia could hear the concern in her voice, but he smiled in response, “Leave it to me. I know what to do.”

Giving him a deep stare, Sun Haiwei mentioned, “The higher ups of the institution aren’t here these days. Take care of yourself!”

After she left, Shang Xia fell deep into thought.

All of a sudden, a loud roar came from the plaza outside. “Leader of the outer division, Zhu Ying from the first outer division plans to challenge your position! Do you accept?”

Staring towards the plaza, Shang Xia noticed that there were hundreds of students standing around.

Zhu Ying wielded a short sword as he stood in the middle of the plaza. His glare clashed directly with Shang Xia’s gaze.

Ignoring the kid, Shang Xia looked at the three custodians who were present.

Two of them were people he knew. Liu Zhifei of the first division and Sun Haiwei of the third division.

The other was a middle aged man who had a distant look on his face, However, Shang Xia was shocked to discover his presence.

The man came from the Protection Division, and he was a pretty impressive figure comparable to an instructor in the other divisions.

“Disciple greets teachers and Instructor Yuan!”

Yuan Zilu, the expert from the Protection Division, shook his hand and muttered, “There’s no need for formalities. I was only invited here to be the judge of the competition.” Pausing for a second, Yuan Zilu asked, “Zhu Ying of the first outer division challenges you to a battle. Do you accept the challenge?”

Shang Xia was expressionless when he responded, “I accept.”

“Alright.” Turning to Zhu Ying, Yuan Zilu continued, “Are you sure you wish to use weapons in the challenge?”

Zhu Ying revealed a sinister smile as he waved the sword in his hand around. A frown formed on Yuan Zilu’s face when he examined the weapon. “Mid-grade weapon?”

Commotion broke out in the plaza after his evaluation.

One wouldn't even be able to find a low-grade weapon in the institution ordinarily, but now, Zhu Ying brought out a weapon one grade higher than that!

"Zhu Ying seems to be from one of the great families in the You Continent..."

"It's no wonder he managed to bring such a weapon out. The family might be exterminated, but their inheritances remain!"

"Shang Xia is in deep trouble this time..."

"Heh, did you forget how he obtained his position as the leader of the outer division?"

Yuan Zilu ignored the comments going around in the crowd and he turned to Shang Xia to request an answer. "Do you accept the use of weapons?"

"It might not be a good idea to use weapons..." A look of hesitation appeared on Shang Xia's face.

The plaza fell silent in an instant.

It didn't take long for Zhu Ying's sneer to break the silence, "Chief Shang, weren't you extremely pleased with yourself when you used your Ivory Fan to take your position? What's with the lack of confidence now?"

Shang Xia revealed a conflicted expression, but with the looks of scorn he was given, he could only agree reluctantly. "Alright then."

The Ivory Fan in his hand appeared and Yuan Zilu sighed, "Shang Xia will be using a low-grade weapon. If you're ready, the battle can begin."

"Wait. Instructor, you're not done yet." Shang Xia smiled before handing over the jade pendant hanging around his waist. A weird light flashed in Yuan Zilu's eyes when he examined the pendant. "You have a defensive talisman too?!"

Zhu Ying, who was about to mock Shang Xia for his lack of treasures, swallowed his words immediately. The confident expression he had started to disappear.

"Hehe, he has a weapon for offense and a defensive talisman to protect himself from Martial Brother Zhu's attacks... Looks like the mid-grade weapon isn't enough to give martial brother Zhu an advantage."

"Their weapons are amazing! I haven't touched a low-grade weapon and they have so many of them!"

“What the f...”

Looks of envy and jealousy were thrown their way, but the noise quickly stopped.

Shang Xia brought yet another item! It was his belt.

As the corner of Yuan Zilu’s mouth twitched, he tapped the buckle on the belt and a sword emerged.

“Delicate Jade River Sword! It’s a mid-grade weapon too!”

“Hiss...”

Zhu Ying’s face turned completely black.

He didn’t know if Shang Xia was showing off his wealth, but he felt as though a fly was caught in his throat.

Other than the Ivory Fan that was known to the rest of the disciples, that was the first time he was revealing his secrets!

No one would have thought that both treasures he brought out would be more precious than the low-grade Ivory Fan!

Turning to look at Zhu Ying, Shang Xia shrugged nonchalantly, “I told you it wasn’t a good idea.”

The corners of Zhu Ying’s eyes twitched violently in response.

Coughing lightly, Yuan Zilu decided to break the awkward air between them. “It’s just a friendly competition between fellow disciples. Let’s not use any weapons.”

A frown formed on Sun Haiwei’s face as she looked at Shang Xia.

Chuckling slightly, he handed over his treasures to her for safekeeping.

After thinking about it for some time, Zhu Ying finally decided to hand his weapons over to Liu Zhifei.

As silence filled the air, the look in everyone’s eye changed when they looked at him again.