

## The Heavens 361

### Chapter 361: Sunset Willow Spirit Awakening Needle

The change in atmosphere caused Shang Xia to realize that there was a deeper meaning behind the trade. However, he wasn't in a rush to get to the bottom of the matter. Instead, he observed the others in the hall. He realized that at least half of those who came wore a mask to hide their identities.

Shang Xia also discovered that Tian Mengzi's gaze became a lot more somber after hearing the offer. He transmitted his voice into Tian Mengzi's ears. "Senior Brother Tian, do you know what's going on?"

Tian Mengzi nodded slightly and replied with another voice transmission. "It hasn't been long since I entered the Martial Intent Realm. I only joined these gatherings twice in the past and in the past two times, Zhao Fengchun also started the gathering off with a trade. He would usually ask for a rank four advancement formula or information about extermination origins. In the past, everyone would burst into laughter after his offer. After all, no one would bother trading with him even if they had that information."

Sun Haiwei also added at the side, "I attended one gathering before, and during that time, I can confirm that he was looking for information regarding ways to enter the Martial Extermination Realm."

Shang Xia sighed softly. "... It's no wonder... For him to do this now, many people might guess that Zhao Hengchun had already entered the Martial Extermination Realm!"

"It might be a tactic they're using to release the news that Zhao Hengchun has already broken through!" Sun Haiwei whispered.

Tian Mengzi nodded in response. "I'm afraid other than the four great clans, Martial Extermination Realm experts are going to appear in other powers..."

Their gazes landed on Shang Xia unintentionally after they spoke.

They were clearly warning him that the situation in the Tongyou City might change soon.

The two of them weren't the only ones who discovered the hidden meaning behind Zhao Fengchun's actions. Everyone's gaze landed on the man and were met with an indifferent expression.

Shang Xia was equally as calm and instead of looking at Zhao Houchun, he turned to look at the other two seniors from the institution.

He interacted with many rank four advancement formula and extermination origin previously. He was extremely knowledgeable about Martial Extermination Realm experts and he knew that even if a few of them appeared in the Tongyou City, they wouldn't be able to change the situation regardless.

Zhao Fengchun swept his gaze across the hall and laughed, "Is there anyone interested in these Hazy Pearls?"

Shang Xia was actually really interested in them. Shang Quan had once spoken to him about the process of crafting rank three talisman ink. If one crushed those Hazy Pearls into powder, it would be a good assistive ingredient in making rank three talisman ink. However, the powder was a mere assistive ingredient and he only needed a small amount to refine rank three talisman ink.

Shang Xia knew that those Hazy Pearls could be used to craft rank three talisman paper, but he didn't know the specifics. After all, all he knew how to do was to craft talismans!

The Zhu Family Talisman Scripture he was using to further improve his way of talismans didn't contain any method of crafting ink or talisman paper. All it told him was how to see if the ink and paper were of sufficient quality.

Shang Xia truly desired the pearls, but he didn't have any of the treasures Zhao Fengchun wanted.

All of a sudden, a man whose face was covered in a black mask chuckled softly. "These pearls are definitely precious treasures, but I don't have any Heart Cleansing Dew or Dancing Yang Blue Jade. I do have a stalk of Heart Directing Grass. I wonder if Owner Zhao is interested?"

Pausing for a second, Zhao Fengchun muttered, "The value of the grass cannot be compared to either treasure I asked for."

A soft chuckle left the black masked man's lips and he fell silent.

The effects of the Heart Directing Grass was truly not as effective as the other two treasures despite them all being treasures of the same rank.

Zhao Fengchun continued, "Even if you do not have Heart Cleansing Dew or Dancing Yang Blue Jade, I am willing to trade as long as the effects are similar."

It was a pity no one else made an offer.

Evidently disappointed, Zhao Fengchun's gaze landed on the black masked man. "How about six pearls for your Heart Directing Grass?"

"Eight." A chuckle left the man's lips and he started bargaining.

Hesitating slightly, Zhao Fengchun eventually agreed to the trade. "Alright. As the host of the gathering, I shouldn't be so calculative. Deal!"

After he spoke, eight pearls rose into the air and flew towards the black masked man.

The man laughed happily and kept the pearls before waving his sleeves slightly. A long wooden box appeared on the table before Zhao Fengchun.

Opening it slightly to inspect its contents, Zhao Fengchun seemed to become a lot more relieved as he closed the box quickly before keeping it.

"Alright. Feel free to take over!" Zhao Fengchun regained his composure and waved his sleeves before retreating to the side.

Very quickly, another cultivator who had a stocky build went up to the table and started taking out treasures.

Shang Xia was happily watching the exchanges happening when Sun Haiwei's voice entered his ears again. "Junior Brother Shang, do you know the similarities between the Heart Cleansing Dew, Dancing Yang Blue Jade, and Heart Directing Grass?"

As Upper Division disciples of the Tongyou Institution, the connection between the items couldn't escape their eyes.

Those who were seated in the hall could also make their guesses.

Shang Xia hadn't said anything when Tian Mengzi interrupted. "From what I know, the Heart Cleansing Dew and Dancing Yang Blue Jade can be used to clear one's turbid qi. It is also really effective for one to consolidate one's foundations to prevent cultivation deviation. It's the first time I'm hearing of the Heart Directing Grass but from the trade earlier, its effects should be slightly weaker than the other two."

"From how urgently Zhao Fengchun wanted to make the trade, could something have happened to disciples of the Zhao Family during their cultivation?" Sun Haiwei frowned. "Did Zhao Hengchun run into some sort of accident after breaking through?"

Shang Xia paid attention to the exchange going on in the middle of the room while replying to the both of them. "Dancing Yang Blue Jade is a rank three treasure and a Heart Cleansing Dew is of a similar rank. If Zhao Hengchun truly broke through, these treasures would be useless for him."

Sun Haiwei hesitated slightly before mentioning, "Junior Brother Shang, do you think that he failed to break through then?"

"Hmm, that might not be the case. It's possible that Zhao Hengchun broke through successfully and is currently experiencing a small problem in his cultivation path. That is why he only requires medicine of the third rank. Of course, It's possible that the situation is extremely serious and Zhao Fengchun is panicking and is trying to get any medicine that has any effect. We can't know for sure..." Tian Mengzi shook his head and sighed.

During their conversation, three people had already gone up to the center table to propose an exchange. Two of them succeeded in getting what they wanted and only one returned empty handed.

By the time they turned their attention back to the table, a female cultivator who named herself, 'Third Mistress Liu' was standing at the center table. She opened a thin wooden box and revealed a pale yellow needle.

Shang Xia knew that it was probably a rank three medicine from the looks of it. After all, it looked pretty similar to the Triple Loop Coalescence Needle he used to break through!

Her revelation captured the attention of many people in the hall.

Soon after, she whispered softly, "This is a rank three medicine called the Sunset Willow Spirit Awakening Needle. It can assist cultivators to strengthen their divine sense and assist in one's

divine sense transformation. Naturally, it would be less effective when used during successive transformations.

Before she could mention the items she wanted to trade for, Sun Haiwei and Shang Xia heard Tian Mengzi's voice in their ears. "Please help me to obtain this item!"

The three of them could be said to be great talents of the Tongyou Institution. However, the distance between them were greatly pulled apart after their entry to the Martial Intent Realm.

Tian Mengzi was able to read the situation really clearly. He knew that neither Shang Xia nor Sun Haiwei needed the medicine and they would be able to assist him in his purchase.

Shang Xia hadn't revealed his cultivation base since returning to the Tongyou City and not many people knew that he had already reached the grand completion stage of the Martial Intent Realm. Tian Mengzi was clearly in the dark, but from the aura Shang Xia was emitting, Tian Mengzi could tell that Shang Xia's cultivation was leagues ahead of himself. As such, Shang Xia probably didn't need the needles.

Moreover, with Shang Xia's background, a mere medicine like that probably couldn't catch his eye.

As for Sun Haiwei, the reason was even more simple. She had already completed her second divine sense transformation not too long ago. As such, she probably had no need for the needle in the foreseeable future!

Tian Mengzi was the only one of the three who could use the medicine! He felt that something was missing ever since he stepped into the Martial Intent Realm. As such, the needle was probably a way for him to push himself to complete his second divine sense transformation!

#### Chapter 362: Opportunity

He was right. Sun Haiwei and Shang Xia were barely interested in the Sunset Willow Spirit Awakening Needle. Of course, they wouldn't reject Tian Mengzi since they learned that he required the medicine and they could only wait for Third Mistress Liu to put forth her conditions.

"I hope to exchange it for a rank three metal. It should be heavier than thirty pounds after I refine its impurities." As soon as she spoke of her condition, Tian Mengzi heaved a sigh of relief.

He had clearly made his preparations before coming to the gathering. Of course, he also managed to run into many opportunities of his own to obtain treasures and he wasn't too afraid that he would be unable to trade for it himself.

However, Shang Xia felt that the trade wouldn't be as easy as it seemed. Everyone sitting in the hall wasn't poor by any means. There were definitely more than a few of them who had the ability to bring out the items she wanted. However, there was only a single needle. There was no doubt that it was going to turn into a bidding war.

Before Tian Mengzi could say anything, someone in the crowd gave an offer. "I have 30 pounds of rank three Star Grain Mysterious Metal. I hope it's enough to exchange it for your Sunset Willow Spirit Awakening Needle."

A smile appeared on Third Mistress Liu's face and she replied. "Star Grain Mysterious Metal. Of course..."

“Wait a second! There’s no need to rush into it!” Another middle aged cultivator interrupted before she could finish her sentence. “Star Grain Mysterious Metal might be a rank three treasure, but I have thirty pounds of Chaotic Rain Essence Gold! It’s worth much more than what he’s offering and I wonder if you would agree to the trade.”

“I have 32 pounds of Flowing Moon Silver!”

“...”

Before Tian Mengzi could even say anything, six people had already raised an exchange.

By the time Shang Xia snapped back to reality, he discovered that he had clearly underestimated the others and how much they wanted the Sunset Willow Spirit Awakening Needle.

He might not be able to use it since he had already entered the grand completion stage of the Martial Intent Realm, and neither did some of those who were bidding, but they could buy it for their juniors or descendants!

As such, many people proposed a trade regardless of whether they could use it or not.

Reaching the conclusion, Shang Xia realized that if he hadn’t promised Tian Mengzi to obtain the treasure, he would have started bidding for it himself.

All she wanted was rank three metals. Shang Xia had a ton of it. He killed more than 10 Martial Intent Realm cultivators in the Changfeng City. He had three Embroidered Cloud Cases in his sleeves and there were too many rank three metals in them.”

Tian Mengzi also clearly realized that there was no easy way to win the item and a bitter laugh escaped his lips. He was no longer in a rush to put up a bid.

The more urgently he raised the bids, the higher the price of the Sunset Willow Spirit Awakening Needle.

Shang Xia’s gaze landed on Third Mistress Liu at that moment and he saw the smile on her face. The bidding war was clearly something she wanted to see.

It didn't take long for the price to rise by a huge amount. Two of the biggest offers were 35 pounds of Cloud Grain Mysterious Copper and 30 pounds of Star Grain Mysterious Metal with an additional 50 pieces of gold coins.

Ordinarily, everyone would be using copper boards and silver essence as currency. Not many people would use gold coins.

However, the Sunset Willow Spirit Awakening Needle was clearly so precious that it wasn’t surprising for cultivators to make up for the value of items using gold coins.

One silver essence was worth a hundred copper boards, and a gold coin was worth a hundred silver essence. They might be used as currency, but they could also be considered a type of treasure in itself.

A bronze board could be obtained after refining a batch of high grade essence bronze.

Silver essence was made after refining low grade essence silver.

By extension, gold coins were made from refining ordinary essence gold. Naturally, the process of refinement of each currency was a little more difficult than the previous ones, but the principle was the same.

As such, fifty gold coins could basically be considered rank three metal. After smelting them, she should be able to get five or so pounds of essence gold. Adding his initial offer of thirty pounds of Star Grain Mysterious Metal, it was pretty much comparable to the other offer of Cloud Grain Mysterious Metal.

With the bidding war basically at a stalemate, everything would be left up to Third Mistress Liu.

Seeing as it was about time for him to make his move, Tian Mengzi spoke up after some discussion with Sun Haiwei and Shang Xia. "I have another offer here. I wonder if you would mind listening to it?"

Third Mistress Liu turned to look at him and Tian Mengzi said casually, "I have ten pounds of Scarlet Flame Metal Sand, ten pounds of Star Grain Mysterious Metal, five pounds of Cloud Grain Mysterious Metal, five pounds of Earth Core Copper Slurry, and three pounds of Stress Gold Ore. What do you think?"

A look of shock flashed in her eyes after he spoke. "Little brother here seems to be pretty rich. However, you only offered 33 pounds in total. It doesn't seem to be comparable to the 35 pounds of Cloud Grain Mysterious Metal offered."

Tian Mengzi smiled confidently and replied. "I offered less because there are a lot more options to choose from. Doesn't this allow you to save a lot of effort to look for other materials?"

That was the result of the discussion between Sun Haiwei, Shang Xia, and Tian Mengzi.

After all, if they were truly talking about wealth, a mere Tian Mengzi wouldn't be richer than most people there. Even with Shang Xia and Sun Haiwei's help, there was no point in overpaying for the needle.

Out of the five materials he offered, only the Scarlet Flame Metal Sand and Earth Core Copper Slurry belonged to him. He borrowed the Star Grain Mysterious Metal from Sun Haiwei and the others came from Shang Xia.

From the way she was exchanging the Sunset Willow Spirit Awakening Needle for metals, it seemed as though she was trying to refine a graded weapon. Moreover, she didn't specify which material she required. That could only mean that she hadn't thought of how she should refine her graded weapon.

Without an idea of how to refine her weapon, she probably hadn't made any preparations. Since refining weapons usually involved more than one type of material, offering a few different types would increase their worth.

That was also the reason why Tian Mengzi had the guts to offer slightly less than the current highest offer. After all, he made up for it in variety.

Naturally, their method would only work if she was truly trying to refine a graded weapon.

They seemed to have placed the right bet as a smile appeared on her face. "Little brother, you seem pretty funny! But... You're right."

Actually, she was already moved when he made his offer earlier. She only mentioned what she did to try her luck at getting a little more.

The others also discovered her true intentions when they saw her reaction and started to look through their collection to see what they could offer.

They discovered that no matter how hard they tried, they were unable to bring out so many different types of rank three materials!

However, Third Mistress Liu seemed to be a little reluctant to part with her Sunset Willow Spirit Awakening Needle. She muttered, "Unfortunately, the quantity is still too low. If you can't make up for the last two pounds, I would choose to trade with the cultivator who is willing to exchange 35 pounds of Cloud Grain Mysterious Metal."

Tian Mengzi wanted to say something, but Sun Haiwei tugged his sleeves to get his attention. He turned to look at Shang Xia and saw him shaking his head slightly.

Realizing his mistake, he knew that he couldn't seem too desperate. He understood Shang Xia's intentions and he shook his head in response. "It's a shame I wouldn't be able to bring out anything more."

Gritting her teeth, Third Mistress Liu seemed a little sore that her plan failed.

Wu Tianfang from the Protection Division of the Tongyou Institution roared with laughter at that moment. "Madam Liu, stop hesitating. None of us here are fools. You can't drag things out and waste everyone's time either. Moreover, you're not making a loss..."

There seemed to be another meaning behind Wu Tianfang's words and everyone present knew what he meant. Clearly, Tian Mengzi's offer was more than fair and she was wasting everyone's time by trying to get a little more.

Pouting slightly, Third Mistress Liu sighed, "Alright, I'll trade it with you for a slight loss... Hmph!"

Tian Mengzi felt a burst of joy in his heart and he made his way forward to make the trade. At the same time, he sent a thankful look in the direction of Wu Tingfang and Huo Wuji.

After the trade was done and Third Mistress Liu returned to her seat, Wu Tingfang stood up and made his way over to the center table. Before he could arrive at the front, a chuckle came from another side of the hall. "Old Chap Wu, I heard that you have a lot of good stuff. You have to take some out and widen our horizons."

Someone else also piped up at the side, "Hey Deacon Wu are you representing the institution or are you here for your own sake?"

Wu Tingfang ignored the two of them as he made his way over. Only when he arrived at the center table did he rebuke the two of them with a soft chuckle. "Yeah, I do have some good stuff with me. It's not like you have the ability to trade for them, you fool! Moreover, the trades here are done fairly. Why do you care who I'm representing?"

Roaring laughter broke out in the hall and it seemed as though his words didn't offend the others in the slightest. No matter what, he was an important figure in the Tongyou Institution. Many people were waiting in anticipation for the things he would reveal.

Under their excited gazes, he took out a document that seemed to be made with a silk-like material. “I have a rank two advancement formula called the Distraction Powder. It’s a guide for those who walk down the dao of direction. They will be able to master left and right qi after training in it. I wish to trade for a completed graded weapon!”

Everyone was flabbergasted by the appearance of an advancement formula, but they soon roared with dissatisfaction. “Oi! All of us here are in the Martial Intent Realm. Why did you take out a rank two advancement formula?! Are you messing with us?!”

“Hehe, you want a graded weapon for a rank two advancement formula. What a joke! You should take out a rank three advancement formula at least!”

Opening his eyes in shock, Wu Tingfang turned to the person who spoke first and roared with rage, “Old Freak Yu, are you delusional or did you fall out of your bed headfirst this morning? This is a completely rank two advancement formula, not a portion of rank two advancement medicine. You’ve been alive for a long time. Have you seen a complete rank two advancement formula in your life?!”

“Oi, there’s you too.” Turning to the person who spoke after the other guy, Wu Tingfang yelled. “Do you think you can hide behind your mask and talk all the crap you want? You want a rank three advancement formula for a graded weapon? Why don’t you bring out a rank three advancement formula? As long as it’s something the Tongyou Institution doesn’t have, I’ll give you a graded weapon. How’s that?! What the f... I’ll even make a deal with you on the Tongyou Institution’s behalf. We’ll give you one graded weapon for every rank three advancement formula you take out that we don’t have. You can trade as many as you want! How’s that?!”

Seeing how unbridled Wu Tingfang was acting, everyone knew that he wasn’t serious too. Regardless, most people in the hall were dumbstruck and Wu Tingfang continued, “Damn your granny. A graded weapon for a rank three advancement formula. I wish I was as crazy as you guys too!”

Coughing once, he eventually regained his composure. “Alright, all of you are too hasty. I wasn’t done yet and all of you started yapping around. Other than this rank two advancement formula, I also have a martial art that is suitable for those who train the dao of directions. This is pretty much half of another rank two advancement formula. It’s definitely enough to trade for a graded weapon!”

Chapter 363: Flying Goose Brush

“A rank two advancement formula and a suitable martial art... Old Man Wu, are you still holding on to an inheritance? Can you complete the set and make it suitable for a Martial Extremity Realm cultivator to comprehend his martial extremity intent and reach the grand completion stage?” The smarter cultivators connected the dots when he brought out the martial art.

Sneering bluntly, Wu Tingfang replied, “Yeah, you’re right! This daddy here also has an inheritance but I don’t have to take it out! These are enough to trade for a low-grade weapon!”



Snickering under his breath, Wu Tingfang continued, “Hehe, if any of you can bring out a mid-grade weapon, I’m willing to bring the inheritance out. Hell... I’ll even throw in the recorded insights of those who had trained in it before!”

It was true that rank two advancement formulas, secret arts, and inheritances weren’t effective for those sitting in the hall. However, the situation was exactly as Wu Tingfang had said. With the exception of a rare few, none of them had seen a complete set before!

With a complete set like that, one would be able to use it as a core inheritance for their faction! There would definitely be someone in the crowd that had a family to support anyway.

“Hehe, I told you guys! Old Man Wu is a petty thief! He’s always hiding someone unless you force it out of him. Shameless asshole split the inheritance with the martial art and advancement formula in order to raise his price a little!” The person who spoke was a middle aged man who was sitting not too far away from Shang Xia. His eyebrows were strangely shaped and it was raised in the middle, forming a Chinese character ‘eight’.

A look of ridicule could be seen on his face as he continued, “Hehe, even if you can take out the inheritance, you’re delusional if you want to trade it for a mid-grade weapon. If you bring out half a rank three inheritance, we might consider it!”

Wu Tingfang’s lips curled upwards and he sneered, “How do you know no one is willing to trade it with me?”

As soon as he spoke, an aged voice rang through the hall. “I have a low-grade weapon here. I wonder if Deacon Wu is willing to make the trade?”

An old man with hunched back stood up close to the back of the hall and he brought out a short spike that was two feet long.

“Can I take a closer look at it?” Wu Tingfang asked.

“Naturally.” The old expert’s withered hands stretched out slightly and a look of reluctance filled his face as he tossed the spike at Wu Tingfang.

Carefully receiving the weapon, Wu Tingfang examined it carefully before returning it to the old expert. “I apologize. The weapon is excellent, but it’s not suitable for me.”

The old expert sighed softly and nodded his head as he retrieved his weapon. He returned to his seat and no longer spoke.

Before Wu Tingfang could say anything, he was interrupted by a familiar laugh.

Looking at the source of the voice, he discovered that it was the black masked man who traded the Hazy Pearls with Zhao Fengchun to start off the gathering.

“Do you wish to make an offer?” Wu Tingfang cupped his fists and asked.

“I have a low-grade weapon, but I don’t think it’s suitable for you either.” The black masked man chuckled in response.

“Can I take a look?” Wu Tingfang didn’t reject it immediately. Instead, he chose to play it safe. After all, a graded weapon was extremely rare and it was already impressive for him to receive two offers.

The black masked man took out his weapon casually and muttered, “Sure, take a look at it. However, this weapon is pretty special. You need to bring out the inheritance and make it a complete set if you wish to obtain this weapon.”

Slightly surprised, Wu Tingfang nodded before placing a scroll on the table.

Seeing the item, the black masked man brought out a wooden box and opened it slowly. A brush laid within and a light immediately flashed in Shang Xia’s eyes.

Two small words were carved onto the jade-like body of the brush, ‘Flying Goose’.

“This is a talisman brush!” A gasp came from someone in the hall.

“Indeed. However, it can also be considered a graded weapon!” The black masked man smiled.

Wu Tingfang was no fool. He knew how precious the Flying Goose Brush was. Something like that would definitely be in the upper ranges of the low-grade weapon. In fact, it was comparable to some mid-grade weapons! It wouldn’t be an exaggeration to trade the rank two advancement formula, martial art, and inheritance for it.

Everyone could see that Wu Tingfang was tempted and he was trying to reason with himself. However, he seemed to have recalled a piece of news that came from the Tongyou Mysterious World and he eventually shook his head. He was about to reject the deal when Huo Wuji interrupted. “Please wait!”

Huo Wuji was a lot more cultured than Wu Tingfang from the sound of his voice. Well, it wasn’t surprising as Wu Tingfang was from the Protection Division and everyone there was brutes anyway. Huo Wuji cupped his fists towards the black masked man and he smiled. “If I may ask, are you a talisman master?”

“Nope.” The black masked man was slightly taken aback by the question, but he shook his head eventually.

Huo Wuji sighed before sitting down again.

Seeing as Wu Tingfang wasn’t going to accept his deal, the black robed man started to close the case but he was stopped once again.

“Wait a second!”

The person who spoke was evidently really young. With his eyes widening with shock, the black masked man turned to look at the person who spoke and discovered he was with the person who bought the Sunset Willow Spirit Awakening Needle earlier.

Shang Xia cupped his fists to greet the black masked man and turned towards Wu Tingfang to signal his apologies for hijacking his trade before coughing softly. “I have a sword that I can trade with you for the rank two scrolls. At the same time, I need a brush.”

The moment he spoke, the faces of Wu Tingfang and the black masked man lit up. They understood what he was trying to say.

With a flick of his wrist, a chilly light flashed in the hall and the Jade Creek Sword appeared in his hand.

The Jade Creek Sword wasn't a broadsword, but it was slightly thicker than ordinary swords. It was indeed suitable for Wu Tingfang.

"That's a good sword! Alright, I'll make the trade!" The moment Shang Xia brought out the sword, Wu Tingfang's eyes lit up. He couldn't help but praise the sword while sending the advancement formula and martial art flying towards the black masked man. He kept the inheritance carefully. Like he said before, a low-grade weapon could be used to trade for the advancement formula and martial art. The inheritance was off the table unless someone brought out a mid-grade weapon.

Grabbing the scrolls Wu Tingfang threw over, the black robed man didn't toss out the case containing the brush towards Shang Xia immediately. Instead, he chuckled softly, "Little friend, I think you know the worth of this brush."

Shang Xia nodded and replied. "Of course. What do you have in mind?"

"Little friend, if you need the brush, you should be a talisman master. You can give me some talismans to make up for the cost of my brush." The black masked man smiled.

"Alright." Shang Xia flicked his wrist and sent three talisman jades flying at the man.

"Rank two talisman jades?" The black masked man might not be a talisman master, but he knew a thing or two. He could tell that Shang Xia tossed out rank two talismans at him and he felt a little disappointed. "If you're only giving me 3 rank two talismans, I'm afraid..."

Before he could complete his sentence, the talisman jades landed in his hand. He scanned them with his divine sense and his expression turned a lot more serious. He stared at Shang Xia, flabbergasted. Only after some time did he continue. "These are amazing quality sword talismans. Alright. Three of them are more than enough!"

With the deal complete, he sent the case with the Flying Goose Brush over to Shang Xia and concluded the trade. It seemed as though all three parties were extremely satisfied with their gains.

Huo Wuji, who was waiting for his turn, carefully walked over to the center table before opening a long jade case that was sealed with a talisman. Five pieces of essence jade were arranged carefully within.

"I have five pieces of essence jade here. I wish to trade for 5 rank three talismans!"

Even though he was announcing the terms of his trade to the rest of the hall, his gaze landed directly on Shang Xia.

Even though Shang Xia being a rank three talisman master wasn't widely spread through the Tongyou City, it wasn't exactly a secret.

Moreover, he just took out the Jade Creek Sword to make a deal with Wu Tingfang just a second ago. The Jade Creek Sword might not be something he used often, but almost every disciple of the Tongyou Institution knew that it belonged to Shang Xia.

After all, it was the weapon he used when facing the genius sword disciples of the other institution when the Shang Clan Convoy was 'raided' when they returned to the Tongyou City for the first time.

As such, Huo Wuji and Wu Tingfang quickly uncovered his identity. Shang Xia didn't find it surprising they managed to discover who he was either.

What he didn't expect was that Huo Wuji would bring out five pieces of essence jade to look for rank three talismans. From Huo Wuji's gaze, Shang Xia could tell that he was expecting Shang Xia to bring out those rank three talismans too!

Unfortunately for Huo Wuji, Shang Xia only managed to scrape together seven pieces of rank three talisman paper with all the help he got. With those seven pieces of talisman paper, he only managed to create two rank three talismans which he left for Hai Min to defend herself.

He might be a rank three talisman master, but he didn't possess a single rank three talisman on him! He didn't even have rank three talisman papers to craft talismans!

Feeling Huo Wuji's gaze on him, Shang Xia could only pretend to be ignorant while remaining silent.

Honestly, Huo Wuji's trade could be said to be extremely worth it if anyone was able to bring out the talismans he wanted!

Essence jade was comparable to rank three treasures, and they were much more valuable than Zhao Fengchun's Hazy Pearls! They could be used even more extensively.

As such, the appearance of those essence jade caught the attention of many cultivators in the hall.

Naturally, most of them present wouldn't be able to make the trade. However, the appearance of five essence jade allowed those in the hall to quickly understand the deeper meaning behind Huo Wuji's actions. It was possible for a person to discover a piece of two. However, for five of them to appear at once, there was only one possibility behind it. Huo Wuji was definitely not capable of bringing out so many of them. The Tongyou Institution had to be behind it.

Of course, Huo Wuji couldn't possibly trade the institution's items for himself. That would mean that the Tongyou Institution was the one who wanted those rank three talismans!

For a massive existence like the Tongyou Institution, there was no way they would be satisfied with several pieces of rank three talismans. Huo Wuji might only be one of the many experts who were tasked with locating rank three talismans.

In other words, there should be even more members of the institution who were out there scouring for rank three talismans as they spoke.

That brought them back to another question. Why would the Tongyou Institution be looking for rank three talismans?

One had to know that the institution had their own rank three talisman masters.

Well informed experts in the hall felt something click in their minds and one of them asked directly, “Instructor Huo, is the Tongyou Institution looking for rank three talismans? So that would mean that the institution is really planning to reopen the spatial tunnel leading to the battlefield between the two worlds and establish themselves there again, right?”

Huo Wuji finally realized that his act was off earlier and since someone had already brought up the question, he could only try to explain his actions. “What’s the matter? Is fellow cultivator interested in joining us?”

The person who spoke earlier burst into laughter. “Of course I’m interested! That’s the battlefield between the two worlds we’re talking about! Your Tongyou Institution will definitely take the lead and start another war the moment you reopen the spatial tunnel to grab as many benefits as possible. It would be great if we’re able to join the second batch of cultivators to enter to fight for a little benefit!”

One had to know that since the Tongyou Institution closed the spatial tunnel during the war for the Tongyou Mysterious World, they were signaling to the Azure Spiritual World that they had given up on the battlefield between the two worlds.

One could argue that the majority of the benefits of the Origin Tide that erupted in the battlefield benefited the institution, but a lot of energy remained in there.

The first batch the Tongyou Institution sent would definitely be attacked by the Azure Spiritual World who didn’t stop their advances towards the battlefield between the two worlds. The risks they were taking were the highest, but at the same time, the benefits they would receive if they were successful would be the largest!

As such, the Tongyou Institution would never allow outsiders to be part of the first batch to enter the battlefield between the two worlds even if it meant that they had to take the risk of coming under attack.

Due to the massive victory the Tongyou Institution obtained during the war for the Tongyou Mysterious World, the members of the institution experienced a huge increase in strength. Entering the battlefield between the two worlds would pose some threat to them, but they should be strong enough to deal with whatever came.

Naturally, the Tongyou Institution wasn’t stupid. After sending in the first batch to grab most of the benefits, they would open up the chance to other cultivators. For those who were interested in entering the battlefield between the two worlds from the second batch onwards, the Tongyou Institution would release a certain number of slots so that they could enter to search for their own fortune. Those from the You Continent, or even cultivators from elsewhere would be allowed to enter!

Other than obtaining rank three talismans, Huo Wuji was also there to spread the news subtly that the institution was about to start their operation!

“I have a piece of rank three talisman here. Can I trade it for a piece of essence jade?”

After understanding the meaning behind his actions, someone quickly brought up a trade.

Since a rank three talisman could only be created with divine sense, there wouldn't be too many of them in circulation.

The power contained in a rank three talisman was also really formidable. If a Martial Intent Realm expert used it, the talisman would turn into a very useful tool!

Unless Huo Wuji ran into a supreme talisman master who had deep accumulations, it was nearly impossible to trade all five pieces away at once. He would have to trade them one by one!

The allure of a piece of essence jade was huge. However, Huo Wuji only managed to trade them for three pieces of rank three talismans eventually. He kept the two remaining essence jade before returning to his seat.

He might be done, but the gathering was far from over. Perhaps it was because of his subtle revelation of the Tongyou Institution's plans, but the atmosphere became even more heated.

Throughout the process, Zhao Fengchun seemed exceptionally happy with all the extra information he gained.

During the rest of the trades, Shang Xia and the rest joined most of the time. Unfortunately for Shang Xia and Tian Mengzi, they didn't manage to obtain much.

Shang Xia didn't trade for much as not many things could catch his eye. There wasn't much he could use either as a cultivator at the grand completion stage of the Martial Intent Realm. It was a different case for Tian Mengzi. As he hadn't been in the Martial Intent Realm for long, he didn't have much savings to begin with. Obtaining the Sunset Willow Spirit Awakening Needle used up a huge portion of his wealth earlier. Even if he wanted to trade for anything else, there was nothing he could bring out!

Sun Haiwei wasn't like the two of them. She managed to obtain a piece of Triple Aperture Heart Ice Jade. It was beneficial to her cultivation and she had been playing with it the whole time since she obtained it.

The trades went by pretty quickly, and everyone felt their horizons expanding every time someone put up a rare item for trade.

Eventually, it was Shang Xia's turn to propose a trade. As Tian Mengzi and Sun Haiwei rejected the chance to propose a trade earlier, Shang Xia was the only one left.

After thinking about it for a second, Shang Xia decided to walk over to the center table.

He gauged the room earlier and not a trace of panic existed in Shang Xia's heart when he made his decision. As everyone stared at him in anticipation, he brought out seven small lacquered boxes that had a vivid carving of a white deer on its side.

Those in the hall weren't amateurs! They immediately recognized the white deer as something that came from the White Deer Paradise!

With the relationship the Tongyou Institution had with the White Deer Paradise, it was clearly impossible for a disciple of the White Deer Paradise to appear in the Tongyou City at that point. For someone to bring out an item like that in a gathering of Martial Intent Realm experts, that could only mean one thing...

The gazes of everyone present became a lot more curious and respectful when they looked at Shang Xia.

The look on Huo Wuji and Wu Tingfang became one of disbelief as they stared at Shang Xia.

Waving his hand, one of the cases slowly opened. A tiny deer that looked a little confused appeared before the eyes of everyone present.

“This is a spiritual deer that was specially nurtured by the White Deer Paradise. I won’t elaborate more on its uses. I believe everyone here knows what this is capable of. It’s not difficult to obtain this either. All I require are rank three talisman papers. There are seven boxes here with a spiritual deer in every one of them. I’ll take two pieces of rank three talisman paper per box.”

As soon as he spoke, someone got to their feet and yelled, “I have two pieces of rank three talisman paper!”

Tossing one box through the air, Shang Xia completed his first trade just like that.

He looked at the talisman paper the other party handed over and inspected them well. He discovered that they were rather crudely made, but they were rank three talisman paper nonetheless.

Shang Xia didn’t price it too high, and with the added reassurance that the item came from the White Deer Paradise, it became an extremely desirable item.

Two cultivators who seemed to know each other whispered to each other before taking out a piece of rank three talisman paper each. With that, they traded it with Shang Xia for a case.

However, someone in the crowd was clearly dissatisfied as they didn’t have any rank three talisman paper. “Little brother, unless we’re talisman masters ourselves or have the ability to craft talisman paper, we won’t be able to trade with you. Why don’t you change your request and ask for other things? I’m willing to trade a case for items equivalent in value to two pieces of rank three talisman paper. How’s that?”

Shang Xia snorted softly in response. “I’m sorry. I only wish to trade for rank three talisman papers today.”

While he was speaking, a fat cultivator approached the table and after searching high and low, he managed to pull out a dull yellow piece of talisman paper, a greenish-black material made out of beast skin, an empty talisman jade, and a palm-sized metal sheet that didn’t have any markings on it.

Even though all four items were different, they were definitely capable of being transformed into rank three talismans.

“Two cases, how’s that?” The fatty smiled before raising two pudgy fingers to Shang Xia.

Shang Xia didn’t hesitate. He took out two cases from the remaining five and handed them over to the fatty.

Even though the spiritual deer in each of the seven cases were pretty much similar, there were still very minute differences.

Those Shang Xia chose for him were clearly those of a higher quality.

After receiving the cases, the smile on the fatty's face grew wider. No one knew if he saw through Shang Xia's actions earlier, but he returned to his seat and plopped his butt down.

Thinking for a second, Shang Xia couldn't help but send the fatty a voice transmission. "Honored sir, are you able to produce talisman paper or material?"

Chapter 365: Rank Three Talisman Ink, Endless Red

"Honored sir, are you able to produce talisman paper or material?"

The fatty raised his head and laughed without giving an explicit reply.

A wave of disappointment filled Shang Xia's heart when his question was ignored, but he didn't bother pressing for an answer.

Seeing how four of the seven cases were already gone, everyone could tell how desirable those items were.

That was also how Shang Xia discovered how well-received items from the White Deer Paradise were.

One had to know that one would be able to obtain an item like that as long as they were a direct disciple from the White Deer Paradise. That would mean that the White Deer Paradise had a way to mass produce them.

That might be true for the White Deer Paradise, but obtaining one in the outside world wasn't so easy.

Many people might want to trade with Shang Xia, but they didn't have what he wanted. As such, there was nothing much they could do about it.

Voice transmissions entered Shang Xia's mind non-stop as many people asked if he was willing to take other items of equal value.

Ignoring all of them, Shang Xia paused for a second to wait for any more offers. Seeing as no one was able to bring out rank three talisman paper, he kept his cases and returned to his seat.

When he returned, another transmission entered his ear. "Are you really a talisman master? I have a bottle of rank three talisman ink with me. Do you want it?"

Shang Xia's expression froze and he turned to look around him. He saw the black masked man nodding slightly in his direction.

Shang Xia found it slightly weird. One had to know that he obtained the Flying Goose Brush from the man earlier. Since the start of the gathering, he brought out a Heart Directing Grass, the Flying Goose Brush, and now, he seemed to be in possession of some rank three talisman ink. He could be considered one of the most active traders in the gathering!

Shang Xia hesitated for a moment before sending a voice transmission of his own. "What type of talisman ink do you have? How much of it do you wish to trade?"

As a rank three talisman master, Shang Xia would be able to tell the slight difference between the quality of talisman paper and talisman ink of the same rank. There would be differences when using



different types of talisman ink on different talisman paper. For example, he obtained two pieces of beast skin that could be considered talisman paper from his trades earlier. The skin came from water-attributed beasts, and if he used water-attributed ink to craft talismans on them, the talisman created would possess stronger effects. It would also be easier to successfully create a rank three talisman.

The metal sheet he obtained from the fatty earlier also had its advantages. If he used it to craft sword talismans or spear talismans, the effects would be much stronger than ordinary talisman paper.

After hearing Shang Xia's question, the black masked man was basically sure that Shang Xia was a rank three talisman master. He chuckled softly in response. "I have a batch of 'Endless Red' ink. Feel free to raise any sort of trade. I believe that you won't try to scam me."

When he was done, he waved his hand and tossed over a small bottle that was three inches tall towards Shang Xia. Their actions didn't really catch the attention of the others in the hall and Shang Xia opened the bottle to inspect its contents after receiving it.

The stench of blood assaulted his nose the moment he opened the bottle. If one allowed the smell to linger for long, they might lose control of their qi. That greatly tested the skills of the talisman master when crafting talismans. They had to be extremely careful when using the ink and every stroke might take them some time as they had to calm themselves down after every movement.

However, that didn't mean that the ink was useless. It could boost the offensive abilities of the talisman when it was completed!

With the effects of the ink, the talisman would be able to last a little longer than other rank three talismans even if they weren't kept properly.

Shang Xia was truly tempted to obtain the bottle of talisman ink. One had to know that when he crafted the two talismans back in the Changfeng City, he was using rank two talisman ink!

It wasn't impossible to craft rank three talismans with rank two ink, but the effects would be a little weaker than rank three talismans made with rank three ink.

Holding the bottle in his hand, Shang Xia didn't return it immediately. Instead, he sent another voice transmission over. "The bottle of ink is of great quality, but it's slightly lacking in quantity, don't you think? According to my estimations, even if I don't waste any, I should only be able to craft five talismans out of these. I am willing to trade it for two spiritual deer cases I brought out earlier. What do you think?"

A happy chuckle made its way into Shang Xia's ears. "Sounds good to me!"

Tossing out two cases, Shang Xia asked another question. "Do you have the recipe to create this ink? I am willing to pay a high price to obtain it."

"I'm sorry, I do not." The black masked man kept the cases carefully while replying to Shang Xia.

Shang Xia couldn't help but feel a little regretful after hearing his response. However, there was nothing he could do about it as his attention returned to the center table.

More than half of the Martial Intent Realm cultivators in the hall had gone up by the time Shang Xia completed his trade. As the others made their way up, Shang Xia felt that there was nothing more they could bring out that could catch the attention of the others present. Surprisingly, he was proved wrong almost immediately. Someone brought out a set of rank three advancement medicine, and another took out a rank three martial art. There was also a rank four spiritual herb that appeared. The gathering was pushed to a whole new climax.

The rank three martial art wasn't comparable to the rest, but the advancement medicine was clearly the highlight of the gathering. The situation in the hall nearly turned chaotic when it was introduced.

The cultivator who obtained it stood up and bade his farewell immediately. With Zhao Fengchun's arrangements, he disappeared from an unknown entrance.

When the rank four spiritual herb appeared, a tense air filled the hall as several experts got to their feet in excitement. Zhao Fengchun couldn't sit still. He felt that he was about to lose control of the situation despite being the organizer of the gathering.

Fortunately, Huo Wuji and Wu Tingfang had the support of the Tongyou Institution and they bought the rank four spiritual herb immediately, causing the tense bidding war that was almost certain to happen to die before it could start. No one could be sure what would happen if everyone in the hall started to bid for the rank four spiritual herb and it was extremely likely the harmonious atmosphere in the hall would be destroyed by a huge battle. After all, everyone present could use a rank four spiritual herb.

With no one else to present their items, the gathering drew to a close as Zhao Fengchun arranged for everyone to leave the hall.

After they left, the three of them felt a sense of loss despite obtaining several treasures. Regardless, the gathering was over and even if they were regretting not bidding on several more items, there was nothing they could do about it.

Before they bade each other farewell, Sun Haiwei asked, "The battlefield between the two worlds is about to reopen and a massive war is almost certain to break out. I am planning to use it as a chance to temper myself to try to complete my third divine sense transformation. I wonder what your plans are?"

Tian Mengzi gasped in shock. "Are you going to complete your third divine sense transformation already? Oh man, I just obtained the Sunset Willow Spirit Awakening Needle and will try to complete my second transformation. Who would have thought that you're going to leave me in the dust..."

Sun Haiwei chuckled softly and continued, "That's what I plan to do. It's not certain that I will succeed..."

"I wonder how the institution plans to retake their territory in the battlefield between the two worlds. If I manage to complete my divine sense transformation before they reopen the spatial tunnel, I wish to join the first batch of cultivators to enter..."

After they spoke, they turned to look at Shang Xia.

Even though they had hung out for an entire day, they had no idea which stage of cultivation Shang Xia had reached.

Shang Xia laughed happily. "I'll definitely join the first batch to enter the battlefield between the two worlds!"

### Chapter 366: Shang Jian's Intentions

A few days had passed since the gathering Shang Xia attended and ever since he returned to the Shang Clan Manor, he had been cultivating quietly to strengthen his inner qi.

He might have reached the grand completion stage of the Martial Intent Realm and looked like there was nothing left for him to do other than to break through to the Martial Extermination Realm, but that wasn't true.

There were many things he could do to strengthen his foundations. It was true that other people who had reached the grand completion stage of the Martial Intent Realm had nothing to do other than to wait for a breakthrough, but he advanced too quickly! As he strengthened his foundations, he was also getting into his peak state to craft a rank three talisman.

Even though he had been hiding in the Shang Clan Manor in a state of semi-seclusion, the situation was different from the time he was in the Changfeng City. In the Shang Clan Manor, Yan Qi would return from time to time to report to him things that were happening throughout the city.

Speaking of which, Shang Xia found things to be a little weird. Wu Tingfang and Huo Wuji might have subtly released the news of the Tongyou Institution's plan to reopen the spatial tunnel, but the undercurrents he expected to rock the city didn't happen.

After taking some time to think about it, Shang Xia discovered why that was the case.

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One was the fact that being able to enter the battlefield between the two worlds was a great opportunity. Those who learned about it wouldn't go around spreading the news like wildfire! They would only tell those in their faction or some close friends.

Next, it wouldn't be easy for anyone to receive the institution's permission to enter the battlefield between the two worlds. Only those who were at least in the Martial Extremity Realm had the qualifications to enter!

The second condition was more than enough to stop 80 percent of those who wanted to enter the battlefield between the two worlds.

The only problem they had was that no one knew when the Tongyou Institution would reopen the spatial tunnel.

Also, Shang Xia was technically still a student of the Inner Division in the Tongyou Institution. Even though his cultivation level had long surpassed many seniors in the institution and he could be considered an unparalleled existence under the Martial Extermination Realm, his status in the institution couldn't even be compared to Sun Haiwei and Tian Mengzi! In fact, any Upper Division disciple would be given more responsibility than him.

As an Inner Division disciple, Shang Xia was naturally not privy to information like the opening of the spatial tunnel.

Because of that, Shang Xia went to fish for more information from Shang Ke. Even so, he failed to gain much knowledge on the matter. Shang Ke didn't seem to be clear about what was going on either.

As such, Shang Xia could only attempt to guess the institution's intentions by looking at their battle preparations. At the same time, he had to prepare himself to the best of his abilities.

Shang Xia's plan to obtain rank three talisman papers didn't stop at the gathering Tian Mengzi brought him to. He requested for Shang Quan to look for rank three talisman papers back in the Changfeng City and Shang Quan had been doing it ever since.

It was a pity the Tongyou Institution was the greatest supplier of rank three talisman paper. They were also making their own battle preparations, and there was no way they could provide Shang Quan with much.

With the Shang Clan operating at full capacity to look for rank three talisman paper, they mobilized their power within and outside the Tongyou City to gather seven pieces in total. Shang Quan passed them all to Shang Xia in the manor. The amount Shang Quan obtained couldn't even be compared to those Shang Xia traded!

Moreover, the rank three talisman paper Shang Quan gathered for Shang Xia were counted as resources provided by the clan. After he succeeded in crafting the talismans, he would have to contribute a small portion of them back to the Shang Clan!

The condition of contributing a small portion of the talismans he created was already a great bargain the Shang Clan gave to Shang Xia. That was because they knew he had just become a rank three talisman master and his success rate of crafting rank three talismans was low!

The institution didn't remain idle either. The master of the Hundred Professions Pavilion came over to invite Shang Xia back to the institution to craft talismans.

They obviously knew that Shang Xia had already become a rank three talisman master after receiving information from their sources.

Shang Xia was a student of the Tongyou Institution and it went without saying that they were allowed to ask him for help, but that was it. Since he didn't use the institution's resources to reach his current level nor did he request the institution's help, they couldn't force him to do their bidding. Instead, they went over to the Shang Clan to cordially invite him over to assist in their efforts.

Requesting for his uncle, Shang Quan, to pay him a visit, Shang Xia handed his uncle a small bottle the moment he arrived.

"Uncle Quan, do you think you can study this bottle of rank three talisman ink and craft higher ranked talisman inks in the future?" Shang Xia asked.

"Is this a bottle of Endless Red?" Shang Quan identified it instantly. He gasped softly, "Where did you get this?"

Shang Xia gave him a rough description of what happened the other day when Tian Mengzi brought him to the gathering of Martial Intent Realm cultivators.

Thinking for a moment, Shang Quan muttered, "It might help me a little, but it will only serve to give me some inspiration. After all, these can't be considered some sort of advancement medicine.

It will be quite impossible for me to re-create this even if I have a sample. I will need to carry out countless experiments and waste god knows how much resources in order to make better talisman ink.”

After some negotiations, Shang Quan retrieved a small tube of the ink with Shang Xia’s permission. Looking at the amount Shang Quan took away, Shang Xia discovered that there was probably about 80 percent of the ink left.

That would be enough to craft around 4 rank three talismans.

Watching Shang Quan leave the courtyard, Yan Qi suddenly entered with a strange expression plastered on his face. He bowed slightly as he gestured to welcome someone else.

“Second Uncle, why are you here?” A trace of surprise flashed across Shang Xia’s face and he hurriedly called for someone to serve some tea.

The relationship between the two could be said to be extremely awkward, but none of them felt any malice for each other.

Shang Jian was a lot more well-versed with the world than Shang Yang and he helped Shang Xia out many times in the past. Other than a little bit of awkwardness left between the two of them, they were actually pretty chill.

When Shang Xia went missing the other time, he tried his best to locate the kid. He even looked for Shang Xi and Yan Qi to see if they had any news of him.

After Shang Xia spoke to Shang Pei during his stay in the Changfeng City, almost all the hostility he had for those uncles and aunts who had some beef with the clan dissipated. Those long-lost aunts and uncles who might have left the clan because of some nasty incident in the past seemed to have already received some form of forgiveness from those of the older generation. Shang Ke didn’t seem to be the only one who was pushing for their return. Shang Xia could tell that even Shang Bo had given his implicit permission for them to come back.

With the increase in his cultivation realm, Shang Xia seemed to be able to see the situation a lot more clearly. He could tell that a huge change was coming and it might happen in the coming years.

When that happened, not a single faction would be able to stay on the sidelines. The opportunity that would befall their clan would depend on how strong they could become before then.

As Shang Xia and Shang Jian sat in the courtyard sipping their tea, Shang Jian finally broke the silence. “I heard that you’ve been gathering rank three talisman paper. I’ve been roaming the world for a long time and I managed to form some connections out there. I managed to obtain 3 rank three talisman paper after looking around and I hope you don’t think they’re too little.”

After he spoke, he placed a small wooden box on the table between them. There were exactly 3 rank three talisman papers in it.

Shang Xia didn’t reject the gift and he chuckled happily, “Second Uncle, I won’t stand on ceremony then!”

In the past, Shang Xia heard from Shang Quan that ever since he requested for rank three talisman paper, Shang Jian went looking for Shang Quan to confirm that Shang Xia had actually become a rank three talisman master.

For close to 20 years, Shang Jian had been living outside the You Continent. His connections in the clan and in the Tongyou City wouldn't be better than Shang Quan and it wasn't likely for him to be able to gather 3 pieces of rank three talisman paper with his network in the city. As such, he definitely expended a lot of effort to obtain them.

Shang Jian felt a trace of joy in his heart when he saw Shang Xia accepting his gift.

After a short discussion, Shang Jian finally brought up the true reason he was looking for Shang Xia. "Little Xia, your cultivation increased by leaps and bounds since we last met but your cousins... Those two brats are still stuck in the Martial Extremity Realm. They might also be walking down the way of the sword, but the way they train is different from me. I don't really have a way to help them myself..."

Shang Xia nodded and chuckled in response, "I left seven sword arts in our clan from my insights. They can take a look at them and see if any of the sword arts suit them."

A wide grin appeared on Shang Jian's face in that instant. However, he regained his composure and thanked Shang Xia sincerely, "Your second uncle will have to thank you in their stead then! Many thanks!"

Shang Jian had seen Shang Xia's sword art when he was in the Martial Extremity Realm and discovered that the various sword qi he had fused perfectly together. When he unleashed his Seven Laceration Sword, it was able to contend with Martial Intent Realm experts!

If they could learn a thing or two from Shang Xia's sword techniques, Shang Jian was certain that the two of them would be able to smoothly enter the Martial Intent Realm in the future.

After Shang Xia sent Shang Jian away, he turned to look at Yan Qi whose expression was fluctuating wildly. It seemed as though he was contemplating whether or not he should say something to Shang Xia.

Seeing the look of discomfort on Yan Qi's face, Shang Xia broke out into laughter. "Seventh Uncle, why do you look so constipated? With our relationship, is there a need to keep secrets from each other?"

Heaving a sigh of relief, words shot out of Yan Qi's lips like bullets out a machine gun. "Young master, don't you know about the strand of extermination origin the institution rewarded our clan with? The Second Master has been looking for the patriarch really often recently to ask for it!"

Shang Xia didn't stop laughing. "I am far from advancing into the Martial Extermination Realm. As a matter of fact, I don't think that extermination origin is suitable for me in the first place."

After obtaining eight rank three talisman paper or equivalent from the gathering, seven from Shang Quan, and three from Shang Jian, Shang Xia managed to gather 18 rank three talisman paper in total! It was more than enough to keep him busy for some time!

Unfortunately, he only had a small portion of the Endless Red ink left. Shang Quan didn't bring him any rank three ink, and he could only use rank two talisman ink once he ran out. It would slightly affect the power contained in the talisman slightly but it was something Shang Xia had to accept.

After all, even in the Hundred Professions Pavilion in the Tongyou Institution, there wasn't enough rank three talisman ink to go around.

Done with his preparations, Shang Xia was in no hurry to start the crafting process. Instead, he crafted more than a dozen rank two talismans to familiarize himself with the Flying Goose Brush.

The Flying Goose Brush was of the same rank as his Thorny Brush, but the Flying Goose Brush was evidently better than the Thorny Brush in all aspects. Regardless of the way it was crafted or the smoothness of the brush, the Flying Goose Brush put the Thorny Brush to shame.

When he was familiar with the Flying Goose Brush, Shang Xia regulated his qi again and he discovered that he was in a pretty amazing state to be crafting talismans. Taking out a piece of rank three talisman paper, he started his first attempt.

The first rank three talisman paper was used to create the Golden Lightning Spear Talisman that he was familiar with and with him already succeeding twice previously, he was confident of successfully crafting a third.

Even though he wasn't in a special state of enlightenment like he was the first two times, he was still extremely focused. He managed to split his divine sense off and complete the talisman in three short days.

Without a doubt, succeeding on the first try was a great confidence booster for Shang Xia.

After he took a short break, Shang Xia didn't bother cultivating to return to his peak state as he wanted to ride on the familiarity he had with the brush. He started on the second piece of talisman paper and soon, the third.

In less than fifteen days, he managed to complete three rank three Golden Lightning Spear Talismans!

Compared to his previous success rate, he was on a roll! One could say that he improved a ton since then. At the very least, he was able to craft Golden Lightning Spear Talismans with a pretty high hit rate now.

#### Chapter 367: Different Talismans

After completing 5 rank three talismans, Shang Xia was starting to feel tired. From that point alone, one could imagine how strong his divine sense was compared to those at the same level.

Even though he had been giving it his all when crafting talismans, he recalled Shang Ke's warning that he had been given back in Changfeng City. No matter what, he couldn't split off too much divine sense in a month.

That was the reason he had to slow down. With 5 talismans complete, he decided to take a break for a month. One reason was to restore his divine sense, and another was to return to his peak state. Lastly, he was preparing to craft another type of rank three talisman.

Shang Xia couldn't possibly craft Golden Lightning Spear Talismans his whole life. There were 6 rank three talismans recorded in the Zhu Family Talisman Scripture and it was much more detailed than whatever the institution had!

After his break, he was planning to craft another type of rank three talisman called the Tranquil Water Screen! As the name of the talisman suggested, one would be able to summon a water screen to protect themselves in times of need.

The Tranquil Water Screen wasn't really related to Shang Xia's cultivation method by any means and in order to succeed, he would have to rely on his mastery in talisman crafting.

Even though one could be considered a rank three talisman master if they could craft a rank three talisman, one could only be considered a qualified talisman master if they mastered the way to craft two or more rank three talismans. Of course, they needed a high rate of success too!

When his break was over and Shang Xia started on his first attempt at crafting the Tranquil Water Screen, his speed slowed to a snail's crawl.

He had been extremely focused and careful, but after completing half the talisman, all his hard work went down the drain because of a small mistake.

As it was his first time crafting a new type of talisman, Shang Xia had been prepared to fail.

Resting for five days, he started his second attempt.

Shang Xia didn't know if it was because of his reflections from the failure before or pure luck, but he actually succeeded on his second attempt!

Overflowing with confidence, Shang Xia started his third attempt right away as he tried to take advantage of the familiarity he had after his success.

Without much suspense, he failed the instant he tried to seal his divine sense into the talisman.

That wasn't all. He failed two more times consecutively. With a 1 out of 5 hit rate, Shang Xia managed to suppress his urge to start on his sixth attempt. He took a short break to reflect on his failures and quelled the impatience burning in his heart.

His creation of the Tranquil Water Screen was far worse than when he made his Golden Lightning Spear Talismans back in the Changfeng City. However, that couldn't stop him from trying again.

Taking out two more pieces of rank three talisman paper, he powered on.

Even though he stumbled slightly, he managed to complete his second Tranquil Water Screen.

Succeeding two times out of six, now his success rate was looking a little better than his initial development of the Golden Lightning Spear.

Obviously, Shang Xia was comforting himself. During his next attempt, he promptly failed.

He wanted to try again, and he could tell that he was starting to gain deeper insights into how to craft the Tranquil Water Screen. If he continued, he would definitely be able to do better.

Looking at the last 6 pieces of rank three talisman paper he had left, he took a deep breath and decided to wait.

Meditating and cultivating for the next few days to properly reflect on everything he had learned, he decided to take another approach. He would use the last 6 pieces to craft another rank three talisman, the Spiritual Yin Knife Talisman!

The power contained in the Spiritual Yin Knife might not be comparable to the Golden Lightning Spear, but it was much more unpredictable. If used properly, it could catch his opponents off guard, and by the time they discovered its presence, it would be too late!

Naturally, his first attempt ended in failure.



On his second attempt, he seemed to have reached the same state of enlightenment he had when he succeeded in crafting his Golden Lightning Spear Talisman for the first time. Without hesitation, his brush danced on the rank three talisman paper on the table and he completed his first Spiritual Yin Knife Talisman.

Shang Xia discovered that the miraculous feeling was still present and he quickly opened the small bottle at the side that contained the Endless Red ink and he dipped his brush into it.

Taking out the metal sheet he obtained from the fatty, his Flying Goose Brush danced on its surface as red streaks appeared.

As the rank three talisman ink filled the metal sheet, Shang Xia didn't rest for a second as he completed his second Spiritual Yin Knife Talisman in one smooth attempt that took three days.

Without rest, he took out another rank three talisman paper.

This time, he completed it even more quickly than before. He took two and a half days to craft his third Spiritual Yin Knife Talisman.

When he was done, he discovered that he only had half of his Endless Red ink left. Fortunately, they would be sufficient for the 2 pieces of talisman papers he had left.

With confidence filling his heart, he started another attempt. He completed it in one smooth attempt, shocking Shang Xia himself.

With the completion of the fourth piece of Spiritual Yin Knife Talisman, the strange feeling he felt finally started to fade. His mind went blank and Shang Xia felt a sharp pain shooting through his body.

Fatigue overwhelmed him and he discovered that he had overdrawn his divine sense.

Luckily, he was still able to withstand the effects.

Looking at the last piece of talisman paper, Shang Xia felt that he should chase his victory and finish the last talisman even if he had to strain his divine sense even more. It sure as hell didn't come as a surprise when his last attempt failed and he wasted his last piece of rank three talisman paper.

#### Chapter 368: Life Under Threat

After using 5 pieces of rank three talisman paper to craft Golden Lightning Spear Talismans, he succeeded thrice.

Using 7 pieces of talisman paper to create Tranquil Water Screen Talismans, he completed two.

With the final 6 pieces he had, he miraculously created four Spiritual Yin Knife Talismans.

With 18 pieces of rank three talisman paper, Shang Xia actually managed to create 9 rank three talismans. The success rate could be said to be pretty underwhelming when compared to other accomplished rank three talisman masters, but it was somewhat amazing for Shang Xia who had barely become one.

After ending his seclusion, he learned from Yan Qi that he used close to 4 months to craft talismans.

By the time he emerged from his courtyard, autumn had already arrived.

“How did so much time pass already?” Shang Xia turned to ask Yan Qi. “Did the institution send any news? Did the first batch of experts already enter the battlefield between the two worlds?”

Before Shang Xia entered seclusion, he told Yan Qi to inform him the moment the institution decided to open the spatial tunnel connecting the Tongyou Institution to the battlefield between the two worlds. He didn’t think that Yan Qi would forget the order.

Shaking his head, Yan Qi muttered, “The Tongyou Institution definitely released the news of the reopening of the spatial tunnel. However, the institution fell silent half a year ago. It seemed as though any plans of reentering the battlefield between the two worlds had fallen through!”

“This... This shouldn’t happen...” Shang Xia frowned.

Yan Qi seemed to have thought of something and he quickly handed a piece of document over to Shang Xia. “Oh right, Young Master, even though you haven’t been to the institution for close to a year now, the institution still promoted you to an Inner Division disciple.”

Staring at him in shock, Shang Xia eventually retrieved the document Yan Qi handed over. He chuckled silently in his heart before keeping the document carefully.

He took out one of each rank three talisman in his collection and handed it over to Yan Qi. “Oh right, help me to hand this over to the clan. It can be considered my contributions to the clan after the resources they gave me to support my advancement to become a rank three talisman master.”

Before Yan Qi could rush to the treasury to hand the talismans over, Shang Xia stopped him again. He took out another Spiritual Yin Knife Talisman after some consideration. “Please give this to my Second Uncle too. I would like to thank him for supplying me with those rank three talisman papers.”

After Yan Qi left, Shang Xia headed over to look for his Fifth Grandpa, Shang Ke.

Shang Ke wasn’t surprised when he saw Shang Xia. In fact, he was the first to speak. “Hehe, damn brat, you’re definitely here to ask about the reopening of the battlefield between the two worlds, right?”

Shang Xia nodded in response. “I can’t hide anything from you. So, is there news about the matter? Did Grandpa Bo say anything about it?”

Shang Ke snickered softly. “Everything I know came from your Grandpa Bo. He seems to be a little reluctant to tell me the full details, but it seems as though it has something to do with the institution’s lack of preparations.”

“Lack of preparations?” Shang Xia frowned. He muttered softly, “The institution should have started their preparations since the war for the Tongyou Mysterious World ended. There’s no way they’re so sloppy in their preparations that they aren’t ready yet. There are only several reasons that can cause the delay. Either something happened on the side of the Azure Spiritual World, or the issue lies with the upper echelons of our Azure Origin World! The Changbai Holy Land might have sent

reinforcements to the battlefield between the two worlds, preventing us from hastily reopening the spatial tunnel...”

A light flashed in Shang Xia’s eyes. “Or... Could it be that Patriarch Kou hasn’t fully recovered? Are there other reasons affecting...”

Staring at Shang Xia in shock, Shang Ke snapped, “All we know right now is that Kou Chongxue wasn’t fully recovered when he went to the Ji Continent before.”

A chill ran down Shang Xia’s heart. “Did his injuries get worse after he took action against the White Deer Paradise the other time? Did he overexert himself?!”

A bitter smile appeared on Shang Ke’s face and he sighed, “That’s not something your Grandpa Bo will say. Not even to me.”

Nodding slowly, Shang Xia seemed to have fallen into deep contemplation. However, he didn’t say anything more.

...

In the core region of the Tongyou Mysterious World where the Zhu Family Manor once stood.

Shang Bo and Yun Jing were looking at Kou Chongxue who had just emerged from seclusion.

Releasing a long breath, a white mist appeared and everything within a hundred feet of the patriarch seemed to freeze over.

“Did you recover fully?!” Yun Jing stared at him with wide eyes and asked.

With a somber expression, Kou Chongxue remained silent. None of them knew what he was thinking about.

Seeing as he didn’t reply to her, a trace of worry appeared on Yun Jing’s face. “Did it not work?! Hmph! You’re really something else alright... You believed that kid because of some random nonsense he spewed. Are you tired of living?! How can you bet your life so casually?!”

Kou Chongxue’s gaze started to focus and a hoarse voice left his lips. “Hehe, aren’t you afraid of offending your Third Brother Shang by insulting his grandson?”

Shang Bo chuckled at the side and he didn’t seem to take her words to heart. After all, he was a little more aware of what had happened.

Smiling at Shang Bo, Yun Jing seemed to express her apologies before turning back to Kou Chongxue. “So what is your situation right now?”

“I managed to rebalance my fate dippers. Hehe, looks like the kid wasn’t sprouting bullshit when he came up with this idea.” Kou Chongxue muttered.

Yun Jing wasn’t the only one who was shocked at the revelation. Even Shang Bo widened his eyes in shock. Even though he expected as much after looking at how much better Kou Chongxue looked, it was another thing to hear it from the man himself.

All of them knew that once Kou Chongxue solved the problem of his fate dippers’ imbalance, he would be able to restore a huge portion of his fighting strength. Moreover, they thought that he would only be able to do something like that if he grasped some sort of special technique. From

what Kou Chongxue was saying, it seemed as though Shang Xia's pointers were all he used to solve the problem!

Was the kid's idea really so impressive?!

Even up till that point, none of them believed that Kou Chongxue's recovery had something to do with Shang Xia.

One had to know that even though Yun Jing and Shang Bo hadn't stepped into the Martial Dipper Realm, they had been to the Beyond Heavens Pavilion. They heard other Martial Dipper Realm experts discussing the dao and they knew that there was one deadly mistake one could never make in the Martial Dipper Realm. That was to lose control of their fate dippers and allow there to be an imbalance. Once that happened, it was said that there was no way back. Only death awaited an expert whose fate dippers reached a state of disequilibrium.

That was the greatest cause of death for experts at the Martial Dipper Realm! It caused more deaths than battles among experts at that level!

Kou Chongxue was probably the first to overturn his fate! Not only did he not die, he even managed to regain his strength and deal a great deal of damage to the White Deer Paradise!

If the news were to leak...

No! The news of his recovery had already spread across the lands!

Now, the Azure Origin World wasn't the only problem. Even the Martial Dipper Realm experts of the Azure Spiritual World would have heard of Kou Chongxue's recovery! All of them would know that Kou Chongxue had a way to solve the greatest problem that plagued them!

The more they thought about it, the heavier their hearts became. Shang Bo and Yun Jing stared at each other in fright.

God damn! Luckily, Kou Chongxue was the one who received the kid's pointers and recovered! If he was anyone else, those treacherous bastards might have already launched a great war to pry the secret from whoever managed to solve the problem of their fate dippers' disequilibrium. Kou Chongxue's reputation truly saved them this time.

Realizing the implications of the matter, Yun Jing and Shang Bo knew that everyone who knew how Kou Chongxue recovered would have to keep the matter a secret. As long as anyone leaked the news, their lives would most likely be forfeit!

No! They forgot a scarier fact! They wouldn't be the first to die! Shang Xia's life would be in even more danger than they could imagine!

Chapter 369: Third Fate Dipper

"This will definitely cause a storm, especially in the Beyond Heavens Pavilion! You need to be careful..." Yun Jing warned.

Shang Bo's expression changed slightly and he muttered, "Is that the reason why you pushed the opening of the spatial tunnel back? Are you expecting another massive war to break out? As for your strength right now..."

Waving his hands casually to dismiss their concerns, Kou Chongxue sighed, “There’s nothing to worry about. The chances of a huge fight breaking out is small. Of course, they will definitely join forces and attempt to suppress us. However, have we ever backed down from a challenge like that? Do you think this old man here will be threatened by them?”

“But... Now that we are reopening the spatial tunnel to regain some ground in the battlefield between the two worlds, the Azure Spiritual World will definitely send a Martial Dipper Realm expert over. With the added pressure from the Beyond Heavens Pavilion, are you sure you won’t be backstabbed by those from our world? You’ll be under attack on all sides!” Yun Jing frowned.

Snorting with disdain, Kou Chongxue growled, “For the past twenty years, haven’t we been attacked on all sides? Relax. They still treasure their reputation and a replay of what happened during the war for the Tongyou Mysterious World shouldn’t play out again. As for how I restored my strength, let’s just say that it was because of a miraculous encounter. It’s not like they have any incidents like that to compare me to. It’s entirely possible that something like that happened in the past and they can let their imaginations run wild. Whatever the case, we’re not telling them the exact way I recovered.”

Yun Jing and Shang Bo nodded their heads slowly.

However, Yun Jing was clearly still worried. “You refined the Water Origin Fate Dipper and restored the balance of your fate dippers. Now, you’re a third element Martial Dipper Realm Expert. Do you think you experienced an upgrade in strength?”

Kou Chongxue sighed softly in response, “That’s what I wanted to tell you. After entering the Martial Dipper Realm, there is no longer a guide on how to get stronger. We have to pioneer our own path, and we can only rely on ourselves to bash our way forward.”

“It’s alright if one has the backing of a huge superpower or a holy land. No matter what, they somewhat have experiences of other Martial Dipper Realm experts. Even though those who borrow the power of their holy lands to advance will be restricted to staying within their territory, they will definitely be able to progress a little more smoothly than me. With so many experts who have already stepped into the Martial Dipper Realm, they definitely left behind a lot of experience and records. They might have been able to find a better way to progress.”

Shang Bo interrupted, “At the end of the day, our foundations aren’t as strong as them. However, when we upgrade to the Tongyou Paradise in the future, we will definitely be comparable to the White Deer Paradise.”

Kou Chongxue nodded in acknowledgment before he continued, “Even though I managed to refine another fate dipper, my battle capabilities seem to have reduced slightly.”

A look of worry appeared on Yun Jing’s face as she was dumbstruck by his revelation.

Hesitating slightly, Shang Bo broke the silence. “Why don’t we call the brat over and ask him if he knows something about it?”

Waving his hands, Kou Chongxue muttered, “There’s no need to trouble a child for this.”

“Third Brother Shang, do you really think that the kid knows what to do in the Martial Dipper Realm?” Yun Jing chuckled bitterly.

A helpless smile also appeared on Shang Bo’s face.

“If we talk about my entire progress in the Martial Dipper Realm so far, you can think of my combat strength to be at the fifth level when I just stepped into the Martial Dipper Realm and refined the Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper. After refining my Eternal Spring Fate Dipper, my combat strength dropped to the fourth level. Today, after everything we’ve been through and after I solved the problem of imbalance, my actual battle capabilities seem to have dropped to the third level!” Kou Chongxue explained.

“Are you the only one facing this problem? Or are other Martial Dipper Realm experts experiencing the same thing?” Yun Jing asked a very important question out of the blue.

Shaking his head, Kou Chongxue muttered, “Those undying assholes in the holy lands might have grasped a thing or two, but I don’t know much about the rest. However, I do know that there are not many Martial Dipper Realm experts who can do a thing to me.”

When he was done talking, he finally got to his feet and he stared at the bronze gates not too far away. Turning into a streak of light, he charged through the air and disappeared into the distance. His voice was the only thing he left behind.

“Just follow the plan for the reopening of the spatial tunnel. Leave the Beyond Heavens Pavilion to me!”

...

With Kou Chongxue’s order, the Tongyou Institution quickly gave the notice that the spatial tunnel would reopen on the eighth day of the ninth month.

It would take place in five days and the news quickly spread through the Tongyou City.

Shang Xia looked at his Scarlet Star Spear that he received not too long ago after commissioning Duan Hong to fix it previously.

Even though graded weapons didn’t possess their own spirituality like divine weapons, they were normally bathed in the inner qi of their user. That would allow the user of a graded weapon to feel a lot more familiar with it.

When he was inspecting his weapon, Yan Qi opened the doors to his courtyard and barged in hastily.

Shaking the spear in his hand slightly, the body of the spear started to buzz as it became ready to threaten everyone in its vicinity. Yan Qi, who had just entered the courtyard, felt as though a terrifying beast had set its sights on him.

However, that feeling disappeared as quickly as it came. Yan Qi could feel that his clothes were drenched in perspiration as he thought back to the fear he felt a moment ago. It happened so quickly that he didn't know if he was hallucinating.

Looks like I can't enter this courtyard as I wish in the future! What the hell was that?!? Yan Qi thought to himself.

"Seventh Uncle, is something the matter?" Shang Xia kept his spear and asked when he saw the hurry Yan Qi was in.

Sucking in a long breath to stabilize himself, Yan Qi took several steps forward and muttered, "Young Master, the institution sent out news that in five days, the spatial tunnel leading to the battlefield between the two worlds will open!"

Turning serious, Shang Xia asked, "Are you sure? Is the news confirmed?"

"The institution passed down the news personally. There's no mistake about it. I believe the manor will receive the notice soon enough." Yan Qi nodded in response.

"Alright! Let's go, I have to look for Grandpa Ke!" Shang Xia yelled as he headed for the exit.

Seeing how quickly Shang Xia was moving, Yan Qi hastened his steps to keep up before yelling, "Young Master, I am willing to accompany you if you enter the battlefield between the two worlds as part of the vanguard!"

Shang Xia chuckled happily in response. "It's great that you're willing to follow me. However, every great clan probably has a plan for their experts to enter the battlefield between the two worlds along with the institution's vanguards. You should be following the clan instead of me!"

Staring at Shang Xia with his eyes wide with shock, he realized what Shang Xia was saying. "Young Master, aren't you planning to follow the clan?"

"Did you forget? I'm an Upper Division disciple of the institution now!" Shang Xia replied without even turning his head.

On their way to Shang Ke's courtyard, the two of them ran into someone Shang Xia hadn't seen in a long time.

"Oi brat, are you also planning to look for Fifth Uncle?" Shang Xi's voice rang through the air the moment she caught sight of him.

From the direction she was walking in, it was clear she had also received the news and was headed for Shang Ke's courtyard.

A smile appeared on Shang Xia's face. "Aunt, are you also planning to head into the battlefield between the two worlds?"

Nodding slightly, Shang Xi explained, "I've been in seclusion this whole time. I received some insights during my cultivation and I plan to head over to start a massacre against those cultivators of the Azure Spiritual World to hopefully gain an opportunity to undergo my third divine sense transformation!"

Chuckling in response, Shang Xia exchanged a few more words with her as they went to look for Shang Ke.

...

When Yan Qi brought the news back, Shang Jian ran into the eastern courtyard hastily.

Seeing the empty courtyard before him and Xu Huizhu in the distance, his expression sank.

“Hmph, where are the kids? Shouldn’t they be training right now?” Shang Jian’s tone of voice wasn’t exactly pleasant. In fact, he seemed to be blaming Xu Huizhu from the way he spoke.

With a frown forming on her face, She snapped at him. “Your nephew’s sword art is really something else. Even I can’t decipher it after examining it over and over. Do you think Bei’er and Dong’er will be able to understand anything in a short period of time? The more they train, the more confused they get. I told them to head into the cultivation chamber to think over what they learned so far. They can train after clearing their minds.”

Finally regaining his calm demeanor, Shang Jian released a long sigh. “Ai... Looks like I can’t blame them for that either. Looking at Fourth Brother’s child, even I’m left far behind. The kid’s sword art has far surpassed me. I only hope that Dong’er and Bei’er can improve quickly so as not to make us look too bad...”

Rolling her eyes at him, Xu Huizhu sneered, “Your kids are already ahead of their peers in terms of cultivation. Don’t compare them to Shang Xia. He’s an absolute monster. If they can be like him, you’ll probably go crazy.”

“Hehe...” Shang Jian revealed a helpless smile. “That’s true.”

The two of them quickly changed the topic and decided never to compare themselves or their children to Shang Xia again.

Looking at Xu Huizhu again, he discovered that she had been examining something when he entered and he asked, “What are you looking at?”

Raising her eyebrows slightly, she muttered softly, “Come take a look yourself. Yan Qi just delivered it. He said that it’s a rank three talisman Shang Xia created.”

A pout formed on her face and she joked, “At least you didn’t waste those rank three talisman papers...”

Sending an annoyed glance her way, Shang Jian quickly went over to look at the talisman that was emitting a slight stench of blood.

“Huh? This... This talisman isn’t as simple as it looks!” A trace of admiration could be heard in his voice as he praised the talisman sitting before him.

Not realizing the intricacies behind the talisman, Xu Huizhu sighed, “A rank three talisman might not be something you see every day, but as cultivators of the Martial Intent Realm, we don’t really need it. We should leave it for Dong’er and Bei’er.”



It was true that the two of them were Martial Intent Realm experts, but Shang Jian was clearly ahead of Xu Huizhu when it came to experience and cultivation. Holding the talisman in his hand, he ignored whatever she said as he inspected it closely. “You don’t understand. This talisman... Hehe, this talisman is so strong that even you might not be able to withstand its effects.”

Seeing the look of shock on her face, Shang Jian knew that she was reevaluating the worth of the talisman at that moment. He couldn’t help but add, “Alright. I will definitely be sent to the battlefield between the two worlds with the clan. I might as well hold on to it. I’ll head out and look for more rank three talisman paper and ask the kid to prepare some talismans for Dong’er and Bei’er in the future.”

“You’re going to join the expedition?!” Xu Huizhu’s expression changed after hearing what he said.

Nodding slightly, Shang Jian interrupted her before she could say anything else. “There’s no need to dissuade me from doing it. I understand what I have to do. Since I’m a part of the Shang Clan, I can’t expect them to hand me everything on a silver platter. I have to make some contributions too. I have to fight for an opportunity to grow stronger. Things will never get better if I remain here and wait for a pie to drop from the skies.”

#### Chapter 370: OPEN SESAME

On the eighth of the ninth month, students of the institution and experts of the four great clans were gathered around the main entrance of the Tongyou Institution where the spatial tunnel lay.

They were split into two groups, and the group that had already stepped through the entrance and was waiting for the spatial tunnel to open was made up of cultivators who were at the very least Martial Intent Realm experts. There were custodians, instructors, deacons, and heads of the various divisions. There were more than thirty of them who hailed from the Tongyou Institution. They were also joined by experts of the four great clans. Surprisingly, there were several chosen cultivators from several other factions in the city among them. Without exception, all of them were in the Martial Intent Realm.

They totaled around sixty people and multiple Martial Extermination Realm experts stood above their heads. Everyone watched the spatial tunnel quietly.

That group would be the first to charge into the battlefield between the two worlds the moment the tunnel opened. They would also be responsible for killing as many people as they could.

The second group remained within the confines of the institution and they were led by a tiny group of Martial Intent Realm experts from the institution. The rest was made up of Martial Extremity Realm cultivators from the institution and some select factions in the city. There were hundreds of people who made up that group.

After the vanguard killed their way in and secured a landing point, the second group would pour into the battlefield between the two worlds and reinforce the region as their base of operations. At the same time, they would slowly expand the radius of their territory.

Shang Xia had strategically placed himself among the first group of people, and he was ready to slay anything or anyone that stood in his way the moment the spatial tunnel opened. He didn’t

choose to join the members of the Shang Clan. Instead, he stood close to the others from the institution. Right beside him were familiar faces like Sun Haiwei and Tian Mengzi.

When the Tongyou Institution mentioned that the spatial tunnel was about to reopen, Shang Xia, Shang Xi, and Shang Jian went over to look for Shang Ke to request permission to take part in the war.

Shang Ke didn't reject their request. Instead, he gathered all the Martial Intent Realm experts who could be deployed from the clan and their vassals and personally brought them to the institution to join the war.

He left Shang Yang back in the clan to take charge of matters there, and he was the only Shang Clan descendant of direct bloodline.

Shang Xia wasn't the only one who wasn't stuck with the members of the Shang Clan. Shang Ke wasn't there either as he hovered in mid air while discussing something with the rest of the Martial Extermination Realm experts there.

In total. He brought over eight members of the Shang Clan who were in the Martial Intent Realm to join in the war, and they were headed by Shang Jian. They stood close to the experts of the institution while waiting for the tunnel to reopen.

No one knew how long had passed, but a ray of light soon emerged from the dense fog that covered the battlefield between the two worlds, painting a strangely beautiful scene on the lands.

At that moment, one of the Martial Extermination Realm experts in the air took a step forward. Standing in front of the spatial tunnel, his voice soon resounded in the minds of everyone. "Open the tunnel!"

His voice was too recognizable and everyone turned to stare at him. He was none other than the other mighty deputy patriarch of the Tongyou Institution who established his prestige not too long ago, Shang Bo!

Amidst the loud warcries of those in the first group, a weird spatial vortex emerged from the mysterious world above their heads. A pillar of light emerged from the depths of the vortex and slammed directly into the spatial barrier separating the institution from the battlefield between the two worlds.

"Heh, are they going to use the strength of the mysterious world to forcefully tear a hole into the battlefield between the two worlds?" Tian Mengzi was the most adept with formations out of them all and he seemed to be able to read into the institution's actions.

However, he quickly continued. "It's no wonder there's no formation master among us. All of them probably hid in the mysterious world to get ready for this!"

Shang Bo's voice boomed through the air suddenly. "Everyone in the Martial Extermination Realm, please lend us your strength to create the tunnel!"

As soon as he spoke, he released his extermination origins. Since he reached the large completion stage back then and reached the state of fusing his extermination origins back to one, a dull

orangey-yellow light emerged and entered the light pillar that came from the vortex. It slammed directly into the spatial barrier.

Those standing behind him also started to make their moves. Their extermination origins started to gather towards the light pillar and crashed heavily into the spatial barrier.

With the power of the mysterious world, a hole that was close to sixty feet deep formed. With the assistance of the various Martial Extermination Realm experts, the depth of the hole increased to a hundred feet.

Strange light emerged from the spatial barrier and it tried to forcefully close the giant hole that formed, but Shang Bo's command came again.

“Those in the Martial Extermination Realm, follow me into the tunnel to stabilize it!” With him leading the way, Yun Jing, Liu Qinglan, Kang Ci, Shang Lubing, Liu Zhiyuan, Shang Ke, Ji Yu, and Yun Yichen flew into the barrier there was another foreign-looking Martial Extermination Realm expert among them who also entered the tunnel.

The mist that was slowly starting to enter the spatial tunnel was forcefully dispersed by the impressive lineup of Martial Extermination Realm experts.

Not too long after they entered, the Tongyou Mysterious World sent out another pillar of light that caused the tunnel to grow by another sixty feet.

As the light started to dim, Shang Bo's loud grunt came from within the tunnel as a multitude of lights lit up the space before them. The tunnel seemed to grow even deeper and the space around it became more solid.

As the process repeated several more times, the tunnel continued to grow and the movements from the Martial Extermination Realm experts were no longer observable from the outside.

Standing before the spatial tunnel and watching the space turn more and more solid, the wisps of gray qi that could be seen along the edges of the tunnel disappeared.

A look of disappointment appeared on Shang Xia's face.

He learned from cultivators at the Martial Extermination Realm that chaotic world essence was contained in the spatial barrier. Those gray wisps that escaped were essentially muddied world origin.

Even though they weren't extremely pure, Shang Xia could feel that they would be effective in restoring the Crimson Soul Tablet.

It was a shame there was too little of it that escaped. It wasn't possible for him to make good use of it. Of course, not daring to enter the unstable tunnel at that point was also a reason behind his inaction. If he was like those Martial Extermination Realm brutes, he would have gone in with them to absorb those world origin. At the end of the day, he was at the Martial Intent Realm. His physical body wasn't strong enough to withstand the spatial storms that came from the unsteady tunnel.