

The Heavens 381

Chapter 381: Chance Meeting

After spending some time strolling around the battlefield, Shang Xia discovered that he couldn't find the slightest trace of Liu Qinglan and her opponent. Helpless, he could only return to where Sima Zhanxing fell.

The heaven and earth qi had already dissipated and Shang Xia stared into the air with a look of regret. He felt that it was a waste for the inner qi stored in Sima Zhanxing's body to be returned to the world!

When Sima Zhanxing died earlier, Shang Xia thought of experimenting with the heaven and earth qi. He wanted to see if it could restore the Crimson Soul Tablet. In his eyes, cultivators in the Martial Extermination Realm already had the ability to touch on world essence. As such, the inner qi stored in their bodies should be effective in restoring the Crimson Soul Tablet, right?

Unfortunately, the waves of heaven and earth qi released during his death didn't cause the slightest bit of reaction from the Crimson Soul Tablet.

With the experience at hand, Shang Xia felt that even if Martial Extermination Realm experts could absorb world origin, they wouldn't be able to use it to the fullest extent! That was probably why the tablet didn't respond earlier.

The more he thought about it, the more Shang Xia felt that something was off. If the inner qi of Martial Extermination Realm experts weren't enough, would the tablet only respond to those in the Martial Dipper Realm?! If that wasn't enough... What about those in the Sixth Order of the Primary Realm?!

A chill ran down his spine when he thought about it.

At the moment, Shang Xia was merely a Martial Intent Realm cultivator. He practically used up all his strength to kill a Martial Extermination Realm expert. Of course, there was the element of luck mixed within. How was he supposed to kill a Martial Dipper Realm expert or those who were even stronger?! The more he thought about it, the colder his heart became. After all, his Crimson Soul Tablet wouldn't be able to last for long if he kept up whatever it was he was doing.

... He couldn't locate the battlefields of the other Martial Extermination Realm experts, Shang Xia decided to take a break before returning to the vicinity of the spatial tunnel to slay some Martial Intent Realm cultivators of the Azure Spiritual World.

His fight with Sima Zhanxing might only have lasted a few short moments, but he used up a very significant portion of inner qi. After all, it wasn't easy to leap realms and kill someone stronger than him.

If he returned immediately, he wouldn't be able to display more than 30 percent of his strength if he fought. He couldn't possibly use the rest of his talismans on those Martial Intent Realm cultivators, right?!

He wouldn't mind using those talismans if he could interfere in the fight between Liu Qinglan and Pan Yunbi, but using the talismans on the Martial Intent Realm cultivators of the Azure Spiritual World would be an utter waste.

"Ah, whatever! I'll hide and restore my strength before trying anything else." Shang Xia muttered to himself. "The victory of our expedition rests on the shoulders of those Martial Extermination Realm experts anyway. Since that's the case, things shouldn't end so quickly. After all, not all of them are as easy to kill as Sima Zhanxing..."

From the looks of it, the situation was probably going to be the same as before. The battle would turn into a stalemate after some time and the situation in the battlefield between the two worlds would return to the time when the Tongyou Peak and the Four Spiritual Peak were still standing.

When that happened, the Martial Extermination Realm experts would no longer go all out against each other. The balance would rest in the hands of the Martial Intent Realm and Martial Extremity Realm cultivators on both sides.

Once the forced peace was restored in the battlefield between the two worlds, there would be hundreds upon hundreds of Martial Intent Realm and Martial Extremity Realm experts on both sides. Even if Shang Xia was invincible in the Martial Intent Realm, he wouldn't be able to rampage and kill as he liked.

Choosing a random direction, he quickly looked for a place to restore his strength. Once he recovered, he would be able to join the battle and take out as many opponents as possible before the situation died down again!

Not too much time had passed when Shang Xia went around looking for a place to recover, but by the looks of it, the Martial Extremity Realm cultivators of the Tongyou Institution should have already entered the battlefield to reinforce the institution's territory. It went without saying that the Azure Spiritual World's plan to stop the Tongyou Institution failed miserably.

Naturally, the Tongyou Institution had to pay a huge price for that to happen. There were experts falling left and right, using their lives to buy the institution a little more time.

Unexpectedly, the battles that took place didn't die down that quickly. Instead, it became even more intense.

Ordinary cultivators weren't like Shang Xia or Sima Zhanxing. The battle between them could drag on for days if they were in the Martial Intent Realm! As long as they didn't go crazy and blast ultimate attacks on each other non stop, they wouldn't exhaust themselves so easily.

Due to the fact that Shang Xia had been chasing Chu Chen for a greater part of the time he was in the battlefield between the two worlds, he had no idea where he was. The space within the battlefield between the two worlds shifted often, and even after their time there, no one would dare to say that they knew every region in the battlefield.

In some special border regions of the battlefield between the two worlds, there were even beasts that were comparable to Martial Extermination Realm experts. Due to their presence, the regions

they were in wouldn't move by much and the experts of both worlds wouldn't mess with those beasts ordinarily. If the true experts of the two worlds didn't dare to go running around the battlefield between the two worlds recklessly, it was even more unlikely for the weaker disciples to do that. As such, Shang Xia managed to find a secluded region before long.

He casually opened a hole in one of the hills around him before laying down some simple alarm systems around before starting his cultivation.

No one knew how long had passed, but Shang Xia was awakened by a loud roar that came from outside his cave. Luckily, the inner qi he expended in the battle against Sima Zhanxing had been mostly fully restored.

Getting to his feet, Shang Xia felt a refreshing wave washing through his mind. As all the fatigue from the battle against Sima Zhanxing disappeared.

Confidently stepping out of the cave, he released his divine sense and fused it with the world around him to conceal his aura. Even if Martial Extermination Realm experts came, they wouldn't be able to detect his presence if they didn't see him for themselves.

After concealing his aura, Shang Xia started to move in the direction of the roar.

Not long after crossing the hill, he heard voices coming from the side. "Senior Brother Zhou, we left the battle without permission to come over here. If anyone discovers us, will we be in trouble?"

Shang Xia hid behind a rock and sneaked a look at them. He saw four cultivators of the Azure Spiritual World huddled together while pointing at places on a weird fabric scroll. It seemed as though they were looking for something.

The person who seemed to be their leader was clad in silvery-blue robes and he was dressed pretty similar to Chu Chen. The other three looked like his followers.

Could it be another direct disciple of the Changbai Holy Land?!

Before the disciple in the silvery-blue robes could say anything, one of the other disciples snapped at the person who spoke before. "Junior Brother Xiang, the battlefield between the two worlds is currently a meat grinder. Two Martial Extermination Realm experts had already died and we recently received news that Chu Chen lost his life. Senior Brother Zhou is trying to protect the three of us by bringing us away from the battle. Junior Brother Xiang, are you planning to head back there and continue fighting with those freaks of the Azure Origin World?!"

Chapter 382: Ambush

Junior Brother Xiang quickly waved his hands in the air and spoke hastily, "No, no! Of course that's not what I meant. Senior Brother Yue, please don't misunderstand! However... If anyone discovers our tracks and reports it to the elders, we might be punished!"

The disciple who snapped at him earlier became even more annoyed after hearing what he said. "Junior Brother Xiang, you've always been so timid. Keep in mind, hunger is key. If you're timid all the time, you'll eventually die from the lack of resources."

Senior Brother Zhou, the leader among them, finally tore his gaze away from the map and looked at the third disciple who hadn't spoken a word. His tone was surprisingly gentle and he chuckled softly, "Junior Brother Qi, what do you think?"

“The battle had nothing to do with us in the first place.” Junior Brother Qi finally spoke up, but his words stunned those present.

A smile appeared on Senior Brother Zhou’s face as he continued, “Junior Brother Qi, why would you say that? Didn’t the elders send us here to take part in the battle?”

“Hmph, the four races of the Liao Continent were the ones who came begging for our assistance. That doesn’t mean that we have to put our lives on the line for them. Moreover, it’s not as though we haven’t fought those cultivators from the Tongyou Institution before. Senior brother Zhou already killed two of them. The three of us managed to kill two more. We did our part by killing four of them.” Junior Brother Qi chuckled softly.

Brother Yue clapped his hands happily in response. “Exactly! Junior Brother Qi, you’re right! We did our part and they can’t blame us for anything!”

The smile on Junior Brother Qi’s face remained but he stayed silent.

Senior Brother Zhou seemed to be extremely satisfied with the response and he flipped the scroll in his hand. “Those thieves from the Tongyou Institution stole the world essence from the battlefield between the two worlds. However, a small portion managed to return to the battlefield between the two worlds before they closed the spatial tunnel. The returning world origin turned into many different treasures scattered around the land. The four races were severely damaged by the Tongyou Institution the previous time and they knew it would be impossible for them to stop the Tongyou Institution from returning eventually. That is why they begged us for help. We chose to assist them as they were also members of the Azure Spiritual World and we killed some of their opponents for them. Junior Brother Qi is correct. The elders can’t find fault with us.”

“Senior Brother Zhou, this scroll...” A trace of light flashed through Junior Brother Xiang’s eyes now that he received assurance they wouldn’t be in any sort of trouble.

“This is the price the four races have to pay for our services.” Senior Brother Zhou laughed in response.

However, he didn’t state what they were looking for exactly.

That didn’t stop the sharp Junior Brother Qi from making his guesses. “Senior Brother Zhou, I heard that the space within the battlefield between the two worlds would shift frequently. The scroll you are holding should be some sort of map. Is it useful in any way?”

“Haha. Of course a mere map wouldn’t be enough. However, there are many landmarks described here that cannot be moved away during the shift. As long as we observe the place thoroughly, we’ll be able to find our way around. At the very least, the four races didn’t waste all their time in the battlefield between the two worlds.” Senior Brother Zhou muttered.

“Senior Brother Zhou, you’re a genius alright. I didn’t think about this at all.” Senior Brother Yue laughed.

Junior Brother Xiang, who had been quiet for a little while now added, “Hehe, the four races of the Liao Continent seem to be backed in a corner by the Tongyou Institution. Otherwise, they wouldn’t give us benefits like that!”

“Do you really think that the four races of the Liao Continent are fools?” Senior Brother Zhou snorted suddenly.

Staring at Senior Brother Zhou in shock, Junior Brother Xiang didn’t know how to respond for a second.

A frown started to form on Senior Brother Yue’s face even though he enjoyed watching Junior Brother Xiang making a fool of himself. However, he had to ask, “Is there something off about this?”

“Everything the four races could find easily should already be retrieved by them. They would only give us the location of treasures that lie in dangerous regions or places that are hard to reach.” Senior Brother Zhou finally turned serious as he explained the situation to the others.

“Hmph. The four races are truly treacherous!” Senior Brother Yue snorted once before turning to look at Junior Brother Xiang. “Do you still have a problem with Senior Brother Zhou’s action of bringing us here?”

With his face flushing red, Junior Brother Xiang yelled loudly. “I... Of course not! I never had a problem! I will always listen to Senior Brother Zhou and follow his commands!”

Snorting once, Senior Brother Yue turned to look away.

The frown on Senior Brother Zhou’s face didn’t fade as he finally interjected. “Alright, alright, stop arguing. According to the map, we’re not too far away from where we need to be. However, the area seems to have changed slightly. We need to locate a small field filled with Bearded Eye Grass. Spread out and look!”

With his command, the three of them scattered to start looking for the herb.

With a deep frown on his face, Senior Brother Zhou didn’t do the same as the three. Instead, he examined it closer before running in another direction.

When Shang Xia heard Senior Brother Zhou’s order earlier for the three to find the Bearded Eye Grass, he knew that they were looking for the hill he was hiding in to restore his inner qi earlier. He quickly left the rock he was hiding behind to return to a region near the cave he made.

After all, he noticed some weird yellowish-green grass when he emerged earlier.

The grass bore some sort of flower that was the size of a man’s eyeball, and the petals resembled long white whiskers. That was how the grass got its name.

When a breeze blew through the land, the flowers looked like tiny eyes that were blinking in the wind. At night, those flowers would also emit a strange soft glow to make them resemble stars in the night sky.

In several short seconds, Shang Xia heard the soft whistling of wind headed his way. Someone actually chose to run in that direction.

As a figure arrived at the foot of the hill, Shang Xia recognized him as Junior Brother Xiang.

The moment he arrived, Junior Brother Xiang's gaze landed on the field of weird-looking grass. A look of joy appeared on his face. However, his gaze quickly landed on the cave Shang Xia carved out to make his recovery and his expression changed drastically. He quickly made the decision to return to notify the others before exploring the area.

Unfortunately for him, a soft chuckle entered his ears before he could leave. "Where do you think you're going?"

Before he could yell to warn his comrades, a ray of sword qi blew a hole in his body. His inner organs exploded like candy out of a pinata and he fell to the ground powerlessly.

Shang Xia kept his Jade River Sword as a frosty light flashed through his eyes. There was no need to be kind to a bunch of Azure Spiritual World cultivators who killed members of the Tongyou Institution. Walking towards Junior Brother Xiang who was still alive thanks to the powerful life force of a Martial Intent Realm cultivator, Shang Xia could see the life quickly draining out of him. "There's no need to waste your energy. You can't nullify my Seven Laceration Sword."

Despair filled Junior Brother Xiang's mind. He wasn't able to say a word, but a multitude of thoughts were running through his mind. He couldn't even understand what type of qi Shang Xia used, other than the fact that there was a shit ton of them running amok in his body. There was no need to bother thinking about nullifying them since he couldn't even tell what they were. Regardless, he wondered how Shang Xia was able to possess so many different types of qi.

The thought barely flashed through his mind when he realized that wasn't the time to think about those random thoughts he had.

Shang Xia couldn't help but chuckle when he saw the conflicting emotions appearing on Junior Brother Xiang's dying face. "What are you looking for? Why don't you share it with me?"

Glaring at Shang Xia, a trace of disdain appeared in Junior Brother Xiang's eyes. He was maintaining his life with his quickly depleting inner qi, but with his cultivation at the Martial Intent Realm, he wouldn't run out of it anytime soon.

The smile on Shang Xia's face became wider as he grabbed Junior Brother Xiang off the ground.

With his eyes widening in pain and shock, Junior Brother Xiang felt a searing pain shoot through his body. Perspiration and blood soaked his clothes and he was like a wet rag that Shang Xia was pulling up from the floor.

Even so, he discovered he couldn't make the slightest noise.

Shang Xia's smile was comparable to that of a devil's in Junior Brother Xiang's eyes. That wasn't the end as Shang Xia muttered softly. "Are you willing to talk? Oh right, blink your eyes if you want to communicate with me. You can't speak anyway."

Hearing what he said, Junior Brother Xiang closed his eyes immediately.

Shang Xia couldn't help but praise the man's guts. "Alright, I'll give you a quick death. The others will probably come looking for you and run into the same fate anyway. Let's just hope that they're as stubborn as you."

Opening his eyes once again, pure rage could be seen as Junior Brother Xiang's face twisted with rage. He wanted nothing more than to tear Shang Xia to shreds for threatening his fellow martial brothers, but his body trembled once and the light in his eyes dimmed.

Shang Xia truly admired Junior Brother Xiang's strong will. As such, he didn't prolong the man's suffering and killed him directly. After all, the enmity between them wouldn't be solved even if Shang Xia released him.

The scroll in Senior Brother Zhou's hand definitely piqued Shang Xia's interest. After all, the treasure that a direct disciple of the Changbai Holy Land had his eye on would definitely be special. Not to mention the fact that direct disciples of the Changbai Holy Land were existences who were one step into the Martial Extermination Realm. Only treasures like rank four advancement formulas and strands of extermination origin would be able to catch their attention.

Shang Xia couldn't help but recall the loot he obtained after killing Chu Chen and Sima Zhanxing.

If Senior Brother Zhou, a direct disciple of the Changbai Holy Land, had a scroll that recorded some sort of treasure on him, Chu Chen might also have something like it!

Unfortunately, forcefully opening the spatial artifact would damage the items within.

Shang Xia was afraid that even if Chu Chen had similar treasures on him, they would be destroyed when Shang Xia forced the case open.

Compared to Chu Chen's spatial artifact, Shang Xia was looking forward to opening Sima Zhanxing's spatial artifact. He might have been living a shitty life in the Azure Spiritual World, but he was a genius member of the Rose Party regardless!

Unfortunately... Shang Xia knew that there was a special rank three talisman called the Bamboo Void Breaking Talisman that could open spatial artifacts without destroying the items within. However, it wasn't recorded in the Zhu Family Talisman Scripture and Shang Xia didn't know if the institution had a way of creating it.

He was quickly brought back to attention when he heard some commotion nearby. He quickly hid his aura again.

The person who came this time clearly wasn't as careful as Junior Brother Xiang no matter how inexperienced he seemed. As the person appeared at the foot of the hill, he yelled at the top of his lungs, "Junior Brother Xiang, stop playing around and being mysterious! Did you find some sort of treasure?! Are you planning to keep it for yourself?"

Taking a few steps forward, Senior Brother Yue looked up only to be greeted with the sight of the Bearded Eye Grass and joy filled his heart. He roared with laughter. "I knew it! I..."

Before he could say another word, a soft sigh entered his ears. "You're much more careless than your Junior Brother Xiang."

Widening his eyes in shock, Senior Brother Yue felt his body going soft as he crumpled to the ground. He stared at Shang Xia who was slowly approaching with fear in his eyes.

Chapter 383: Bystander

Shang Xia discovered that against cultivators in the same cultivation realm, his Nine Providence Spears didn't give him the greatest advantage. There was obviously no need to bother with his Divine Killing Spear when up against them. After all, all those moves would create too huge of a commotion.

With his comprehension of the Man and Heaven Synergy Chapter, he was able to conceal himself almost perfectly. He needed attacks that could allow him to catch his opponents off guard!

The sneak attacks he used against Junior Brother Xiang and Senior Brother Yue succeeded due to their relatively lower cultivation realm. Neither of them completed their third divine sense transformation and they didn't detect the danger that was rapidly closing in.

After a cultivator completed their third divine sense transformation, their senses would become a lot sharper. Even though they might not be able to detect Shang Xia, they would feel a sense of danger at the last second.

Unfortunately for the two of them, they were unable to feel anything and Shang Xia dealt with them with one move.

Originally, Shang Xia was planning to do the same to the third person.

However, the remaining two weren't fools. They discovered that Junior Brother Xiang and Senior Brother Yue didn't respond to any of their calls and they quickly gathered together. As they approached the hill, a deep frown appeared on Shang Xia's face.

If Senior Brother Zhou was the only one with a strong cultivation base, Shang Xia wouldn't feel too annoyed. He expected a direct disciple of the Changbai Holy Land to be at the grand completion stage of the Martial Intent Realm anyway. However, Junior Brother Qi had surprisingly completed his third divine sense transformation.

It seemed as though Senior Brother Zhou wasn't as useless as he looked. He was actually able to get such capable subordinates.

The Azure Spiritual World and Azure Origin World might be separated by the spatial barrier and the battlefield between the two worlds, but the contact between the two worlds was pretty much plentiful. The Tongyou Institution's information system wasn't too bad and they gathered some intelligence on the Changbai Holy Land too.

Shang Xia knew that disciples like Chu Chen and Senior Brother Zhou were really important in the Changbai Holy Land. They had to gather their own subordinates before entering the Martial Extermination Realm and the holy land fully supported their actions.

Junior Brother Qi looked a little younger than Senior Brother Zhou, and Shang Xia couldn't understand how Senior Brother Zhou got him as a subordinate. For a talented individual like Junior Brother Qi, he would most likely enter the grand completion stage in the future and become a direct disciple comparable to Senior Brother Zhou!

Well, it evidently wasn't time to think about all that nonsense. The two of them didn't slow down as they quickly approached the hill. Their voices eventually entered Shang Xia's ears.

“... They came one after the other. However, they didn't leave behind any indications for us to follow...” Junior Brother Qi muttered softly.

As soon as the words left his lips, Senior Brother Zhou snorted in disdain, “Hmph, they're probably getting greedy.”

“Senior Brother Zhou?” Junior Brother Qi stared at him with a confused expression.

Sighing softly, Senior Brother Zhou explained, “No one knows how many fruits the Lightning Fire Jujube Tree bore. If they located it first and kept a few for themselves, no one would know...”

Junior Brother Qi looked at him in shock.

Clapping Junior Brother Qi's shoulders, Senior Brother Zhou muttered, “Let's go. It's not that easy for those dumbasses to steal the fruits for themselves. I'll teach them a lesson so they behave themselves in the future!”

As soon as he spoke, he started walking towards the foot of the hill.

Junior Brother Qi hastened his steps as he followed closely behind Senior Brother Zhou. However, Senior Brother Zhou paused suddenly.

Junior Brother Qi's expression changed as he retreated quickly. He didn't forget to yell, “Senior Brother Zhou, get back!”

No one knew if Senior Brother Zhou hadn't detected the danger or if he was planning to take it head-on, but he remained where he stood.

The second Junior Brother Qi left, a massive spear created from starlight shot straight for Senior Brother Zhou.

Junior Brother Qi's pupils shrank when he saw the starlight that made up the spear. Since there was no way of sneak attacking the two of them, Shang Xia felt that he might as well open with his spear art.

Realizing that there was no way to run, Senior Brother Zhou roared and brought out his weapon. It was a high-grade weapon and heaven and earth qi gathered around him the moment it appeared. It was a massive metal ruler and he slammed it down heavily at the spear flying his way.

A loud blast rang through the air, but Junior Brother Qi yelled over it. “Senior Brother, be careful! That's the Upper Division disciple of the Tongyou Institution, Shang Xia!”

Students in the Tongyou Institution would stay for six years at max, and disciples who could enter the upper division had statuses comparable to direct disciples of the holy lands. However, the Tongyou Institution was a special case. In order to nurture as many disciples as they could, the time disciples could remain in the institution was limited. In two short years, the cultivation of the Upper Division disciples couldn't improve by much! When compared to true direct disciples of the various powers, they were far too lacking.

As a result, the disciples of the Tongyou Institution in the Upper Division would usually only possess cultivation bases at the peak of the Martial Extremity Realm. It would be rare for them to enter the Martial Intent Realm.

The institution only managed to increase the number of disciples who entered the Martial Intent Realm in recent years due to the increased resources they obtained from the battlefield between the two worlds.

Even so, disciples like Tian Mengzi and Sun Haiwei were in the minority. The Tongyou Institution might be growing stronger recently, but the quality of their disciples was far from holy lands like the Changbai Holy Land and the White Deer Paradise.

Of course, there were exceptions to everything. There was one black horse that managed to advance so quickly that his reputation rang loud and clear through the worlds. That was Shang Xia, who took less than 3 years to enter the Upper Division.

The terrifying existence known as Shang Xia not only managed to kill Chu Chen, a direct disciple of the Changbai Holy Land, he even managed to kill a Martial Extermination Realm expert, Sima Zhanxing!

Senior Brother Zhou and the others might not really care about an abandoned Martial Extermination Realm expert like Sima Zhanxing since they had no idea what it was like to face a Martial Extermination Realm expert, but Chu Chen hit close to him!

The reason they were able to become direct disciples was because of the support of the elders in the faction! Their cultivation base was also a cut above the rest as they could suppress those in the same cultivation realm.

Nevertheless, Shang Xia killed someone like that!

The fact alone caused those from the Azure Spiritual World to raise their guard against him.

There was even an order from the Changbai Holy Land for their disciples to report Shang Xia's whereabouts if they ever ran into him. They were also specifically ordered not to fight him as the holy land would send out Martial Extermination Realm experts to hunt him down.

Unfortunately, Shang Xia disappeared from the battlefield between the two worlds when the order was released. The space within the battlefield might shift quickly, but no one expected him to disappear for three days straight!

Now that Senior Brother Zhou and Junior Brother Qi ran into him, they were cursing themselves for their bad luck.

Laughing bitterly, Senior Brother Zhou actually didn't need Junior Brother Qi's reminder of who Shang Xia was. He realized who the attacker was the moment he saw the spear. However, he didn't plan on resigning to his fate yet.

As a direct disciple of the Changbai Holy Land, even if he was weaker than an opponent of the same level, he wouldn't be defeated in a few moves!

As long as he was able to buy some time and send an emergency signal out, he believed that the seniors of the Changbai Holy Land would be able to arrive quickly.

Moreover, he wasn't the only one who was present. There was also Junior Brother Qi who would assist him...

Many thoughts flashed through his mind, but in reality, only a short moment passed. His metal ruler slammed heavily into the spear and he took several steps back. Every time his foot landed on the ground, huge cracks would be seen.

When he finally stabilized his body, his face was flushed red with all the blood rushing up to his brain and his inner qi fluctuated unsteadily. He was on the verge of losing control of his inner qi altogether.

Luckily, he managed to deflect the spear with his previous attack. The giant spear made with starlight smashed into a rocky surface nearby. A massive hole was blown through it and the space seemed a lot wider than before.

With that, two corpses were revealed to Senior Brother Zhou and Junior Brother Qi.

“Junior Brother Qi...” Realizing that things were going south too quickly from the power contained in the spear, Senior Brother Zhou yelled in haste. He knew that if he were to fight Shang Xia alone, he would only suffer the same fate as Chu Chen. Only if they dragged the battle out would they be able to hold out till the seniors arrived!

With a loud roar, he raised his weapon and rushed at Shang Xia again without waiting for Junior Brother Qi to follow behind him.

One had to say that Senior Brother Zhou definitely possessed the qualities befitting a direct disciple of the Changbai Holy Land. Not only was he confident in his abilities, he knew that he had to risk everything for a chance to survive. Only by seizing the initiative would he be able to draw the battle out.

Too bad for him, he missed one extremely crucial detail. His Junior Brother Qi stood at the sidelines instead of joining the battle!

“Junior Brother Qi, hurry up and fight him with me!” Senior Brother Zhou roared as he took on several blows from Shang Xia.

He wasn't the only one who was confused. Shang Xia was equally as puzzled.

“Junior Brother Qi, what are you doing?! Why aren't you fighting him?” Senior Brother Zhou yelled as he was quickly suppressed by Shang Xia.

Even if he wasn't willing to assist his fellow teammate, he should be running away to report to his superiors! Why was he standing there while watching the fight?!

Shang Xia couldn't understand what was happening, but he didn't let up on his relentless assault on Senior Brother Zhou.

Naturally, he split off a bit of his divine sense to observe Junior Brother Qi. The other party might look like he was planning to remain as a bystander, but Shang Xia knew better than to let his guard down.

Eventually, Shang Xia unleashed Piercing Sun and shattered Senior Brother Zhou's martial intent, Measuring the Heavens. Releasing his fourth move, Void Evasion, he took Senior Brother Zhou's life.

When everything was happening, Junior Brother Zhou merely stood at the side with a cold gaze.

Chapter 384: Inner Sect Elder, Huang Yunxiang

Since Shang Xia carried out his sneak attack, Junior Brother Qi had been watching coldly from the side.

That might be the case, but Shang Xia never lowered his guard against the disciple of the Changbai Holy Land.

Only after Senior Brother Zhou's death and the storm of heaven and earth qi dissipated did Shang Xia turn his attention to Junior Brother Qi.

"Who... Who exactly are you?" Shang Xia hesitated for a moment before asking the question. He even suspected that Junior Brother Qi was a spy the institution placed in the Changbai Holy Land from his actions.

"I'm obviously a cultivator from the Azure Spiritual World." With a trace of mockery in his eyes, he sneered at Shang Xia. "I know what you're thinking. I'm no spy for your Tongyou Institution."

Shang Xia wanted to ask him for the reason behind his actions, but Junior Brother Qi was clearly unwilling to give him the chance to do so. Twisting his palm slightly, a strange hook-like weapon appeared in Junior Brother Qi's hands.

"Well... I won't feel good if I don't exchange some pointers with you..." Looking at the weapon in his hand, Junior Brother Qi muttered softly.

Before Shang Xia could say anything, Junior Brother Qi lowered his voice and growled, "If you manage to take on my blow, the Lightning Fire Jujube fruits can be yours. If you can't... Don't blame me for taking advantage of your weakened state after defeating Senior Brother Zhou!"

Shang Xia found his words a little strange, but Junior Brother Qi was already leaping at him.

"Oh? Large completion stage of the Martial Intent Realm?" Shang Xia was slightly taken aback when Junior Brother Qi's aura rose abruptly. He discovered the other party was hiding his strength and even though he wasn't at the grand competition stage, he was close!

The only thing that made Shang Xia take him a little more seriously was that Junior Brother Qi was merely a smidge weaker than Senior Brother Zhou when the latter unleashed his martial intent, Measuring the Heavens!

From the looks of it, Junior Brother Qi hadn't even started comprehending his martial intent!

Facing such an attack, Shang Xia didn't plan on receiving it passively. Instead, he took the initiative and sent out an attack of his own. Starlight fell from the void and streamed towards the long hook.

He didn't dare to be careless as he unleashed his seventh move, Celestial Disruption!

Tiny explosions rang through the skies as the starlight fell on Junior Brother Qi's hooks. His offensive was seriously weakened as he approached. However, Junior Brother Qi didn't seem

surprised in the slightest. He twisted his hooks in mid air and he redirected the massive spear that had formed. The spear was forced off its trajectory.

The sudden change truly shocked Shang Xia.

Unfortunately, that was the extent of Shang Xia's feelings. He wasn't flustered at all and he concentrated his divine sense on the giant spear that was directed away from Junior Brother Qi.

Junior Brother Qi seemed to have underestimated Shang Xia's control over his spear. He failed to withdraw his hooks and the giant spear trembled slightly, forcing Junior Brother Qi to lose his balance.

Reacting quickly, Junior Brother Qi regained his footing and redirected his hooks with the suction force coming from the spear and slashed it at Shang Xia's neck.

One had to say that Junior Brother Qi was truly an exceptional talent. His skills were top notch and the power contained in his strikes was comparable to weaker martial intents comprehended by those in the Martial Intent Realm.

Too bad for him, he was up against Shang Xia. The monster of a man wouldn't allow Junior Brother Qi to do as he wished!

Shang Xia also reacted quickly and the Scarlet Star Spear in his hand trembled. Without any warning, he unleashed his eighth strike, Startling Moon!

The void started to tremble and the hook that was closing in on Shang Xia's neck was affected by the twisted space as it completely missed its target.

Shang Xia's Startling Moon didn't stop there. Even after nullifying Junior Brother Qi's attack, it shifted its focus on defense and struck out mercilessly. The spear arrived before Junior Brother Qi before he could detect it.

Even though Junior Brother had no idea how Shang Xia's spear worked, he was able to feel a trace of danger rapidly closing in on him. That alone was admirable!

No longer bothering with attacking, Junior Brother Qi didn't even bother defending himself with his weapons. He turned around to escape immediately!

Naturally, he wouldn't leave himself defenseless. He threw out a rank three talisman and it transformed into two streaks of blood-red light that covered his legs. His speed instantly increased by one-fold and Shang Xia could only stare at him, dumbfounded by the sudden change.

Looking at the direction he left, a ray of light flashed through Shang Xia's eyes. It was no wonder Junior Brother Qi had the guts to pick a fight with him. Other than the fact that his cultivation wasn't simple, he was also confident in his ability to run away. Junior Brother Qi was probably planning to use Shang Xia to hone himself in order to reach the next stage of cultivation! In actuality, Junior Brother Qi already touched on the edges of his martial intent. All he lacked was a way to comprehend it for real. With the experience he gained from fighting Shang Xia, it was a matter of time before he comprehended it.

Now that Junior Brother Qi had escaped, Shang Xia knew that it wouldn't take long before Junior Brother Qi comprehended his martial intent and became a direct disciple of the Changbai Holy Land. Only one question remained.

The dude's identity seemed a little questionable...

Shang Xia shook his head silently and sighed. Seeing as there was no way to hunt down Junior Brother Qi, he turned to look at Senior Brother Zhou's corpse.

Luckily for him, Senior Brother Zhou didn't keep the map in his spatial artifact. After some searching, Shang Xia pulled it out from the corpse's lapel.

Opening the map, Shang Xia looked at the various annotations on it and quickly found where he was. From the looks of it, he wasn't far from the treasure.

Lightning Fire Jujubes could be considered a precious treasure that was born from the world.

If one were to pluck the jujube fruit from the tree, one would be able to use it as a weapon. As long as one infused enough inner qi into the fruit before tossing it at their opponents, they would be able to summon a huge amount of lightning and fire qi. The power contained in it was comparable to a talisman!

A mature Lightning Fire Jujube tree could bear 36 fruits in total, and the quality of the fruits was usually split into 4 levels.

The lowest-graded fruits could release power equivalent to a rank one talisman and those fruits made up half of the 36.

A slightly better fruit could release power equivalent to a rank two talisman and there were probably 9 of them in total.

By extension, the rank three fruits were comparable to a rank three talisman, and 6 of them would appear among the 36.

The final 3 fruits were considered rank four Lightning Fire Jujubes and they could be compared to a rank four talisman!

One had to know that Shang Xia used many months of effort to create 9 rank three talismans back at the Shang Clan Manor.

Even if he added all of them up, the power contained within couldn't match up to a rank four Lightning Fire Jujube!

With 3 fruits like that, Shang Xia would finally possess a little more means to threaten a Martial Extermination Realm expert.

Retrieving Senior Brother Zhou's spatial artifact, Shang Xia found nothing else of value in the others and he quickly cremated the corpses. He followed the map and started looking all around him.

Looking at the map, Shang Xia knew that it definitely came from the four great races of the Liao Continent. Could those treasure maps be the reason behind the Changbai Holy Land's willingness to join the battle?

That revealed another problem. If the four great races of the Liao Continent had a map to the Lightning Fire Jujube Tree, why would they not save it for themselves? Could it be because the region around the tree was filled with danger? Perhaps only those who were capable had the ability to harvest the fruits.

It seemed as though the closer he got to the tree, the more danger he would be in. Since Junior Brother Qi managed to escape, Shang Xia knew that he would also have to be extremely careful during the entire process. He had to hide his tracks the best he could.

No matter what identity Junior Brother Qi had, the fact that Shang Xia killed three disciples of the Changbai Holy Land. With one of them being a direct disciple, Junior Brother Qi would definitely be questioned the moment he surfaced. Only by revealing Shang Xia's presence would he be able to escape suspicion.

From what he heard earlier, the Changbai Holy Land had a way for them to communicate in the battlefield between the two worlds and it wouldn't take long before a Martial Extermination Realm expert came looking for him.

Whatever the case, Shang Xia ventured deeper and deeper into a strange mountain range indicated on the map not too far away from the Bearded Eye Grass.

Due to the efforts of those who surveyed the battlefield between the two worlds, almost everyone knew that the central region was mostly flat while the border regions were filled with mountainous regions. Of course, that didn't mean that there were no mountains to be found in the central region. They were just few and far between.

In the past, the Tongyou Institution and the Four Spiritual Peak were both located in the central region and from the information they gathered, spiritual beasts and mutated beasts lived in those mountain ranges lining the border. The various powers also concluded that without being fully prepared, none of them would disturb the powerful beasts living in those mountain ranges.

In close to twenty years, there had almost been little to no stories of Martial Extermination Realm experts slaying those strong beasts. Every time there was news of that happening, reports of a beast tide would usually follow, causing the strength of both the humans and the beasts to fall considerably.

At that moment, Shang Xia was closing in on a sea of pebbles. According to the indication on the map, that was the landmark closest to the Lightning Fire Jujube Tree.

In other words, he should be extremely close to it!

Taking a closer look all around him, Shang Xia discovered that his surroundings were a little too quiet. Expanding his divine sense to the best of his abilities, he turned around to stare at a patch of space behind him.

"Hehe. Looks like you still managed to discover my tracks. I was planning to deal with you after you located the Lightning Fire Jujube Tree. Who would have thought that you could discover me with your divine sense? Impressive..."

A hoarse voice came from the void as an aged figure emerged.

Shang Xia remained relatively calm when he looked at the newcomer. He muttered in a low voice, "Are you an elder of the Changbai Holy Land?"

"You're Shang Bo's grandson indeed. The rumors of your strength should be true... Chief of the Upper Division, Shang Xia. This old man is called Huang Yunxiang and I'm

an Inner Sect Elder.” The aged figure nodded slightly and he even seemed to admire Shang Xia slightly.

Even though the structure of the Tongyou Institution was different from the rest, people like Huang Yunxiang were naturally familiar with how the institution classified their disciples.

A strange look appeared on Shang Xia’s face and he asked suddenly, “Inner Sect Elder? In that case, do you know someone called Liang Shuangren?”

Huang Yunxiang nodded slowly and sighed. “Looks like the Tongyou Institution really had something to do with his death. Liang Shuangren was an honorary elder of our Changbai Holy Land... Hmm, you can consider him an Outer Sect Elder.”

“Oh... I understand now.” Shang Xia nodded in all seriousness and continued. “He’s just a strong fighting dog your Changbai Holy Land uses to carry out your operations.”

Chapter 385: Giant Rat

“Oh... I understand now. He’s just a strong fighting dog your Changbai Holy Land uses to carry out your operations.”

Staring at Shang Xia in apparent shock, Huang Yunxiang eventually chuckled in amusement. “Well, you’re being really direct about it but I can’t say you’re wrong.”

Thinking for a second, Shang Xia continued, “Elder Huang, for you to run all the way out here for a mere Martial Intent Realm cultivator, aren’t you afraid that the Tongyou Institution will manage to gain the upper hand?”

Shang Xia didn’t actually know the situation out there. He was merely trying to bait some information from Elder Huang.

The moment Elder Huang appeared, a bad premonition appeared in Shang Xia’s heart. It seemed as though the institution wasn’t doing too well if the opponents could afford to send another Martial Extermination Realm expert to look for Shang Xia.

Chuckling softly, Huang Yunxiang could obviously tell Shang Xia’s intentions. After all, an old fox like him was too familiar with the ways of the world. Shang Xia was truly too inexperienced when compared to him. He continued nonchalantly, “Since I showed my face here, why don’t you take a guess?”

Shang Xia grinned after hearing what Huang Yunxiang said. “Since Elder Huang put it so ambiguously, you guys probably failed to gain the upper hand. Haha. I am much more relieved now. Looks like the Tongyou Institution isn’t doing too badly.”

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The smile on Huang Yunxiang’s face faded as the killing intent in his eyes grew stronger. He didn’t expect himself to be outsmarted by a little brat like Shang Xia.

Shang Xia added again, “Elder Huang, you’re a Martial Extermination Realm expert. Your divine sense should be able to cover a much larger range than me. Did you discover the Lightning Fire Jujube Tree?”

“What’s the matter? Are you trying to waste my time now? Or do you think you can deal with me after harvesting the fruits on the tree?” Huang Yunxiang raised an eyebrow and mocked the kid.

“Haha. I don’t want you to die without even seeing the tree, that’s all... At least you can leave this world without regrets.” Shang Xia sniggered softly.

Huang Yunxiang’s expression turned cold the moment the words left Shang Xia’s lips. “Hmph, in that case, you’ll definitely be leaving the world with regrets today!”

As soon as he spoke, he waved his sleeves violently and a yellow cloud emerged. It expanded in the skies above Shang Xia before crashing down mercilessly.

Shang Xia didn’t expect an elder of the Changbai Holy Land to act so unscrupulously towards a Martial Intent Realm cultivator. Luckily, he had prepared himself for it. The moment Huang Yunxiang made his move, Shang Xia threw himself in the opposite direction and ran across the sea of pebbles.

He knew that he wouldn’t be able to outrun an attack from a Martial Extermination Realm cultivator. He could only try to take it on with the assistance of the terrain around him. When he was running, he didn’t forget to mock the elder. “Heh, as an elder of the Changbai Holy Land, you can’t even keep your composure when speaking to juniors. You won’t even give me a chance to fulfill my last wish. Are you really so afraid of me?”

“Go talk to Sima Zhanxing when you’re dead. Don’t waste my time.” Huang Yunxiang growled before pointing downwards. “Fall!”

The cloud that was slowly descending suddenly increased its speed and it resembled a huge yellow hurricane that was tearing down the land. It went straight for Shang Xia.

The yellow storm filled the skies and it seemed to want to swallow everything in its path!

Raising his spear, Shang Xia released Startling Moon without even turning back. Piercing a hole in the storm, he created a small safe space for himself.

“Hmm... To affect space when you’re in the Martial Intent Realm. You’re truly a genius worth sending out a Martial Extermination Realm expert for.” Huang Yunxiang complimented Shang Xia before his tone sank again. “It’s a pity your actions are futile. How long can you last under my Desert Mist Extermination?”

The moment he completed his sentence, he discovered that Shang Xia had already increased the distance between them by more than ten feet.

“Huh? How is he able to avoid my divine sense detection? Is this something Shang Bo left behind?” Huang Yunxiang muttered. He wanted to look at the situation under the yellow storm, but he suddenly realized that something was wrong. “Not good!”

He suddenly felt a strong disturbance coming from under the yellow cloud. Shang Xia tore his way through the land, and when Huang Yunxiang saw how his extermination origin wasn’t able to stop Shang Xia’s his expression turned incomparably serious.

Of course, he didn't think that the situation had turned bad yet. He didn't use his full strength earlier because he didn't think he had to. Now that Shang Xia had jumped out of the range of the yellow cloud, he didn't wait for Shang Xia to land before pointing at him.

A thin ray of light emerged from his fingertips and shot straight at Shang Xia.

The instant it came into contact with his divine sense, Shang Xia felt a bone-chilling sensation and he felt his divine sense freezing over.

Shang Xia understood that Huang Yunxiang had revealed his second extermination origin.

In mid air, Shang Xia circulated his inner qi again and the Scarlet Star Spear trembled in his hands. He unleashed his ninth move, Piercing Sun, without hesitation.

A huge spear appeared in mid air and smashed at the ray of light that came from Huang Yunxiang.

That was the only move he had with power close to his Divine Killing Spear and Shang Xia knew that he had to use it in order to deal with the threat at hand.

Clashing with the ray of light in mid air, Shang Xia achieved something that wasn't supposed to happen. He stopped an attack from a Martial Extermination Realm cultivator with his rank three spear art!

The giant spear couldn't avoid its fate of being frozen over and it eventually dissipated in mid air. It didn't stop there. Shang Xia had to block the remainder of the attack with his Scarlet Star Spear. His weapon froze over instantly.

Everything happened so quickly that Shang Xia was unable to land on the ground even after his spear froze.

He might have lost his weapon, but Shang Xia didn't seem flustered in the slightest. Instead, he stared at Huang Yunxiang while laughing. "Is there a reason you're holding back even after so many failed attempts to kill me? Are you preparing for something to happen?"

Huang Yunxiang's expression turned extremely ugly and he simply grunted at Shang Xia to indicate his annoyance at the kid. The chill in his gaze grew stronger.

In contrast, a pained look appeared in Shang Xia's eye when he saw his frozen-over weapon that had already fallen to the ground. He knew that with the damage it suffered, it was definitely going to be badly damaged after the battle.

He quickly regained his composure and an annoying smile appeared on his face again. "Elder Huang, you're a Martial Extermination Realm cultivator at the end of the day. I'm not your opponent... It won't take much for you to kill me either. Why don't you come closer since you seem to be wasting a lot of energy trying to kill me from so far away."

Fury flashed through Huang Yunxiang's eyes but he remained where he was. He sneered coldly, "Brat, you're asking to die!"

Shang Xia ignored him completely and he chuckled coldly, "We shouldn't be far from the tree, right? Are you afraid of damaging the fruits if you act recklessly now?"

Seeing the sneer on Huang Yunxiang's face, Shang Xia seemed to have thought of another possibility. "... Or... Are you afraid that there's a spiritual beast guarding the treasure?"

Shang Xia barely completed his sentence when he discovered a huge disturbance coming from underground. Violently rumbling filled the lands and a massive crack appeared under him. It was like a giant mouth that wanted to swallow him whole.

With his expression changing, Shang Xia didn't dare to leap into the air to flee from the crack. Instead, he unleashed his Irregular Steps to its limit. Running to the side, he quickly hid his aura.

If not for the fact that Huang Yunxiang had his eyes on Shang Xia, he would have expected Shang Xia to be swallowed up by the crack. He wouldn't believe that a Martial Intent Realm cultivator could hide his presence so perfectly.

However, that wasn't time for him to worry about Shang Xia's abilities.

That was because after Shang Xia retracted his aura, the existence that was underground locked onto him!

"Squeak, squeak!" With two loud squeaks, the crack on the ground widened and a massive mouth appeared. Two large teeth that resembled large blades chomped at Elder Huang Yunxiang.

Chapter 386: Lightning Fire Jujube Tree

The Lightning Fire Jujube Tree was one reason behind Elder Huang Yunxiang's reluctance to go all out against Shang Xia, but a bulk of his attention was placed on dealing with the spiritual beast that would be guarding the tree.

Shang Xia didn't expect the beast to be hiding underground where no one could see it. He didn't discover the beast when he was in the area, instead, he managed to detect Huang Yunxiang who was tracking him.

Crossing paths with Huang Yunxiang, Shang Xia managed to catch on at the last second and avoid the giant rat that emerged from underground.

A Martial Extermination Realm spiritual beast developed intelligence that was superior to ordinary beasts. It could tell that Shang Xia was a mere ant with his cultivation realm and the real threat was posed by Huang Yunxiang who was floating in the air above.

That was why Shang Xia had the guts to try escaping in front of the beast. Since the beast missed Shang Xia the first time, it wouldn't bother missing such a tiny meal. It charged directly at Huang Yunxiang and started a strong offensive.

A loud squeak filled the skies and Shang Xia felt as though someone stabbed a sharp needle through his brain. Even with his willpower and soul that was close to a cultivator at the Martial Extermination Realm, he felt as though his head was splitting open.

Luckily, he reacted quickly and concealed his aura. Huang Yunxiang was the true target of the attack. Shang Xia looked up only to see Huang Yunxiang's extermination origin expanding rapidly under his feet as he forced his body to stabilize in mid air.

The giant rat's teeth came crashing down at that exact moment and a loud blast was heard when Huang Yunxiang counterattacked.

Another loud squeak came from the giant rat along with the massive blast.

When Shang Xia looked up again, he discovered that Huang Yunxiang had already summoned his third extermination origin to deal with the threat.

A sea of three-colored light swallowed the massive figure that was the giant rat.

“Heh, that old fart actually hid his cultivation when trying to kill me... He’s actually a third layer Martial Extermination Realm expert!” Shang Xia sneered silently as he continued to watch the situation playing out in the air. He intended to reach over with his divine sense to observe the battle but when his divine sense approached, it was quickly swallowed up by the same sea of light.

It seemed as though a battle like that wasn’t something he could peek at with his weak divine sense.

Fortunately, the giant rat didn’t look too weak. It didn’t look like it was at a complete disadvantage against Huang Yunxiang. It released an enraged cry as it continued to fight.

Since the battle was between Martial Extermination Realm experts now, Shang Xia figured that it was the best time for him to sneak away.

All he needed to know was where the hell the damn tree was!

He knew it was close, but there were no signs of it!

Since he couldn’t locate the tree immediately, he had to keep his little life safe before doing anything else.

He realized how stupid his actions were after feeling the shockwaves of the battle. He knew that the Changbai Holy Land would send an expert to track him down after Junior Brother Qi escaped, but he still chose to stubbornly look for the Lightning Fire Jujube Tree!

Finally admitting his mistake, he started to run in a random direction away from the battle. Since both parties fighting had nothing to do with him, there was no point interfering with the battle. It would be for the best if they heavily injured each other.

It didn’t take long for him to arrive hundreds of feet away from the battlefield.

As he focused on getting further away from the battle, a burst of red light came from nowhere, obstructing his way. A wall of fire came out of the ground and stood in his way, stopping him from moving forward.

Shang Xia felt a chill running through his heart as he took a huge leap to the side to avoid slamming into the wall of fire that appeared.

The wall of fire seemed to appear from Huang Yunxiang’s third extermination origin and it was clear the elder didn’t plan on letting him leave so easily.

His ability to obstruct Shang Xia sounded all the alarm bells in Shang Xia’s mind. It seemed as though the elder was able to split off a part of his consciousness and he wasn’t fully focused on the battle against the giant rat. He had to get away as quickly as possible!

Turning in another direction, he ran even quicker away from the battle. Who would have thought that he would run into a massive pit after running for a short while? Nothing but a lone tree stood at the center of the pit and Shang Xia noticed dozens of egg-sized fruits hanging on its branches.

Widening his eyes in shock, Shang Xia almost couldn't believe his eyes. He was still lamenting the fact that he couldn't find the tree earlier. Who would have thought that he would run into it while making his escape?

With a burst of joy filling his heart, Shang Xia decided to head down and pluck all the fruits before thinking about the repercussions.

As he leaped through the air and tried entering the pit, weird pulsations came from the ground below and countless spikes appeared. They shot towards Shang Xia who no longer had his spear due to Huang Yunxiang's interference.

Flipping his wrist, the Jade River Sword appeared in his hand. Sword light rained down on those spike-like objects. The collision between his sword qi and those spikes forced him back up to the surface.

What the hell? Is this the doing of the weird fat rat?

Shang Xia shivered slightly. He knew that the rat wouldn't be willing to let Shang Xia steal those fruits easily. He was surprised by the fact that the rat still had the energy to mess with him even when tangled with Huang Yunxiang!

He was angered and amused at the same time, and he nearly burst out in enraged laughter.

It seemed as though both Martial Extermination Realm assholes fighting were holding back and hiding their full strength!

Shang Xia felt that it was possible they were both wary of him, but that didn't make sense if he thought about it. If they were both afraid he might take away the Lightning Fire Jujubes, Huang Yunxiang wouldn't have stopped him from running in the direction he was headed initially!

There could only be one other reason. There was something there Huang Yunxiang didn't want him to find!

Choosing another direction that didn't lead to the pit or the region he was once stopped by Huang Yunxiang, Shang Xia started running once again.

This time, no one stopped him.

Even so, their divine senses didn't leave him. With Shang Xia's acute instincts, he could feel that both experts were keeping an eye on him. Only after he ran out several miles did he leave their range of detection.

Quickly stopping, Shang Xia turned to look behind him. He took a huge detour around the hill that was beside him before deciding to head back.

This time, he moved at a snail's pace. He pushed his concealment to the limit and if anyone were to see him now, they would think that he was a weird corpse that was wandering the land due to the lack of qi.

When the two existences felt Shang Xia's presence leaving their range of detection, they immediately stopped holding back. Releasing their full power, the scale of the battle reached a new height instantly.

Even when he was six miles away, Shang Xia could feel the terrifying energy fluctuations that came from the clash between the two. He didn't need to use his divine sense to observe the battle to know where it was.

From the shockwaves of the battle, Shang Xia could tell that Huang Yunxiang was stronger than Liang Shuangren who was killed back in the Thousand Leaf Mountain Range!

What shocked him was the fact that the damn fat rat was able to match up to Huang Yunxiang!

Pushing his concealment to the limit, Shang Xia carefully made his way back to where the two of them were fighting. By the time he returned, four long hours had already passed. The battle that was happening in mid air finally experienced some changes.

Shang Xia could vaguely feel Huang Yunxiang's extermination origins growing stronger all of a sudden, and the battle immediately tilted in his favor.

Rather than trying to kill the rat with the advantage he had, he started to draw the battle away from the Lightning Fire Jujube Tree.

Shang Xia became even more confident of his guess when he ran away earlier, but he remained where he was without the slightest movement.

When the two of them moved away a little, a figure popped out from the ground where Huang Yunxiang stopped Shang Xia with a wall of fire earlier. The figure started running towards the large pit.

"I knew it!" Shang Xia thought to himself. Even though his guess was verified, he remained motionless.

The person who was running to the pit wasn't anyone else but Junior Brother Qi who ran away from Shang Xia previously.

Junior Brother Qi was only able to hide there because of a secret art from the Changbai Holy Land and Shang Xia didn't find it surprising at all.

Since he made his appearance, Shang Xia guessed that he probably made some sort of deal with Huang Yunxiang. Moreover, the Martial Intent Realm disciple might have already guessed that there would be a spiritual beast guarding the tree when he called the elder over.

Their plan was probably to approach the tree from different directions and Huang Yunxiang's job would be to lure the beast away while his job would be to retrieve the fruits.

That was why Huang Yunxiang stopped Shang Xia from running in that direction in the first place. With his strong divine sense, he would definitely discover Junior Brother Qi!

The giant rat might have been lured away by Huang Yunxiang, but the moment Junior Brother Qi started moving in the direction of the pit, it quickly discovered the disciple's presence.

Roaring with rage, the giant rat seemed to go crazy as it tried its best to return to the pit. It ignored all the damage it was suffering from Huang Yunxiang.

Noticing the rat's reaction, Huang Yunxiang's attacks became even more intense in an attempt to stop it.

At that point, neither expert held back. They pushed themselves to the limit as the huge battle that took place before transformed into a match of sudden death!

Huang Yunxiang released several grunts while miserable squeaks came from the rat. The man and spiritual beast duo suffered varying levels of injuries.

Shang Xia, who had been observing everything, turned extremely serious as he brought out a yellow gourd from his storage case.

Chapter 387: One Stone, Two Rats

The two existences in the air finally placed everything on the line as they released everything they had.

If they didn't stop soon, it was certain that they would be seriously injured even if they didn't end up dragging each other to the underworld.

Even though the battle up there looked intense, both Martial Extermination Realm existences knew that the key to victory had already appeared.

The moment Junior Brother Qi approached the tree and obtained the fruits, he would be able to unleash attacks comparable to experts in the Martial Extermination Realm. If the rat was barely able to hold on under Huang Yunxiang's ferocious assault, the addition of Junior Brother Qi would spell its death!

On the contrary, if the rat managed to break past Huang Yunxiang's obstruction and protect the tree, Huang Yunxiang's plan would fail miserably.

Sitting at the sidelines, Shang Xia understood that Huang Yunxiang's true intention might not be the Lightning Fire Jujube Tree in the first place. Instead, he might be scheming to get the giant rat's extermination origins!

Killing Shang Xia might just be a side quest of his. That was probably why Huang Yunxiang didn't chase after him when he made his escape earlier.

From how long the battle lasted, it was easy to tell that the rat had refined more than a single strand of extermination origin. If Shang Xia or Huang Yunxiang had to compare the extermination origin they could obtain by killing the giant rat and the Lightning Fire Jujubes, the extermination origins were countless times better.

Shang Xia was extremely serious when he took out the yellow gourd. It contained the strand of sword qi Patriarch Kou sealed within for him to save his life at a crucial moment. Even when he was fighting Sima Zhanxing, he didn't want to waste it.

However, with the giant rat and Huang Yunxiang in front of him, Shang Xia felt that it was time to take the risk.

Slowly opening the cork on the gourd, Shang Xia poured his inner qi into it without holding back. A deep green ray of light seemed to have awakened in the depths of the gourd as a tiny sword that was barely three inches long started to form.

Shang Xia got to his feet and bowed slightly at the sword before muttering in an incomparably solemn tone, "I hope this cute little sword... Ahem, I mean... I hope Patriarch Kou can help me deal with this!"

The tiny sword rose into the air before enlarging itself by several thousand times. A gigantic sword that contained the strength of a Martial Dipper Realm expert hovered in the skies and the entire world around it lost its color.

In that instant, the sword qi Kou Chongxue left Shang Xia and became the center of attention in the battlefield between the two worlds. The Martial Extermination Realm experts scattered all around stopped their battles abruptly and turned to stare in the direction of the sword qi as an uncertain light flashed in their eyes.

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In the Beyond Heavens Pavilion where the vortex was located, a frightening amount of sword qi caused the void to tremble.

The shorty who seemed to be called Ancestor Xu leaped to his feet and yelled with rage, "Kou Chongxue, you despicable bastard! You actually left behind a portion of your power in the battlefield between the two worlds!"

A smile appeared on Kou Chongxue's face and he sneered derisively, "Shorty Xu, are you stupid or something? Your holy land sent experts into the battlefield between the two worlds to support their battle efforts despite you guys having nothing to do with this. Am I not allowed to leave my disciples some life saving methods? Alright, you want this to be fair? Retrieve the Lingxuan Space Shattering Claw from the battlefield right now or I'll send my Hidden Frost Sword down there to play with you guys. How's that?"

"The Lingxuan Space Shattering Claw belongs to the four races of the Liao Continent. What does my Changbai Holy Land have to do with this?" Shorty Xu snorted in response.

"Oh really? Without your Changbai Holy Land messing around, do you think those bunch of fools who are thinking of backstabbing each other all the time can gather together to make a divine weapon?" Kou Chongxue mocked.

Raising his voice slightly, Shorty Xu quickly retorted, "You can't blame us for everything! Do you have evidence to show that we made that weapon? Hmph, our Changbai Holy Land might be rich and powerful, but we're not crazy to the point where we can give away divine weapons!"

Kou Chongxue no longer bothered with the short man. Instead, he turned to the bearded elder. "Elder Luo, this little short fuck seems like he's ready to fight me. Why don't we just fight it out now and get this over with?"

The bearded elder maintained a serene expression on his face and he quickly tried to mediate the situation. "Come on, It's just a scuffle between juniors. We don't have to get involved with this. If you throw your Hidden Frost Sword down there, your combat abilities will definitely be affected if we were to fight. Junior Brother Xu, you need to calm down too. Patriarch Kou only left behind a small trace of his qi. It's not something to make a fuss over."

Shorty Xu snorted once before glaring at Kou Chongxue. However, he seemed to have thought of something and a mocking smile appeared on his face. "Our Changbai Sect is more than capable of taking out anything your Tongyou Institution can give your students..."

Rolling his eyes slightly, Kou Chongxue decided to treat Shorty Xu like a barking dog and he no longer bothered with the man.

...

In a certain location in the battlefield between the two worlds, Yan Su'er was holding Yun Jing and Shang Lubing back on her own.

She was the only remaining Martial Extermination Realm expert of her race, but she was no weakling. She had already reached the fourth layer of the Martial Extermination Realm and she wasn't at a disadvantage when taking the both of them on at the same time.

Yun Jing chuckled bitterly after noticing that she had no intention of killing the two of them. From her actions, she seemed more interested in holding them back so they couldn't head over to assist the other members of the institution. "Grandmother Yan, your relationship with our institution has never been bad. Why are you making things difficult for us?"

Yan Su'er casually waved her staff to force the advancing Shang Lubing back slightly before muttering softly, "When did I make things difficult for you? We've always been on good terms with each other. Isn't it good for us to be stuck in a deadlock like this without any deaths? The two of you are the ones who are trying to make things difficult for me. I'm not doing anything!"

Yun Jing didn't know whether to laugh or cry. She thought about it for a second before responding, "In that case, I'll stay behind and put on an act with you. Just let Mister Shang Lubing leave. How's that?"

"Absolutely not." Yan Su'er rolled her eyes at Yun Jing before she continued, "If I let any one of you leave, my race and I will have to take on the brunt of the holy land's anger! Are you planning on defending us against the Changbai Holy Land? Hmph. Even Kou Chongxue will have to be able to enter my Liao Continent before you can even think of that."

Yun Jing heard the meaning behind her words and a glint flashed in her eyes. "Grandmother Yan, looks like you're not very satisfied with the Changbai Holy Land either!"

"Heh, don't even try. This old lady has eaten more salt than you have rice." Yan Su'er sneered immediately.

Chuckling softly, Yun Jing seemed to have reached a conclusion of her own. She was about to say something when a terrifying sword qi emerged in the distance.

...

Shang Bo was desperately running away as he flew across the lands at high speed.

That was right, the legendary Shang Bo who stopped the experts of the Liao Continent on his own during the war for the Tongyou Mysterious World who had reached the large completion stage of the Martial Extermination Realm was running away with his tail tucked between his legs! He was akin to an invincible existence in the case where no Martial Dipper Realm experts appeared, but now, he was running for his life!

The person who was chasing him relentlessly was Ran Kongqing, Ran Biluo's uncle!

When the Four Spiritual Peak fell in the past, the Martial Extermination Realm experts from the Liao Continent suffered serious losses. It was especially so for the Lang and She races. They lost two Martial Extermination Realm experts each!

Yan Su'er was the only remaining Martial Extermination Realm expert of the Yan Race, but she had reached the fourth layer of the Martial Extermination Realm!

Ran Biluo might have fallen, but there were still two Martial Extermination Realm powerhouses left in the Ran Race.

Due to the events that happened, the Ran Race naturally became the strongest of the four great races of the Liao Continent. With the interference of the Changbai Holy Land, the Lingxuan Space Shattering Claw naturally ended up with Ran Kongqing.

If they truly took cultivation realms into consideration, Ran Kongqing was far from Shang Bo's match. Even if there were two Ran Kongqings, they wouldn't be able to suppress Shang Bo in the slightest! However, things were different with a divine weapon in hand.

Since the Tongyou Institution barged into the battlefield between the two worlds, Ran Kongqing immediately located Shang Bo. The two experts who stood at the peak of the power pyramid in the battlefield between the two worlds at the moment started their game of cat and mouse since then.

Throughout the battle, Shang Bo had been exchanging blows with the Lingxuan Space Shattering Claw. His Champion's Spear had suffered a lot of damage due to the clashes despite it being a high-grade weapon. He didn't know how long he would be able to hold out for. When he was sighing about the fact that he barely used his weapon for a year, a giant claw emerged from the void in front of him. Ran Kongqing's annoying voice ran in his ears once again. "Shang Bo, let's see if you manage to escape from me now..."

Midway through his sentence, his facial expression froze as the two of them turned to stare in another direction. A bone-chilling aura came from one of the regions in the battlefield between the two worlds and caught their attention immediately.

...

When Junior Brother Qi made his appearance and angered the giant rat, Huang Yunxiang discovered that he made a serious miscalculation.

Originally, he thought that with his superior cultivation, he would be able to defeat the giant rat eventually.

However, the rat possessed a specific extermination origin that directly countered his Desert Mist Extermination Origin.

That wasn't all. The giant rat had terrifying defensive capabilities. When it summoned the same extermination origin to wrap around its body, it seemed to have donned a set of tough armor that Huang Yunxiang had trouble breaking.

As for the giant rat's second extermination origin, it was concealed under its body in a formless mass. It allowed the rat to move at a frightening speed, and one could only imagine how difficult it was to deal with an existence that moved with the speed of a rocket and possessed sturdy defenses.

Ordinarily, rats were clumsy animals that had weak defenses. The giant rat that was locked in combat with Huang Yunxiang destroyed everyone's preconceptions of rats. Huang Yunxiang missed close to half his attacks on the rat and those that hit were eventually nullified by the rat's defensive abilities.

With Junior Brother Qi's appearance to enrage the monstrous rat, Huang Yunxiang realized how bad of a situation they were in. He had to do something to the rat before it returned, but how the hell was he supposed to do so?!

Risking it all, he unleashed everything he had. Sending out attacks without holding back his inner qi expenditure. He quickly shattered two of the rat's claws and punched a hole in the creature's stomach, but he also suffered a massive headbutt from the freakish existence. He felt his insides turning upside down and his inner qi slowed to a crawl.

With the two of them heavily injured, a figure that they had forgotten about finally reappeared. They discovered that the figure had released a small green sword before they could take any precautions.

The sword seemed to lock on to the rat and man combo, but the feeling was so faint neither of them focused on it.

In the next instant, the tiny green sword trembled once before turning into a massive guillotine that hung above their heads.

Huang Yunxiang frowned slightly and the final thought he would ever have ran through his mind.

What the hell is this? And why didn't we discover that little bastard when he's so close to us?

Chapter 388: Looting and Scooting

To be fair, Kou Chongxue told Shang Xia that the sword qi he left behind couldn't be easily blocked by anyone under the Martial Dipper Realm. However, it was Shang Xia's first time using it. He didn't know what he should expect but since he was unleashing it against two heavily injured Martial Extermination Realm experts, he felt that it shouldn't be much of a problem to deal with them.

Now that he used it, all of his worries were blown away.

For Kou Chongxue to say that his sword qi was practically invincible under the Martial Dipper Realm, it was no mere exaggeration. Huang Yunxiang and the giant rat were no match for it. They were slain the moment it emerged!

As the little sword danced in mid air, the three strands of extermination origin that surrounded Huang Yunxiang were easily shattered as his body was sliced in two.

Helpless, he fell powerlessly from the skies.

Even though his body was in a crippled state and he was almost completely fucked, he wasn't truly dead yet. The life force of a Martial Extermination Realm expert was truly boundless. Even if he lost a few limbs and half his body, he would be able to live for quite some time.

The little sword flashed in the air again and only his head was left. Heaven and earth qi fluctuations filled the skies and Huang Yunxiang's head fell weakly to the ground below. With the last of his energy, he roared, "Hurry up and run!"

A figure leaped out from the pit that contained the Lightning Fire Jujube Tree and fled without so much as turning back.

One had to admit that Junior Brother Qi acted really decisively.

While he made his escape, a loud explosion came from behind as a storm of heaven and earth qi tore through the lands. Huang Yunxiang's items scattered everywhere.

Even at the brink of death, Huang Yunxiang didn't forget to detonate his spatial artifact. It was a pity Shang Xia wouldn't be able to obtain everything he owned. One had to know that his spatial artifact contained the wealth of an elder of the Changbai Holy Land!

With the destruction of his spatial artifact, the last of his life force drained away from his body. All the inner qi he stored turned into wisps of energy that returned to the battlefield between the two worlds.

Looking at the scattered items reluctantly, Shang Xia chose to take a closer look at them before heading over to the Lightning Fire Jujube Tree. He couldn't be bothered with how many fruits Junior Brother Qi stole before getting away as he ran over to where the items fell.

When he arrived, he discovered that the giant rat was still breathing. The life force it possessed was much stronger than Huang Yunxiang, and even after the little sword severed its body, it was still able to maintain its life! At the final moment before the sword made contact with its body, the formless extermination origin it possessed allowed it to twist slightly, avoiding a hit on its critical regions.

Shang Xia noticed that it was trying to dig into the ground to make its escape, but it was a shame Huang Yunxiang severed its claws earlier. It was unable to make its escape before Shang Xia arrived.

With the threat approaching, several spikes emerged from the ground below and shot at Shang Xia.

The Jade River Sword danced in his hand as sword qi rained down on those spikes, shattering it to pieces. The giant rat was evidently not in the best shape after taking on Kou Chongxue's sword qi.

Realizing how weak it was, Shang Xia leaped into the skies and sent his Seven Laceration Sword deep into the creature's back.

The sword qi wreaked havoc in the rat's body and it didn't take long before all its innards were turned to mush. His sword qi didn't stop there. They ate away at the rat's life force before destroying it completely.

Even after noticing how the rat flopped powerlessly to the ground, Shang Xia didn't dare to let his guard down. He carefully observed the creature while keeping his sword. At the same time, he brought out the gourd to retrieve Kou Chongxue's sword qi.

Due to the expenditure, the sword was no longer as solid as it was before. It flickered unsteadily and its body became a lot more translucent than before.

Trembling once, the sword turned to point at the giant rat.

After a Martial Extermination Realm expert was slain, the energy contained in their body would normally scatter and return to the world. That wasn't the case for rank four spiritual beasts. It was

possible to retrieve its extermination origins for other uses. Moreover, the corpse of the beast wouldn't disappear in the storm of heaven and earth qi that ensued.

When Kou Chongxue modified the gourd in the past, he didn't just leave the sword qi in there for Shang Xia. Instead, he gave the gourd the ability to store extermination origins.

The giant rat might be dead, but its extermination origins were still stored safely in its body. The strand of sword qi in the gourd locked firmly onto their positions.

Circulating his inner qi again, Shang Xia pointed the gourd in the direction of the creature as a suction force started to emerge from its opening.

Soon after, two strands of light rose from the corpse. One of them was a deep yellow in color while the other seemed weirdly formless. Shang Xia barely noticed the other strand of light.

As the extermination origins slowly entered the gourd, Shang Xia could feel it getting significantly heavier.

When they were fully extracted, Shang Xia felt as though the gourd in his hands weighed a thousand tons. The unique aura that was possessed by a rank four spiritual beast no longer lingered on the giant rat's body, but the stench of blood in the air became a lot stronger than before.

"Well, the meat on the body of a beast should be pretty nutritious... However, is anyone going to really eat the body of a rat?" Shang Xia thought to himself while examining the corpse. Even if he wanted to keep the corpse into his Embroidered Cloud Case, it wouldn't fit. Waving his hand slowly, he created a pit before burying the corpse of the giant rat.

Walking over to where Huang Yunxiang's items had fallen, he swept his gaze across everything while sighing. There was nothing too precious left like what he expected.

Experts like Huang Yunxiang who came from a huge power like the Changbai Holy Land weren't like those wandering cultivators out there. He wouldn't bring his personal inheritance around with him wherever he went. Moreover, some of his treasures would be kept back in his faction. If he fell, his belongings would be left for the various juniors and fellow cultivators back there.

After dealing with the mess, Shang Xia turned to look at the giant pit where the Lightning Fire Jujube Tree was. Deciding not to head in there immediately, he chose to look for his spear before doing anything else. It didn't take long for him to find it, but since it took Huang Yunxiang's attack head-on, Shang Xia discovered that he wasn't able to send his inner qi into the spear as smoothly as he did before.

Clearly, the spear that he barely used for a year had suffered serious damage. Even if he brought it back to the institution, he might not be able to fully restore it back to its original state.

Helpless, Shang Xia could only pour as much Origin True Qi into the Scarlet Star Spear as he could in order to get rid of whatever inner qi Huang Yunxiang left behind.

That was the simplest way to slightly restore the usability of his weapon, but the effects were similarly elementary. Moreover, he would have to do it for a long time for there to be any visible improvements.

Returning to the pit that contained the Lightning Fire Jujube Tree while pouring his inner qi into his spear, Shang Xia noticed that more than half the fruits were gone.

Luckily, the Lightning Fire Jujube Tree possessed a weird and unique property. It would only produce 33 fruits initially, and only after all 33 were plucked would it bear the final 3 fruits. The final 3 fruits were of the fourth rank, and it went without saying that they were the most powerful fruits that could be produced by the tree.

Also, it wasn't easy to retrieve the Lightning Fire Jujubes. One had to be very careful in plucking the fruits. One had to remove all the first rank fruits before moving on to the second rank ones. Finally, they would remove the third ranked Lightning Fire Jujubes. If one made a mistake by retrieving the fruits in the wrong order, the final 3 rank four Lightning Fire Jujubes might not fully form. Even if it did, not all 3 fruits would be available.

If one was extremely unlucky, retrieving the fruits in the wrong order might also cost them their lives! The fruit might explode if plucked in the wrong order, and when that happened, it would cause a chain reaction for every fruit on the Lightning Fire Jujube Tree to explode simultaneously, swallowing the entire region in a sea of lightning and flames.

The probability of that happening might be low, but it was definitely possible. That was also the reason why Junior Brother Qi didn't dare to risk it and try destroying the tree before escaping. After all, if the fruits exploded together, he would be dead for sure!

By the time Shang Xia approached the tree, he discovered that there were only 11 Lightning Fire Jujubes left. That would mean that Junior Brother Qi managed to obtain 22 Lightning Fire Jujubes before running away!

Examining the tree a little more closely, all 6 rank three Lightning Fire Jujubes were still present. Not a single rank one fruit was left. It seemed as though Junior Brother Qi was quite meticulous when it came to retrieving the fruits.

Even though he didn't know if his powerful divine sense had anything to do with it, but Shang Xia could clearly feel the difference between the fruits that remained on the tree. He could tell the rank two ones from the rank three ones and it didn't take long for him to completely clear out the rest of the rank two jujubes.

When he was done, he carefully retrieved the 6 rank three Lightning Fire Jujubes in preparation for the birth of the rank four fruits.

The moment the last rank three Lightning Fire Jujube was plucked, the tree that was almost ten feet tall started to shrink.

At the same time, the essence of the tree started to gather in the main branches as three deep green jujube fruits emerged from the tallest branch. The fruits matured quickly as they grew visibly in size as the color changed from deep green to a brilliant red.

The tree didn't stop shrinking as it became smaller and smaller. Finally, when it became a mere feet tall, it started to tremble violently. The three Lightning Fire Jujubes that were the size of an egg turned completely red as faint markings appeared on its surface.

The rank four Lightning Fire Jujubes were finally fully mature, and Shang Xia carefully retrieved them. He kept them properly in a special case made for retaining the heaven and earth qi of an item while watching the Lightning Fire Jujube Tree continue to shrink.

Transforming into a wisp of jade-green qi, the Lightning Fire Tree disappeared completely. The strand of qi shot into the ground below and Shang Xia understood that that was the true source of the Lightning Fire Jujube Tree.

Now that all the fruits were gone, the strand of qi would return to the earth to nurture the next Lightning Fire Jujube Tree. As for when the next tree would be born, no one knew when that would happen.

Chapter 389: You Have A Trump Card, I Have A Trump Card, Everyone Has Trump Cards!

If the fall of two successive Martial Extermination Realm experts didn't cause the situation in the battlefield between the two worlds to change by much, the same couldn't be said for Huang Yunxiang. The phenomenon that appeared in the skies when he fell alarmed the entire battlefield between the two worlds.

That was because of the strand of sword qi Shang Xia released right before Huang Yunxiang fell.

The sword qi he summoned earlier came from Kou Chongxue and with the appearance of a Martial Dipper Realm aura and the death of a Martial Extermination Realm cultivator, things couldn't be more obvious.

"How is this possible?!" As an inner sect elder of the Changbai Holy Land, he left his blood imprint talisman with other members of the Changbai Holy Land in order to stay in contact with the others. The talisman allowed him to receive reports or messages from those who were holding onto it. The moment he died, his blood imprint talisman shattered.

Pan Yunbi, who was one of them who held onto his blood imprint talisman, felt it shatter the moment he died. A deep frown formed on her face and she found it hard to accept that he had died.

In contrast to her disbelief, Liu Qinglan caught on to the small shift in her emotions and started another round of frenzied attacks.

During their battle, Pan Yunbi had the upper hand due to her deep foundations as a member from a holy land. However, Liu Qinglan was no pushover. As an expert from the Tongyou Institution, she became stronger the more she fought. The situation was slowly turning around as Liu Qinglan adapted quickly to Pan Yunbi's fighting style.

Liu Qinglan's situation wasn't unique though, the Martial Extermination Realm experts were starting to fall into a stalemate but they weren't the only ones. The cultivators of the Azure Origin World and Azure Spiritual World who weren't in the Martial Extermination Realm had also been forced into a deadlock. Everyone was approaching their limits.

Now that another Martial Extermination Realm expert fell, the situation in the battlefield between the two worlds started to tilt towards one side.

The members of the Tongyou Institution seemed to have received a huge boost after discovering the change. After all, the sword qi earlier came from Patriarch Kou! Many of them felt it before during

the battle for the Tongyou Mysterious World, and now that it appeared again with the fall of a Martial Extermination Realm expert following soon after, it wasn't hard to deduce that the one who died was someone from the Azure Spiritual World!

They slowly started to gain the upper hand due to the sudden change.

As the person who caused it, Shang Xia had no idea what was going on. After retrieving the extermination origins from the giant rat, and the Lightning Fire Jujubes, Shang Xia regained some confidence. It seemed as though it wasn't a complete waste to use the sword qi Kou Chongxue stored in the gourd.

The only thing Shang Xia could complain about was that he used nearly half his reserve of inner qi to summon the strand of sword qi. Looking for a secluded spot, Shang Xia chose to recover his lost inner qi before doing anything else.

Junior Brother Qi managed to escape once again, and there was no doubt he would bring another Martial Extermination Realm expert over. Since Shang Xia could pretty much guess what Junior Brother Qi was going to do, he wouldn't remain in the area just to get caught off guard by another expert.

Running some distance away, Shang Xia found a spot to recover. By the time he was done, a period of time had already passed.

Slowly taking out the Spirit Extermination Gourd, Shang Xia examined the flickering strand of sword qi contained within. It looked extremely unstable and there was no way he could send out another attack like the one before. It barely maintained its functionality of absorbing extermination origins. Shang Xia had no idea when it would be able to recover.

After killing two Martial Extermination Realm experts on the side of the Azure Spiritual World, Shang Xia was afraid that there was a massive target drawn on his back. He even guessed that the moment he appeared, he would be hunted down by the opposing Martial Extermination Realm experts without a care of the consequences. If that were to happen, the Martial Extermination Realm experts of the Tongyou Institution wouldn't be able to save him.

No matter how cocky he might be feeling after killing two Martial Extermination Realm experts, Shang Xia knew how strong he actually was. With the strand of sword qi given to him by Kou Chongxue in hibernation, he had lost his greatest trump card.

The last thing he dared to do at that moment was to rush straight to where most of the other cultivators were gathered. Making a smart decision, he chose to head to a location as secluded as possible. After all, his original objective to search for world origin in the battlefield between the two worlds and his actions would be of great help.

With the remnant sword qi in the Spirit Extermination Gourd, Shang Xia could collect any extermination origins he ran across. With the assistance of the Crimson Soul Tablet, he would also be able to locate world essence as long as he came close enough.

In a sense, extermination origins were comparable to world origin. One could say that world origin gave birth to extermination origins, but it would be more accurate to say that extermination origins were created from the heaven and earth qi that was born from world origin.

Now that he was free to move around as he wished, Shang Xia planned to use his Crimson Soul Tablet along with his divine sense to scan the area. He would hit the jackpot if he managed to find world origin, but he would also take out the gourd from time to time to feel for the presence of an extermination origin.

Unfortunately, the region he was in was too secluded. Any extermination origins he would be able to locate would probably be in the bodies of rank four spiritual beasts, and he wasn't crazy enough to take one on yet.

After noticing how strong the giant rat was, Shang Xia knew that even with the rank four Lightning Fire Jujubes, he wouldn't be able to do much to rank four spiritual beasts.

Those fruits might not be weak, but in the face of a Martial Extermination Realm expert, Shang Xia wouldn't be heavily injuring them unless he caught them off guard! The moment they were prepared for it, the power released by the rank four Lightning Fire Jujube would be equivalent to an attack from a cultivator at the same level. Defending themselves wouldn't be much of a problem.

That was the reason behind Shang Xia's cautious attitude even though he was traversing through the secluded regions of the battlefield between the two worlds. The moment he discovered anything off, he would choose to make a long detour. Better safe than sorry anyway.

His caution paid off multiple times. Twice, strange beasts who hid well to carry out an ambush on Shang Xia had to emerge from their hiding spots the moment he chose to take another path. Unfortunately for them, Shang Xia didn't enter their attack range and with his battle experience, he eventually managed to make a narrow escape.

As he continued on his adventure, he discovered that the towering mountains and ridges that surrounded him slowly started to disappear. Unknowingly, a massive marsh that had never been recorded in the reports of the institution appeared before his eyes.

When he was still hesitating about whether he should enter the marsh, a strange whistle filled the battlefield between the two worlds.

He was no stranger to the whistling. He knew that the sound signaled the appearance of a divine weapon! Moreover, he was familiar with the disturbance when the Lingxuan Space Shattering Claw or the Hidden Frost Sword appeared. The sound this time was clearly different, and that meant that a new divine weapon had appeared on the battlefield!

When the Tongyou Institution forcefully opened the spatial tunnel to the battlefield between the two worlds, the Azure Spiritual World had been waiting for them. Since they knew how strong the experts of the institution were, it went without saying that the Lingxuan Space Shattering Claw had already been lying in wait in the hands of an expert of the Azure Spiritual World. Who would have thought that they would send a second divine weapon into the battlefield between the two worlds?

Things weren't looking too good for the Tongyou Institution. After all, Kou Chongxue was still holding on to his Hidden Frost Sword as he held the fort back at the Beyond Heavens Pavilion. The appearance of a second divine weapon would definitely tilt the favor of the battle back to the Azure Spiritual World.

The advantage they obtained after Huang Yunxiang died was wiped away in an instant!

Since the disturbance caused by the arrival of the second divine weapon was huge, Shang Xia could tell its general direction with his divine sense.

A thunderous roar swept through the skies at that moment. “Shang Lubing, go to hell!”

The skies darkened slightly as the roar caused the heavens to tremble.

Shang Xia’s expression changed drastically. The aura coming from the divine weapon didn’t lose out in the slightest when compared to Kou Chongxue’s sword qi.

Soon after, the space above the battlefield between the two worlds was torn to shreds with the appearance of a frightening amount of silver threads. They shot in the same direction, in a certain region of space in the battlefield between the two worlds.

Shang Xia felt his heart leaping into his throat when he heard the roar and witnessed the terrifying attack that was descending.

Staring at the silver threads that filled the skies, Shang Xia felt that the divine weapon resembled a horsetail whisk. As for the person wielding the weapon... It was obvious that anyone who could bring out the power of a divine weapon, albeit slightly, was an expert at the Martial Extermination Realm expert.

Since their target was Shang Lubing, Shang Xia was truly afraid for the man. After all, Shang Lubing wasn’t Ji Wenlong or Shang Bo! He might not be able to take the attack and live!

Just as the strike was about to land, a cold snort rang through the battlefield between the two worlds and it was akin to a deafening thunderclap in the ears of everyone present.

Raising his head in fright, Shang Xia witnessed a scene that wasn’t something he would see every day.

A massive hand that seemed to surpass his knowledge of objects that could be condensed from heaven and earth qi tore through the void and grabbed at the whisk.

That wasn’t all. The space around the hand revealed countless cracks as something wanted to continue emerging from the broken space above.

As the upper body of the creature was about to fully emerge from the broken space, a terrifying fluctuation filled the battlefield between the two worlds.

Even without reaching the Martial Extermination Realm, Shang Xia could feel that the space around him became a lot thinner than before. The culprit that caused it was clearly the giant who was tearing its way into the battlefield.

With the giant hand holding firmly onto the whisk, the facial features of the man himself started to become clear. The moment it did, Shang Xia’s jaws dropped in shock.

“Ji Wenlong! You... You actually entered the Martial Dipper Realm!” The Martial Extermination Realm expert who was yelling about killing Shang Lubing a moment ago roared in fright. From his tone, it wasn’t hard to imagine how frightened he was.

Chapter 390: Ji Welong, Martial Dipper!

In the Beyond Heavens Pavilion, around the vortex. Ancestor Xu leaped to his feet and pointed at Kou Chongxue while yelling with all his might, “Kou Chongxue, how dare you allow a Martial

Dipper Realm expert to enter the battlefield between the two worlds? You went against our agreement. You... You... You wish to destroy the battlefield between the two worlds and kill everyone within! You're really vicious...."

Before he could finish his sentence, a cold light tore through the air.

Ancestor Luo who had been seated yelled in fright, "Junior Brother Xu, be careful!"

Ancestor Xu jumped in fright. Regardless, he was an expert in the Martial Dipper Realm. His figure flickered thrice in the air and he eventually managed to evade a small strand of sword qi that was sent his way.

"Kou Chongxue, how dare you sneak attack me?" Ancestor Xu finally returned to his original position and he gasped in shock. The fear in his voice was pretty apparent.

By the time Ancestor Xu's gaze landed on Kou Chongxue, the patriarch of the Tongyou Institution was already properly seated with his Hidden Frost Sword pressed firmly beneath him. It was as though he never made a move in the first place.

Looking at Ancestor Xu with a look of mockery on his face, Kou Chongxue sneered, "Shorty Xu, who the hell do you think you are to point at my face and curse me? If I'm not mistaken, no one has the guts to do so."

"You..." Ancestor Xu raised his hand again, but before he could extend his finger, he hesitated and lowered his hand instantaneously. His awkward actions quickly made him a laughing stock for anyone who witnessed the scene.

He might not dare to get physical with Kou Chongxue, but he wasn't afraid of running his mouth. With rage filling his heart, he growled, "Alright. Since you wish to destroy the region, let's go all out and do it thoroughly! Heh, of the cultivators within, only a small portion of them come from my Changbai Holy Land. Even if they're killed, our foundations wouldn't be affected. Those from the four races of the Liao Continent can die for all I care. After all, they're merely dogs who follow our command. Heh, can you say the same? If everyone from the Tongyou Institution dies, all your effort in the past years will be completely wasted!"

Kou Chongxue's gaze turned slightly serious, but he replied casually. "Alright. At the very most, I'll use another twenty years to build another Tongyou Institution. It's just twenty years. I can afford to waste it anyway!"

"Fine! That's great! Since that's the case, we'll just watch as this..." Ancestor Xu's rage overwhelmed him and he released a thunderous roar. However, Ancestor Luo interrupted him before he could complete his sentence.

"Junior Brother Xu, calm down!" Seeing as the two of them were about to come to blows at any moment, Ancestor Luo knew that he had to stop the situation from deteriorating. Turning to look at Kou Chongxue, a look of praise could be seen in his eyes as he quickly diverted the topic. "Patriarch Kou, I have to commend your excellent planning skills. Your Tongyou Institution actually managed to produce

another Martial Dipper Realm expert. Looks like your Tongyou Institution truly gained the qualification to raise itself into a holy land!”

Chuckling softly, Kou Chongxue cupped his fists towards Ancestor Luo and smiled. “Many thanks! Hahaha! Many thanks for your congratulations!”

What the hell? Did I even say anything about congratulating you?

With the look on his face freezing slightly, Ancestor Luo eventually regained his calm expression. He swept his gaze across the void before him and sighed, “This... Hmm. If I’m not mistaken, he should be Deputy Patriarch Ji Wenlong of your Tongyou Institution. Haha, looks like he’s a real daring fellow. He had the guts to attempt his breakthrough to the Martial Dipper Realm even without reaching the grand completion stage of the Martial Extermination Realm.”

Kou Chongxue also retracted his smile and he sighed, “He didn’t have much of a choice. Old Man Ji had been trapped in the Martial Extermination Realm for a long time... He didn’t show any signs of comprehending his martial intent and could only try his luck to break through. Otherwise, the amount of world origin my Tongyou Mysterious World absorbed would be enough to immediately cause us to ascend to become a holy land immediately. That wouldn’t be good for the spatial barrier. When that happens, my Tongyou Institution would immediately become a target for everyone in the Azure Origin World.”

Ancestor Luo sighed softly before he continued. “Since that’s the case, we’ll all take a step back. Deputy Patriarch Ji is not allowed to join the battle and I’ll retrieve my Thousand Silver Whisk. Now that your Tongyou Institution produced a second Martial Dipper Realm expert, Patriarch Kou, you will have to be warier of your actions in the future to be fitting of your status.”

After speaking, he turned to look in a certain direction and seemed to pass down an order.

Laughing softly, Kou Chongxue replied, “How can I not accept now that you brought it up?”

Reaching forward slightly, Kou Chongxue lightly patted the space before him. Ancestor Luo reached out at the same moment and pointed at a certain region in the battlefield between the two worlds.

...

In the skies of the battlefield between the two worlds, Kou Chongxue’s figure started to solidify and the space contained within trembled violently.

The silvery threads that were extending through the void turned a little more transparent as every strand grew thicker. They twisted tighter and tighter around each other in Ji Wenlong’s hands.

The faces of the Martial Extermination Realm experts on both sides revealed a worried expression as the situation had already spun out of control. None of them knew what would happen if Ji Wenlong and the divine weapon fully emerged.

When they were trying to prepare themselves mentally for what was about to happen, Ji Wenlong’s figure and the divine weapon disappeared in unison. It was as though neither of them existed in the first place.

The battlefield between the two worlds regained its original calm, and Shang Xia could feel the space around him turning more solid. The fear that was spouting in his heart had also disappeared and he heaved a sigh of relief.

Only then did Shang Xia's attention return to the marsh he saw earlier. As he extended his divine sense, Shang Xia could faintly feel that there was something calling out to his Crimson Soul Tablet, but the feeling was too blurry. The calling seemed to come from far away.

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Bringing out the Spirit Extermination Gourd, Shang Xia decided to try his luck. He popped open the cork of the gourd and a small strand of sword qi emerged. It seemed to be attracted in a certain direction and after slightly spinning around Shang Xia, it turned to point towards the depths of the marsh.

From the looks of it, he would have to venture deeper into it to look for the source of the attraction.

At the moment Shang Xia chose to enter the marsh, the Azure Origin World finally gained a firm advantage over the Azure Spiritual World. Without the addition of the divine weapon, the Azure Spiritual World was one powerhouse down. The Tongyou Institution quickly capitalized on the gap.

Nearly three hundred miles from the entrance of the spatial tunnel carved out by the Tongyou Institution, Shang Jian stabbed his sword into the ground beside a huge pool of water. He fell to the ground powerlessly and he fought to suck in several deep breaths of air. Only then did his pale face finally regain some color.

Two corpses of cultivators from the Azure Spiritual World could be seen lying on either side of him and from the looks of it, they tried to pincer Shang Jian but were killed instead. Also, with Shang Jian's back facing the body of water, it wasn't hard to determine that he was trying to prevent them from approaching the pool.

Of the two corpses, one of them had multiple lacerations on his body and it was obvious he was killed by a powerful sword art. The same couldn't be said for the other corpse. There was a huge hole in his neck, and it didn't seem to be made by a sword.

"Luckily I had the Spiritual Yin Knife Talisman! If not for it, I'll probably be buried here today..." Shang Jian quickly restored as much inner qi as he could before turning to look at the pool of water behind him. A fire seemed to be lit in his eyes as he muttered, "Dong'er and Bei'er might actually be able to break through now... With the main ingredient of their advancement medicine ready for the pickings, I only hope that they work harder. Hopefully, they don't fall too far behind the others..."

Even though that was what he said, he didn't quite believe himself when he thought about Shang Xia. The talisman that saved his life in the last moment was even made by the kid!

Choosing to not think about it any longer, he plunged into the deep pool of water.

...

In one of the many forests in the battlefield between the two worlds, Shang Xi held firmly onto her blades and she stared at a sorry figure who was trying to run away desperately. Flipping her palm,

she revealed a talisman that shone a brilliant golden color. However, she eventually kept it safely in her sleeves.

...

Tian Mengzi ran desperately as he tried to widen the distance between himself and a lady wearing a red dress behind him. No matter how hard he tried, the distance between them would not open up.

“Hehe, why do you have to be so heartless, is this servant really so scary?” An eerie voice rang in his ears and it caused his hair to stand on end. His face twitched slightly as he became slightly faster than before.

Despite his effort, he was stopped by a cliff that blocked his path.

“Oh no! This has to be fate. Hehehe, looks like even the heavens are trying to match make us. Why don’t you stop running and come... Hey, what are you doing?! Are you tired of living?”

Tian Mengzi didn’t hesitate as he leaped off the cliff with the weird voice ringing behind him.

The lady in the red dress craned her neck over the cliff to watch Tian Mengzi’s falling figure as she gnashed her teeth in anger. “Hmph, murderous garbage! It’s good that you chose death anyway.”

Too bad for her, a resplendent glow surrounded Tian Mengzi the moment the words left her lips. It was as though two huge wings had grown out from his back as it allowed him to soar through the air temporarily. He landed gracefully after descending hundreds of feet.

Seeing that he had survived, she stomped her feet angrily before turning to leave. Not too long after she left, a massive avalanche fell from the top of the cliff.

...

As Sun Haiwei was roaming a massive prairie with grass reaching up half her body, they swayed violently in the wind. A massive wave of grass seemed to form at that moment as it tried to swallow her whole.

Without warning, Sun Haiwei sent a strong palm strike to the side.

Frosty qi emerged from her palm, freezing a huge region of land and the grass that was about the land on her. The moment it did, a head popped out of nowhere. Unfortunately, it was eventually frozen solid.

With a frown on her face, Sun Haiwei drew her sword. As a cold ray of sword light flashed in front of her, the head that had turned into an ice statue shattered completely.