

The Heavens 401

Chapter 401: Calling for Backup

Shang Xia had a few spirit restriction cases and spirit holding cases. He even had a few spirit sealing talismans he made himself some time ago.

However, those items didn't seem too appropriate to hold the Spirit of Wind in the Lightning Bird's claws. It would be for the best if he used a spiritual restraining pouch like Ren Huan said.

Luckily for him, Shang Xia could be considered truly well-prepared this time he entered the battlefield between the two worlds. He brought two spirit restraining pouches and spirit sealing bottles each. Having to choose between them, Shang Xia felt that using the pouch was much more convenient than the bottle.

With Ren Huan's suggestion, he brought out a spirit restraining pouch from his Embroidered Cloud Case and opened it the best he could.

Releasing a clear cry, the Lightning Bird dove down while shoving the Spirit of Wind directly into the open bag. When he felt the bag getting heavy, Shang started to close it as the Lightning Bird pulled his claws out. The formless Spirit of Wind was firmly captured in the bag.

Before keeping the pouch, Shang Xia stuck a spirit sealing talisman on it in order to play it safe. When he was done, he squeezed the bag lightly in order to look for the Spirit of Wind but all he felt was emptiness. It was as though nothing was contained in the pouch.

When Ren Huan saw Shang Xia's actions, he couldn't help but laugh. "That thing is truly formless. It's really hard to actually touch it."

Nodding slightly, Shang Xia tossed the pouch into his Embroidered Cloud Case.

After obtaining the Windchime Grass and grabbing a Spirit of Wind on the way, Shang Xia was extremely content with his haul this time. Ren Huan was equally as satisfied to obtain the main ingredient of his advancement medicine and wide smiles could be seen on their faces.

When they passed through the stream of howling wind and returned to the spot where the ancient tree was, Ren Huan didn't wait for Shang Xia to chase him away. He bade Shang Xia farewell before taking his leave.

With Ren Huan gone, Shang Xia's attention turned to the hazy space on the other side of the valley. He could tell that world origin existed somewhere in that hazy space but he had no way of approaching it! He couldn't even fully make his way over to the screen of hazy space even if he wanted to!

Sighing softly, Shang Xia continued his solo journey through the battlefield between the two worlds.

Because the Martial Extermination Realm experts had stopped fighting, Shang Xia's tense emotions managed to relax to a huge extent. However, he didn't slow down as he made his way around. He was clear about what their ceasefire entailed. Now that they weren't fighting anymore, they definitely started searching the other regions of the battlefield between the two worlds for treasures that appeared after the Origin Tide.

The moment a Martial Extermination Realm expert arrived, Shang Xia would be left with the dregs!

As he continued to explore the battlefield between the two worlds, luck wasn't on his side. He didn't manage to get anything else. He might have obtained the Lightning Fire Jujube, Wind and Lightning Leaves, and Windchime Grass previously, but that was it. As for world origin that remained after the Origin Tide, he didn't catch a single glimpse of it.

Rather than finding treasures, Shang Xia seemed to be running into trouble as he trekked on. He discovered the aura of rank four spiritual beasts thrice while making his way around.

It was rather fortunate that his senses were much more acute than cultivators at the same level. Of course, he wasn't exactly afraid to confront those beasts if they appeared to attack him. After all, he had another rank four Lightning Fire Jujube on him. Naturally, it made sense for him to save the treasure if he could. He managed to take a detour before running into those beasts, allowing him to avoid a scary run-in.

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When Shang Xia found a small creek and was washing up, he suddenly discovered the heaven and earth qi around him turning denser.

With a frown on his face, Shang Xia followed the creek upstream and arrived before a cave opening.

The Crimson Soul Tablet which had been unusually quiet the whole time finally trembled slightly and seemed to point to the depths of the cave.

Could there be world origin in the cave?!

Shang Xia perked up slightly and started to make his way in. Who would have thought that two flashes of cold light would shoot towards him the moment he raised his leg?

That wasn't all. Another streak of light came charging at him head-on and in an instant, he was surrounded by three attacks.

It was clearly a trap, but Shang Xia didn't know if the trap was specially made for him.

Well, with the threat so close at hand, there was no point in thinking about either matter. The only emotion that was left in Shang Xia's mind was shock as they managed to avoid his detection and he only noticed them after they unleashed their attacks!

With his life under threat, Shang Xia waved his hand and tossed out scarlet-colored jujube from his left hand while a flickering gold talisman shot out from his right sleeve.

He retreated hastily and his Scarlet Star Spear appeared in his hand when he was an appropriate distance between himself and his attackers. Wielding his spear, bolts of lightning surrounded the weapon and they struck accurately at the frosty light that was coming his way.

Shang Xia unleashed his second move, Lightning Stonefire! It was the move that focused on speed and it accurately countered the threats.

Loud blasts echoed through the cave as Shang Xia nullified the sneak attack.

Even though he was the last to act, he managed to react perfectly. The flashes of frosty light were shattered with his lightning and the exchange ended with no one coming out on top.

The short delay bought Shang Xia some time and he quickly retreated in order to leave the radius of the trap laid down around the cave.

The Lightning Fire Jujube and his Golden Spear Talisman weren't useless either. They detonated when he was making his way backward and stopped two figures who wanted to take the chance to close in even more.

After using those treasures, the number of rank three Lightning Fire Jujubes Shang Xia had decreased to a measly 1 and the only rank three talisman he had was the Spiritual Yin Knife.

Drawing a horizontal line in front of him, a wave of Origin True Qi emerged and forced everything that was advancing towards him back. Any follow-up attacks were stopped immediately.

When everything was done, Shang Xia's attackers were revealed. Shang Xia's heart might be pounding in his chest, but the three of them weren't exactly relaxed either. Their expressions were extremely ugly.

The three of them used talismans to hide their aura in order to lay down a trap. They thought that they would be able to kill the person approaching the cave in one smooth motion, but they seemed to have miscalculated.

It didn't matter if their rare concealment talismans were used up if they killed their target. However, looking at the demon-like presence who managed to hold them off alone without suffering in the slightest, their eyelids started to jump violently.

How the fuck did we run into a freak like that in such a deserted place?!

That was the only thought that ran through their minds when they looked at Shang Xia. However, they weren't the only ones who were examining Shang Xia. Shang Xia was observing them and he quickly noticed the abnormality in the locations they were standing on. His pupils constricted slightly and he muttered, "Sword Formation?"

His words quickly caught the attention of the three of them. The leader among them eventually took a step forward and muttered in a low voice, "I didn't think that we would run into you here..."

"Oh?" The corners of Shang Xia's lips curled upwards and he chuckled. "Do you know me?"

The three of them didn't reply, but their bodies became a lot more tense. They tightened their grip on their swords at the same time.

Shang Xia didn't think too much of their actions. Instead, he continued to question. "What's in the cave?"

The expressions of the three turned ever more grave but they didn't give him an answer. Instead, they took several steps back and formed a stronger defense around the entrance.

The smile on Shang Xia's face grew wider after seeing their actions. The more they wanted to protect the cave, the more precious the item within. "Hehe. Since the three of you aren't willing to tell me, I'll take a look for myself."

The moment the words left his lips, the three of them acted as though they were about to face a calamity and they gathered even closer to each other. Despite their actions, they didn't take a single step away from the entrance.

Naturally, Shang Xia wouldn't go easy on them. The Scarlet Star Spear trembled in his hands as he released his seventh move, Celestial Disruption.

From the way they were dressed, Shang Xia could tell that they were from the Changbai Holy Land. He could also tell that all three of them had completed their third divine sense transformation and even though they might not be a direct disciple of the Changbai Holy Land, they weren't much weaker than one when they worked together.

Even if they ran into a weaker Martial Extermination Realm expert from the Azure Origin World, they were confident of holding them off. Unfortunately, the person standing in front of them was Shang Xia. They learned that he was the monster who was responsible for the deaths of both Martial Extermination Realm experts who fell on their side and more than one direct disciple of the Changbai Holy Land had already died in his hands!

They definitely feared the monster before them, but they didn't allow their fears to affect their fighting abilities.

Working flawlessly together, sword lights filled the skies. The three of them seemed to create a sword screen that defended the entrance of the cave. Sword light fell from the skies incessantly.

Of course, Shang Xia wasn't overconfident to the point where he thought that a single spear strike would be enough to take care of the three of them. His spear danced in the air as it struck the sword lights raining down on him before abruptly pointing to one of them.

Even though the spear seemed to contain no energy and looked more like a feint than anything else, it was anything else but.

The person Shang Xia pointed at felt his heart pounding in fear as his instincts told him that a calamity was about to befall him. However, he couldn't put his finger on where it was coming from!

Fortunately for the three of them, the sword formation they were using allowed them to discover the threat against any one of them. The other two quickly noticed something wrong and tried to help him. Because they had worked together for a long time, they could somewhat tell what each other was feeling.

When the feeling of danger finally arrived, the leader of the three felt his pupils shrinking as he slashed violently at the void beside him. He yelled loudly, "Be careful!"

Before the two could react, the power contained in the sword formation gathered around the leader's sword and it blasted violently against the space beside him. A strand of spear qi was revealed as it smashed ruthlessly against the leader's sword.

Shang Xia wasn't too surprised that his Void Evasion Spear was blocked. After all, the three of them weren't weaklings. With his figure flickering slightly, he swung his spear effortlessly. After mastering all nine spear strikes, he was able to unleash them however he wished! The more he fought, the deeper his understanding of his Nine Providence Spear.

As the three disciples of the Changbai Holy Land resisted desperately, they were stuck in a deadlock with Shang Xia at the entrance of the cave.

Shang Xia finally realized what they were doing and he growled, "Heh, you're actually playing for time..."

“Hehe, did you finally notice? It’s too late now. We sent out a secret transmission to our elder a long time ago. He should already be on his way!” The leader among them chuckled happily.

Waving his sleeves, Shang Xia tossed out his final Spiritual Yin Knife Talisman and the rank three Lightning Fire Jujube. Retrieving his rank four Lightning Fire Jujube, he tossed it out with a look of anger on his face.

Feeling the terrifying aura around the rank four Lightning Fire Jujube, the three of them felt the blood draining from their faces.

“Retreat!” Their leader yelled and the three of them retreated in unison. Due to their movements, an opening was revealed.

“He won’t be able to bring the thing inside away anyway! Now that our elder is on the way, he can’t escape if he enters!”

Chapter 402: Essence Jade Cave

Shang Xia could tell that the three of them standing before him were comparable to Junior Brother Qi who escaped after stealing some Lightning Fire Jujubes. To be exact, the leader of the three had cultivation similar to Junior Brother Qi and the other two were a notch weaker.

However, the three of them were able to deploy a powerful sword formation as they worked together flawlessly. Even Shang Xia couldn’t break their offensive in a short period of time.

Moreover, the three of them were focusing on drawing the battle out anyway. They needed to hold Shang Xia down until their elder arrived and they didn’t make any risky moves that would allow Shang Xia to take advantage of any gaps in their cooperation. Neither side could defeat the other in a short period of time.

Luckily, Shang Xia noticed their intentions early into the battle. The three of them made their intention too obvious and since he uncovered their plan, he wasn’t going to wait for their Martial Extermination Realm elder to arrive as he wore himself down fighting the three of them. Retreating wasn’t an option either. Shang Xia wasn’t willing to run away without seeing the contents of the cave. After all, the Crimson Soul Tablet’s reaction told him that there would definitely be precious treasures contained within.

Since that was the case, Shang Xia didn’t hesitate to reveal his precious treasures in exchange for a chance to enter the cave. Naturally, it was a ruse to force them away as he didn’t plan on activating any of his treasures. It didn’t make sense to waste such a huge amount of resources on the three of them. As such, Shang Xia pretended to release his treasures with the intention of killing them. His bluff worked as the three of them escaped the instant he tossed them out.

However, the situation didn’t change too much. Their elder was still rushing over and the three of them could guard the entrance of the cave. They weren’t afraid that Shang Xia would be able to pull any miracle out of thin air.

Moreover, the item contained in the cave wasn’t something he could bring away in a short amount of time...

They couldn't be more glad that Shang Xia had entered the cave instead of running away. He would be boxed in the moment their elder arrived.

As Shang Xia entered the cave, the three of them didn't forget to regroup and redeploy their sword formation. As Shang Xia was rushing in, he couldn't exploit their weakness in time and could only allow them to do as they wished.

After gathering together, the three of them didn't attempt to approach Shang Xia. Seeing as they weren't going to do anything, Shang Xia boldly entered the cave before him. As soon as he entered, the three of them left and decided to leave everything to the Martial Extermination Realm elder after he arrived.

He moved extremely quickly as he ran deeper into the cave. He might not know if they were lying when they said that they had called an elder over, but he wouldn't dare to call their bluff. He could only treat it as though his time was limited.

With the Crimson Soul Tablet trembling slightly, Shang Xia knew that it was possible for there to be world origin contained in the cave. If he could also uncover whatever treasure those disciples of the Changbai Holy Land were so concerned about, he would have struck gold.

The initial portion of the cave was pretty narrow and it slowly expanded as he got deeper. After traveling tens of feet in, he discovered that he had entered a large cavern. Even though the cavern had some sort of aesthetic lull to it, Shang Xia had no time to admire the view as he probed the reaction of the Crimson Soul Tablet again. Feeling the trembling grow a little stronger, Shang Xia knew that he was moving in the correct direction.

However, he quickly realized that the amount of world origin contained in the cave was far from comparable to the amount he obtained in the marsh. He took many turns and followed different roads along many forked paths in the cave and finally entered a pretty desolate cavern in the depths of the cave.

When he arrived, he could tell that the cavern was formed naturally countless years ago. He could feel that it used to contain dense heaven and earth qi. However, the heaven and earth qi that used to fill the cavern seemed to be slightly dissipated and there were signs of excavation on one of the walls. Weird light could be seen on the unnatural surface too.

Understanding that he had located whatever the Crimson Soul Tablet was reacting to, he also knew that the members of the Changbai Holy Land were a step ahead of him.

Stepping into an uneven crevice, Shang Xia quickly discovered the faint traces of world origin contained in the cavern.

With a single thought, the world origin started to move in his direction. This time, it was slightly different from the time in the marsh. It might be because the world origin was a little too lacking in quantity, the Crimson Soul Tablet was in no rush to absorb it.

Ordinarily, cultivators wouldn't be able to locate world origin so easily. If not for the Crimson Soul Tablet that acted like a GPS finder, Shang Xia wouldn't be able to run accurately through the cave either.

Even though the speed of absorption was slow, it was relative to the speed at which the Crimson Soul Tablet absorbed world origin in the marsh. It didn't take long for him to complete the absorption.

Throughout the process, Shang Xia had been observing the wall of the cavern where the disciples of the Changbai Holy Land had been excavating.

The three of them didn't seem to have noticed the remnants of the world origin. Instead, they seemed to be looking for some sort of treasure in the cavern. It was probably because of the dense heaven and earth qi in there.

From the strange light that was peeking out from the unnatural cave face, Shang Xia could tell that it came from something extraordinary. It seemed as though the wall was hiding some sort of treasure.

That was indeed the case. The rocks that were supposed to exist behind the wall seemed to have experienced some sort of transformation. The rocks seemed to emit a milky glow that was obstructed by random debris.

"Huh?" The strange light that originated from the milky glow couldn't escape Shang Xia's eye. When he extended his divine sense to inspect it, he could feel a familiar feeling.

Waving his hand to push away the small rocks that had fallen, a round piece of jade that was the size of a pigeon's egg fell out and rolled to his feet.

"This... This is essence jade!" Shang Xia inspected the item between his fingers and he felt the pure heaven and earth qi contained within. From the looks of it, the cavern might be the start of an essence jade mine!

Even though essence jade was created naturally in the world, no one truly knew how it was done.

No one would have expected for heaven and earth qi to be so concentrated in the cavern deep in the cave. After an extremely long period of time, the heaven and earth qi seeped into the rocks around which resulted in the density of it decreasing. However, that seemed to have led to the formation of essence jade in the walls of the cavern!

Essence jade themselves might not seem to be extremely precious treasures, but they were pretty rarely seen. It was used in a variety of applications too. They might be used in rank two or rank three advancement medicines, or they might also be used to craft graded weapons. Formations might use essence jade as their base and there were many other applications. That resulted in the worth of essence jade being pretty high.

Casually playing with the essence jade in his hand, Shang Xia clearly knew the worth of an essence jade mine.

From the looks of the wall around, the rocks were starting to transform and the cavern could be turned into a mine at any time.

“Looks like this cavern can actually turn into an essence jade mine... I have to report this to the institution immediately! However, reclaiming it back from the Changbai Holy Land might be a little challenging...” ?Shang Xia muttered softly.

Obtaining the world origin contained in the cavern and obtaining a piece of essence jade along the way, Shang Xia was content with his gains this time round. He knew that staying in the area wasn't the smartest choice and he hid his aura to run out of the cave.

Not too long after he left, a ray of light tore through the skies and a Martial Extermination Realm expert from the Changbai Holy Land appeared at the entrance of the cave.

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When the elder arrived, Shang Xia had already entered a dense forest twenty miles away. He was hiding his aura as he observed the changes to the Crimson Soul Tablet.

Because of the presence of the essence jade mine, Shang Xia chose to name the cave he had just been in as the 'Essence Jade Cave'.

The amount of world origin he obtained earlier was just a tiny sliver, but the three disciples of the Changbai Holy Land didn't notice it even though they had excavated the area around it. After all, they didn't possess the Crimson Soul Tablet to point it out.

Using the world origin in the cave to repair the cracks on the Crimson Soul Tablet, Shang Xia discovered that it barely managed to seal off a tiny part of the crack.

He finally realized how much danger he was in. Three faces of the Crimson Soul Tablet had cracked and the fourth face was barely holding on. It was as though the tablet would shatter at any time. The moment it did, Shang Xia's soul would go along with it.

That was why Shang Xia had been looking for world origin so urgently. No matter how little he could obtain, he hoped that it could help restore his Crimson Soul Tablet even slightly.

After his adventure this time and his discovery of the essence jade mine, he managed to seal a quarter of the crack on the fourth face of the tablet.

He also realized that the amount of world origin required when deducting and completing the formula of his advancement formula was extremely disproportionate when compared with the amount of world origin required to restore it!

It required a lot more world essence to repair the broken Crimson Soul Tablet and that worried Shang Xia greatly.

From the experience of completing his rank four advancement formula, he felt that he needed to restore the tablet such that there would be two uncracked faces before he even attempted to break through to the Martial Dipper Realm!

It seemed as though his task of locating world origin to repair his Crimson Soul Tablet was far from over.

Releasing a long sigh, Shang Xia retrieved a specially crafted secret transmission talisman from his Embroidered Cloud Case.

It was an item the institution handed out in case anyone needed to call for help. However, the institution didn't give them out to anyone who wanted one. Only disciples who had recently graduated from the institution or those who were currently enrolled were provided with one!

Even though Shang Xia ran into Sima Zhanxing and Huang Yunxiang in the past, he didn't use the talisman.

That wasn't because he was confident in his abilities to fight the two of them. By the time he ran into them, he was in no state to use the transmission talisman. He couldn't afford to shift his focus for even a fraction of a second when up against Martial Extermination Realm experts.

Of course, everything worked out in the end because Shang Xia had enough trump cards to keep him alive.

When he discovered the Windchime Grass and the ancient tree, Shang Xia didn't choose to inform the institution with the talisman. After all, Ren Huan was the only other person who discovered the location with him and the fatty was on their side. The Lightning Bird had also made his new nest there and Shang Xia was in no rush to make the report.

The situation with the Essence Jade Cave was different. The members of the Changbai Holy Land had already discovered it but they hadn't set up too many defenses around the area. It was the best time for the institution to take over the region.

Sending some inner qi into the talisman, Shang Xia made a simple introduction of the cave and its location. However, he thought about it for a second and decided to give the institution the location of the Lightning Bird's nest and the treasures around it while he was at it. Since he was telling them most of the important things he learned throughout his journey, Shang Xia threw in some knowledge of the marsh where he met the Poison Miasma Frog. Of course, he left out everything about him obtaining world origin. When he was done, he released the talisman and it turned into a streak of light that tore through the skies.

Heaving a sigh of relief, Shang Xia knew that he did all he could. Taking a short rest, he was contemplating between going out to search for more world origin and returning to the institution's territory when he was distracted by a ray of light coming from another direction.

Chapter 403: Redwood Forest

Actually, Shang Xia had two secret transmission talismans on him. One came from the institution but the report sent by Shang Xia would be sent directly to his Grandpa Bo.

The other came from the Shang Clan and every member of the clan was given one.

Unlike the talisman provided by the institution that covered the entirety of the battlefield between the two worlds, the talisman the Shang Clan handed out would fly towards the closest cultivator who had a similar transmission talisman.

Not too long after Shang Xia sent out his report, a transmission was sent his way! With a look of confusion on his face, Shang Xia wondered if his Grandpa Bo was in the area. After all, if that was a reply, it came a little too quickly!

In all of Shang Xia's memory, the institution - or his Grandpa Bo - never acted with such efficiency!

With doubt filling his heart, Shang Xia circulated his inner qi to pull the transmission in the air down towards him. When he finally held it, he realized that it wasn't a reply to his report earlier. Instead, it was a transmission talisman sent by someone from the Shang Clan!

Shattering the restriction around it, he heard his Grandpa Ke's voice clearly in his mind. "There's a rank four Mutated Monkey in the Redwood Forest brewing some wine. Any member of the Shang Clan who receives this is to head over to provide assistance."

Hearing what Shang Ke said, Shang Xia heaved a sigh of relief. At least it wasn't someone who ran into trouble and needed bailing out. However, Shang Ke seemed really serious about the Mutated Monkey King's actions. From the way he behaved, it was almost certain that the wine was a rank four brew. Even if the brew wasn't successful, the dregs would probably be of the fourth rank too.

One had to know that Shang Xia needed the Crimson Crystal Valley Brew as an assistive ingredient when creating his rank four advancement medicine. It was a rank four brew and even if whatever he obtained from the Mutated Monkey King wasn't what he needed, it was possible to trade for it in the future.

Several thoughts flashed across Shang Xia's mind in an instant, but he didn't hesitate. He quickly ran in the direction of the transmission talisman.

Naturally, the Shang Clan's transmission talisman didn't possess unlimited transmission distance. Ordinarily, the talismans would be able to travel close to a hundred miles at its max. As such, it didn't take long for the Redwood Forest to appear in his sights.

Crossing a hill, he saw a figure rushing towards the forest from not too far away.

"Did someone else receive Grandpa Ke's summons?" Shang Xia muttered to himself.

Less than ten members of the Shang Clan entered the battlefield between the two worlds and it was extremely unlikely for them to be within a hundred-mile radius of the Redwood Forest like Shang Xia. The Shang Clan Patriarch probably wouldn't send out two transmission talismans at once. After all, he couldn't be sure that there was more than one member of the Shang Clan nearby, or any for that matter. He was merely trying his luck.

Looking at the figure who was darting into the forest, Shang Xia felt that Shang Ke wasn't the only one who discovered the Mutated Monkey King and his tribe.

Unfortunately, those who were running into the forest probably came after receiving a signal from another party.

One had to know that Shang Ke was a Martial Extermination Realm expert. For someone to be confident enough to call for backup would mean that the other party was confident of competing with Shang Ke.

At the moment, there was likely more than a single Martial Extermination Realm expert in the Redwood Forest.

The feeling of excitement Shang Xia had when he ran over started to die down. Calming himself down slightly, Shang Xia hid his aura by circulating his Man and Heaven Synergy Chapter. Using the vegetation and boulders lying around, he hid his tracks while making his way deeper into the Redwood Forest.

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If forcing their way back into the battlefield between the two worlds required the cooperation of the higher-ups of the Tongyou Institution and experts in the Tongyou City, obtaining victory and securing a foothold in the battlefield between the two worlds signaled the end of the cooperation. What came next was each individual faction's hunt for benefits.

When the war ended, Shang Ke successfully located the Redwood Forest and located a tribe of Mutated Monkeys. Due to their strong bond, Shang Xia knew that it wasn't really possible to deal with them alone. The Mutated Monkey Tribe was somewhat similar to humans. There was also the presence of a rank four Mutated Monkey King.

While observing the tribe, Shang Ke felt that something was off as the Mutated Monkey King was directing the rest of the tribe to gather some fruits and flowers. From the looks of it, they were dumping all the ingredients into a hollowed tree trunk.

The legend of monkeys brewing wine flashed across Shang Ke's mind and he couldn't help but send out a transmission talisman to call for backup.

After sending out the transmission talisman, Shang Ke started to worry that he wouldn't be able to locate any Shang Clan members nearby. If that was truly the case, the talisman wouldn't be able to detect anything similar in a hundred-mile radius and would fly around above him like a headless fly before self-destructing. Now that it shot out successfully by turning into a streak of light that shot into the skies, Shang Ke heaved a sigh of relief. That was a sign that there was a member of the Shang Clan nearby.

The next thing Shang Ke had to do was to hide himself well. He observed the situation in the dark and tried to look for hollowed-out tree trunks the monkeys were brewing the wine in.

From how the tribe was acting, there seemed to be more than a single spot where they were brewing the wine. If he managed to locate other tree trunks where they had already completed the brew, he would have struck the jackpot!

He eventually managed to find two of them but he noticed another streak of light shooting out of the Redwood Forest while he was at it. That could only mean that there was another expert in the Redwood Forest!

With his heart sinking slightly, the aura around Shang Ke trembled slightly despite his best efforts to suppress it. At the same time, he started to look for signs of other experts who were going to enter the forest because of the newly released transmission talisman.

At the same time, he rejoiced silently that he was the first to send out his transmission talisman. Otherwise, the other party would have discovered him like how he spotted them.

While paying attention to the surroundings to look for the other party who was also in the Redwood Forest, Shang Ke prayed silently that the person who received his summons would come a little later to catch whichever party it was who sent out the second transmission talisman off guard.

His prayers seemed to have worked. He could feel the aura of a Martial Intent Realm expert rushing into the Redwood Forest and he heaved a sigh of relief.

Examining the newcomer with his divine sense, Shang Ke could tell that it wasn't a member of his Shang Clan.

The Martial Intent Realm cultivator ran straight into the forest and his voice rang through the air. “Elder Qi, this disciple received your summons and has arrived! Please allow me to greet you in person.”

Shang Ke’s heart trembled slightly and he thought to himself. “Elder Qi? Don’t tell me it’s Qi Yunxiu from the Changbai Holy Land... Wasn't that the asshole who brought the Changbai Holy Land’s divine weapon into the battlefield between the two worlds and caught the attention of Ji Wenlong?”

Since the battle had ended, the experts of their respective worlds started to exchange information with those in their faction and the identities of their opponents had basically been revealed.

No matter how loud the disciple called out, he received no response which caused Shang Ke to be slightly taken aback. There could only be one reason for Elder Qi to not respond. His tracks might have already been discovered!

The moment the thought crossed his mind, Shang Ke extended his divine sense to inspect the area closest to him but failed to discover anyone.

When he tried to locate the Martial Intent Realm cultivator of the Changbai Holy Land again, he discovered that the disciple had already retracted his aura. Unfortunately, he was unable to hide his presence from a Martial Extermination Realm expert.

After not getting a response from ‘Elder Qi’, the disciple of the Changbai Holy Land also discovered that something was off. He quickly hid his aura in case he ran into any trouble. Too bad for him, he couldn’t hide from Shang Ke regardless.

Despite still being able to find the Martial Intent Realm disciple, Shang Ke started to turn serious. If his presence wasn’t discovered, why would Elder Qi not respond to the disciple of the Changbai Holy Land? Shang Ke couldn’t find any traces of Qi Yunxiu either. It didn’t make sense for the elder to leave after he discovered the actions of the Mutated Monkey Tribe.

There could only be one more possibility. The disciple who came wasn’t summoned by the transmission talisman Shang Ke saw! If that were the case, that would mean that there was another Martial Extermination Realm cultivator in the Redwood Forest! The Qi Yunxiu Shang Ke had been thinking about probably came even earlier than him!

That would mean that Qi Yunxiu had summoned the disciple of the Changbai Holy Land before Shang Ke, and someone else sent out a transmission talisman after Shang Ke. Qi Yunxiu probably noticed both attempts and he chose to hide his tracks from the two of them!

That would also mean that Qi Yunxiu knew that there were two Martial Extermination Realm experts in the Redwood Forest other than himself.

Well, that didn’t mean Shang Ke was stupid either. Now that the situation had played out, he also guessed that there were two other Martial Extermination Realm experts in the Redwood Forest. The only person who was kept in the dark was probably the last person who sent the transmission talisman. The last person might have learned that Qi Yunxiu was hiding somewhere in the forest, but he had no idea Shang Ke was also present.

Carefully evaluating the situation, Shang Ke realized that even though he was the second to arrive, he held an advantageous position.

The only question was how long he could hold that advantage. The moment a member of the Shang Clan arrives, Shang Ke's identity would be revealed if the person behaved like the disciple of the Changbai Holy Land!

Shang Ke could only hope that the Shang Clan member who received his summons wouldn't rush over recklessly. Or at the very least, he hoped that the Shang Clan member wouldn't run into either Martial Extermination Realm expert on his way over.

Other than his worries, he was starting to become concerned about the identity of the third Martial Extermination Realm expert.

If the third expert was from the Azure Origin World, that would be for the best. After all, they would definitely be on the side of the institution. They would either be someone from the other three great clans or a newly ascended Martial Extermination Realm expert like Zhao Hengchun.

If the third expert was a member of the four great races of the Liao Continent, things might get ugly.

As for whether the third person could be another elder of the Changbai Holy Land, Shang Ke didn't even think of the possibility. After all, he would have revealed himself the moment the disciple came over calling for Elder Qi.

Just as Shang Ke's head was starting to hurt as he thought about the possible identities of the third Martial Extermination Realm expert, a familiar voice entered his ears. "Fifth Grandpa!"

Chapter 404: It's a Trap!

"Fifth Grandpa!"

Shang Ke nearly jumped in fright when he heard the familiar voice.

"There's no need to get too excited! It's me, Shang Xia!" Shang Xia expected his Grandpa Ke's reaction when he spoke. As such, he quickly followed up with another voice transmission.

Shang Ke also started to calm down as he realized that he wasn't hallucinating.

He couldn't help but realize his mistake after thinking about his actions when he heard Shang Xia's voice earlier. If he made any unnecessary movements or lost control of his emotions, he would probably be discovered by the two other Martial Extermination Realm experts.

Heaving a sigh of relief, he suddenly realized something else. Earlier, he was afraid that the members of his Shang Clan would be discovered when they arrived. Now, he wouldn't have to worry any longer. Shang Xia had arrived, and even he couldn't locate the kid! Their advantage over the other two parties became even larger!

He couldn't help but rejoice silently. Luckily for him, the person who came was Shang Xia. With the kid's ability to hide himself from Martial Extermination Realm experts, Shang Xia was already a step ahead of cultivators in the same realm. Moreover, Shang Ke felt that he was pretty familiar with the kid's strength. He would be a huge asset in the upcoming battle.

However, he couldn't help but wonder about Shang Xia's concealment art. He was truly curious about how Shang Xia did it.

It didn't take long for Shang Xia's voice to ring in Shang Ke's mind again. "Grandpa Ke, what's our plan?"

Shang Ke tried to locate the source of the voice transmission and his gaze eventually landed on a thick Redwood Tree nearly twenty feet behind him.

"We can't make any rash moves. There are three Martial Extermination Realm experts in the forest at the moment. Other than me, there's Qi Yunxiu from the Changbai Holy Land and someone I suspect is from the four great races of the Liao Continent. All of us called for backup and you're the second to arrive. The first to come was a disciple of the Changbai Holy Land. The third disciple isn't here yet and we'll act after they make their move." Shang Ke explained and sent a voice transmission towards Shang Xia who purposefully revealed his location to Shang Ke.

After a short pause, Shang Xia's voice came again. "Grandpa Ke, I'll go look for the other two Martial Extermination Realm experts. I'll let you know when I find them."

Shang Ke was about to say something else but he quickly swallowed his words. After all, he wasn't able to discover Shang Xia when he entered the Redwood Forest previously. Thinking about it for a second, he left Shang Xia with a warning before allowing him to do as he wished. "Be careful. If you run into any trouble, yell and I'll rush over as quickly as I can."

"Grandpa Ke, relax. I know what to do. They won't be able to do anything to me anyway." Shang Xia's voice rang in Shang Ke's mind.

Even so, Shang Ke couldn't help but leave another reminder. "You cannot be careless!"

By the time he completed his sentence, he discovered that Shang Xia's aura had disappeared again. He lost track of the kid.

It didn't take long before Shang Ke felt the presence of another Martial Intent Realm cultivator approaching the forest. Shang Ke quickly recalled that the location where the cultivator was headed to was where he noticed the transmission talisman being used.

Holding his breath, he paid a little more attention to the newcomer while pushing his senses to the maximum in hopes of discovering any changes in the Redwood Forest.

Indeed. The moment the Martial Intent Realm disciple entered the forest, he yelled impatiently, "Uncle Qingyun, I'm here! Where are you?!"

Shang Ke's heart trembled slightly. His fears were realized as he recognized the name. The disciple was calling out to Lang Qingyun, a member of the four great races of the Liao Continent.

Lang Qingyun was Lang Jingyun's brother, and he hastily broke through after the war that decimated the Four Spiritual Peak. Due to his forced improvement, he was only at the first layer of the Martial Extermination Realm, and in the war that just passed, he fought with Yun Yichen on the side of the Tongyou Institution. Yun Yichen was also an expert who just broke through and the two of them were unable to gain the upper hand over the other.

After the war ended, the experts on both sides shared information about their opponents and that was how they learned about the relative strength of their enemies.

At that moment, Shang Ke and Shang Xia learned the identities of the other two Martial Extermination Realm experts hiding in the Redwood Forest.

However, the disciple of the Lang Race acted the same way as the disciple from the Changbai Holy Land. When he didn't receive a reply from Lang Qingyun, he became alert and started to hide his aura. When he was done, he started to change his position.

It was too bad he didn't know that his tracks were as clear as day in front of the other Martial Extermination Realm experts and Shang Xia. His careful actions were seen right through as he hid himself to observe his surroundings.

A dull whistling filled the air and the disciple of the Lang Race discovered a red shadow that was the size of a chicken egg flying at him. When he finally sensed the danger, he swung a spade-like weapon at the red shadow.

"Not good!"

Lang Qingyun's voice rang through the air, but it was too late.

When his weapon slammed into the red shadow, a huge sea of lightning and flames emerged, swallowing the disciple's arm completely.

"Ah!" Retracting his arm as quickly as possible, he released his weapon and it clattered to the ground. At the same time, his arm was charred black.

Luckily, the thing that flew at him was a rank two Lightning Fire Jujube. With his quick reactions, he sealed off the fiery poison that wanted to seep into his body in order to stabilize his condition immediately. As long as he took some time to recover, his arm should be as good as new.

Lang Qingyun, who had been hiding somewhere nearby, flew into a fit of rage as he roared, "Qi Yunxiu, your Changbai Holy Land went too far!"

A ray of extermination origin shot into the skies and turned into a phantom of a giant wolf before it charged in the direction where the Lightning Fire Jujube came from.

Lang Qingyun, the last of the three to arrive, only knew that Qi Yunxiu was present due to the arrival of the disciple of the Changbai Holy Land. Because of Shang Xia's ungodly ability to hide himself and his tracks, Lang Qingyun didn't know that there was another Martial Extermination Realm expert present.

At the moment, Lang Qingyun's divine sense was also locked onto the Martial Intent Realm disciple of the Changbai Holy Land. However, he leaped in the direction where the Lightning Fire Jujube came from since it was most likely where Qi Yunxiu would be. The moment he moved, he unknowingly fell into Shang Xia's trap.

...

After informing Shang Ke of his presence, Shang Xia started to move around the area however he liked. He started looking for the location of the other two Martial Extermination Realm experts while hidden and when the disciple of the Lang Race arrived, Shang Xia managed to locate Qi Yunxiu. The distance separating himself and the Martial Extermination Realm elder of the Changbai Holy Land wasn't too far away and he decisively tossed a rank two Lightning Fire Jujube at the member of the Lang Race.

The moment he threw it out, he ran for cover, away from Qi Yunxiu.

The moment the Lightning Fire Jujube exploded, Lang Qingyun exploded with fury and took action.

Since Lang Qingyun's phantom wolf was unable to ascertain Shang Xia's location and Qi Yunxiu was in range of the attack, it was enough to shock the old expert.

Qi Yunxiu was no fool. From the time the Lightning Fire Jujube appeared, he knew that someone was messing with them. However, the next thing he knew, Lang Qingyun's figure approached where he was hiding. As Shang Xia's location wasn't too near his position earlier, Lang Qingyun didn't see him immediately. He knew that as long as he made a move at that moment, he could easily heavily injure Lang Qingyun.

When that happened, there would be one less person to fight with him for the treasure!

Due to the war that just passed, the Changbai Holy Land and the four great races of the Liao Continent seemed to have reached some sort of disagreement. No one would blame him if he injured Lang Qingyun at the moment. Moreover, Lang Qingyun was yelling for him to die earlier when he unleashed the attack and didn't bother hiding his killing intent.

"If I slightly injure him, he will have to leave the forest. Well, as long as I don't kill him, no one will be able to say a word. Hmph. He started it by trying to fight me for the treasure anyway!" Quickly justifying his action, Qi Yunxiu released his extermination origin. He slapped a whisk in the air as silver whiskers swiped at Lang Qingyun's back.

Luckily, the whisk he was using this time was his own. It wasn't the divine weapon that caused Ji Wenlong to risk breaking the fabric of space to enter the battlefield between the two worlds.

Well, even if it wasn't the divine weapon, the sudden appearance of his weapon caught Lang Qingyun off guard. More than a third of his energy contained in the phantom wolf he summoned was destroyed in an instant. Even though it didn't cause him severe injuries, it greatly wasted his inner qi. His battle capabilities decreased by close to 40 percent and there was no way he could fight other cultivators at the same level anymore."

"Lang Qingyun, there's still a third person in the area. You better be careful of traps!" Qi Yunxiu gave Lang Qingyun a warning eventually but he held back in his actions. In order to prevent himself from humiliating Lang Qingyun completely, he provided a reason to shift the man's focus.

Without Qi Yunxiu explaining further, Lang Qingyun also realized that something was off after seeing Qi Yunxiu popping out from behind him. He was afraid that he had already fallen into a trap.

Of course, being schemed against by someone else was one matter, being injured by Qi Yunxiu was another. Lang Qingyun raged silently about how Qi Yunxiu sneak attacked him earlier but due to his injury, he wasn't in any position to anger the elder from the Changbai Holy Land.

Whether he liked it or not, he had to swallow his anger at the moment. With Qi Yunxiu's warning, it seemed flushing out the third expert was what they had to do. Despite Qi Yunxiu's sneak attack, the hidden expert was the true perpetrator behind the entire matter. If he needed an avenue to vent his frustrations, it would be better to do it on the sneaky bastard.

Shang Xia was no fool. He wouldn't let them work things out before taking action. When the two of them were still speaking to each other, another Lightning Fire Jujube the size of a chicken egg flew towards them.

This time, there were golden lines all over the fruit. It wasn't a rank two Lightning Fire Jujube like before. This time, Shang Xia lobbed a rank four Lightning Fire Jujube over!

At the end of the day, Qi Yunxiu and Lang Qingyun were experienced cultivators. They felt the threat coming from the fruit and their faces changed instantly.

Unfortunately for them, the Lightning Fire Jujube came at a bad time. The two of them were too close to dodge.

With a heaven-shaking explosion, they were swallowed by a sea of fire and lightning. The trees in the surroundings that had stood tall for hundreds of years turned into ash instantly.

Qi Yunxiu and Lang Qingyun released a miserable cry each before fighting their way out of the sea of lightning and fire. Ripples appeared around Qi Yunxiu's body as he forcefully cut out a path to make his escape.

On the other hand, Lang Qingyun clearly didn't possess the same abilities. With the injuries he suffered earlier inhibiting his fighting abilities, he could only use his extermination origin to push the lightning and fire away.

When the two of them left the sea of lightning and fire, they were in an extremely disheveled state. But before they could do anything, an explosion rang like a thunderclap beside their ears. Countless rays of spear light fell from all directions on their weary body.

Chapter 405: The Soundless Bell?

The power contained in the explosion of a rank four Lightning Fire Jujube was comparable to an attack from a Martial Extermination Realm expert.

Qi Yunxiu and Lang Qingyun fell into Shang Xia's plot and what resulted was them being swallowed by a sea of lightning and fire.

As an elder of the Changbai Holy Land, Qi Yunxiu naturally had ways to protect himself. However, Lang Qingyun wasn't so lucky. He was injured earlier and the sea of lightning and fire only served to weaken him even further.

When they finally emerged from Shang Xia's dirty sneak attack, they were immediately besieged by the Martial Extermination Realm Shang Ke!

One had to admit that the grandpa-grandson duo worked really well together. Even if Shang Ke didn't expect the kid to plot against the two of them at the same time, he leaped into action at the critical moment!

Ordinarily, only Martial Extermination Realm experts would be able to deal with someone of the same level.

Shang Ke had entered the Martial Extermination Realm for more than a year now and his control over his extermination origin was much better than before. Countless spear lights shot through the forest as it flew straight at the two of them.

Even though the attack looked like it was aimed at both of them, Shang Ke's real target was actually the heavily injured Lang Qingyun! The spear lights approaching Qi Yunxiu didn't contain much energy and they were merely there to serve as a distraction.

It wasn't that he didn't think of dealing with both experts at once. However, both he and Shang Xia could keep their cool and think about the situation from a proper perspective. Killing any single Martial Extermination Realm cultivator required a lot of effort! In their current situation, they might not even be able to kill Lang Qingyun in a short amount of time! The thing they lacked the most at the moment was time!

When Qi Yunxiu escaped from the sea of lightning and fire, the ripples around him had turned extremely faint and could disappear at any time. He didn't seem too injured, but the lightning fire poison in the Lightning Fire Jujube had already seeped into his body. He needed a lot of concentration to suppress the poison and wasn't capable of dealing with sudden attacks. He needed some time to neutralize the lightning fire poison in his body but no one was going to give him the luxury to do that. The moment he raised his head, he noticed several rays of spear light falling on him. Gasping in fright, he waved his whisk in the air in a desperate attempt to protect himself. At the same time, he tossed out some sort of crystal feather.

Flying through the air, the crystal feather started to transform. It eventually turned into a pair of snowy white wings. As his whisk slapped heavily against it, his figure shot into the skies with a soft whoosh.

Qi Yunxiu might have escaped, but his actions were directly in line with what Shang Ke and Shang Xia desired. Now that he was gone, they could place all their attention on the heavily injured Lang Qingyun.

As soon as Qi Yunxiu disappeared, the spear lights that were falling his way disappeared abruptly and those that remained strengthened slightly while stabbing straight for Lang Qingyun.

Being heavily injured, Lang Qingyun wasn't able to dodge Shang Ke's attack. He knew that he wouldn't be able to take it head-on either in his weakened state and in a fit of desperation, he released all his frustrations. "Qi Yunxiu, you caused me to die!"

His final roar caused a visible shockwave to tear through the region. Everything within a hundred feet of him turned to dust. As soon as Shang Ke's spear light connected, he was thrown through the air like a broken kite. When he finally fell to the ground, he was barely holding on to his life due to his strong life force.

A hundred feet away from him, Shang Ke's figure flashed light lightning as he leaped into the air. His spear stabbed downwards once again and the moment it did, the series of events ended. The battlefield between the two worlds witnessed the loss of another Martial Extermination Realm expert.

However, a soundless shadow appeared when Shang Ke ended Lang Qingyun's life and flew silently towards his back.

"Be careful!" Shang Xia yelled, even though his warning wouldn't make it in time.

Yelling wasn't the only thing Shang Xia knew how to do. His inner qi poured into the Scarlet Star Spear in his hand and by the time the words left his lips, the spear was shooting out at a terrifying speed.

It turned into a streak of light that broke through the void. It accurately struck the sneaky figure who was approaching Shang Ke.

That was his ninth move, Piercing Sun!

“Swoosh!” The sound that rang through the air came after the spear found its target and the resulting soundwave caused the trees around to rustle.

With the heavy impact of Shang Xia’s Piercing Sun, the figure shot through the air and tumbled away. It brushed across Shang Ke’s body before coming to a stop tens of feet away. A huge crater was left under the figure who tried to sneak attack Shang Ke when he was at his most vulnerable.

The pride that should have filled his heart after killing another cultivator at the Martial Extermination Realm was replaced with fear as Shang Ke realized what had just happened. He lowered his spear quickly and prepared himself for battle as the phenomenon of heaven and earth qi filling the skies due to the death of a Martial Extermination Realm cultivator dissipated.

Shang Ke turned his head to observe what had just happened and his gaze eventually landed on Shang Xia who wasn’t too far away. The kid was retrieving his spear which was basically half-destroyed at that point. The tip of the spear was broken and the look of shock on Shang Xia’s face was obvious.

Turning to look at the crater that appeared, Shang Ke gasped. “It’s the Mutated Monkey King!”

Even though the crater was still there, it seemed to have been created by a treasure thrown out by the Mutated Monkey King.

Shang Ke didn’t dare to let his guard down as he looked into the depths of the Redwood Forest.

“That was close.” Shang Ke sighed and turned to look at Shang Xia again. When he was sure that the kid was safe, he continued, “The mantis stalks the cicada, unaware of the oriole behind him... I didn’t think that I would be plotted against by a mere beast!”

Shang Xia also made sense of the situation. The three Martial Extermination Realm experts hid in the forest to obtain the wine brewed by the Mutated Monkey Tribe. They had been plotting against each other and hid their tracks well, but none of them were aware that they had been discovered by the Mutated Monkey King a long time ago.

It seemed as though the Mutated Monkey King possessed a higher level of intelligence compared to other spiritual beasts. Even though it discovered Shang Ke and the others, it didn’t attack immediately. Instead, it hid in the shadows to watch the three of them scheme against each other. It chose to attack at the last moment, but its plans were thwarted by Shang Xia.

If not for the giant anomaly known as Shang Xia, Shang Ke wouldn’t have been able to avoid the sneaky strike.

“What do we do now?” Shang Xia asked as he looked in the same direction as Shang Ke.

“Now that Qi Yunxiu has escaped and the sign of a Martial Extermination Realm cultivator falling has emerged, many Martial Extermination Realm experts should be

arriving. We need to move quickly. I'll lure the Mutated Monkey King away and you can go look around the forest. We'll start to leave once the time it takes to burn a stick of incense has passed. No matter what you manage to find, leave the moment time is up." Shang Ke decided.

However, Shang Xia started to hesitate. "Grandpa Ke, you don't even know how strong the Mutated Monkey King is!"

Originally, Shang Xia wanted to speak his mind. He wanted to say that Shang Ke might not be a match for the Monkey King at all, but he changed the way he spoke at the last second.

He wasn't speaking blindly. After all, he witnessed how the Mutated Monkey King attacked earlier.

A smile appeared on Shang Ke's face and he chuckled in response, "Relax. I might not be the monkey's opponent, but I can definitely hold it back for a short while. You're the one who needs to take care of yourself. The tribe might not be commanded by the Monkey King, but there are many rank three monkeys among them. If you fail to run away when the time is up, you will probably be surrounded by Martial Extermination Realm experts."

Nodding seriously, Shang Xia replied. "Grandpa Ke, rest assured. I know what to do."

When he was done speaking, he turned to take his leave. It didn't take a genius to know that the area was about to turn into a battlefield between Shang Ke and the Mutated Monkey King.

However, he was called back by Shang Ke. "Wait. Don't be in such a rush to leave. Go over there to the crater and take away the thing that was used to ambush me."

When Shang Xia stopped the attack earlier, he managed to catch a faint sight of the item at the last second and it seemed to resemble a bell.

He couldn't understand how a bell could remain so silent when it flew.

With question marks in his mind, Shang Xia released several reddish-golden bolts of lightning that struck the soil under his feet. A loud chime echoed through the air and a bell that was the size of a fist popped out from the ground below. Shang Xia quickly grabbed it.

Looking at the small indent caused by his Scarlet Star Spear, Shang Xia knew that the bell was definitely an amazing treasure. The only thing he had to do was to figure out its uses.

Leaping out from the crater, Shang Xia saw his Grandpa Ke keeping Lang Qingyun's items.

As their gazes met, they nodded in tacit understanding. Shang Xia turned to leave as he rushed into the Redwood Forest.

Not too long after he left, an explosion rocked the air. Heaven and earth qi fluctuated violently the next moment.

The battle between Shang Ke and the Mutated Monkey King had begun!

Without hesitation, Shang Xia ran in the other direction. He might be worried about his Grandpa Ke, but that wasn't the time to hesitate. He ran deeper into the territory of the Mutated Monkey Tribe and straight into their ambush.

Cries could be heard through the air as items were flung at Shang Xia. Fruits, stones, wooden blocks, balls of mud, and some sort of nuts flew at him as they emitted strange heaven and earth qi fluctuations.

At the same time, a sinister aura appeared behind Shang Xia and it shot straight for Shang Xia's back.

It was the disciple of the Changbai Holy Land who arrived before Shang Xia! No one expected him to still be around!

Chapter 406: Stealing Wine

In order to save time, Shang Xia had planned to charge straight into the depths of the forest. He was ready to take on the attacks of the monkey tribe, but he didn't expect the disciple of the Changbai Holy Land to be waiting for him! After all, Qi Yunxiu had left and Lang Qingyun was dead. No one expected the disciple to not escape. He was even daring enough to try a sneak attack on Shang Xia! That wasn't all. The timing he chose was almost perfect.

The thing about it that caught Shang Xia's interest wasn't the disciple's courage. Instead, Shang Xia wanted to know how he managed to avoid detection to appear behind him.

One had to know that after Shang Xia comprehended his Man and Heaven Chapter Synergy, his divine sense could merge with the world around him and allow him to hide from Martial Extermination Realm experts. At the same time, it was much stronger than the divine sense from cultivators of the same level.

The disciple alone was definitely unable to avoid Shang Xia's divine sense. That was the case earlier. Shang Xia and Shang Ke noticed him hiding in the forest but he disappeared all of a sudden, leading them to think that he had escaped. Neither of them expected the disciple to be ballsy enough to use some sort of treasure to hide in the surroundings to try fishing for some benefits.

Facing such a sudden attack from the disciple from the Changbai Holy Land while being pelted with weird objects from the Mutated Monkey Tribe, any other Martial Intent Realm cultivator would have no choice but to accept their fate.

It was too bad the person who was trapped in the situation was Shang Xia, anything was possible!

The tip of his Scarlet Star Spear might be damaged, but it was still usable. Surprisingly, Shang Xia held it with one hand and released a sword technique while swinging the long pole around.

His inner qi circulated quickly through his body and sword lights appeared around him.

Using a huge amount of inner qi, Shang Xia deployed his martial extremity intent, the Seven Laceration Sword Formation!

Seven pairs of sword qi were contained in the sword lights around him and they started to spin around at a frightening rate. The different types of sword qi separated and fused with each other from time to time and they destroyed any threat that dared to approach him.

Everything the monkeys threw at him turned to dust in the face of the sword formation. As for the disciple of the Changbai Holy Land, he could only retreat after breaking through four layers of sword lights and still failing to reach Shang Xia.

Turning his attention to the disciple of the Changbai Holy Land who tried to sneak attack him, Shang Xia wouldn't allow him to get away so easily. Also, Shang Xia's interest was piqued by the number of surprises the disciple was giving him. Not only was he able to avoid detection, but he also managed to break through four layers of sword lights! Evidently, the disciple of the Changbai Holy Land wasn't some random nobody.

Replacing the spear in his hand with his Jade River Sword, the power contained in the formation increased by yet another level. The radius of his sword formation also extended outwards now that he was holding the appropriate weapon in his hand. He wanted to trap the disciple of the Changbai Holy Land completely.

Luckily for the disciple, he retreated the moment he failed to kill Shang Xia. With his speed, he managed to barely escape Shang Xia's sword formation. The sword light chased closely behind him and the disciple of the Changbai Holy Land released a blade light to cover his back. It blocked off a portion of Shang Xia's sword formation but two streaks of sword light still entered his body. Releasing a pained grunt, he pushed his speed to its limit and fled into the forest.

With a frown on his face, Shang Xia quickly estimated the strength of the disciple who just ran away and realized that he wasn't any weaker than the direct disciples of the Changbai Holy Land who fell in his hands.

Glancing in the direction the disciple left, Shang Xia burned the feeling of the man's aura into his mind before turning back to complete his mission. Looking at the monkeys in front of him, he noticed that there were close to a hundred of them. Their ranks varied from the first to third rank, but none of them were able to do a thing to Shang Xia.

Without the threat of the disciple of the Changbai Holy Land, Shang Xia could focus all his attention on those monkeys. However, he had to admit that those monkeys had above-average intelligence compared to other beasts. They were able to feel the threat and even without being commanded by the Mutated Monkey King, they started to run away from Shang Xia.

Those who were further away managed to escape into the forest, but those who were closer to Shang Xia were decimated instantly.

Looking at the monkeys who were running away desperately, Shang Xia didn't plan on catching them one by one. Instead, he drew a horizontal arc through the air with his Jade River Sword and the radius of his sword formation extended yet again. The sword lights that surrounded him eventually extended to cover a fifty feet radius and any creature in there was killed before they could scream.

Those who were a little further away managed to keep their lives but their panicked cries didn't stop. They tried to call out to their king while running away.

Dealing with the threat of the Mutated Monkey Tribe for the moment, Shang Xia retracted his sword qi and took a deep breath to calm himself.

The Seven Laceration Sword Formation was his martial extremity intent and but using it the way he did definitely tired him out.

Luckily, the power of the sword formation wasn't something anyone could scoff at. Even at his current level, his sword formation was a useful tool in dealing with multiple enemies.

As Shang Xia tried to recover his inner qi, a sharp yell came from the other side of the forest. It seemed as though his actions of massacring the Mutated Monkey Tribe didn't go unnoticed by the Mutated Monkey King.

A roar from a rank four beast was enough to affect the flow of inner qi in lower-leveled cultivators. Those who were weaker would lose control of their cultivation and suffer heavy injuries.

Luckily, Shang Xia was only slightly affected and his heart pounded slightly.

The yell from the Mutated Monkey King gave Shang Xia a good reminder to move quickly. After all, the Mutated Monkey King might be much stronger than Shang Ke. With his mass killing of Mutated Monkeys, the Mutated Monkey King might go berserk and risk it all to kill him instead.

Rushing through the forest, Shang Xia quickly discovered the heart of the Mutated Monkey Tribe.

The area was a mess as random fruits lined the ground.

However, the faint smell of wine, fermented fruits, and several herbs seemed to tell Shang Xia that he had come to the right place.

His gaze quickly rested on a thick tree trunk. From his observations since he entered the Redwood Forest, the bark of the Redwood Trees was extremely dense. As long as the monkeys hollowed out a space in the trunk of the Redwood Trees and fermented their wine within, the liquid that was produced could be contained with no problems.

Shang Xia tried to extend his divine sense to ascertain if there was wine in the tree he had locked onto, but he discovered that his divine sense was being obstructed. It was difficult to peer into the situation within the trees.

The problem didn't stump Shang Xia for long. He quickly made several rounds and quickly discovered several trees that had mud smeared on their surface.

Looking at the degree of which the mud had dried out, Shang Xia was able to estimate how long the wine had been fermenting. The time they had been fermenting for told Shang Xia if they were ready, or the grade the wine contained within was at.

Even though the Mutated Monkey King was at the fourth rank, it didn't mean that the wine it fermented was of the fourth rank.

Jumping onto one of the trees in his surroundings, Shang Xia carefully peeled away the mud seal on it. A strong aroma assaulted his nose the instant he did.

Taking a light whiff, Shang Xia felt his head getting lighter as his heartbeat accelerated. The inner qi in his body also started to circulate a little quicker.

Focusing his senses, Shang Xia pushed his inner qi to rotate even quicker as he forced the effects of the wine out of his body.

"Hehe, my luck isn't too bad! I found a batch of rank three Monkey Wine!" Shang Xia felt a burst of joy as he quickly identified the level of the wine in the tree trunk.

It was said that Mutated Monkeys used the wine they brewed to increase their cultivation. In some cases, they were even able to break through a bottleneck after drinking some of their wine.

Since the tree contained rank three Monkey Wine, Shang Xia estimated it was the reward given to rank two Mutated Monkeys for them to improve.

Of course, the wine couldn't actually be a replacement for actual advancement medicine. It might be able to assist a break through, but it required long term use. Moreover, that specific effect could only benefit Mutated Monkeys. Cultivators of other species would only be able to increase their cultivation slightly when ingesting Monkey Wine.

Retrieving a spirit sealing bottle, Shang Xia shoved it through the mud seal. A stream of faint-red liquid poured into the bottle and it didn't take long for him to empty the tree. The rank three Monkey Wine that had been sealed in the tree for god knew how long had been obtained by Shang Xia in the blink of an eye!

He quickly turned to look at another tree with a mud seal. When he repeated the process, the aroma of the liquid pouring out was a lot fainter than before. The heaven and earth qi contained in the liquid was far from the first bottle.

Clearly, the rank of Monkey Wine contained in the second tree couldn't be compared to the first!

Originally, Shang Xia wanted to use a spirit sealing bottle to contain the liquid within. However, he felt that it would be a waste of a good bottle and changed it to a spirit restraining pouch. That was because he discovered that the Monkey Wine that was pouring out hadn't even reached the second rank!

Disappointed, he quickly looked for more trees in his surroundings but after opening the next two, all he obtained was rank one Monkey Wine.

Only after he reached the fifth tree did he discover rank two Monkey Wine! Bringing out a spirit sealing bottle, he filled it up completely.

Before he could look for a sixth tree, a loud whistle tore through the air. Shang Xia could tell that it came from his Grandpa Ke, and his heart ran cold. That was a secret signal they decided on earlier. It meant that Shang Ke was reaching his limit and couldn't hold the Mutated Monkey King down much longer and that Shang Xia was to retreat immediately.

Indeed... The Mutated Monkey King is a lot stronger than Grandpa Ke!

Shang Xia leaped over to the nearest tree and filled another bottle with rank two Monkey Wine.

The time it took to burn a stick of incense was running out, and Shang Xia knew that he had to go. Moreover, Shang Ke was close to his limit and there was no way they could stay any longer.

With other Martial Extermination Realm experts rushing over too, Shang Xia knew that it was time to go. He wasn't too greedy. After draining six trees, he knew that he definitely got his fair share of the treasure. In fact, he might have taken a huge bulk of it!

Right as he started to make his leave, his gaze unintentionally landed on the core region of the Mutated Monkey Tribe. There, a massive tree grew alone. The trunk of the tree was so thick that two people were required to wrap their hands around it and the moment he saw the tree, he knew that it was good stuff. After all, it wasn't too common to see such a huge tree growing around.

His pupils shrank as he noticed a small mud seal that was the size of his fist on the trunk of the tree.

Finally, his curiosity got the better of him and he quickly jumped onto the branch of the tree closest to him. Breaking the seal, a faint-red mist emerged and Shang Xia nearly lost his balance after smelling it slightly.

This... Rank four Monkey Wine?!

Chapter 407: Swords Drawn

When Shang Xia inhaled the fumes of the rank three Monkey Wine, he felt a little dizzy but he managed to regain his composure in a short second.

However, this time was different. The moment he took a whiff of the mist that came from the trunk of the massive tree, he nearly fell from the branch he was standing on.

It wasn't difficult to estimate the rank of the wine contained in the tree trunk.

Did the Mutated Monkey King actually manage to brew rank four Monkey Wine?!

The thought flashed through Shang Xia's mind for a second but he quickly focused his thoughts. At the same time, he forced the effects of the alcohol out of his body. Next, he brought out another spirit sealing bottle.

However, he only managed to retrieve close to three catties of wine from the massive tree after all his efforts.

Earlier, every single tree contained twenty to thirty catties of Monkey Wine. the volume of lower-ranked wine was much higher than whatever was contained in the massive tree!

Shang Xia wasn't too surprised though. He understood that even if he added up all the wine he obtained earlier, it wouldn't be worth more than the three catties of wine he was holding. Rank four Monkey Wine was a truly precious commodity!

When he was done, another whistle tore through the forest but this time, it sounded a lot more urgent than before.

That was Shang Ke's final warning for Shang Xia to tell him that the Mutated Monkey King had already managed to break free from the battle. With the rank four Mutated Monkey King racing back to the depths of the Redwood Forest, Shang Xia had to leave immediately!

This time, Shang Xia didn't hesitate. He ran in the opposite direction of where Shang Ke was fighting the Mutated Monkey King.

The mutated Monkey King might have broken free from the battle, but Shang Ke was still trying his best to hold the creature back. After chasing for a short distance, Shang Ke changed direction all of a sudden. His extermination origin surrounded his body and he flew to where the two of them had promised to meet.

A mere second had passed since Shang Ke stopped his chase when an enraged cry came from the depths of the Redwood Forest. It didn't stop there as the Mutated Monkey King roared multiple times to vent its anger.

Glancing in its direction, Shang Ke didn't plan on heading over to take a look. Instead, he continued to fly to where he was meeting the kid. It didn't take long before he discovered Shang Xia running through the forest under him.

Seeing as the kid was perfectly fine, Shang Ke heaved a sigh of relief.

Originally, he wanted to retrieve his extermination origins and head down to meet Shang Xia, but he discovered a powerful presence coming from the distance. Raising his head, he saw two streaks of light flying in the direction of the Redwood Forest.

Hovering in mid air, he started to prepare for battle as he didn't know if the newcomers were friend or foe. While he was doing that, he sent Shang Xia a voice transmission to tell him to not bother with anything and leave.

With Shang Ke watching over him from the skies, Shang Xia knew that no Martial Extermination Realm expert would be foolish enough to try dealing with him. After all, the threat of Shang Ke catching them off guard was enough to ensure his safe departure.

Also, Shang Xia knew his limits. He knew that a battle of the magnitude that was about to break out wasn't something a mere Martial Intent Realm cultivator like him could take part in, regardless of whether he could actually fight a Martial Extermination Realm expert or not. After all, there would be too many of them and there were some exceptionally powerful ones.

As the two streaks of light approached the Redwood Forest, Shang Ke's gaze returned to the depths of the forest. He discovered that the raging Mutated Monkey King had left the core region of his territory at the moment and was headed away from him.

Did it discover that Martial Extermination Realm experts are approaching and decided to escape before danger arrived?

Shang Ke couldn't help but praise the Mutated Monkey King's intelligence. If it chose to remain where it was, the numerous Martial Extermination Realm experts who were bound to arrive would definitely spare no effort in killing it to divy up its extermination origins.

Also, the extermination origins of the Monkey King weren't the only treasure that remained in the forest. Shang Xia might have taken a portion of the Monkey Wine, but there was still some of it left in the trees. Moreover, the existence of the Mutated Monkey Tribe was a sign that there might be treasures that were nurtured in the area.

The Mutated Monkey King might be decisive enough to give it up, but it was definitely feeling heartache like never before. After all, any Martial Extermination Realm expert would be unwilling to give up on their fortune like that!

In the time it took for those thoughts to enter Shang Ke's mind, the two streaks of light arrived. Both Martial Extermination Realm experts revealed themselves and one of them was Qi Yunxiu who had escaped earlier. The other was someone Shang Ke was familiar with, but not in a good way. He was someone from the four great races of the Liao Continent, She Dajun.

Before they entered the Martial Extermination Realm, Shang Ke had fought She Dajun more than once. Who would have thought that they would both advance and run into each other again in the Redwood Forest?

A look of contemplation flashed in Shang Ke's eyes when he saw how they arrived. Even though the two of them were supposed to be on the same side, they flew separately and there seemed to be a clear distinction between them.

The Changbai Holy Land could be said to be the reinforcements there to assist the four great races of the Liao Continent, but it was clear that the relationship between them wasn't exactly great.

She Dajun's expression changed when he saw Shang Ke and he yelled, "Did Lang Qingyun die?! Were you the one who killed him?"

A sneer formed on Shang Ke's face and he didn't bother answering the question. His expression seemed to have said it all.

"You did it alone? How is that possible?" She Dajun frowned as he extended his divine sense to observe his surroundings. He tried to look for traces of other experts present but found nothing. Even so, his expression sank even further as a cold light flashed in his eyes when he glanced at Qi Yunxiu.

She Dajun didn't need to say much and Qi Yunxiu's face flushed red from embarrassment.

When he left the forest earlier, he quickly realized that he had been tricked. If only he stayed with Lang Qingyun and helped him slightly, Shang Ke would not have been able to get the kill.

By the time he realized his mistake, he quickly made his way back. However, he knew that Lang Qingyun would be in dire straits. Even though he felt that it was possible for the opponents to gather their strength and deal with him after they were done with Lang Qingyun, he couldn't possibly sit back and do nothing! As such, he located She Dajun who was nearby to return to the Redwood Forest. At the same time, he sent out several secret transmission talismans to notify others of the Changbai Holy Land what had happened.

Unfortunately, by the time his transmission talismans started to shoot through the skies, the violent fluctuation of heaven and earth qi that signified the death of a Martial Extermination Realm expert filled the air.

Qi Yunxiu understood that he was a huge part of the reason behind Lang Qingyun's death and his action might cause the destruction of the alliance between his Changbai Holy Land and the four great races of the Liao Continent.

In order to retain the trust of the four great races of the Liao Continent, the only way was to...

"You... You killed Lang Qingyun!" Qi Yunxiu pointed at Shang Ke and screamed in anger. As the words left his lips, he swung his whisk through the air and silver threads filled the skies. They shot towards Shang Ke and the moment he made his move, She Dajun seemed to understand his intentions. Even though She Dajun knew that Qi Yunxiu was trying to push all the blame to Shang Ke, he had to play along. It was a two against one situation and if they managed to take advantage of the situation to take down Shang Ke...

A light flashed in She Dajun's eyes and he started to move. He quickly went to block off Shang Ke's route of retreat.

The two of them were comparable to Shang Ke in strength and with the two of them working together, they quickly gained the upper hand.

Unfortunately, She Dajun had barely gotten in position when the void above him trembled again. A long whip extended out from the crack and lashed at She Dajun's body.

With his expression changing drastically, She Dajun revealed a truncheon that attempted to block the strike.

A loud smack could be heard as She Dajun's figure was sent flying through the air.

"What's your problem? Do you think you can bully us because of your numbers?" Liu Qinglan's chuckle rang through the air.

Shang Ke's figure blurred as he left behind an afterimage. By the time he reappeared, he was standing beside Liu Qinglan.

Qi Yunxiu's face twisted with fury as She Dajun quickly flew to his side. The two of them glared at Liu Qinglan and Shang Ke as they prepared for battle.

At that moment, another streak of light tore through the air. It moved in a tyrannical manner and even though it was approaching the Redwood Forest at high speed, it didn't slow down in the slightest. Instead, the energy fluctuations around the beam of light increased. The light separated into two as it transformed into a giant wolf that was deep blue in color as it pounced at Shang Ke.

Slightly startled, Shang Ke swept his spear before him and summoned a huge sword light that struck the body of the wolf. Even though he was surprised by the appearance of the newcomer, Shang Ke didn't panic.

"Lang Jingyun, how dare you!" Liu Qinglan's voice boomed through the air as a nine-segmented whip appeared to assist Shang Xia. It flew straight towards Lang Jingyun who was close to a thousand feet away.

Noticing Liu Qinglan's counterattack, Lang Jingyun's figure froze in mid air and he no longer charged straight at Shang Ke. Changing directions, he headed for Qi Yunxiu and She Dajun.

The two of them went over to greet Lang Jingyun and they felt a lot more confident now that a strong expert on their side had come.

"Shang Ke, did you kill my brother?!" Lang Jingyun released the extermination origins that surrounded him for a second before glaring at Shang Ke. His eyes were completely bloodshot as he waited for an answer.

Raising his spear slightly, Shang Ke growled, "That's right."

"Alright, you'll pay for that with your life!" Lang Jingyun roared as he lashed his four-segmented whip at Shang Ke.

Unfortunately, the space around them started to solidify and Lang Jingyun's whip was no longer able to move as it pleased. A terrifying pressure descended on the lands as the five Martial Extermination Realm experts who were present felt a massive weight pressing down on their shoulders.

Raising their heads, they discovered that the space above them didn't crack, unlike the time they made their arrival. Instead, it trembled slightly as Shang Bo stepped out with his hands crossed

behind his back. Looking around casually, the other Martial Extermination Realm experts unintentionally lowered their heads. No one dared to meet his gaze.

However, Shang Bo eventually stared at a certain spot in space before muttering, "Brother Ran, since you are already here, why don't you show yourself?"

A blood-red palm extended out from the void after the words left his lips and the space it shattered seemed to turn into a giant black door that Ran Kongqing stepped out from. As soon as he arrived, Ran Kongqing glanced at Qi Yunxiu, She Dajun, and Lang Jingyun before turning his attention to Shang Bo.

"Is your brother really capable of killing Martial Nephew Qingyun?!" Ran Kongqing directed the question to Shang Bo and he frowned slightly as he didn't think that Shang Ke was capable of doing what they said he did.

Without a change in expression, Shang Bo muttered, "I'm equally as curious. If the two of them are the only ones present, my Fifth Brother shouldn't be able to kill him."

Qi Yunxiu felt the blood draining from his face. He knew that those old foxes were definitely able to uncover what had happened given the information they knew! Even so, he maintained his composure as he looked into the distance, as if waiting for something to happen.

Chapter 408: I Want More

...

The Azure Spiritual World might have killed a Martial Extermination Realm expert from the Tongyou Institution and wounded many disciples, but they suffered a greater loss. They lost two Martial Extermination Realm experts on their side. Sima Zhanxing's fall wasn't anything noteworthy, but the same couldn't be said for Inner Sect Elder Huang Yunxiang. His death wasn't so much a mystery as it was an unfortunate event. Everyone knew he was killed by the Martial Dipper Realm sword qi, but no one knew the reason he died. Moreover, his death decided the outcome of the war directly.

Now, Lang Qingyun has also fallen. His death was a mystery to all other than those who killed him, and the death toll of the Martial Extermination Realm experts on the side of the Azure Spiritual World increased to three! They could be said to have taken a huge loss. Lang Jingyun, a fellow clan member of the fallen Lang Qingyun, and even Ran Kongqing, were finding it difficult to accept the loss.

Ran Kongqing was currently the representative of the four great races of the Liao Continent and he was in possession of the Lingxuan Space Shattering Claw. When he learned about the death of Lang Qingyun, he wanted nothing more than to charge into battle once again and vent his frustrations on the Tongyou Institution.

However, the indignant feeling that was filling his heart didn't just come from the Tongyou Institution. Some grievances for the Changbai Holy Land were also smoldering in his mind.

The news of Lang Qingyun's death started to spread when Qi Yunxiu managed to escape, but Shang Ke also sent a transmission to Shang Bo about the situation in the Redwood Forest. From what Shang Bo had said, Ran Kongqing could guess what had happened. If Qi Yunxiu had nothing to do with the battle, Shang Ke wouldn't have been able to kill Lang Qingyun!

However, no matter how deep the hatred he felt, Ran Kongqing knew that he wouldn't be able to take it out on Qi Yunxiu. After all, they needed the strength of the Changbai Holy Land to deal with the Tongyou Institution.

...

A second later, the space above the Redwood Forest was torn open. Shang Lubing from the Tongyou Institution arrived and Pang Yunbi from the Changbai Holy Land arrived one after the other.

In the space above the Redwood Forest, nine Martial Extermination Realm experts had gathered. There were five of them from the Azure Spiritual World and Ran Kongqing also had the Lingxuan Space Shattering Claw on him. However, they weren't confident in defeating the four experts from the Azure Origin World.

With the appearance of so many of them, both Ran Kongqing and Shang Bo knew that no matter how much they hated each other or how much indignation they were suffering, things would not end in a bloody battle. Since the Martial Dipper Realm experts on both sides had come to an agreement, all of them had to control themselves.

After a round of mockery and quarrels, both sides seemed to understand what happened earlier even though both sides tried their best to hide what had happened.

Pan Yunbi glared at Qi Yunxiu before admitting 'graciously', "Junior Brother Qi made a huge mistake and caused Junior Qingyun to suffer some injuries. Patriarch Ran can decide on his punishment. However, the enemies are upon us and the situation in the battlefield between the two worlds isn't really stable right now. I hope that Patriarch Ran can go easy on him and allow him to make up for his mistakes through battle."

Pan Yunbi's words seemed to solve the situation perfectly while denouncing Qi Yunxiu, but her words were basically a formality. Ran Kongqing wasn't able to do anything to Qi Yunxiu anyway and he could only shoot a glance at Lang Jingyun while forcing a laugh, "No matter what, we can only blame the enemy for being too crafty. How can I possibly push all the blame onto Junior Yunxiu? We won't bring this matter up after this."

Liu Qingan couldn't help but sneer after hearing what he said.

Lang Jingyun and the others shot her death stares but she didn't bother with any of them.

Shang Bo's voice rang in Liu Qingan's mind as the members of the Azure Spiritual World were trying their best to intimidate her. "Nothing much will happen here now that Ran Kongqing and I are here. Go take a look at the essence jade cave that was reported. There seems to be a mine in there capable of producing essence jade."

Nodding slightly, Liu Qingan shot another mocking smile over to the experts of the Azure Spiritual World before turning into a streak of light that flew away. It didn't take long before she disappeared.

Turning to Shang Lubing, Shang Bo sent another voice transmission over. "Chief Shang, I hope you can stay here and deal with the aftermath with Shang Ke. We discovered the nest of the Mutated Rain Swallows once again and I should head over to take a look. At the same time, I'll rush over to the newly discovered marsh to check it out."

Shang Lubing nodded but when he tried to look for Shang Bo, he discovered that the Deputy Patriarch had already disappeared.

With his departure, Ran Kongqing also vanished from his spot. Lang Jingyun who was emitting waves of killing intent was left behind with She Dajun the newly promoted Martial Extermination Realm expert.

Lang Jingyun was unwilling to say anything and She Dajun could only break the silence helplessly. Coughing once, he muttered, "How do you plan to split this place?"

Chuckling softly, Shang Lubing suggested, "We'll split it equally."

Shang Ke, who was standing right beside him, couldn't help but interrupt. "Wait... Chief Shang, my Shang Clan should receive a portion too, right? After all, I was the person who discovered this place and reported it."

Shang Lubing did a double take and he didn't seem to believe what he just heard. He turned to look at Shang Ke with a strange expression on his face but was met with an incomparably serious stare.

Even a fool could tell that someone had already raided the place. Moreover, the Martial Extermination Realm experts present weren't able to detect the presence of the little shit several miles away, but they spotted his figure staring at them sneakily as though everyone there was blind.

Shang Lubing couldn't help but think back to Shang Bo's hasty departure. He wondered if the Deputy Patriarch left because he wanted to maintain his reputation and avoid being part of their shameless show.

Regardless, Shang Lubing was eventually defeated by Shang Ke's 'earnest' gaze. He sighed helplessly, "Yeah... Of course there's a portion that will go to your Shang Clan..."

With a wide grin appearing on his face, Shang Ke cupped his fists and thanked, "Many thanks, Chief!"

...

Originally, Shang Xia thought that a massive battle would break out the moment they arrived. That was why he chose to hide himself far away. However, he realized that the battle wouldn't be taking place the moment his Grandpa Bo and Ran Kongqing appeared.

As such, he approached sneakily while keeping his eye on those experts hovering in the skies.

Indeed. It didn't take long for the experts to take their leave. Eventually, there were only four of them left and they were responsible for splitting up the Redwood Forest. With the decision made, Lang Jingyun turned to take his leave immediately. Shang Ke flew over to Shang Xia with a wide smile threatening to split his face in two.

"How much wine did you collect?" Shang Ke couldn't wait to hear about his gains.

Even though they couldn't use Monkey Wine to break through to the next level, it was an extremely valuable treasure to help with their cultivation.

After all, Monkey Wine could increase the speed at which inner qi is circulated in a cultivator's body!

One could only imagine how quickly a cultivator would improve if they could drink some Monkey Wine every day, the accumulated effects would be frightening after several years of cultivation!

Shang Xia swept his gaze around his surroundings before whispering carefully, “I collected more than 100 catties of rank one Money Wine. There’s close to 60 catties of rank two Monkey Wine. As for rank three Monkey Wine, I only managed to gather around 30 catties...”

Shang Ke’s face lit up after hearing what he said.

Even though rank one to three Monkey Wine wasn’t really useful to someone at his level, it was great for those in the clan! He could even imagine how the Shang Clan’s power would make a sharp rise in the following years.

“Nice, nice! Everything was worth it!” Shang Ke celebrated, but he also suppressed his voice when he said it. However, he couldn’t hide his excitement. “Oh right, there are more Monkey Wine in the forest and from the way we’re splitting up the loot, our clan will receive an additional portion. Oi, brat, what’s with that stupid look you’re giving me?”

“It’s nothing!” Shang Xia shook his head violently before he continued, “Grandpa Ke, you’re working so hard for our clan and I have nothing but respect for you...”

“Ahem...” Shang Ke coughed lightly and he quickly followed up, “Brat, it’s good that you know. If you take on the role as the Shang Clan Patriarch in the future, you will know how difficult it is to manage the entire clan. You cannot give up any benefits that might help the clan!”

Raising his thumb slowly, he commended his Grandpa Ke. However, he quickly took out another bottle and explained, “Grandpa Ke, this...”

Shaking the bottle slightly, Shang Ke glanced at Shang Xia from the corner of his eye. “Why is there so little liquid in here?”

He didn’t wait for Shang Xia to explain himself as he popped open the cork immediately. A faint-red mist emerged from the opening of the bottle and a dense fragrance filled the air.

“Rank four...”

Shang Ke’s expression changed immediately as he stuffed the cork back in. He inhaled deeply to remove any traces of the wine fragrance in the air but he couldn’t relax still. In the end, he waved his sleeves to create a violent gust of wind that ripped through the area.

Looking at him now, Shang Ke’s face was flushed red. No one knew if it was because of the alcohol or if he was too excited. He asked Shang Xia hurriedly, “Where did you get this?!”

As soon as the question left his lips, Shang Ke realized that it was a stupid question. He quickly shifted the topic. “Did the rank four Mutated Monkey King actually leave some rank four Monkey Wine?!”

In essence, the question he asked was the same as the previous question. However, no one could blame him as obtaining rank four Monkey Wine was a great achievement! It was no wonder he was so excited.

Nodding slightly, Shang Xia explained, “Grandpa Ke, will three cattles of this be enough for you to refine your second extermination origin?”

Shang Ke stared at him in stunned silence for a second and he laughed eventually, “You’re not too far away from breaking through yourself. You should keep it.”

A bitter smile formed on Shang Xia’s face when he thought about how far away he was from completing his advancement medicine. “It’s not that easy to gather everything for my rank four advancement medicine. I’m afraid I’m going to be stuck at the peak of the Martial Intent Realm for quite some time! Rather than leaving this Monkey Wine with me, we might as well make full use of it now and help you increase your cultivation.”

“I understand where you’re coming from and I appreciate your thoughts. However, I can’t raise my cultivation as I wish! Even if it can help me refine my second extermination origin, it’s really difficult to find one! Do you think extermination origins are cabbages that grow on the side of the road?” Shang Ke chuckled bitterly.

Thinking about it for a moment, Shang Xia wondered out loud. “After the war for the Tongyou Mysterious World, didn’t our clan obtain the Lingkong Formless Extermination Origin?”

Shang Ke waved his hand and snapped, “I can’t use that! It’s supposed to be left for you. When you gain the qualification to enter the Martial Extermination Realm, you can use the strand of extermination origin to break through immediately! Giving you the opportunity to break through is much better than me using it to slightly improve my strength!”

“Oh?” Shang Xia gasped. “Grandpa Ke, doesn’t this mean that as long as our clan obtains another strand of extermination origin, you’ll use it to break through to the second layer of the Martial Extermination Realm?”

Falling silent for a second, Shang Ke eventually sighed, “No... We can’t do that.”

“Why not?” Shang Xia frowned.

Looking at Shang Xia, Shang Ke sighed. “I know my limits... I broke through to the Martial Extermination Realm in the Coral Forest because there was no other choice. With my potential, reaching my current level is the furthest I can go. Instead of wasting extermination origins, I would rather leave them for promising members of the later generations in our Shang Clan.” Pausing slightly, he continued, “Your Second Uncle put in a lot of effort during this war and if you don’t need the extermination origin immediately, I plan on giving it to him so that he can break through to the Martial Extermination Realm.”

Shang Xia thought about it for a second but he still seemed a little confused. “Didn’t Second Uncle choose the Exquisite Muddled Liquid as his advancement medicine? Wouldn’t the Multi Illusion Wine be much more compatible with the Lingkong Formless Extermination Origin?”

“That is indeed the case, but the Exquisite Muddled Liquid is just a little worse than it.” Shang Ke explained but he quickly added, “Actually, anyone who can break through to the Martial Extermination Realm would be thanking their lucky stars. Why would they go around being picky about their advancement medicine?”

“What if... What if he can choose from other extermination origins?” Shang Xia threw out a bomb all of a sudden.

Chapter 409: Spirit of Spring

Shang Ke seemed to have given up increasing his own cultivation level as he chose to leave everything for the junior members of the Shang Clan.

Shang Xia could hear that his Grandpa Ke’s decision came from the bottom of his heart and as the patriarch of the Shang Clan, he truly wanted the best for them.

His heart trembled slightly and a mischievous smile eventually formed on his face. “I think the Lingkong Formless Extermination Origin still suits you the best. Grandpa Ke, you should use it to enter the second layer of the Martial Extermination Realm. As for Second Uncle’s extermination origin... He might be able to make other choices!”

Shang Ke shook his head while chuckling bitterly. “That might not work... After all, our Tongyou Institution’s goal is only to gain a foothold in the battlefield between the two worlds. Even though we might gain a few extermination origins along the way, it won’t be enough to reward the various clans and families that came in with us. It’s not likely for us to get another extermination origin.”

Shang Xia knew that Shang Ke had misunderstood him and he quickly retrieved his Spirit Extermination Gourd. He held it in front of Shang Ke and he asked, “Grandpa Ke, do you recognize the two extermination origins contained within?”

“Wait a second, is that the treasure Patriarch Kou gave you to help kill Huang Yunxiang?” Shang Ke gasped.

When Shang Xia brought out the Spirit Extermination Gourd, he thought that his Grandpa Ke would be amazed by the items within, who would have thought that the old man would focus on the treasure itself? Shang Xia felt like he was hitting air with his efforts.

“Yeah... It is.” Shang Xia could only reply helplessly. After a short pause, he added, “Actually, the real purpose of this treasure is to collect extermination origin...”

“Oh? It can actually be used to collect extermination origin?! That makes it somewhat similar to the treasures those direct disciples of the holy lands use. Looks like Patriarch Kou is truly planning to nurture promising disciples of the institution...”
Shang Ke sighed.

Seeing as Shang Ke still wasn’t seeing the point, Shang Xia pointed it out directly. “Take a look inside! I collected two extermination origins and you can see if any of them are compatible with Second Uncle’s advancement medicine!”

“Ohhh, you even started using it to collect... Collect extermination origins?!” Shang Ke’s tone changed drastically when the past few words came out of his lips. He stared at Shang Xia in disbelief. “What did you just say?! You said that you collected two extermination origins?!”

He stared at the Spirit Extermination Gourd in his hand and shook them slightly before looking at Shang Xia. The process repeated several times before he gasped. “Are you serious?!”

Shang Xia technically didn’t need to say anything. Shang Ke was holding the gourd and he would be able to discover the extermination origins within as long as he sent a trace of his consciousness into it.

“This... This...” Even as the patriarch of the Shang Clan who had experienced multiple trials and tribulations, he couldn’t help but suck in a long breath to calm himself down. Staring at Shang Xia, he asked seriously, “Where did you get them?”

Shang Xia had no choice but to repeat the story of how he borrowed the power of Kou Chongxue’s sword qi to slay Huang Yunxiang and the giant rat. Only then did a look of understanding appear on Shang Ke’s face.

Even so, he couldn’t help but gasp silently.

One might be able to kill Martial Extermination Realm experts, but that didn’t mean that they would be able to collect extermination origins easily! The mutated spiritual beasts in the battlefield between the two worlds were special and cultivators could obtain extermination origins after killing them, but the Tongyou Institution and the four great races of the Liao Continent didn’t go around killing them randomly.

That was because starting a mass slaughter was a surefire way of starting a beast tide. That would cause both sides to suffer huge losses.

Also, it was difficult for individual cultivators to kill rank four spiritual beasts. Since mass killing wasn’t an option and moving alone to kill beasts wasn’t effective, there was no point in doing it. ? That was also the reason behind the strength of the Tongyou Institution remaining relatively stable. They didn’t experience a moment where they experienced a sharp increase in strength.

Of course, that was only what the Tongyou Institution thought of themselves. In the short 20 years that they had been established, with the experts of the four great clans added to the mix, the number of Martial Extermination Realm experts had numbered more than 10. In the eyes of the Azure Spiritual World and the various holy lands, the Tongyou Institution’s strength could be said to have increased at a frightening rate.

That was one of the reasons the various holy lands were trying to keep them in check!

“The dull yellow one should be called the ‘Yellow Earth Extermination Origin’. After refining it, one would experience a sharp increase in their defenses. However, it’s not really suitable for attacking others.” Shang Ke explained. He quickly identified one of them by feeling the aura of giving off.

“It’s not really compatible with our Multi Illusion Wine and we need to investigate its compatibility with the Hundred Days Longevity Intoxication. It’s actually somewhat suitable to be used with our Exquisite Muddled Liquid, but we have to look into it a little more before making a decision.”

The Shang Clan had three rank four advancement formulas and the one they knew the best was the Multi Illusion Wine. Next came the Exquisite Muddled Liquid and they knew the least about the Hundred Days Longevity Intoxication.

They might have received the Hundred Days Longevity Intoxication first, but they were still a little more familiar with the Exquisite Muddled Liquid. After all, Shang Pei broke through with it and she left behind her experience. That was why Shang Jian chose to use the Exquisite Muddled Liquid instead of the Hundred Days Longevity Intoxication after learning that it wasn’t suitable for him.

“As for the other one...” Shang Ke fell into deep contemplation. He frowned slightly before he continued, “It seems to resemble the Cloudy Gale Extermination Origin. If that is truly the case, it should be compatible with your Second Uncle’s sword art!”

Shang Xia thought back to the battle between the giant rat and Huang Yunxiang. The scene where the rat seemed to borrow the power of wind to dodge Huang Yunxiang’s attacks played out in his mind and Shang Xia muttered, “That’s probably it...”

Shifting the topic, Shang Xia asked, “So how about it? Grandpa Ke, you can go ahead and refine the Lingkong Formless Extermination Origin now, right? There’s nothing else to fear!”

A complicated feeling rushed through Shang Ke’s heart and Shang Xia’s image in his mind became much more imposing. He couldn’t help but sigh, “Looks like I’m going to owe you a lot for this...”

Handing the bottle of rank four Monkey Wine over to Shang Ke with a smile, Shang Xia laughed, “There’s no need for such formalities, we’re all family here! Grandpa Ke, when you become even stronger, our clan’s foundations will become even more stable. It’s amazing news for us!”

“I’ll probably only need a catty or so of the wine here...” Shang Ke quickly gave an estimation. Seeing as Shang Xia was about to say something else, he quickly waved his hands in response. “My cultivation should be able to improve with a catty of Monkey Wine. Even if I use up the rest, I won’t be able to push my cultivation even higher. Since it won’t be able to help me, you should keep it and use it for yourself.”

Nodding in acknowledgment, Shang Xia no longer harped on the matter.

Since he met up with his Grandpa Ke, Shang Xia decided to no longer roam around the battlefield between the two worlds. Returning to the institution’s territory to digest his gains wasn’t a bad idea.

Along the way, Shang Ke seemed to have thought of something and he asked, “Oh yeah. Did you manage to make any progress in finding the herbs for your advancement medicine? Or did you find any remnant world origin?”

A bitter smile appeared on Shang Xia’s face. “I gained a little, but I didn’t manage to make much progress...”

“That’s unfortunate... The resources and world origin contained in the battlefield between the two worlds is like a drop in the ocean compared to what we received in the Origin Tide. In order to completely recreate the formula of that incomplete advancement medicine you took from the institution, you will need a lot more world origin...” Shang Ke muttered.

It was true that Shang Xia required a huge amount of world origin, but it had nothing to do with the recreation of his advancement medicine. However, he wouldn’t correct Shang Ke’s misunderstanding.

In the next moment, Shang Ke said something that gave Shang Xia a pleasant surprise. “Actually, I know of a location that contains world origin. However...”

“Where is it?” Shang Xia was so excited when he heard the news that he completely ignored the change in Shang Ke’s tone at the end of his sentence.

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A forced chuckle escaped Shang Ke’s lips. “There’s no need to get impatient. Even though there’s quite a bit of world origin there, it’s extremely difficult for you to approach it. Not even Martial Extermination Realm experts are confident of leaving in one piece after they enter...”

It was as though a bucket of cold water was poured over Shang Xia and his excitement quickly died. However, he didn’t forget to ask, “Where exactly is it?”

“You should be pretty familiar with the place. It’s the Yuxi Peak that once made up our Tongyou Peak.” Shang Ke explained.

“Yuxi Peak? Does our Tongyou Peak still exist in the battlefield between the two worlds?” Shang Xia frowned.

“Of course not. The only peak left is the Yuxi Peak...” Shang Ke whispered.

Shang Xia followed up with another question. “What’s the matter with the Yuxi Peak at the moment? Why don’t Martial Extermination Realm experts dare to enter?”

“It’s not that they don’t dare to enter the Yuxi Peak. Did you not hear what I say?! They might not return safely if they enter...” Shang Ke snapped. “I can’t explain it in a few sentences. Just go back and take a look and you’ll know what I mean.”

Now that the Tongyou Institution was back in the battlefield between the two worlds, they established themselves on a place called the Observation Peak. Shang Ke and Shang Xia left the Redwood Forest as they made their way back.

Shang Ke seemed to have thought of something again and he reminded, “Oh yes, you might need a lot of herbs and treasures to carry out experiments when you’re trying to complete the recipe for your advancement medicine, but if you are sure that some herbs are used in your recipe, you can start to collect them. Otherwise, you’ll waste a lot of time gathering more when you’re ready to refine your advancement medicine.”

Shang Xia nodded in response and he added, “Grandpa Ke, there’s something else I need to ask you. Have you heard of the Spirit of the Four Seasons?”

Slightly taken aback, Shang Ke chuckled softly. “Why are you asking about the Spirit of the Four Seasons all of a sudden? Do you need them to make your advancement medicine?”

“You actually know about them? Grandpa Ke, hurry up and tell me more about them!” Shang Xia felt a rush of joy when he saw Shang Ke’s reaction.

“Wait, you actually need them?” Shang Ke stared at him strangely and was greeted with an expectant expression. He quickly followed up, “Alright, alright. The Spirit of the Four Seasons can be said to be the essence of the various seasons. It’s born naturally and it has some sort of intelligence. Even though it’s rare, it can’t be used everywhere. As such, it’s not too precious. From what I know, Patriarch Kou has collected a flower spirit that contains the essence of spring. It can be considered the Spirit of Spring.”

Chapter 410: Meeting Zhang Haogu Again

“Patriarch Kou has a Spirit of Spring?” Shang Xia was excited after hearing the news but he also felt a slight headache coming.

It wouldn’t be easy getting something from Kou Chongxue! One couldn’t look at things on the surface level and think about the many times Shang Xia had met with Kou Chongxue. He might have obtained a strand of sword qi from Kou Chongxue, but that was his reward after making huge contributions to the institution! Shang Xia wasn’t delusional enough to think that he had a great relationship with Kou Chongxue just because of their few meetings.

As such, Shang Xia didn’t think that obtaining the Spirit of Spring from Kou Chongxue would be easy.

Shang Ke seemed to have seen through his thoughts and laughed, “Leave the matter of the Spirit of Spring to me. I’ll go look for information regarding the other three spirits too.”

Shang Xia felt a huge weight lifted off his chest after hearing what his Grandpa Ke said. He might have some friendship with several Martial Extermination Realm cultivators, but at the end of the day, he could only be considered a member of the younger generation to them. He wasn’t truly qualified to talk to ask them for favors or anything else.

Things were different if the Shang Clan Patriarch were the one to do it. The authority and prestige he had was on a whole other level compared to Shang Xia.

Moreover, Shang Xia had already expected that he would need to rely on the Shang Clan to collect the Spirit of the Four Seasons.

All of a sudden, Shang Xia seemed to have thought of something. He recalled the time when he first met Kou Chongxue. The area that was flourishing with life seemed to contain several precious herbs too.

“Grandpa Ke, if you manage to request for the Spirit of Spring from Patriarch Kou, can you also ask if he has a piece of Jade Peach Blossom that can be harvested in the Spring?” Shang Xia asked.

Staring at him with a confused expression, Shang Ke wondered out loud. “Jade Peach Blossom? That’s not a rare herb at all.”

“Yeah. And it has to be harvested in the Spring.” Shang Xia added.

“Oh, alright!” Shang Ke laughed. “Special herbs are usually harvested in special seasons or at special times. It’s more than likely that he harvested them in the Spring or sometime during the rainy season...”

As they conversed, they quickly approached the Observation Peak. The Observation Peak was located almost eight hundred miles away from the spatial tunnel that led back to the Tongyou Institution. The entire region was pretty flat, and there wasn’t much forestry surrounding it. From the top of the Observation Peak, one could enjoy an unobstructed view of up to ten miles away. Even though it wasn’t as majestic and intimidating as the original Tongyou Peak, times were different. As of that very moment, the Tongyou Institution wasn’t the weakest faction in the battlefield between the two worlds.

They laid down several simple but large scale formations in the area for the time being in order to prevent the Observation Peak from shifting due to the changes in space in the battlefield between the two worlds. Naturally, improvements to the formations would be done given more time.

Even though the structures that had been built since they established themselves were made in a rush and were pretty flimsy, the area seemed to bustle with activity. It gave off a different vibe when compared to the air of oppression that had existed on the Tongyou Peak.

After the two of them arrived, Shang Ke casually pointed at the area where the Shang Clan had set up base for the time being before dumping Shang Xia to his own devices. In the blink of an eye, he disappeared.

When Shang Xia went over alone, he discovered that the territory the Shang Clan controlled was far from what they had on the Tongyou Peak. Obviously, that meant that there was no Shang Clan Pavilion for him to live in. There were only several hastily built houses that were surrounded by simple wooden boards that acted as fences.

Even though he had returned, Shang Xia didn’t see any Martial Intent Realm cultivators of the clan. Instead, he ran into his Uncle Quan.

Seeing as Shang Xia had returned safely, Shang Quan revealed an expression filled with excitement and he explained, “Our clan sent many disciples out to do battle but you’re the only one who hasn’t paid us a visit. Now that you’re back, everyone can finally be at ease...”

“I came back with Grandpa Ke... Oh yeah, why isn’t there anyone else around here?” Shang Xia chuckled in response.

“Since the battle ended, everyone other than those who were killed or heavily injured managed to gain quite a bit. Moreover, it’s rare for so many experts to be gathered in

a single region in the battlefield between the two worlds and many of them formed groups to go on adventures. There are also many who are making deals and forming connections with each other. Most of the time, the Martial Intent Realm cultivators of our Shang Clan won't be here. I'm the only one responsible for taking care of our land." A helpless smile appeared on his face after he explained the situation.

Hearing what Shang Quan said, Shang Xia started to feel a burning sensation rushing up his chest. He wanted to join the others too and he couldn't be more ready to take part in a trade gathering like the one he attended back in the Tongyou City. After all, he had quite a lot of goodies on him.

Shang Quan also managed to see through Shang Xia's thoughts and he laughed heartily, "What's the matter? Do you also wish to head out there and join the rest?"

Coughing lightly, Shang Xia brought out an item from his Embroidered Cloud Case and handed it over to Shang Quan. "Uncle Quan, I chanced upon this and would like you to have it."

"For me?" Shang Quan laughed happily while rubbing his palms together. He received the scroll from Shang Xia and opened it slightly to scan its contents. The moment he did, a look of shock appeared on his face. "Pine Smoke Purple Scale Ink! This... This is a rank three talisman ink formula! Where did you get this?"

"I got it from a friend. Uncle Quan, you should start researching the formula soon. After all, I'm waiting for you to produce a batch or two so I can use them for my talismans." Shang Xia smiled.

"No problem! I wasn't able to make rank three talisman ink in the past because I didn't have a recipe for any of them. With this, I'll definitely be able to create a few batches." Shang Quan promised. He also seemed to have thought of something and he spoke while carefully keeping the scroll. "This ink made me think of something. Not long ago, the members from the Talisman Hall came to ask if you would join them as soon as possible."

Shang Xia's achievements as a rank three Talisman Master weren't a secret. The Tongyou Institution had sent invitations to him again and again. Unfortunately, Shang Xia didn't have the time to do it before.

Shang Xia laughed in response, "What a coincidence. I was planning on negotiating something with them. Looks like I can take one less trip there." Pausing for a second, he continued, "Oh yeah, Uncle Quan, why are they in such a rush?"

"They probably don't have enough people." Shang Quan gestured around him and said, "Look! There are basically no defenses around our Observation Peak. They need to complete the grand formation as soon as possible. I even heard that in order to hasten the speed of laying down the formation, the members of the Formation Hall and Talisman Hall have been working together. They need a large amount of

talismans and the Talisman Hall is truly lacking in manpower right now. They need all the help they can get.”

Sniggering under his breath, Shang Xia muttered, “Actually, I’m not really interested in creating talismans for them to lay down the formation right now.”

That wasn’t him trying to avoid responsibilities. At the moment, he was at the peak of the Martial Intent Realm. All he wanted to do was to locate all the necessary herbs to create his advancement medicine. Moreover, he just received some news about world origin being on the Yuxi Peak and he didn’t wish to waste his time in the Talisman Hall.

Shang Quan added, “The Talisman Hall passed the order. As long as you are willing to join them as quickly as possible and promise that you won’t spread their inheritance to anyone else, They’re willing to give you all the inheritance regarding talisman making the institution possesses.”

Gasping in shock, Shang Xia looked at Shang Quan and exclaimed, “Are you serious?”

When he saw Shang Quan nodding, Shang Xia started to fall into deep contemplation.

With the condition they were giving him, Shang Xia started to think about the various spatial artifacts that he didn’t wish to open with brute force.

One of them came from Sima Zhanxing and two of them came from direct disciples from the Changbai Holy Land. He was truly looking forward to the treasures they contained.

He knew that the Bamboo Void Breaking Talisman was part of the inheritance possessed by the institution. It was able to break apart any form of restriction and that would allow the contents of those spatial artifacts to not be damaged.

“I’ll take a short break and head over immediately. Oh right, who’s the head of the Talisman Hall at the moment?” Shang Xia asked.

“It’s the head of the Scripture Depository, Chief Zhang Haogu.” Shang Quan replied.

“Oh? Looks like I can’t possibly mess around anymore... Forget it, I’ll head over in a bit. I’ll be able to ask Senior Zhang about some matters too.” Shang Xia frowned a little after he spoke. “Wait, this doesn’t seem right. Instructor Zhang is the head of the Scripture Depository, why is he the head of the Talisman Hall too? He hasn’t entered the Martial Extermination Realm for a long time and he should be holding the fort back at the Tongyou Institution. Didn’t he not join the war?”

Shang Quan raised an eyebrow and asked, “You don’t know? Even though we won and killed two Martial Extermination Realm experts from the Azure Spiritual World, more than ten of our own experts received heavy injuries. Two of them were slightly wounded. Even Deputy Patriarch Yun Jing wasn’t able to leave the war unscathed. Those heavily injured experts have already left the battlefield between the two worlds to recover in the city. The gap was quickly filled by Zhang Haogu and Gu Shou.”

“Luckily, the battle is over. The Martial Extermination Realm experts of both sides won’t engage in large scale battles anymore. Otherwise, things might get ugly.” Shang Quan sighed.

Shang Xia’s feelings mirrored what Shang Quan was feeling at the moment.

It was true that the Tongyou Institution experienced a huge increase in strength in the recent times. However, their foundations were definitely shallow.

There might be ten Martial Extermination Realm experts on the side of the Tongyou Institution the moment the war started, but five of the ten were merely first layer Martial Extermination Realm experts.

Two of them were in the second layer, and they were Liu Qinglan and Shang Lubing respectively. However, they broke through recently!

Yun Jing was the only third layer Martial Extermination Realm expert among them but her opponent was Yan Su’er, a fourth layer Martial Extermination Realm expert. In the end, she was injured and forced to leave the battlefield between the two worlds.

If not for the fact that Shang Xia, the biggest anomaly in the war, was present, no one knew how things would have ended. Of course, he relied on a lot of luck as well when he killed Sima Zhanxing and Huang Yunxiang, but luck had always been a part of life.

Now that he learned about Zhang Haogu’s presence in the battlefield between the two worlds, Shang Xia didn’t remain in the Shang Clan’s territory for long. He quickly ran over to find the instructor.

Zhang Haogu was extremely happy to see him. After all, he discovered Shang Xia when the youngster returned with Shang Ke.

He thought that Shang Xia would need to enter seclusion for a period of time. After all, Shang Ke had already started looking around for the Spirit of the Four Seasons and Zhang Haogu thought that they were preparing for Shang Xia’s breakthrough. He was already prepared for Shang Xia to not show up for some time.

Who would have thought that the youngster would be rushing over to look for him?

“This old man is really heartened to see that you have rushed over to join the Talisman Hall.” A look of admiration flashed through Zhang Haogu’s eyes when he looked at Shang Xia. However, he chuckled bitterly the next moment. “I won’t hide our situation from you even if you laugh at us for this. We’ve been extremely busy and I’ve been stressing about the formation the whole time. Moreover, those annoying brats from the Formation Hall have been pestering me everyday now. Now that you’re here to help me, I can finally relieve myself of a lot of pressure. After all, rank three Talisman Masters are a precious commodity!”

“This disciple came a little late. Instructor Gu, please let me know if you need me to do anything.” Shang Xia naturally wouldn’t go straight to the point and start

bombarding Zhang Haogu with questions the moment they met. Of course he had to play along with the old instructor before raising his requests.

After hearing the sigh of relief coming from Zhang Haogu, a crafty smile appeared on Shang Xia's face as he asked, "Oh right, actually, I wanted to ask you to clear some doubts I have while I'm at it."

Out of the many seniors in the institution that he had access to, Zhang Haogu was the most knowledgeable one. As he had been giving out pointers and teaching people for a long time now, Zhang Haogu didn't find Shang Xia's request irritating. "Go ahead. I'll tell you whatever I know!"

"Instructor Zhang, have you heard of the Spirit of the Four Seasons?" Shang Xia got straight to the point.

"Spirit of the Four Seasons?" Zhang Haogu was slightly taken aback as he looked at Shang Xia again. He didn't expect Shang Xia to ask something like that. After some time, he finally continued, "Other than high-leveled blacksmiths, not many people will pay attention to things like that! Are you planning to make a divine weapon?"