

The Heavens 461

Chapter 461: Abyssal seal

Yu Hanglong's self-developed rank four martial art was called the Bestial Sword Art. It was made up of four styles, the Wolf's Sword, Bear's Sword, Tiger's Sword, and Dragon's Sword.

There was nothing special about his first 3 moves as they were developed through the observation of the various beasts. The only problem came when he developed the Dragon's Sword as he had nothing to base it on.

Even so, Yu Hanglong could be considered a genius in his own right. He gained some inspiration from the winding Taihang Mountains and after a lot of research, he finally developed his Dragon's Sword to complete his Bestial Sword Art. The power contained in his sword art was nothing to scoff at.

His final style, the Dragon's Sword, was also a huge reason behind his title as the Taihang Swordsman.

Actually, Shang Xia didn't expect that he would be able to fly through the air with the help of his sword art.

After a short examination, Shang Xia discovered that Yu Hanglong wasn't flying for real. He merely parked himself on his sword qi. It was like standing on a formless mountain, and Shang Xia discovered that Yu Hanglong didn't possess the nimbleness of true flight.

Yu Hanglong expected Shang Xia to attach his divine perception after learning about his abilities during the fight earlier. He prepared himself for it, but he never expected that Shang Xia would be able to locate him accurately. An even scarier fact was that the youngster was able to go against the suppression of the Cloud Water Gorge and fly!

Even though it took a lot of energy to resist the suppression so that he could fly for a short while, it was more than enough! Yu Hanglong was heavily injured by Shang Xia's sudden strike.

Striking Yu Hanglong down was one thing. Shang Xia used his divine perception to guide Shang Pei to where Yu Hanglong would land. As he fell from the skies, Shang Xia could feel that the energy he recovered earlier was gone again.

Understanding that Martial Extermination Realm experts would usually hide a few life-saving tricks up their sleeves, Shang Xia had no choice but to call Shang Pei over despite her poor condition. He could tell that she was forcefully suppressing her injuries, but they couldn't be careless. Yu Hanglong might be on his last legs and heavily injured, but the battle wasn't concluded unless he was dead.

Taking out a bottle of rank four Hundred Flower Spiritual Wine, Shang Xia took a huge swig. The inner qi in his body recovered slightly as Shang Xia rushed to where Yu Hanglong had fallen.

He barely took a few steps when his expression sank. He increased his speed to rush over to where Shang Pei was.

Even though he wasn't able to see them in the dense fog, his divine perception locked accurately onto their location.

It didn't take long for him to arrive when he noticed Shang Pei's inner qi circulating at a frightening rate. Blood dripped down her face and she was deathly pale. Her body swayed from side to side as her breaths were shallow.

When she forced her smile, Shang Xia noticed the rage contained within. She growled, "Fourth Brother Zeng didn't die in vain now that we buried two Martial Extermination Realm experts with him. Duan Liufeng is the only one left!"

Shang Xia didn't bother looking at Yu Hanglong's corpse on the ground as he examined Shang Pei's condition. Yu Hanglong's body was starting to get cold and he couldn't be more dead. The only thing he noticed was the broken sword beside him. He could basically guess what happened after he struck Yu Hanglong earlier. He probably launched a desperate counterattack on Shang Pei, injuring her before he was slain.

"How are you feeling?" Shang Xia frowned. From what he could tell, Shang Pei had suffered horrifying injuries.

She had been forcefully holding off the 3 of them earlier, and after going all out against Yu Hanglong during Shang Xia's sneak attack, she was an arrow at the end of her flight. Now that she received Yu Hanglong's final blow, it was extremely possible for her foundations to be damaged.

If she wasn't careful, she could bid farewell to her future as a cultivator.

"I'll live..." Shang Pei leaned on her spear in an attempt to support herself. She didn't stop Shang Xia when he rushed over to help her.

Only then did Shang Xia notice the damage to Shang Pei's spear. Even the tip of the spear had a two inch dent in it.

It seemed as though she was going to have to scrap her weapon...

"Did you collect everything from Feng Chenyi's corpse? The lantern is especially important... You didn't break it, right?" Shang Pei asked.

With a smile slowly lighting up his face, Shang Xia muttered, "Of course not. I collected everything."

Shang Pei nodded slightly and continued, "The Cloud Water Gorge is a little weird. The spatial shifts here feel worse than the battlefield between the two worlds. If you put anything on the ground, it might disappear the next second."

Shang Xia pulled out a bottle from his Embroidered Cloud Case and handed it to her. "That's what I heard too. Anyway, just focus on recovering for now in case your injuries worsen."

Looking at the bottle he handed over, a look of surprise flashed through Shang Pei's eyes. "This... This is rank four Hundred Flower Spiritual Wine. It's what Duan Liufeng used to establish himself in the Taihang Mountains... Where did you get this?"

Chuckling softly, Shang Xia recounted his experience of how he attacked the Jingxiu Peak.

By the time he concluded his story, Shang Pei was roaring with laughter. She felt her insides hurting, but she couldn't stop gloating. "Hehe, I can imagine that asshole's expression when he leaves the Cloud Water Gorge and returns to his Jingxiu Peak."

“That’s not all. I auctioned off the Jingxiu Peak after everyone left. Those who gave up their treasures in exchange for the remnants of the Jingxiu Peak probably won’t return Duan Liufeng his treasures. When he returns, a disagreement is bound to take place. If Duan Liufeng fails to handle the situation well, he might be attacked on all sides back on the Jingxiu Peak.” Shang Xia sneered.

Nodding for a second, Shang Pei seemed to have thought of something. She stopped nodding and shook her head while explaining, “Duan Liufeng is a crafty freak. He might not fall for your trap when he returns. Well, at least he has to eat the loss of his Jingxiu Peak regardless...”

She couldn’t help but giggle after thinking of how Duan Liufeng’s territory was backdoored during his expedition to the Cloud Water Gorge. That poor guy probably doesn’t have a place to stay now! She felt a lot better even though she didn’t kill him and the color quickly returned to her face.

Even though they had been talking, Shang had yet to accept the bottle of rank four Hundred Flower Spiritual Wine. She eventually continued, “Do you know how precious this is? Duan Liufeng is the only one with the recipe to craft it and he produces 2 to 3 bottles of rank four Hundred Flower Spiritual Wine every 7 years... It’s extremely beneficial for cultivation, and it’s a waste to use it to recover from injuries. Now that you have entered the Martial Extermination Realm, you should use it to cultivate. Only then will you be able to bring out its full effects.”

Shang Xia expected her to react as such. Shang Ke said pretty much the same thing when he offered the old man rank four Monkey Wine.

Taking out another half-filled bottle filled with rank four Hundred Flower Spiritual Wine, Shang Xia snickered, “Third Aunt, I raided that old freak’s treasury. I have more wine than you might think.”

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“Alright, alright! Then I won’t stand on ceremony!” Shang Pei laughed before accepting the bottle.

Grabbing the bottle, the leader of the Youyan Stronghold and the former bandit lord of the Eighteen Horsemen of the You Continent seemed to make her reappearance as she took a violent swig from the bottle.

The Hundred Flower Spiritual Wine might not be used to treat injuries, but it was a rank four treasure at the end of the day. After drinking some, Shang Pei felt her inner qi circulating rapidly through her body. She looked a lot better than before.

After examining her body, Shang Pei turned to look at Shang Xia, “Little brat, you started with all the good news of the destruction of the Jingxiu Peak and you even gave me this medicine to stabilize my injuries... Are you waiting for me to recover so you can throw some bad news in my face?”

The corners of Shang Xia’s lips curled upwards and he muttered, “I found this on Feng Chenyi’s corpse.”

An intricate-looking bag that was the size of his palm appeared before Shang Pei. A frown appeared on Shang Pei's face before her pupils shrank violently. She turned to stare at Shang Xia and muttered, "This is definitely a Spatial Pouch, however..."

Shang Xia nodded before flipping the pouch around. There seemed to be two ancient words embroidered on it, 'Divine Capital'.

"Divine Capital?" Shang Pei muttered to herself. It didn't take long for a look of shock to appear on her face. "Divine Capital Sect from the Si Continent?! Could she be from the Divine Capital Paradise?!"

"I'm afraid so..." Shang Xia's expression was as grave as could be.

A trace of panic, anger, contemplation, and helplessness flashed through Shang Pei's eyes but she eventually calmed herself. She sighed softly in response. "We probably won't be able to keep this a secret."

"We'll hide it as long as we can. The most important thing for us and the Tongyou Institution is time!" Shang Xia replied.

Getting to her feet, Shang Pei muttered, "Since that's the case, Duan Liufeng has to die. We'll be able to buy some time that way. Also, I need to disappear..."

Shang Xia shook his head before replying, "There's no rush for now. With your injuries, you won't be able to fight any time soon. Just leave it to me."

Shang Pei knew that she had acted a little too hastily. She had less than a tenth of her original strength at the moment and she was in no position to do anything. "It's not going to be easy for you to kill him alone..."

Shang Xia knew that it wouldn't be easy, but he didn't have a choice. Duan Liufeng couldn't be left alive. The moment he left the Cloud Water Gorge, he probably wouldn't return to the Jingxiu Peak. After all, it was true that he was a crafty old asshole. He would probably hide in some hole to observe the situation. If that happened, killing him would be a lot harder than before.

Shang Xia brought out Feng Chenyi's Hexagonal Lantern and a smile returned to his face. "Third Aunt, are you forgetting something? I can probably use this to hunt him down before he leaves the Cloud Water Gorge..."

The Hexagonal Lantern was clearly a strange treasure. It not only managed to create an area unobstructed by the strange fog, but it also possessed offensive and defensive capabilities!

Just as Shang Xia was starting to pour his inner qi into the lantern, Shang Pei yelled, "Oh no! We won't make it in time!"

Before Shang Xia could express his confusion, Shang Pei revealed a cube-like seal in her hand and started her explanation. "Do you remember the secret region I told you about? It's hidden in the Cloud Water Gorge! Forget Duan Liufeng. You need to enter the secret region as soon as possible!"

Pausing for a second, she continued, "This... This Abyssal Seal is the key to entering the secret region."

Chapter 462: Seal

Shang Xia didn't reach for the seal immediately. Instead, he frowned, "Is it really so coincidental that the secret region would appear so suddenly?"

A soft sigh escaped Shang Pei's lips as she tossed the seal before her. The space around the seal grew several times denser to hold the object in the air as Shang Pei started to explain, "Like you thought, the Abyssal Seal is closely related to the secret region. The fog around us interacted with the seal the moment I took it out, and it's a sign that the secret region is about to appear..."

Pushing the seal in Shang Xia's direction, Shang Pei continued, "Only the Abyssal Seal can detect the exact location the secret region is going to appear, take it."

Shang Xia was a little surprised when he first saw the seal, but he gasped softly after her introduction and took out a strange six-sided object Shang Pei had given him back in the underground cavern of the Changfeng City. "Didn't you say that this was the key to entering the secret region?"

Shang Pei gestured slightly and the item flew at the Abyssal Seal before fusing tightly with it.

Only then did Shang Xia realize that the entire object had transformed. The Abyssal Seal's cubic shape formed the base of the seal while Shang Xia's hexagonal item turned into a handle of sorts.

Looking at Shang Xia's shocked expression, Shang Pei explained, "It's impossible to bring the Abyssal Seal out of the Cloud Water Gorge. The only thing I managed to bring out was the handle. Now that both items are together the complete Abyssal Seal has been reformed."

Shang Xia couldn't help but ask, "I thought you had the seal all along..."

Shang Pei nodded and continued her explanation. "As long as no one obtains the other half of the seal, I would be able to find it quickly after returning to the Cloud Water Gorge. I gave you the other half as a precaution that I won't be able to come back. The special properties of the seal were probably left behind by the creator of the secret region anyway..."

Shang Xia finally understood the situation at hand, but he didn't retrieve the Abyssal Seal immediately. He muttered in an incomparably serious tone, "This isn't the time to look for the secret region."

"Why not?" Shang Pei frowned.

"The moment I enter the secret region, you won't hold the Abyssal Seal anymore. How are you supposed to leave the Cloud Water Gorge?" Shang Xia chuckled.

Before Shang Pei could say anything, Shang Xia continued, "You might say that you can remain in the Cloud Water Gorge, but with your current strength, you can't ensure your safety. Your fellow members of the Youyan Stronghold might also be in serious danger at the moment. Do you know how I managed to get my hands on the seal talisman to save you? I saved Ninth Brother Huang who had been seriously injured..."

Shang Pei was silenced when she thought about Fifth Uncle Cen, Ninth Brother Huang, and the rest. If she was alone, she wouldn't bother with Shang Xia's rejection and would urge him to enter the secret region as soon as he could. However, the lives of her fellow companions were on the line right now. She couldn't ditch them all and leave them for dead.

“Right now, the most important thing is to look for them!” Shang Xia made the decision for Shang Pei after seeing the conflicted look on her face.

Looking for them was a little easier than locating Shang Pei with the use of the seal talisman. With Shang Xia in tow, Shang Pei started to locate the remaining members of the Youyan Stronghold. Shang Xia decided to ask about matters regarding the secret region along the way.

“I don’t know! Shang Pei sighed in response.

“You don’t?” Shang Xia muttered, “Then...”

A look of reminiscence appeared on Shang Pei’s face as she started to talk about what happened that year. “When I roamed the Taihang Mountains with my husband, we entered the Cloud Water Gorge by accident. We managed to obtain 2 Abyssal Seals during our adventures here, and we thought that we chanced upon some huge treasure. We kept the seals well, but we didn’t think that we would accidentally open the secret region...”

Shang Pei’s expression sank slightly and Shang Xia couldn’t help but ask, “2 Abyssal Seals? What happened after that?”

“After we entered...” Shang Pei’s eyes grew a little mistier as she continued, “We appeared above a mountain that was covered in a dense layer of cloud. We saw several other mountain peaks poking out from the top of the clouds in the distance, but the heaven and earth qi in the secret region was so dense that it felt suffocating. We thought that we ran into a massive opportunity, but before we could start exploring the region, a disaster arrived.”

Shang Pei took a deep breath before she resumed her recount of the situation. “A blade light appeared from nowhere... We didn’t even know where it came from. From the intensity of the blade light and the power contained behind it, it wasn’t weaker than a Martial Extermination Realm expert’s divine perception. We thought that we were being attacked the moment we entered. After entering the Martial Extermination Realm myself, I can confirm that the attack contained the might of a Martial Extermination Realm expert. In a fit of desperation, my husband pushed me off the mountain. The blade light seemed to lose track of me, but he took on the full force of the blow. By the time I reacted, he was swallowed in a sea of blue-colored blade light. After that, I seemed to have caught a glimpse of a broken blade stuck in a giant rock on the mountain behind us. That might also be where the blade light came from...”

Shang Pei paused after talking so much.

Shang Xia thought for a second as he followed up with another question. “What happened next? How did you escape from the secret region and did the suspected divine weapon react after that?”

“I have no clue.” Shang Pei muttered while shaking her head. “I merely glanced at the weapon before tumbling through the clouds. The next thing I knew, I found myself back in the Cloud Water Gorge. The only thing left was the Abyssal Seal...”

“Tumbling through the clouds...” Shang Xia muttered to himself. “Then...”

From what he heard, Shang Pei barely managed to escape from the secret region. Most of her knowledge of it seemed to be conjectures that couldn't be proven.

The only thing he knew for sure was that she was attacked the moment she arrived. That would most likely happen to him when he explored the secret region.

That was an attack from a divine weapon they were talking about! Even after entering the Martial Extermination Realm, Shang Xia wasn't confident he could resist it completely. The divine weapon might be damaged, but Shang Xia wasn't going to risk his life and assume he could block the strike without suffering some injuries.

He sank into silence as he didn't know what to say.

As they searched for members of the Youyan Stronghold, Shang Xia took over the strenuous task and he took the seal from Shang Pei's hand. No matter what, Shang Pei suffered serious injuries from the battle that took place earlier. Shang Xia felt that it would be easier for him to be the one looking for them.

As he sent his Four Constellation Qi into the seal, he felt a strange sensation filling his body. He felt as though the dense clouds in the Cloud Water Gorge were no longer as restrictive as they were as he became a part of them. At the same time, he felt a subtle shift in the fog around him as they seemed to become a layer of protection for him.

Even though his divine perception couldn't extend freely like when he was outside the Cloud Water Gorge, he discovered that the suppression weakened. He was able to feel everything within a 2000 feet radius with the seal in hand.

Shang Pei wasn't surprised when Shang Xia described the changes he felt. "I know what you mean when you say that you feel like a part of the dense clouds in the Cloud Water Gorge. Otherwise, I wouldn't have been able to hold out against the 3 of them for such a long time. If not for Feng Chenyi's lantern, I might have defeated them without your assistance..."

"The vague sense of protection and the ability to feel the presence of the secret region are the other properties of the seal. Of course, a fixed area around the seal wouldn't experience spatial shifts, and that's the foundation of the Youyan Stronghold. Your range of perception within the area covered by the seal would also increase. Although... Did you say that you can feel 2000 feet around you?! Doesn't that mean that you can extend your divine perception close to 1000 feet around yourself without the seal?" Shang Pei muttered out loud. However, she wasn't done. "How far can you extend your divine perception outside the Cloud Water Gorge?!"

Shang Xia smiled, but he didn't reply.

Locating the other members of the Youyan Stronghold became a lot smoother now that Shang Xia took over. It might be because of his larger divine perception range, but he quickly located the first person from the Youyan Stronghold.

Surprisingly, he found Ninth Brother Huang before the others. From the looks of it, he had been recovering from his injuries. Shang Xia also discovered that he had drunk the wine Shang Xia left him.

Even though space shifted frequently in the Cloud Water Gorge, it seemed as though Ninth Brother Huang lucked out and wasn't transported too far away.

After some time, Shang Xia discovered someone else's tracks. They located Sixth Sister Gu not long after and Shang Pei stopped him right after that.

"Do you have rank one talisman paper and ink on you?" She asked.

"Yes." Shang Xia didn't know what she needed them for, but he replied nonetheless.

Even though Shang Xia might not have a lot of rank four talisman papers on him, at the very least, he was a rank four Talisman Master. Rank one and two talisman paper couldn't be considered too rare for him at the moment and he carried some wherever he went.

Shang Pei pointed at the Abyssal Seal in his hand and continued, "We'll just stay where we are and place the seal on the ground. Pour your inner qi into the seal before stamping it on some rank one talisman paper. The seal talisman will last for seven days and they can roam the Cloud Water Gorge without getting lost."

After speaking, Shang Pei didn't care about Shang Xia's reactions. She turned to Ninth Brother Huang and Sixth Sister Gu. "I injured my foundations during the last battle and I need to enter seclusion immediately. Otherwise, I might leave behind hidden injuries in my body. My nephew has an important mission that might cause him to risk his life and he can't be disturbed either. I have to entrust the two of you to look for the remaining members of the Youyan Stronghold."

Sixth Sister Gu couldn't help but ask, "Third Sister, are you really going to be okay?"

Slapping his chest, Ninth Brother Huang said confidently, "Third Sister, rest assured... Cough, cough..."

It seemed as though he slapped himself a little too hard and his injuries weren't fully recovered as he couldn't complete his sentence. Even so, Shang Pei understood what he meant.

Nodding slightly, she turned back to Shang Xia and said, "Alright, do it."

Taking out a little more than 10 pieces of rank one talisman paper, Shang Xia dipped the seal into some talisman ink before stamping it down on the first piece.

Chapter 463: Divine Capital Sect

In the Divine Capital City in the Si Continent...

Initially, they called themselves the Divine Capital. They wanted to show that they were the main city of the Azure Spiritual World, but as the number of people settling down in the region increased, they started to call the settlement the Divine Capital City.

Despite the prosperity of the city and the rise of many factions, everyone in the Divine Capital City knew that there was only one true power that controlled the region. It was the Divine Capital Sect that had based themselves in the core of the Divine Capital City.

In one of the second palaces of the Divine Capital Sect, a middle aged Martial Extermination Realm expert wearing a grave expression rushed into the main hall. He approached a withered figure sitting within who seemed to be nodding off as he whispered softly, "Ninth Palace Elder, we received news from the Spirit Hall. Enforcer Feng Chenyi's life tablet shattered..."

A chilly light flashed in the old expert's eyes and the tired look on his face disappeared in an instant. He growled in a hoarse voice, "Where did she die?"

Bowing even lower, the middle aged expert continued, "Her life tablet didn't indicate the exact location. All we know is that she was killed in the northeastern direction. Since the tablet couldn't show where she died, she definitely left the Si Continent."

Grunting once, the old expert mumbled, "I knew it. Who would dare to touch enforcers of our Divine Capital Sect members in the Si Continent...?"

The middle aged expert hesitated slightly before speaking again. "Ninth Elder, do you think..."

"Do what we have to do. We can't let an enforcer of our sect die without repercussions." The old expert replied without raising his head.

A trace of joy flashed across the middle aged expert's face and he bowed respectfully, "Yes, Ninth Elder! This disciple will deal with it immediately!"

As soon as he spoke, he got ready to leave.

"Wait!" A powerless voice came from behind, but it seemed to contain a strange charm that caused the middle aged expert to tremble slightly before stopping in place.

"Ninth Elder? Do you still have any instructions for me?" The middle aged expert turned around and lowered his head in deference, not allowing anyone to see the look on his face.

Finally raising his head slightly, the old figure said plainly, "You should know where the little lass went, right? Do you also know what she was up to?"

"I..." Pausing, the middle aged man didn't reply immediately.

"Hehe..." A hoarse laughter filled the hall and the middle aged man was afraid his back would break if the old expert laughed a little louder.

With beads of sweat dripping down his forehead, the middle aged man explained, "This disciple knows that Junior Sister Feng went to the Taihang Mountains. She borrowed the Misty Palace Lantern from the treasure before she left and I believe she went over to look for a secret region!"

The old expert mumbled nonchalantly, "Greedy fool!"

"Yes, yes, Ninth Elder, you're right!"

With his eyelids fluttering slightly, the old expert continued, "Go. Bring some men with you. I want to see her corpse and the lantern. Deal with whatever she started... Even if she's useless, we can't let her die for nothing, especially in the hands of others."

The caution in his heart was replaced with joy, but the middle aged expert maintained a solemn expression while replying to the elder. "Yes! This disciple understands what to do. I'll slay whoever killed Junior Sister Feng and bring back the treasure to our sect!"

The old expert no longer bothered with him and returned to his rest while the middle aged man shuffled out of the hall with his head still bowed.

He wanted to heave a sigh of relief the second he stepped out of the hall as his taut nerves finally relaxed, but he managed to hold it in.

Glancing at the main hall one last time, a four colored light surrounded him as he flew into the distance.

That was a fourth layer Martial Extermination Realm expert who was bowing and scraping in the hall earlier, he was a formidable expert who had refined four extermination origins!

Not too long after he left, a man who wore a silver hat entered the main hall. He ran straight to the old expert and asked, "Teacher, Senior Brother Sang was prepared to head off to the Taihang Mountains all along. Looks like he was sure Junior Sister Feng would run into trouble..."

Maintaining his aloof appearance, the old expert acted as though he didn't hear anything the man in the silver hat said.

Unwilling to give up, the man continued, "Teacher, I suspect that someone had been plotting against Junior Sister Feng the moment she stepped out of the sect. I hope Teacher can get to the bottom of this!"

"Do you also wish to go to the Taihang Mountains?" The old expert's eyes opened at an unknown time and his gaze seemed to be able to peer into one's soul.

The man in a silver hat felt his muscles trembling as he replied hastily, "This disciple doesn't wish to see a fellow disciple die in vain. Junior Sister Feng clearly became someone else's tool and I do not wish for Teacher to be fooled..."

"Fooled?" The old expert finally broke into laughter. "Do you really think that he's the one trying to fool me? Or could you be the one..."

"This disciple doesn't dare! Teacher, I have never once thought of fooling you!"

Trembling in fright, the man in the silver hat jumped in fright before bowing deeply towards the old expert.

Shaking his head casually, the elder sighed, "Leave. Go and do what you're supposed to."

The man in the silver hat felt his heart thumping slightly and he asked, "Teacher, please guide me..."

"Go outside the heavens." The old expert said as he closed his eyes slowly. He seemed as though he was about to fall asleep as he continued, "Don't be like me and rot in this tiny little Azure Origin World. I'm just a bag of old bones left in the Divine Capital Sect..."

The man in the silver hat felt his heart trembling slightly as he replied respectfully, "Yes, Teacher! Many thanks for the guidance and I will head to the Beyond Heavens Pavilion immediately!"

After he spoke, he behaved like the middle aged man before him and left the hall.

A dreamy voice rang in his mind as he took his leave. “We won’t be able to stop the fusion of the worlds. Hehehel... In order to make old fellows like myself step down, opportunities are popping out everywhere...”

...

It was extremely hard to grasp the time in the Cloud Water Gorge and thus, Duan Liufeng had no idea how long he had been running through the dense fog.

He had to admit one unfortunate thing. A Martial Extermination Realm expert like himself was lost!

Luckily, he was still a second layer Martial Extermination Realm expert at the end of the day. As long as he wasn’t surrounded by a bunch of strong creatures, he would be able to escape eventually.

Despite his confidence in his abilities, he was burning with anxiety. He was afraid that the leader of the Youyan Stronghold and the mysterious expert who appeared to help her were hunting him down.

He knew that the leader of the Youyan Stronghold had the ability to move about the Cloud Water Gorge as she wished. With the Hexagonal Lantern, his fate was sealed if they managed to locate him.

The more he thought about it, the stronger the calling for him to leave the Cloud Water Gorge. There was a voice at the back of his head telling him to return to his old territory as soon as he had the chance. It was as though something big was about to go down.

Duan Liufeng forced his divine perception to its maximum range as he continued to look for a way out. Along the way, he felt the ground below his feet giving way as he fell into a strange pit.

Cursing silently, he wanted to leap out of the pit but a thin shadow appeared from the sand beneath.

“Hmph, I was prepared for you, you little shit.” Duan Liufeng growled as the shadow flew up at his face. With his index finger and thumb, he grabbed the creature 7 inches from its head. No matter how the snake tried to twist around to bite Duan Liufeng, it failed to break free.

“Shadow Snake!” Duan Liufeng’s expression changed slightly after identifying the creature. Even though the snake was merely a rank three spiritual beast, its poison had the ability to threaten Martial Extermination Realm experts.

Exerting some strength, he shattered the snake’s heart. Duan Liufeng casually tossed the corpse to the side before resuming his journey.

Ordinarily, he would definitely skin the snake and harvest all its organs. Its poison gland, gallbladder, and other parts of the body were really valuable treasures. He might have even kept it alive to brew some wine. Unfortunately, he wasn’t feeling it at the moment.

It didn’t take long before the fog in front of him started to pulse wildly. As it churned, the space around him started to solidify. He could tell that the area was close to 200 feet around his body and he immediately assumed the worst.

A look of fright appeared on his face as he got ready for an attack. He nearly turned to run, but he finally discovered that he was overreacting. If anyone wanted to attack him in the Cloud Water

Gorge, they wouldn't have caused such a huge commotion. Moreover, the attack should have already arrived.

He felt the fog around him churning faster and faster as the heaven and earth qi around him grew extremely dense. A strange wind blew across his face and he felt a sense of curiosity like never before. "This... Is this the birth of some special treasure?"

Was he finally going to run into a huge opportunity to make himself stronger?!

He wanted to take a step towards the twisting space, but his sense of reasoning eventually stopped him.

Even if a treasure was being born, it didn't seem like it was ready to appear. He decided to wait a little, but it didn't take long for the change to arrive.

In the time it took for him to drink a cup of tea, the fog started to disperse. A huge area cleared out and Duan Liufeng discovered that he could see everything in the radius of a 1000 feet.

His figure was revealed to the world, but a tiny seal could also be seen sitting quietly on the ground beside his feet.

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"The inheritance for the Bestial Sword Art! Yu Hanglong actually carried it on him!" Shang Pei opened a manual made with beast skin and skimmed its contents. A pout quickly formed on her face. "Damn it! That asshole Shang Jian just sits at home all day and such a great fortune is falling on his head!"

Shang Pei looked at Uncle Cen and grumbled, "Tell me I'm right. What has that lazy fellow done? He barely returned from the battlefield between the two worlds and was allocated a strand of extermination origin. He didn't do shit and Shang Xia brought back a suitable advancement formula. His mighty grandaunt... I mean, cousin, even found a rank four martial art suitable for him! What the fuck! This... This... This..."

An awkward smile appeared on Fifth Uncle Cen's face and Shang Pei continued, "Tell me. Doesn't he deserve to die if he fails to enter the Martial Extermination Realm?"

The awkward smile on Fifth Uncle Cen's face turned into bitter laughter after hearing what she said. How was he supposed to respond?!

Before he could react, a sharp crack came from a newly created mountain cave not too far away.

Shang Pei casually glanced in that direction before starting another round of complaints. "God damn it, everyone is messing with me... Didn't Shang Xia say that he became a rank four Talisman Master? He even swore that he would create a Spiritual Protection Substitution Talisman before coming out of seclusion. What bullshit did he spout before? How many times has he failed since he started?!"

Chapter 464: Spiritual Protection Substitution Talisman

Yu Hanglong was a famous figure in the Taihang Mountains and no one could deny that he was a strong fighter.

Even though his Bestial Sword Art was a little flawed, he made up for it with his fourth move, the Dragon's Sword. With the Taihang Mountains as his inspiration, he created an extremely powerful move.

With his Dragon's Sword, he was able to challenge third later Martial Extermination Realm experts at the second layer Martial Extermination Realm. That was also how he managed to break through the Tongyou Institution's encirclement back during the War of the Tongyou Mysterious World.

Shang Pei was extremely indignant because of how amazing the rank four inheritance was.

Well, no matter how amazing it was, the inheritance Shang Pei received wasn't bad either. It was a technique developed by Shang Bo, an expert much stronger than the Taihang Swordsman.

Unfortunately, the Shang Clan Spear Art developed by Shang Bo wasn't truly suited for Shang Pei. Along with the grudge she was holding in her heart, she wasn't able to unleash the full strength of her spear art.

Before she adapted the spear art into something of her own, she would never be able to use it to its fullest potential.

Whatever the case, she couldn't be bothered with her own techniques for the time being. After obtaining the Bestial Sword Art, she immediately realized it was extremely compatible with Shang Jian. He might not even have to modify a huge portion of it before being able to show its true strength.

Damn it! This grandaunt had to suffer betrayal, capture, threats, and a lot of pain before entering the Martial Extermination Realm. I even had to come all the way over to the Sixth Pass in the Taihang Mountains to make a foothold... Shang Jian, you lucky asshole! All the luck fell on you when you were lazing around back at home...

Shang Pei cursed inwardly, but she was merely venting her frustrations.

She was also slightly depressed that Yu Hanglong's sword was ruined. The only valuable on him that could catch her eye was his Bestial Sword Art, but she couldn't even use it. The other items that Yu Hanglong had might be precious, but she couldn't be bothered as she handed them over to Fifth Uncle Cen and the others.

Treasures left behind by a Martial Extermination Realm expert were a huge fortune to the rest of the members of the Youyan Stronghold.

After Shang Pei gave away the loot from Yu Hanglong, she focused on the Spatial Pouch Feng Chenyi left behind.

Her identity as a member of the Divine Capital Sect of the Si Continent caused no small amount of worry for Shang Xia and Shang Pei.

However, that also meant that as a Martial Extermination Realm expert of the Divine Capital Sect, she definitely had a lot of treasures on her.

Just the fact that she had a Spatial Pouch on her was enough for Shang Xia and Shang Pei to take the risk of killing her in the first place. Not to mention the fact that she had a special treasure like the Hexagonal Lantern.

With a flick of her wrist, a Bamboo Void Breaking Talisman was stuck onto the pouch.

It was the Bamboo Void Breaking Talisman she had used and if not for an amazing rank four Talisman Master like Shang Xia who had several Bamboo Void Breaking Talisman already made, she would never have been able to obtain so many of them. The value of a Bamboo Void Breaking Talisman was much higher than other rank three talismans, and so was the difficulty of crafting one. She estimated that after using the third Bamboo Void Breaking Talisman, she would finally be able to open the Spatial Pouch.

As a Spatial Pouch was of a much higher quality than an Embroidered Cloud Case, the restrictions on it were a lot more intricate. Shang Pei had to use her divine perception in tandem with the Bamboo Void Breaking Talisman in order to wear down the restrictions on the pouch.

After Shang Xia placed the Abyssal Seal down to create a stable region in the Cloud Water Gorge, Shang Pei had been focusing on recovery and opening the pouch.

While she poured her divine perception into the pouch, Shang Xia's voice came from behind her. "Are you still trying to open the Spatial Pouch?"

Gasping in shock, she refocused on the task at hand before turning her head slightly to look at Shang Xia. "You finally left seclusion. Did you give up on crafting your rank four talisman or something?"

She seemed to be laughing at Shang Xia over his failed attempts.

After interacting with Shang Pei for such a long time, Shang Xia basically understood what her personality was like. It might be because of her time as a bandit, but she would usually put on a tough front to hide her shrewd thoughts.

Because of her recent role as the leader of the Youyan Stronghold, she developed a strange charm that allowed others to place their trust in her. Even though her words were curt, no one would take them to heart.

Shang Xia chuckled in response, "How do you know I failed?"

Shang Pei widened her eyes in shock after she heard his response. She wasn't the only one as the other members of the Youyan Stronghold who overheard the conversation turned to stare at him.

"But... That sound earlier.." Fifth Uncle Cen was the only other person in the Youyan Stronghold who was familiar with Shang Xia. After Shang Xia's identity as a Martial Extermination Realm expert was revealed, only Fifth Uncle Cen could maintain his composure to speak to Shang Xia openly. The rest seemed a little afraid of him.

With a wide smile, Shang Xia opened his palm to reveal a gray talisman that was inscribed on some metallic sheet.

There was an outline of a shield in the middle of the talisman made from complicated runes and it was clear he succeeded.

"Is this the Spiritual Protection Substitution Talisman you were talking about?" Shang Pei separated a tiny portion of her divine perception to probe the talisman. She felt the power contained in the talisman and gasped, "You actually succeeded!"

“No shit! Third Aunt, were you hoping that I would fail?” Shang Xia mumbled helplessly.

“Of course not!” Shang Pei looked at the youngster standing in front of her as though it was the first time she discovered how much of a genius he was before she continued, “Rank four Talisman Master! You actually became a rank four Talisman Master! Haha! You should be the only piece of shi... I mean, you should be the only rank four Talisman Master in the Tongyou Institution, right? Hehehe, who would believe them if they said that a youngster like you had become a rank four Talisman Master..”

Shang Xia could only roll his eyes quietly before snapping at her, “Well, many thanks for the praise! I told you before that the Golden Sun Inferno Talisman I threw at Duan Liufeng previously was the first rank four talisman I made, no?”

Sniggering softly, Shang Pei added, “Whatever. I was keeping count by the way. You failed four times before crafting this Spiritual Protection Substitution Talisman, right?”

Shang Xia’s slightly proud expression crumbled in an instant. He had used up all the resources he brought with him. He no longer had any rank four talisman paper and talisman ink as he wasted them all trying to craft the Spiritual Protection Substitution Talisman.

One had to know that the Tongyou Institution had been saving up for some time in order to gather so many resources. There was also a portion of the Shang Clan’s savings in there too. If he wanted to craft rank four talismans in the future, he would have to look for ingredients himself. He couldn’t attempt crafting rank four talismans as he wished in the future!

Since he became a rank four Talisman Master, the Talisman Hall released all its inheritance to him. Other than the Zhu Family Talisman Scripture he obtained previously, he learned 2 other rank four talismans from the institution’s records.

The Golden Sun Inferno Talisman he made previously came from the Zhu Family Talisman Scripture while the Spiritual Protection Substitution Talisman he had just made came from the Talisman Hall.

Chasing the other members of the Youyan Stronghold away, Shang Pei turned to Shang Xia and asked seriously, “Are you sure this talisman can stop the blade light from the divine weapon?”

Shaking his head, Shang Xia chuckled bitterly, “Even if it can’t fully block the blade light, it should be able to weaken it slightly.”

Shang Pei nodded slowly in response. “Even so, you cannot be careless. I might have felt a blade light that was comparable to a strike from a Martial Extermination Realm expert, but a divine weapon has sentience. Who knows if it sent out that strike because it detected our cultivation realm? It might not have revealed its full power yet.”

Shang Xia agreed. It was true that he had to take precautions.

After Shang Pei had spoken, Shang Xia’s expression flickered slightly and he seemed curious about something. However, he didn’t say anything after a long time. Shang Pei couldn’t help but ask, “Do you have something else to ask me?”

“Aunt, you said that you and your husband each had an Abyssal Seal when you entered the secret region in the past, right?” Shang Xia muttered.

Raising her eyebrows slightly, Shang Pei continued, “What are you trying to say?”

There was no point concealing his doubts and Shang Xia finished his question, “How many Abyssal Seals are there in total? Also, will your husband’s seal reappear in the Cloud Water Gorge? After all, you said you obtained the seal after the fog condensed around you previously...”

Shang Pei seemed a little confused, but she knew that Shang Xia wouldn’t ask a question like that for fun. “Did you discover something?”

Opening his palm, Shang Xia revealed the Abyssal Seal. “I was playing with the seal in between my attempts to craft the Spiritual Protection Substitution Talisman and I felt a strange resonance two days ago. It seemed to be pulling me in a certain direction, but the feeling was cut off abruptly. After that, I couldn’t feel it anymore.”

Shang Pei was afraid that Shang Xia would be too engrossed when crafting his talisman to feel the changes of the Abyssal Seal but after hearing his description, she realized that not only did he detect the slight changes, he even discovered something suspicious.

“Do you think that a second Abyssal Seal appeared in the Cloud Water Gorge and someone managed to obtain it?” Shang Pei frowned.

Nodding slowly, Shang Xia continued, “You said that you entered the Cloud Water Gorge 20 years ago and you felt its reappearance 10 years ago. You determined that the secret region would open once every 10 years... Did you manage to feel the existence of the second seal 10 years ago?”

Shang Pei shook her head and before Shang Xia could say anything else, She continued, “My inability to feel the second seal might have something to do with the fact that no one can enter the secret region twice.”

A look of realization appeared on Shang Xia’s face and he sighed, “I’m afraid that would mean that I’ll be facing some competition after entering the secret region...”

Shang Pei’s expression lit up suddenly and she muttered out loud, “Do you think... Do you think it’s possible for Duan Liufeng to have obtained the second seal?”

“Wouldn’t that be for the best?” Shang Xia chuckled in amusement.

A strange look appeared on Shang Pei’s face after hearing what he said. “Are you confident that you can kill him alone?”

Shang Pei could tell that Shang Xia’s cultivation was a little weird, but at the end of the day, he had barely broken through to the Martial Extermination Realm. No matter how she looked at it, Duan Liufeng was a second layer Martial Extermination Realm expert.

Before Shang Xia could reply, Shang Pei turned her attention back to the Spatial Pouch. She yelped happily as the sound of items clattering to the ground filled the skies. It seemed as though the restrictions on the Spatial Pouch had finally been broken.

Chapter 465: Appearance of the Secret Region

After wasting 3 Bamboo Void Breaking Talisman, Shang Pei finally opened Feng Chenyi's Spatial Pouch!

When the aunt and nephew duo looked at the bunch of items on the ground, their look of expectation quickly turned into shock. Glancing at each other, Shang Xia quickly turned away as his face heated up slightly.

There were at least 10 cubic feet of space contained in the Spatial Pouch, and it could be considered one of the lousiest Spatial Pouches in existence. Even so, it was larger than anything Shang Xia and Shang Pei had seen before.

A bunch of female products lay on the ground before them and Shang Xia could only chuckle in embarrassment, "I should have known... After all, ladies need to bring a lot more stuff during their travels outside..."

With a strangely suspicious look on her face, Shang Pei turned to glare at Shang Xia. "Oh? Looks like you know a lot about the items ladies would have to bring when they go out adventuring?"

"No...?" Shang Xia shook his hands desperately before him and tried to explain, "How would I..."

"Don't pretend... Do you really think that I don't know anything?!" Shang Pei snorted coldly before addressing Shang Xia, "You're no different from your father..."

Shang Xia felt his heart trembling slightly when he heard her bringing up his father but before he could ask, Shang Pei had already turned around to toss the Spatial Pouch at him. "Here, it's yours." She started to pick out treasures from the ground after tossing the Spatial Pouch over to Shang Xia.

Holding the pouch, Shang Xia seemed to have recalled something and he decided to give it back to her. "Aunt, I already asked someone to head out to the Beyond Heavens Pavilion to craft me a Spatial Pouch. You should keep this one."

Shang Pei glanced at the feminine-looking pouch in Shang Xia's hand that clearly did not suit his looks and she chuckled, "You don't want it? Have you thought it through? If you're sure, I'll keep it."

She didn't pretend to reject Shang Xia's gift. Eventually, she kept the pouch in her sleeves before turning back to the treasures.

"Hey, look at that. She's an enforcer of the Divine Capital Sect alright... She has some good stuff with her!"

She took out a pair of low-grade weapons that looked like crescent hooks before keeping it for herself. "This looks pretty suitable for Sixth Sister Gu. It's hers now."

It was true that the quality of those hooks wasn't bad. It might not be comparable to the pair of blades Shang Xia gave Shang Xi in the past, but it wasn't that far off.

Naturally, Shang Xia wouldn't care about low-grade weapons and let Shang Pei do what she wanted. Thinking a little, he asked, "Aunt, do you know how many Abyssal Seals will be produced before the secret region appears?"

Shang Pei was picking out treasures from the ground and she replied without looking up. “How would I know? We entered the secret region with 2 Abyssal Seals 20 years ago. I didn’t detect anything else 10 years ago and I thought that the other seal was trapped in there.”

Shang Xia nodded slightly and recalled the strange properties of the Cloud Water Gorge. There shouldn’t be many people who entered the region and the possibility of someone finding the second seal was pretty low.

It was even possible that no one entered the secret region the previous time it appeared.

A strange thought formed in Shang Xia’s mind, but before he could ask, Shang Pei yelped softly before taking out a case that was almost a foot long. “Guess what this is!”

Shang Xia glanced at the broken spiritual seal on the case and muttered, “Could it be a high-level spiritual herb?”

Shang Pei opened the case and saw 24 glass tubes arranged neatly within. There were 7 empty ones but the remaining 17 were filled with a strange amber liquid. There was a small bean-like ball of light flickering within like a tiny candle.”

“What is this? Could it be a set of advancement medicine?” Shang Xia asked.

“Do you think someone will carry so many sets of advancement medicine on them?!” Shang Pei rolled her eyes at Shang Xia before explaining, “This is called the Divine Fire Wine. To be more exact, it’s called the Divine Capital Divine Fire Wine. it’s a rank four treasure that is even better than your Hundred Flower Spiritual Wine!”

“Really?! Is it really that impressive?” Shang Xia’s eyes lit up and he gestured to Shang Pei. “Give me half of them as a finder’s fee.”

“What the hell for?.” Shang Pei closed the case and explained, “You can only use one tube every month and this should be every Divine Capital Sect enforcer’s two year supply.”

Any disciple in the Divine Capital Sect would be promoted to an enforcer the moment they entered the Martial Extermination Realm. Feng Chenyi clearly possessed the qualifications to hold on to so many of them.

Shang Xia pouted indignantly, “Give me a few of them at least!”

Opening the case again, Shang Pei took out a single tube and pointed at the flame flickering within. “Do you see that? Every tube of Divine Fire Wine contains fire essence. The treasure is for experts who cultivate the fire element. Are you sure you can use them?”

Shang Xia might not know what element he was cultivating exactly, but he felt that he could most probably make use of it. After all, his Mirroring Sun Extermination Origin had ‘Sun’ in its name. It was probably of the fire element, right?

However, Shang Xia knew that rank four treasures were hard to come by, especially something like the Divine Fire Wine. He might have some rank four Monkey Wine and rank four Hundred Flower Spiritual Wine, but he didn’t really plan to use them before he came up with his rank four martial art.

Since Shang Pei wanted to keep the wine for herself, Shang Xia knew that she had other uses for it. He wouldn't go overboard by asking for a lot of them and he knew that Shang Pei wouldn't really shortchange him.

He observed the flickering flame within the tube and asked suddenly, "Aunt, do you think the flame in the Hexagonal Lantern uses the same fire essence contained in the wine?"

Shang Pei raised her eyebrows slightly and tossed the tube over. "Test it out later."

After she spoke, she picked out a few other articles of clothes and undergarments from the pile. Shang Xia stood there awkwardly as he didn't know what to do or say at that moment.

"Hmm, these clothes are of pretty good quality. They're made from reasonably precious materials and they possess some defensive properties when worn..." Shang Pei mumbled to herself. "Too bad someone has already worn these. Hmm. Alright. I'll give them to Sixth Sister Gu and the rest and they can split them however they like."

Shang Xia pretended to not hear any of that. Thinking back to a question he had earlier, he couldn't help but ask, "Aunt, do you think the Cloud Water Gorge is the only entrance to the secret region?"

"How would I know?" Shang Pei sneered before picking out several handkerchief-like items on the ground. "All I know is that we didn't detect anyone else in the secret region when we entered."

The fuck? How are you supposed to detect anyone while escaping the blade light?

Obviously, Shang Xia buried the thought in his heart. He wouldn't run his mouth like a dumbass in front of Shang Pei.

Her voice rang through the air again. "Instead of thinking about all things that might or might not happen, why don't you focus on dealing with the blade light? Of course, you can never be too careful. When you enter the secret region, you better bring the lantern with you..."

She seemed to find something interesting among the items Feng Chenyi left behind and she gasped suddenly to interrupt herself. "Look! Look at what this is!"

She raised a copper flask and shook it slightly to hear sounds of sloshing coming from within.

Shang Xia's divine perception locked onto the flask immediately and he discovered a familiar feeling coming from it. He couldn't help but ask, "This should be an artifact members of the Divine Capital Sect use to collect extermination qi. Could it be something similar to my Spirit Extermination Gourd?"

Shang Pei shook the flask happily while replying, "There might be a complete strand of extermination origin within."

Shang Xia felt a trace of excitement bubbling in his heart. "What extermination origin is it? Can you use it?"

Shang Pei shook her head and sighed with a little disappointment, "I'm afraid not. However, I hope Fifth Uncle Cen can make use of it to break through to the Martial Extermination Realm in the future."

“Hmm... You should start making your preparations now then. The institution or the clan wouldn't reveal a rank four advancement formula to him when he tries to advance. At the very most, they will provide him with a set of advancement medicine.” Shang Xia thought out loud.

Agreeing with him, Shang Pei no longer spoke of the matter. Instead, she started to walk towards Shang Xia.

“What's wrong? Did nothing else catch your eye?” Shang Xia burst out laughing.

She tossed him several wooden cases and instructed suddenly, “Bring these back for me.”

Opening the cases slightly, Shang Xia noticed several intricately designed golden accessories within and joked, “Aunt, why are you giving these to me? Shouldn't you give them to my future wife directly?”

Shang Pei's expression sank and she growled softly, “I told you to bring them back for me, I didn't tell you they were for your future wife. Help me give them to Min'er and Yuanyuan...”

Shang Xia nearly jumped in fright as he responded quickly, “Oh yeah, alright, alright! I'll give it to them once I return...”

Glaring at Shang Xia, Shang Pei smacked Shang Xia's face with the handkerchiefs she picked up earlier before taking her leave.

With a slightly confused look in his eyes, he asked, “Do you also want me to bring these handkerchiefs to them? It's just several pieces of cloth...”

“Are you blind? Can you even call yourself a rank four Talisman Master? Take a good look at them. Those pieces of cloth should be enough for you to turn them into rank four talisman paper...” Shang Pei replied without turning her head.

Carefully examining the cloth, Shang Xia revealed a joyful expression as he stuffed them into his sleeves.

However, he froze the next moment as the Abyssal Seal emerged from the same place he stuffed those handkerchiefs. It hovered in the air in front of him while spitting out faint white gas.

Shang Xia could feel that the Abyssal Seal seemed to be resonating with something, and the feeling became even stronger than before. It was as though something was about to appear!

“What's going on?” Shang Pei quickly turned around and her gaze landed on the Abyssal Seal.

Shang Xia glanced at the seal as he replied calmly, “It's nothing special. The secret region is probably about to appear.”

Chapter 466: Secret Region

The moment the secret region appeared, Shang Xia felt its presence through the Abyssal Seal.

However, he wasn't in a rush to head over as he carefully stamped several pieces of talisman paper to create seal talismans for the members of the Youyan Stronghold.

“Relax. Even if you take the seal away, the seal talismans will last for seven days. We won’t get lost during that time and you should have left the secret region by then.” Shang Pei chuckled. “Even if you don’t come out in seven days, I’ll bring the rest and leave the Cloud Water Gorge.”

Shang Xia wasn’t too worried about them. After all, the Eighteen Horsemen of the You Continent managed to rampage about freely in the Ji Continent for tens of years without the presence of a Martial Extermination Realm expert. Now that Shang Pei had entered the Martial Extermination Realm, there was even less for him to worry about.

Turning to look at Shang Pei, Shang Xia asked, “Have you completed the refinement process of your second extermination origin?”

“I’m almost halfway done.” Shang Xia chuckled in response. “Looks like you discovered it anyway.”

“I’m sure you didn’t enter the Cloud Water Gorge because the institution told you to do so. You planned on coming here all along to gather extermination qi. Now, I wonder what your second extermination origin is called...” Shang Xia asked.

“I named it myself. It’s called the Abyssal Cloud Water Extermination Origin.” Shang Pei laughed, “It’s a pity collecting it bit by bit isn’t as exciting as refining a complete extermination origin all at once. Otherwise, I wouldn’t hide here the past year...”

Shang Xia smiled and sighed softly, “It might not be as bad as you think. There’s a benefit to refining the extermination qi in the air slowly. It might not be as quick as refining a complete strand of extermination origin, but you can familiarize yourself with your extermination origin as you go along. Refining a complete extermination origin would take you 2 to 3 years to fully comprehend and wield its power, but going slow will bring about bigger benefits in the future!”

Shang Xia didn’t just stamp enough seal talismans for those present. He even stamped a few more. Flipping the Abyssal Seal around when he was done, he muttered softly, “Stamping a rank one talisman paper would actually cause it to possess the properties of a rank one talisman. I wonder if I can do the same for rank two, three, and four talisman papers... If stamping talisman paper of the corresponding rank can produce talismans, there won’t be a need to worry about success rate. Even non Talisman Masters would be able to produce talismans...”

Of course, it sounded possible, but reality rarely worked the way he wanted it to. Shang Xia knew that the possibility of that happening was slim to none.

The Abyssal Seal wasn’t just a random treasure to him anyway. After examining it for such a long time, Shang Xia could tell that it was a really impressive treasure. It wasn’t just used for crafting rank one seal talismans...

Shang Pei stared at him and the extra talismans before giving him a stern warning, “Now is not the time for you to think about these matters. You should be looking for the secret region as soon as you can. If there really is someone else who entered, you need to be extremely careful. The blade light won’t be the only threat you need to deal with.”

Bidding the members of the Youyan Stronghold farewell, Shang Xia quickly disappeared into the thick fog.

Fifth Uncle Cen looked at Shang Pei staring aimlessly into the dense fog and he muttered softly, "Third Sister, how possible would it be for him to obtain the divine weapon?"

"If he fails to get it, no one will be able to." Shang Pei replied without turning her head.

Fifth Uncle Cen quickly continued, "You're really confident in him. At the end of the day, it's just a damaged divine weapon. Is it really beneficial for him to obtain a treasure like that?"

"A damaged divine weapon..." Shang Pei muttered before turning to stare into his eyes. "Is there anyone else other than him capable of obtaining the weapon? Did those fellows from the Tongyou City say something to you?"

A bitter smile left Fifth Uncle Cen's lips and he sighed, "I can't hide anything from you. There have been several people in the institution who hope that the damaged divine weapon can be given to the institution. Of course, your nephew is extremely talented and he has the qualifications to wield the damaged divine weapon for some time..."

"Just like his grandfather huh? Shang Bo had been using the Nine Firefly Lance for ten or so years. In the end, it still belonged to the institution." Shang Pei snorted rudely to interrupt him.

A helpless look appeared on Fifth Uncle Cen's face as he continued, "You know what I mean. I'm on your side on this. I'm just a messenger for them."

"Then I'm sure you won't mind conveying my attitude to those assholes who like to stir shit while sitting comfortably back at home. I discovered the secret region and they only learned of the damaged divine weapon because of my reports. My husband died in there for it and even if anyone brings the damaged divine weapon out, it belongs to me. I can give it to whoever I see fit. When did my belongings enter the possession of some yapping dogs in the institution?" Shang Pei sneered.

Fifth Uncle Cen sighed again as he complained softly, "Indeed. The Tongyou Institution wasn't as harmonious as it once was. The attitude among several experts seems to be shifting..."

"It's natural for that to happen. After all, the institution produced a lot of Martial Extermination Realm experts in recent years. They obtained victory after victory in the battlefield between the two worlds and they're just a step away from promoting the Tongyou Mysterious World into the Tongyou Paradise. Even the White Deer Paradise doesn't dare to let out a fart in front of the institution and those fellows think that everything is going smoothly. They feel that it's time for them to sit back and enjoy their fruits of labor and all of them started scrambling for power." Shang Pei laughed coldly in contempt.

Hesitating slightly Fifth Uncle Cen wanted to say something, but he was interrupted by Shang Pei once again.

“Hmph, you’re thinking that the Shang Clan became too strong over the last two years and the balance among the great families in the city has been broken, right? That’s the reason behind the institution’s intentional suppression of my Shang Clan...” Shang Pei explained.

Fifth Uncle Cen could do nothing but laugh helplessly at the side. Shang Pei took the words right out of his mouth. Just when he thought of something else to say, he was interrupted once again by a feminine voice behind him.

“Third Sister, Third Sister, Oh? Fifth Uncle Cen is here too...” Sixth Sister Gu appeared behind them and she seemed extremely excited. “Advancement medicines! We found some advancement medicines! Two more Martial Intent Realm experts can be produced among our fellow brothers and sisters!”

Fifth Uncle Cen’s expression lit up immediately and he yelled, “Nice! Hurry, bring us there to take a look at the advancement medicine!”

Shang Pei finally replaced the sullen expression on her face with a smile as she followed behind the two of them.

...

Traveling in the direction the Abyssal Seal told him to go, Shang Xia traveled through the Cloud Water Forge at a frightening speed. He no longer bothered with the changes to the lands or the beasts hiding in the fog.

Along the way, Shang Xia discovered that his divine perception became even more sensitive than before. He could even detect minute spatial fluctuations in the space around him, but that didn’t cause him to slow down in the slightest. By the time the fluctuations ended and the space around him changed, he was already gone.

No one knew how long had passed, but Shang Xia a dense cloud had gathered under his feet and was following him wherever he went.

After even more time, Shang Xia realized that he wasn’t stepping on the ground anymore. Instead, his steps landed on the cloud under his feet.

Extending his divine perception slightly, he could tell that the ground beneath him had disappeared. He was also rising slowly in the air as he traveled, and it didn’t take long for him to arrive 1000 feet into the air.

Despite how high he was, he was still surrounded by dense fog. Before he could react, a foreign aura appeared in range of his divine perception.

He barely gathered his thoughts to chase the owner of the foreign aura down when he discovered that the aura was traveling away from the direction the Abyssal Seal was guiding him. The cloud under his feet wasn’t responding to his desire to chase the foreign aura down either. If he stubbornly

wanted to move in a different direction, he would plunge down thousands of feet in the air. He wouldn't know what that would lead to either.

Was he trapped going down that route?!

Shang Xia felt helpless and a sense of annoyance soon followed. He hated the fact that he was forced to follow the will of someone else.

Shang Pei never mentioned anything about that to him before and Shang Xia realized that with their cultivation level at the time they were entering the secret region, they might not even know that they had been hovering in mid air.

The feeling he received from the Abyssal Seal became even clearer and Shang Xia saw a huge clearing in the dense clouds before him. The only thing that was left was a path that led to a strange cloud-like door.

Taking a deep breath, Shang Xia didn't hesitate as he walked towards the door. He didn't realize that the clouds were disappearing behind him as he progressed.

Bringing out the Abyssal Seal as he approached the door, it opened without warning. Before Shang Xia could react, a strong suction force pulled him through the entrance.

As soon as he entered the strange door disappeared. Shang Xia's presence was wiped away from where he once stood and the region quickly became covered by a layer of dense clouds.

Taken by surprise, Shang Xia found the scene before his eyes changed. His divine perception was still in a state of chaos when he was transported into the secret region, but danger had already arrived.

Luckily, Shang Xia received Shang Pei's reminder and he took out his Spiritual Protection Substitution Talisman before his vision cleared.

He felt a strange orange light tearing through the air above him.

"Ah!" A miserable shriek rang through the air and Shang Xia's eyes widened in shock. Even so, he didn't dare to turn his head to look at the direction where the yell came from.

That was because a frightening ring came from above him. Raising his head abruptly, he noticed a yellowish-orange blade light chopping straight down at him. The Spiritual Protection Substitution Talisman in his hand shattered...

Chapter 467: Abyssal Sect

When Shang Xia entered the secret region, a group of hidden experts who had concealed their cultivation bases appeared around the Cloud Water Gorge.

Strangely enough, none of them dared to step foot into the region.

Several other experts stood around the southwestern direction of the Cloud Water Gorge. They were the only group who didn't hide their appearance.

The Cloud Water Gorge was covered in dense clouds all the time. From outside, it seemed extremely quiet and peaceful. It wasn't often that the Cloud Water Gorge would experience huge changes, but that day seemed different from the rest.

The thick clouds that covered the Cloud Water Gorge were churning violently unlike anything anyone in the Taihang Mountains had ever seen.

A middle aged expert with a dignified appearance was the leader of those experts standing in the southwestern direction and he was stepping on a four colored extermination light as he hovered in mid air. It was obvious he was a fourth layer Martial Extermination Realm expert.

There were 3 other experts behind him and the weakest among them was a second layer Martial Extermination Realm expert.

With his hands clasped behind his back, the middle aged man stared at the churning clouds around the Cloud Water Gorge silently. The youngest looking cultivator behind him was finally unable to resist the urge and he asked, “Martial Uncle Chen Kang, we’ve been waiting here for more than 2 hours now. Are we really not going to enter?”

Martial Uncle Chen Kang replied without turning his head. “Martial Nephew Chang Qing, there’s no need to be hasty.”

Chang Qing stared at Chen Kang for a moment, but he was still unable to contain his curiosity. “Martial Uncle, you said that Martial Aunt Feng Chenyi was killed in his region. What’s the point of waiting around? Shouldn’t we hurry up and look for her belongings and the cause of death? We should avenge her immediately!”

Chen Kang didn’t bother with his outburst. Instead, he chuckled softly while looking at the violent churning of clouds. “The Cloud Water Gorge is usually shrouded in clouds. Something seems different today. With the changes happening right now, a secret region might have appeared within. I’m afraid Junior Sister Feng Chenyi’s belongings will be affected by the sudden change.”

“Appearance of a secret region?!” A brilliant light flashed in Chang Qing’s eyes. However, a frown quickly appeared on his face. “Even a secret region really appeared, shouldn’t we be charging in right now? There have to be heavenly treasures born in secret regions and there might even be huge amounts of world origin within! It would be a waste if that asshole who killed Martial Aunt Feng Chenyi entered before us.”

“It doesn’t matter. No one in there will be able to escape anyway.” The person who spoke wasn’t Chen Kang. Instead, it was the cultivator standing right behind him. He was also a Martial Extermination Realm expert and he continued, “Martial Nephew Chang Qing, I’m afraid you don’t know about this, but the Cloud Water Gorge has already been surrounded. Anyone who emerges will be captured immediately.”

“Marital Uncle Chen Ming, how do you know?” Chang Qing asked.

Touching the bamboo hat on his head, Chen Ming chuckled in a hoarse voice, “Martial Nephew Chang Qing, you’re a talented cultivator who managed to refine 2 extermination origins at the age of 20. However, you’ve focused too much on cultivation your whole life. You’re lacking experience...”

A trace of rage flashed through Chang Qing’s eyes but he quickly suppressed his emotions. His tone became a lot more humble when he spoke, “Martial Uncle Chen Ming, please guide me.”

Waving his hands casually, Chen Ming chuckled, "I can't guide you. I'm just a little more experienced because of how long I lived. Martial Nephew Chang Qing, you thought that we left the sect in haste and came here as soon as we could. However, Senior Brother Chen Kang had already dispatched a group of experts to Sixth Pass a long time ago. Our job was to stabilize the situation and deal the final blow..."

"Wouldn't that mean that our disciples have already surrounded the Cloud Water Gorge? So... We knew that a secret region would appear in the Cloud Water Gorge. Did someone leak the news or something?" Chang Qing asked.

"You guessed it..." A trace of displeasure appeared on Chen Ming's face, but it disappeared just as quickly as it appeared. Despite the sense of annoyance he felt, he continued his explanation. "We're not the only ones who have our sights on the secret region. The disciples of our sect were deployed to watch over the region, but they had to keep their distance..."

"Oh! There are other powers eyeing the Cloud Water Gorge other than us..." Chang Qing seemed to turn serious all of a sudden while muttering to himself.

Nodding slightly, Chen Ming sighed, "Originally, Senior Brother Chen Kang had made all the arrangements... Who would have thought that Junior Sister Feng Chenyi would... Sigh... She was overzealous and she came to the Taihang Mountains alone. She wanted to command the disciples of our sect to investigate the matter of the secret region and Senior Brother Chen Kang had no choice but to agree. She didn't stop there... Before heading out to the Cloud Water Gorge, Junior Sister Feng even used a lot of favors to borrow the Misty Palace Lantern from the sect to protect herself."

Chang Qing nodded silently and mumbled to himself, "With Martial Aunt Feng Chenyi's personality, things would get ugly if she chooses to make a scene... Martial Uncle Chen Kang, things have been tough on you."

"That's right. Not too many people knew about the matter regarding the Cloud Water Gorge in the first place. I wonder how Junior Sister Feng managed to learn of it? Senior Brother Chen Kang was afraid that she would kick up a huge fuss in the sect causing even more people to learn of it and he could only agree to let her head over first." Chen Ming sighed. He paused for a short second before he continued, "Who would have thought that Junior Sister Feng would ditch the disciples of our sect the moment she arrived in the Sixth Pass? She went to work with several Martial Extermination Realm experts of the Taihang Mountain and charged into the Cloud Water Gorge... Well, all of us knew what happened next."

"So that's what happened!" Chang Qing gasped. He seemed to understand why they brought him along and he added, "Once I understand the situation from the disciples stationed here, I will let my father know what exactly happened."

A joyful light flashed through Chen Ming's eyes and he chuckled happily, "Martial Nephew Chang Qing, it's great that you understand! As your elders, we'll spare no expense to get you a suitable extermination origin for your cultivation!"

A faint smile appeared on Chang Qing's face and he replied quickly, "I'll have to thank martial uncles then. There's no need to force it anyway. I just refined my second extermination origin and I would need to consolidate my foundations. My father has also started looking for suitable extermination origins for me and I have a few choices at the moment."

"A few choices..." Chen Ming's eyelid jumped violently and he realized that Chang Qing really didn't care about a strand of extermination origin or two."

Chen Kang finally released a bout of laughter to break the awkwardness as he turned around to address the others. "Junior Brother Chen Ming, with Senior Brother Chen Gang making the arrangements, we won't have to worry about Martial Nephew Chang Qing's cultivation."

Chen Ming quickly forced a chuckle. "Looks like I didn't think things through..."

Chen Kang's gaze landed on Chang Qing once again and he laughed, "Martial Nephew Chang Qing, the Abyssal Secret Region might contain some treasures, but it's not really too attractive to our Divine Capital Sect. We called you along because we discovered a treasure in there that's suited for you."

After hearing what he said, Chen Ming's expression changed slightly but Chen Kang shot him a gaze before he could say anything.

A look of excitement finally appeared on Chang Qing's face. "May I ask what treasure is it? How is it compared to the Misty Palace Lantern?"

Chen Kang laughed heartily before turning slightly serious. "It's a divine weapon. What do you think?"

Chang Qing was slightly taken aback at the revelation, but the wide grin on his face quickly revealed his excitement at the news. "Are you serious? Martial Uncle, is a divine weapon really in there?"

"Relax. If the divine weapon really appears in the secret region, we'll try our best to get it for you." Chen Kang promised.

Finally suppressing the elation he was feeling, he suddenly realized a question he had forgotten to ask. "Martial uncles, do you know how the secret region came about? At the very least, the place had to be a mysterious world or better to be turned into a secret region. Anyone who has the ability to maintain one has to be a powerful faction. The Sixth Pass in the Taihang Mountains isn't exactly a secluded region. How did no one discover the presence of the secret region after so many years?"

"Haha, do you know how long our Origin Azure World has been around for?" Chen Kang chuckled in amusement.

Chang Qing didn't need to think for long before he replied, "It's the 845th year of the Divine Martial Calendar right now. Obviously, that's how long Azure Origin World has been in existence for."

“What about the time before the Divine Martial Calendar started?” Chen Kang raised his eyebrows and asked.

Looking at the look of confusion on Chang Qing’s face, Chen Kang explained, “Do you really believe that our history only goes back 800 or so years? The 13 vast continents of our Azure Origin World have existed for a long time before that...”

“Then...” Chang Qing showed an expression of revelation as his gaze turned exceptionally clear. “Martial Uncle, do you mean that this secret region existed before the start of our Divine Martial Calendar?”

“Exactly.” Chen Kang praised Chang Qing’s quick reactions and understanding.

With a strange look, Chang Qing turned to look at Chen Kang. “Martial Uncle Chen Kang, how would you know about that? Why haven’t I heard anything about the time before the creation of our Divine Martial Calendar?”

“Everything I know is limited. In the future, your cultivation will catch up to mine and when that happens, you will gain the qualifications to learn about those matters.” Chen Kang laughed. After a short pause, Chen Kang revealed a slightly haughty expression as he explained, “Actually, there isn’t any faction in our Azure Origin World that knows more about the time before the Divine Martial Calendar than our Divine Capital Sect.”

“Martial Uncle Chen Kang, why would the secret region appear now?” Chang Qing followed up with yet another question.

“The fusion between our Azure Origin World and the Azure Spiritual World is set in stone. All the secret regions that have been hidden in both worlds will start to show themselves. The Abyssal Secret Region might appear at regular intervals in the past to pass down whatever inheritance was trapped inside. However, This should be the last time the Abyssal Secret Region would appear.” Chen Kang mumbled.

“So that’s it...” Chang Qing nodded. “So... The cloud around the Cloud Water Gorge would disappear once the Abyssal Secret Region closes. The Cloud Water Gorge would be revealed to the world when that happens. It’s no wonder Martial Uncle refuses to enter the Cloud Water Gorge at this moment.”

Watching Chen Kang nodding in acknowledgment, Chang Qing seemed to have thought of another important question. “I wonder which power used to own the Abyssal Secret Region?”

“The Abyssal Sect.” Chen Kang replied candidly.

Chapter 468: Big Loot

...

The Spiritual Protection Substitution Talisman in Shang Xia's hand shattered instantly. It barely managed to buy him a split second after blocking the yellowish-orange blade light.

The intensity of the blade light fell as it continued to chop down at Shang Xia but its tyrannical might remained the same.

Luckily, Shang Xia was ready for it. He started to defend himself after the blade light was obstructed.

He poured the Divine Fire Wine into the Hexagonal Lantern before entering the secret region. The moment he poured his Four Constellation Qi into it, a brilliant flame was lit.

With a slight intention, a pillar of flame shot into the skies. It was promptly sliced in two by the incoming blade light, but both portions of flame quickly twisted around each other to form a protective wall of fire above his head.

After chopping through the pillar of flame, the energy contained in the blade light barely diminished by a third. It continued to slam heavily into the wall of fire, shattering it eventually.

In an instant, Shang Xia lost two layers of protection.

The blade light continued to fall and it quickly arrived 3 feet above him. Tilting his head to look at the incoming blade light, not a trace of panic could be seen in Shang Xia's eyes.

He didn't intend to dodge as he raised his spear.

As his Scarlet Star Spear shot upwards, Shang Xia tightened his grip on its shaft as he released his Divine Killing Spear.

His third martial intent wasn't just the strongest attack he mastered. It also possessed the weirdest properties among everything he knew. Even though Origin True Qi was what powered the strike before he entered the Martial Extermination Realm, it was powered by Four Constellation Qi now that he had successfully broken through. It contained the properties of the four season samsara and made his attack much stronger than before.

The blade light crumbled when the tip of Shang Xia's spear stabbed into it. As the energy fluctuations started to dissipate, Shang Xia's expression became even more serious than before.

In the short exchange that happened, Shang Xia not only used his Spiritual Protection Substitution Talisman. He used his inner qi to power the Hexagonal Lantern and released his Divine Killing Spear, exhausting half of his reserve in a short amount of time.

Recalling Shang Pei's reminder before he entered the secret region, Shang Xia found it a little unbelievable.

It was absolutely impossible for her husband to push her away at the last second when faced with a blade light of such caliber. If they were facing the same blade light as him, there was no way either of them would be able to react in time.

Since she couldn't possibly lie about her experience, there was only one other possibility. The blade light he faced was several times stronger than what they had to deal with!

The thought flashed through his mind as he raised his guard. He couldn't show any sign of weakness and he knew that he would have to react quickly to whatever was thrown his way.

Shang Xia's lightning-like gaze shifted and he quickly glanced in the direction where the cry came from before.

He was greeted with a shocking sight. He saw the peaks of several mountains poking above the sea of clouds and a familiar figure held his left shoulder that was missing an arm as he struggled to fly towards one of them.

It was possible to fly in the secret region!

However, from the speed at which the person was flying, Shang Xia could tell that it wasn't as easy as in the outside world.

It came as no surprise that the figure flying through the air was Duan Liufeng and he probably obtained the other Abyssal Seal from god knew where.

Unlike Shang Pei and her husband who entered together in the past, Duan Liufeng and Shang Xia appeared at different locations within the secret region. Looking at Duan Liufeng flying through the air, Shang Xia wondered if there were even more Abyssal Seals out there. Could there be more people in the secret region other than the two of them?

With that concern in his mind, Shang Xia didn't start flying around immediately. He extended his divine perception to the greatest range he could to scout his surroundings. Back in the Cloud Water Gorge, he was able to detect a radius of 1000 feet around him without the help of the seal. In the secret region, he was able to observe anything within a 2 mile radius.

It seemed as though the suppression in the secret region was a lot weaker than in the Cloud Water Gorge. As he was observing the situation around him, he discovered that a portion of his divine perception was being ground away.

Turning to stare at the cause, Shang Xia noticed a mountain peak close to 1000 feet away. He noticed a long blade with a third of its body sticking out from the boulder it was stuck in and he turned to focus his divine perception on it. When his divine perception arrived within 30 feet of the giant boulder, it started to distort violently and he couldn't feel anything in the area around the boulder.

Shang Xia wondered if his divine perception was stopped by some sort of spatial screen or some strange formation, but it wouldn't take him long to figure it out now that he had arrived. As he thought of how he should progress, he decided to put his spear away.

Casually inspecting his spear while he put it away, he discovered that the tip of his Scarlet Star Spear had been shaved away. It was 3 inches shorter than it should be!

It probably happened when he blocked the blade light earlier.

At the end of the day, the blade light came from a divine weapon. The Scarlet Star Spear was merely a high-grade weapon and it wasn't comparable in terms of quality.

After discovering the damage to the tip of his spear, Shang Xia started to inspect the weapon a little more carefully and discovered that the shaft of the spear felt a little thinner than before.

Thinking back to how he stopped the blade light, Shang Xia recalled how it shattered his Spiritual Protection Substitution Talisman instantly. When he raised his spear earlier, Shang Xia was half prepared for his Scarlet Star Spear to shatter. Surprisingly, the spear managed to hold out and other

than becoming a little thinner and shorter than before, it still maintained its properties as a high-grade weapon.

Despite maintaining its grade as a high-grade weapon, Shang Xia knew that he wouldn't be able to bring out its full strength when wielding this modified version of his Scarlet Star Spear.

Actually, the blade light wasn't the full reason the Scarlet Star Spear was damaged. Shang Xia's Four Constellation Qi also had something to do with it.

Because he poured his Four Constellation Qi into his weapon to unleash his Divine Killing Spear, the destructive properties of his inner qi and the formidable power contained in the blade light caused his spear to shrink to its current form.

After realizing what happened to his spear, Shang Xia's first thought was about how useless a high-grade weapon was to him.

Shang Xia's Four Constellation Qi was different from other cultivators' rank four inner qi. He discovered that when he broke through the Jingxiu Peak's protection formation. When he cycled his inner qi according to the seasonal sequence, he managed to produce a terrifyingly strong destructive force. That was how he destroyed the remaining energy in the blade light earlier and if he had to unleash his Divine Killing Spear a few more times like that, the spear would definitely shatter. When that happened, he would never be able to fix it again.

Since a high-grade weapon wasn't good enough for him, a renewed sense of determination filled Shang Xia's heart. His gaze didn't falter as it landed on the blade stuck in the boulder.

Finally tearing his gaze away from the blade, Shang Xia looked at the sea of clouds around him. It didn't take long for him to discover that something was wrong. He could see several mountain peaks peeking out from the sea of clouds, but the number of peaks and their location were completely different from what he could sense with his divine perception.

He could see a dozen mountain peaks but his divine perception merely detected 5 of them. That was also including the mountain peak that contained the blade stuck in the boulder.

He was sure that his divine perception could detect anything within a 2 mile radius, but it failed to sense a mountain peak that was barely 2000 feet away. Shang Xia was staring right at it, but all he felt with his divine perception was a patch of empty clouds.

Is the space around the peak twisted? Or is that a trap...

Shang Xia thought to himself as he tried to find Duan Liufeng. Unfortunately, he was no longer able to locate the man.

Shang Xia didn't even realize when he lost track of Duan Liufeng and that caused him to grow even more wary.

Everything around him seemed to regain its original calm after he dealt with the blade light and an eerie silence pervaded the region.

Looking down at the mountain beneath him, Shang Xia decided he should examine it a little more carefully. When his divine perception covered the mountain, he felt a slight fluctuation coming from below. Hesitating slightly, Shang Xia slowly opened his palm. He felt a trace of energy emerging from the void around him before condensing into a seal that lay quietly in his hand.

It became slightly hefty after it formed completely and Shang Xia looked at it only to discover that it was the Abyssal Seal he had used to enter the secret region. That was because the six sided handle he placed on it before was also present.

Because of all the strange happenings, Shang Xia didn't know if the seal in his hand was an illusion or the real thing.

Before he could fully make sense of what was happening, his Four Constellation Qi seemed to stain the treasure. It formed some sort of connection with him now that it was fully formed and Shang Xia could feel a strange connection with something else on the mountain below.

Following the sense of attraction, Shang Xia descended the mountain. Since he started on the mountain's peak, he was way above the sea of clouds. Finally arriving 100 feet from the endless ocean of white, Shang Xia noticed an altar sitting not too far away.

Slowly approaching it, he discovered an empty slot in the middle of the altar that the Abyssal Seal would fit perfectly in.

The lines on the slot were carved into the altar and the stamp on the seal fit snugly into them.

Staring at the slot, Shang Xia aimed the seal in his hand carefully before stamping down decisively.

The moment he did, a strange glow surrounded the seal. Under Shang Xia's shocked gaze, the seal started to transform into a strange liquid that flickered at strange intervals.

Pinching his glabella which was pulsing slightly, Shang Xia muttered in disbelief, "This... This is world origin in liquid form!"

Chapter 469: Other People

"This... This is world origin in liquid form!" Shang Xia pinched his glabella to prevent the Crimson Soul Tablet from jumping out from his sea of consciousness. He muttered in equal parts disbelief and equal parts joy.

Being extremely careful, he didn't harvest the world origin in front of him immediately. Instead, he stared at the six sided handle of the seal that was floating in the pool of liquefied world origin and pondered to himself.

Stretching out his hand a little hesitantly, he reached out cautiously to grab the six sided handle. The liquefied world origin rose into the air with it.

Examining the six sided handle, it seemed to possess the ability to restrain world origin. Shang Xia wondered if that was what it was made for in the first place.

With the ball of liquid world origin in the air in front of him, an idea popped into Shang Xia's mind and he sent a trace of inner qi into the six sided handle. Its ability to restrain world origin was affected and the ball of liquid started to fall to the ground.

A strong pulse came from the space between Shang Xia's eyebrow and a formless force turned the liquefied world origin into a thin stream that burrowed into his glabella.

Looking into his sea of consciousness, Shang Xia discovered the Crimson Soul Tablet trembling gently as world origin poured into it.

The last bit of crack on the third face of the Crimson Soul Tablet quickly closed up and with the stream of liquefied world origin pouring into the tablet, the second face started to recover at an exceedingly rapid pace. The crack on the second face started to seal up and by the time he absorbed the entire ball of world origin, only two-thirds of the crack on the second face was left.

Shang Xia's eyes widened in shock. He knew how much world origin it devoured earlier. The ball of liquefied world origin didn't seem like much, but it was a lot more than Shang Xia had expected.

The ball of world origin he absorbed earlier seemed tiny, but it was extremely concentrated and was easily refined. He didn't know how such a concentrated ball of world origin was produced, but his gaze started to heat up as he stared at the altar.

It seemed as though the Abyssal Seal itself was created from world origin and the handle was used to restrain and contain it. Placing the seal into the slot in the altar allowed it to revert back to its original form.

Shang Xia wondered if he could dig the altar out from the ground and bring it with him, but he was afraid that he would ruin the mountain he was standing on. Thinking back to the many peaks poking out from the sea of clouds, he wondered if there was an altar like that on the rest.

The thought barely flashed through his mind when he felt a slight disturbance in the air above him. Raising his head, he saw a blade light soaring through the air.

Luckily, it wasn't aimed at him. Instead, it flew straight for another mountain peak. Looking closer at the blade light that was shooting through the skies, Shang Xia saw that it was much smaller and weaker than the one that he had to deal with when he entered the secret region.

Realizing the reason, Shang Xia quickly returned to the top of the mountain he was on to observe the falling blade light. A figure that just appeared finally noticed the danger and a yell filled the skies. "Not good!"

From the voice, Shang Xia could tell that the newcomer was a female cultivator and the next thing he saw was her tossing out a strange handkerchief in the air. The next moment, it turned into a massive sheet that tried to stop the incoming blade light.

It was a shame the sheet of cloth was sliced in two the moment it came into contact with the blade light. Just like that, her first attempt at protecting herself failed.

Seeing as the blade light wasn't slowing down, the ornate hairpin she was using shot upwards to meet the blade light. Extermination qi emerged from the hairpin as it started to grind away at the power contained in the blade light. It was a shame it was quickly destroyed by the tyrannical blade light.

The hairpin she used was clearly no ordinary treasure. From the extermination qi it produced earlier, a Martial Extermination Realm expert definitely had a hand in its creation.

Even though it failed to stop the blade light, the hairpin managed to weaken it to a certain extent.

Wasting 2 life-saving treasures, the female cultivator finally started to panic. She threw out an object in her hand in a desperate attempt to stop the blade light.

Shang Xia might be observing everything from a different mountain peak, but he could tell that the item she tossed out was an Abyssal Seal!

Now that he knew what an Abyssal Seal could do, Shang Xia couldn't possibly allow it to be destroyed by the divine weapon's blade light. He instinctively reached for the six sided handle and pointed it at the Abyssal Seal flying through the air.

Shang Xia could only stare at what happened next in a state of disbelief. The Abyssal Seal that the female cultivator had thrown out moved slightly in his direction. The subtle shift allowed the seal to avoid its fate of being sliced in two by the blade light, but that also caused the last bit of hope in the female cultivator's eyes to die out. She closed her eyes as she accepted her fate.

At the very last second, Shang Xia waved his sleeves and a frosty light shot towards the blade light at a terrifying speed. It seemed to travel through the void as it smashed heavily into the blade light that was about to slice the female cultivator in two.

The sound of shattering could be heard as the blade light was destroyed by Shang Xia.

"Thud..." The thumping of an object falling to the ground caused the female cultivator to slowly awaken. As she slowly opened her eyes, the terrifying blade light that was threatening to take her life a moment ago was nowhere to be seen. Only a small throwing knife that was in shambles lay at her feet.

The Fleeing Wind Dagger, one of the earliest graded weapons Shang Xia obtained, lay at her feet. After he got his hands on the weapon in the past, Shang Xia considered learning a set of techniques to use hidden weapons. However, there was only one Fleeing Wind Dagger and the moment he tossed it out, his technique would be rendered useless. His cultivation skyrocketed soon after, and he couldn't really care less about a low-grade hidden weapon like that.

At the very least, he managed to make use of it eventually. He used the Fleeing Wind Dagger to block the blade light, destroying it in the process.

"It's true! The divine weapon sends out an attack based on the cultivation level of the person who enters. She's a mere Martial Intent Realm cultivator and the blade light sent towards her was much weaker than the one I stopped when I first entered. Of course, it's not something she can stop on her own... It's no wonder Third Aunt's husband was killed without the slightest bit of resistance when they entered in the past." Shang Xia muttered softly. After stopping the blade light with his Fleeing Wind Dagger, Shang Xia gained a better understanding of the properties it contained. He could accurately determine that there was a trace of annihilation contained in it and would affect anyone struck by it.

Like Duan Liufeng, who was clearly struck by the blade light when he entered, had an entire arm sliced off. He might have been able to recover the arm he lost, but he was definitely suppressing the power of annihilation with his inner qi to prevent it from rampaging about in his body.

Speaking of Duan Liufeng, Shang Xia lost track of him in the sea of clouds...

"Junior Wei Qiongyi from the Liang Continent thanks Senior for the life saving grace..." Shang Xia's thoughts were interrupted by the feminine cry.

“Huh?” Shang Xia was a little awkward whenever someone called him ‘senior’. Looking at her from the mountain peak he was on, he could see that the female cultivator before him was in no way younger than him. Regardless, he didn’t harp on the topic. Instead, he asked in a slightly surprised tone, “Young Lady, are you from the Liang Continent? How did you enter the Taihang Mountains?”

“Taihang Mountains?” She cried out in fright. It didn’t matter if Shang Xia didn’t bring it up, but she seemed extremely confused now that he did. “Isn’t that on the eastern side of the Bing Continent? What has it got to do with the Liang Continent? Senior, are you playing a prank on me?”

“Young Lady Wei, do you mean to say that you were in the Liang Continent before this?” Shang Xia was genuinely confused as he yelled back at her. Since the two of them were standing on different peaks, they could only speak loudly when addressing each other.

Wei Qiongyi seemed to understand that someone with Shang Xia’s cultivation wouldn’t mess around with her for fun. Even though she was still frightened by her previous encounter with the blade light, she forced herself to regain her composure before explaining, “Senior, I was patrolling the spatial barrier that separates the Liang Continent from the battlefield between the two worlds but the barrier cracked suddenly and a strange white mist filled the region I was in. In an attempt to investigate what had happened, I went towards the crack in the barrier, and the next thing I knew, I appeared in this place. Senior, is this place really situated in the Taihang Mountains? How is it possible...”

Shang Xia was starting to feel uncomfortable from the way she was addressing him and he quickly interrupted, “Alright, there’s no need to call me your senior. I’m Shang Xia from the You Continent. Anyway, did you say that you were transported here after being swept up by the white mist contained in the spatial barrier separating your continent from the battlefield between the two worlds?”

Shang Xia could guess that she was hiding a whole bunch of details from the fact that she had an Abyssal Seal on her. However, he didn’t doubt for a second that she was lying about how she appeared in the secret region.

If what she was saying was true, could the secret region have something to do with the spatial barrier?

Thinking back to how similar the Cloud Water Gorge and the battlefield between the two worlds were, along with the dense fog that covered the region, Shang Xia wondered if the secret region was located in the void somewhere outside the Azure Origin World. Otherwise, why would the spatial barrier separating the Liang Continent from the battlefield between the two worlds have anything to do with her appearance in the secret region?

Shang Xia’s train of thought was interrupted by the lady once again. She seemed extremely agitated about something as she cried, “You’re Shang Xia?! Are you ‘Young Master Shang Xia’ from the Shang Clan of the Tongyou City and the chief disciple of the Tongyou Institution?! How... How did you already enter the Martial Extermination Realm?!”

“Young Master Shang Xia?! Who the hell calls me that other than those in the Shang Clan?” Shang Xia muttered to himself. However, he quickly snapped out of his thoughts and replied, “I didn’t expect you to know who I am. However, I have already graduated from the institution and cannot be considered their chief disciple.”

A complicated look flashed through Wei Qiongyi’s face but a trace of dejection soon took over. She sighed, “I am a deacon for the Weiwu Institution’s Outer Division and I greet Young Master Shang. Young Master Shang, your reputation is like the sun in the midday sky among the five border institutions right now. There’s no one who hasn’t heard of you. Once again, I would like to thank Senior for the life saving grace...”

Shang Xia wasn’t surprised by her identity. With her cultivation level, she had to be someone important. However, that wasn’t the point at the moment. Waving his hands in front of him, he spoke, “Don’t worry about it. Deacon Wei, there’s no need to be so formal.”

Shang Xia eventually gave her a little recount of what happened after he entered. He didn’t actually describe much. After all, he had barely entered the secret region himself.

She seemed to heave a sigh of relief after hearing his experience. She couldn’t help but ask, “Young Master Shang, so is it true that one will be able to leave the secret region after descending past the sea of clouds?”

Shang Xia nodded slightly but before he could say anything, he turned to stare in the direction of the mountain peak where the divine weapon was located.

Wei Qiongyi was surprised by his reaction but she quickly followed his gaze. She saw another yellowish-orange blade light rising into the air before chopping down at one of the other mountain peaks.

There was no doubt about it, someone else managed to enter the secret region!

Chapter 470: Four Essence Abyssal Wine

Shang Xia was sure that anyone who entered the secret region would appear on one of the many peaks above the sea of clouds. They would also have to take on a single strike from the divine weapon the moment they appeared.

From the looks of it, the divine weapon was able to discern the cultivation level of those who entered. The blade light that was sent at Martial Extermination Realm experts was countless times stronger than those aimed at Martial Intent Realm cultivators. That was the understanding Shang Xia had.

However, he was shocked by the new blade light that emerged from the divine weapon. The blade light that shot at the newcomer was a lot stronger than what Wei Qiongyi had to face, but it was still far from what Shang Xia had to defend himself against!

Was that a sign that the person who just entered was stronger than Wei Qiongyi but weaker than Shang Xia?

Even if the divine weapon had sentience, it shouldn’t be strong enough to discern the minute difference in cultivation level among all the experts that entered, right?

Just when Shang Xia was still feeling a little confused, an excited cry came from the mountain peak the blade light was flying towards. “Haha! Divine weapon’s blade light! Martial Uncle didn’t lie to me! Luckily, I made my preparations and suppressed my cultivation before entering.”

The words barely left his mouth when a terrifying aura emerged from his body. A powerful divine perception struck at the blade light that was falling on his head.

The person who entered was clearly a Martial Extermination Realm expert. However, he managed to seal off a part of his strength before entering the secret region to confuse the divine weapon’s detection.

What was more important were the words he spoke after entering. Shang Xia could tell that the person who entered the secret region wasn’t as clueless as Wei Qiongyi. His knowledge of the secret region was even greater than Shang Xia.

As his aura started to climb, his divine perception showed signs of overpowering the blade light coming his way. Soon after, a silver light emerged from his body. It smashed heavily into the yellowish-orange blade light, shattering it completely. The silver light slowly dissipated to reveal an exquisite looking silver hammer.

Because of the clash and presence of the divine weapon’s aura, Shang Xia’s divine perception couldn’t detect what happened on the mountain peak after the newcomer blocked the blade light.

Back when Duan Liufeng escaped his detection, Shang Xia learned that his divine perception wouldn’t be able to sense everything in the secret region. The information he learned with his sense of sight might be different from what he felt with his divine perception.

The only place where his vision matched his divine perception was the mountain he was standing on. When Wei Qiongyi appeared earlier, Shang Xia didn’t move immediately. He only made a move at the last second to save her life, and he did so by throwing his Fleeing Wind Dagger.

By using the dagger, he learned that the space between the peak he was standing on and the mountain peak where Wei Qiongyi appeared was stable.

When he learned that she came from the Weiwu Institution, his brain was starting to come up with a lot of ideas of how he could obtain some extra benefits from her mountain peak. Who would have thought that someone else would appear before he could form a proper plan?

What shocked Shang Xia even more was that the person who entered didn’t just possess a shockingly powerful cultivation base. He also seemed really familiar with the secret region.

In that instant, Shang Xia formed an unspoken alliance with Wei Qiongyi.

With a gentle movement, Shang Xia flew off the mountain peak he originally arrived on and flew straight for Wei Qiongyi.

The familiar sense of suppression that existed in the Cloud Water Gorge appeared once he started to fly and his inner qi was drained at an extraordinary rate. Luckily, the sense of suppression was a lot weaker than in the Cloud Water Gorge and Shang Xia had a much easier time.

Flying slowly, Shang Xia managed to make his way over to Wei Qiongyi’s mountain without any accidents.

Wei Qiongyi was clearly wary about Shang Xia's self-invitation over to where she was, but she decided to remain silent.

The deacon from the Weiwu Institution wasn't a fool. She knew that she was nothing in front of a Martial Extermination Realm expert. Instead of showing Shang Xia attitude, she might as well work with him. At the very least, she wouldn't annoy Shang Xia and might even gain some benefits out of it.

She was clearly someone who knew how to adapt to the situation.

Holding the six sided handle in his hand, Shang Xia first retrieved the Abyssal Seal that had fallen somewhere on the peak. The seal quickly fused with the handle and Shang Xia extended his divine perception to cover the mountain peak. Nodding slightly towards Wei Qiongyi, he indicated for her to follow him as he started to make his way towards the sea of clouds. It didn't take long for him to locate another altar.

Throughout the process, the divine weapon seemed to turn dormant once again.

No one knew if the person who entered earlier noticed Shang Xia and Wei Qiongyi, but Shang Xia guessed that with the newcomer's understanding of the region, he would probably be looking for the altar to convert the Abyssal Seal to world origin.

"This..." Wei Qiongyi looked at the slot on the platform and a guess quickly appeared in her heart. A trace of reluctance filled her mind after connecting the dots. According to her, the Abyssal Seal she tossed out earlier belonged to her. She should be the one to obtain any treasure she discovers on the mountain peak. While the multitude of thoughts ran through her mind, she casually forgot about how she was saved from certain death earlier.

Shang Xia didn't bother with Wei Qiongyi as the voice at the back of his head was urging him to hurry up. He felt threatened when he first entered the secret region and the sense of threat remained no matter how many precautions he took. When the newcomer entered the secret region, the sense of danger he felt grew even stronger.

Shang Xia could tell that something big was about to happen soon and he had to obtain all the benefits he could before the situation got worse.

Taking a step forward, Shang Xia stamped the Abyssal Seal into the slot and the change happened almost instantaneously. The seal started to melt, but it didn't turn into a ball of world origin like what he thought would happen. As the seal continued to dissolve, Shang Xia couldn't feel the slightest trace of world origin.

It seemed as though his previous conjecture was wrong and under his confused gaze, the liquid started to flow onto the altar to form a string of words. It didn't take long before a short passage could be seen on the altar.

"This... This..." Wei Qiongyi, who was standing behind Shang Xia, expressed her shock when she read the passage. There was also a trace of fear in her eyes as she glanced at Shang Xia from time to time as though she was afraid he would silence her in order not to prevent the contents of the passage from leaking.

Shang Xia was clearly disappointed after skimming through its contents. However, he chuckled in amusement after seeing her reaction. “Deacon Wei, relax. It’s just a rank four advancement formula. I won’t do anything stupid for something of this level...”

The words on the altar formed a complete rank four advancement formula, the Four Essence Abyssal Wine and it was pretty special compared to other rank four advancement formulas. The main ingredients of the rank four advancement medicine was the essences of lightning, rain, cloud, and dew. With those essences, the advancement medicine could be crafted by mixing them with other assistive herbs.

The number of rank four herbs required to craft the Four Essence Abyssal Wine was numerous, but they were pretty ordinary rank four herbs that weren’t exactly hard to find. The crafting process wasn’t too difficult either.

What made the Four Essence Abyssal Wine special was the mild effects it had. It didn’t bring about extremely violent fluctuations when used to break through and cultivators who used the Four Essence Abyssal Wine would enjoy an exceptionally high success rate when advancing to the Martial Extermination Realm.

Naturally, it had its drawbacks. Anyone who used the Four Essence Abyssal Wine to break through wouldn’t possess frightening combat abilities. They would only enjoy a longer lifespan compared to cultivators of the same rank. They might also find it easier for them to escape in difficult situations.

Wei Qiongyi finally relaxed after hearing Shang Xia’s admission. All the worry she felt was replaced by a sense of joy.

She might be a deacon in the Weiwu Institution, but there were countless Martial Intent Realm cultivators among them. There were many who were stronger and more experienced than herself. There were also those who had a stronger background. If she had to wait for the institution to allocate her resources for her breakthrough, she might only be able to do so after dozens of years.

When the time came, the Weiwu Institution wouldn’t be any different from the Tongyou Institution. They would provide her with a completed rank four advancement medicine. They wouldn’t show her the complete advancement formula for her breakthrough.

Now that the formula for the Four Essence Abyssal Wine was laid out before her, she could immediately begin her preparation to enter the Martial Extermination Realm. With a rank four advancement formula, Wei Qiongyi’s options were no longer as limited as before. She could even use it to trade for herbs and treasures she required. Entering the Martial Extermination Realm wasn’t as unachievable as she had thought!

For obvious reasons, the words on the altar wouldn’t remain forever. They became a little fainter by the minute until not a trace was left. However, Shang Xia and Wei Qiongyi had long since carved the formula into their memory.

Shang Xia might have entered the Four Constellation Realm and wasn’t lacking in rank four advancement formulas, but no one would grumble about having more rank four advancement formulas. It strengthened the foundations of any faction that had it and Shang Xia wouldn’t mind trading it for resources he required in the future.

Now that the words were gone, Shang Xia reached over to the slot and retrieved his six sided handle.

He didn't expect to detect something strange when he touched it again.

Flipping it around, Shang Xia saw a thin layer attached to it. It resembled a brewer's yeast and Shang Xia grunted softly when she saw the look in Wei Qiongyi's eyes. "Hah. It's actually a piece of Flowing Goblet Brewer's Yeast!"

Wei Qiongyi's eyes lit up once again as it was the brewer's yeast required to complete the Four Essence Abyssal Wine. She didn't expect to find it so easily.

Lightly tapping the six sided handle, the brewer's yeast fell into his hands. Shang Xia handed it directly to her after seeing the look of anticipation in her eyes.

"This... Isn't this a little too valuable?" Wei Qiongyi knew how precious the brewer's yeast was and she was finally starting to feel a little uncomfortable. After all, she had already learned a rank four advancement formula moments ago.

Shang Xia felt a slight disturbance within the range of his divine perception and his gaze flickered slightly. However, he maintained his composure and chuckled, "No matter what, I only found this place after using your Abyssal Seal. Also, if you have no other business here, I suggest you leave immediately. This secret region is about to become... It's about to become really dangerous!"

The moment the words left his lips, a massive blast filled the skies and shocked Wei Qiongyi. The space contained in the secret region started to quake violently.