

## The Heavens 51

### Chapter 51: First Training Session at the Martial Extremity Realm

When Shang Xia retrieved the knives he obtained from Yan Ming, Shang Quan's eyes nearly popped out from their socket.

"Actual graded weapons?! A pair of them?!" Shang Xia gasped in fright. When he finally pulled himself back to reality, he looked around them. Ensuring that no one had noticed them, Shang Quan dragged Shang Xia back into the Shang Pavilion.

"Where did you get these?!" The moment they returned to the Shang Clan's territory, Shang Quan heaved a sigh of relief. His tone turned serious.

Shang Xia was shocked by Shang Quan's sudden change in attitude, but he eventually revealed everything that happened with Yan Ming.

After listening to the story, Shang Quan heaved a sigh of relief. However, he didn't fully relax. "Even though the origin of these weapons is not a problem, but since they came from the Wind Swallow Race, they will definitely turn you into a target!"

Shang Xia grimaced. He had already formed a grudge with them due to the problem with Yan Ming. Now, it seemed as though the grudge was only going to deepen.

"Is that really necessary? Isn't it just a pair of low-grade weapons?" Shang Xia asked.

Of course, he didn't mean to brag. It was just that he had too many of them! Other than the Ivory Fan, he had the Delicate Jade River Sword! The sword was a mid-grade weapon, and he naturally didn't think that low-grade weapons were valuable.

A snort left Shang Quan's lips. "You're something else alright! Do you know what a low-grade weapon means to our Shang Clan?"

Hesitating slightly, he finally realized that a low-grade weapon was much more valuable than it seemed. He probed, "Do we not have a lot of them?"

He was lucky that Shang Quan had been doing business and crossing paths with different types of people. His experiences allowed him to become a lot more mellow-tempered, but hearing what Shang Xia said, he snapped, "What do you think?! Our Shang Clan has five graded weapons in total! Apparently, someone here is holding two of them!"

"Is that really true?" Shang Xia felt that his uncle was pranking him.

"The number of graded weapons we have aren't many to begin with. The quality isn't that good either. Out of the five of them, two of them are mid-grade weapons. The other three are low-grade ones."

Shang Xia stammered, "This... This can't be true... My grandpa's Nine Firefly Lance is a high-grade weapon!"

In a dispirited tone, Shang Quan explained. “That doesn’t belong to our clan. The Nine Firefly Lance belongs to the institution. As the deputy patriarch, he gained the authority to use it. The moment he loses his position, he will have to return the treasure.”

Shang Xia nodded in enlightenment. He didn’t think that that would be the case.

Glancing at Shang Xia, Shang Quan continued, “One of the mid-grade weapons is with Uncle Ke, and two low-grade weapons have been given to two experts at the Martial Extremity Realm. Even your aunt, Shang Xi, doesn’t possess suitable weapons!”

“Then... I have two of them!” Shang Xia suddenly realized that the weapons in his hands were getting a little hot.

“Do you finally realize how important the weapons are to our family?!”

Shang Xia nodded hastily. He decided to hand his Ivory Fan and Delicate Jade River Sword back to the clan.

However, he was met with a hearty chuckle from Shang Quan. “There’s no need for this. You can keep it for now. The moment you return them, you won’t be able to show them off anymore.”

Shang Xia thought about the time he flaunted his weapons back in the institution and his scalp went numb.

“?!”

Shang Quan noticed the look on Shang Xia’s face and he laughed, “No one in the family uses these weapons. It remains in the vault most of the time and anyone can apply to use them. Do you really think we’ll give them to you so you can strut your stuff in the institution?”

Shang Xia came to a realization. His aunt, Shang Xi, grabbed the mid-grade sword from him several times. However, she always returned them after a few days.

Shang Xia looked at the pair of knives and muttered, “Uncle Quan, this...”

Shang Quan looked at the chips on the blade and a smile appeared on his face. “There’s no need to worry. Our craftsman might not be good enough to create low-grade weapons, but repairing some damage isn’t a problem. In fact, he will be more than happy to fix them!”

“Great...” A brilliant smile appeared on Shang Xia’s face.

After thinking for a moment, Shang Quan reminded Shang Xia, “Our clan will provide the materials to repair the weapon. You can keep them after they are repaired. Since you’re part of the clan, it can be considered a boost to our organization too.”

“Of course!” Shang Xia grinned.

“Moreover, the knives came in a pair. The actual value of them doesn't pale in comparison to a mid-grade weapon. Now, our clan will be able to close the gap between the other three...”

Excitement bubbled in Shang Quan’s heart.

A question left Shang Xia's lips all of a sudden. "Our Shang Clan is one of the four great clans of the Tongyou City. Is the difference between our families so obvious?"

Shang Quan said bitterly, "Brat, you were born after everything that happened. You have no idea how powerful the five great families before the calamity was. Now, three of the four great clans of the Tongyou City, the Ji, Liu, and the Yun Clan, come from the remnants of the five great families. We can only be considered a new upstart compared to them."

"Even a skinny camel is larger than a horse... The three other clans might not be as glorious as the five families of the past, but our Shang Clan can't compare to their hundreds of years of accumulation." Shang Quan muttered. "Just the high-grade weapon they possess shows it. The patriarchs of their families are also deputy patriarchs, but the weapons they hold come from their families."

Shang Quan's explanation gave Shang Xia a whole new understanding of his clan. He felt a sense of oppression like never before.

Shang Quan could feel the change in Shang Xia's mood and he quickly comforted his nephew, "There's no need to be too sad. Our strength has been rising the past few years, and we've been slowly closing the distance between our clans. The pair of low-grade weapons you brought back today greatly shortened the difference between us. If anyone brings back another weapon in the future, we might just surpass them!"

Shang Xia thought about it for a moment and his expression turned serious all of a sudden. "Uncle Quan, do you really think that we can grow stronger than them with another low-grade weapon?"

Shang Quan stared at Shang Xia in stunned silence and he muttered uncertainty, "Perhaps? I don't know..."

"Oh." Shang Xia nodded and took out his dagger he stuffed into his boots. "What do you think about this dagger? It's called Origin Light and it's also a low-grade weapon!"

"..."

Shang Quan's eyelids started to twitch violently and he felt his brain buzzing slightly.

...

Even though Shang Xia didn't interact too much with Shang Quan, he felt that his uncle was someone who was always calm and collected.

When he thought about the terrified expression Shang Quan had on his face when he brought out three graded weapons, he chuckled in his heart.

Shang Xia sat in a quiet room his uncle organized for him in the Shang Pavilion and the scent of incense filled the air.

He thought back to the inheritance he obtained back in the Scripture Depository and ensuring that he recalled every word, he started to focus on the Triple Mystery Polarity Art. He pondered over every single sentence contained in the manual.

At the same time, the inner qi in his dantian started to rotate around subconsciously.

Due to the presence of the giant yin yang diagram, his dantian remained relatively stable as his inner qi moved about.

After entering the Martial Extremity Realm, Shang Xia absorbed a ton of heaven and earth qi. They gathered in his dantian alongside his own inner qi and both types of qi were controlled by the giant yin yang diagram.

If anyone else was in the same situation as him, they wouldn't dare to use their inner qi at all in fear that it would lose control and cause their dantian to explode.

Of course, Shang Xia was the only exception.

After entering the Martial Extremity Realm, he wasn't just cautious when using his inner qi. He even fought with others several times! After every battle he experienced, his foundations became a little more sturdy.

From the start, Shang Xia knew that the Taiji Yin Yang Diagram in his dantian was the core of his strength. Martial arts, martial intent, and different techniques were only secondary when compared to the diagram.

As such, Shang Xia didn't intend to look for a martial art that could allow him to control his inner qi! Nothing could come close to the usability of his yin yang diagram.

One could even say that the moment the diagram appeared in his dantian, Shang Xia had already completed half the creation of his secret art. It was no ordinary secret art he was creating. As soon as he completed it, it would definitely be considered one at the high-grade level.

The only thing he was lacking was a way to maximize the power when using his inner qi.

That was the reason he chose the Triple Mystery Polarity Art. He was interested in the idea within, and when he infused it with his own secret art, he would complete it for real!

"If I start at the two extremities of water and fire..." Shang Xia thought to himself as the yin yang diagram started to spin.

Water gushed around half of the diagram while fire burned strong on the other half.

"Water and Fire are the most basic of ways to enter the Martial Extremity Realm. Even though they look simple, the combination of the two are extremely stable. The reason the creator of this manual chose these two elements is probably because of the dangers behind the transformation of the different types of inner qi."

The diagram rotated slowly, and the heaven and earth qi stored in his dantian started to awaken. They poured towards the diagram and started spinning about with it.

At the same time, the inner qi that was contained in his body gathered towards his dantian in one unstoppable wave.

Chapter 52: Second Extremity?

In the Shang Pavilion, Shang Quan was speaking to a well-built man with a bearded face.

There was a look of excitement on the bearded man's face, and his actions were extremely animated. It was as though he was on the verge of breaking out into a dance.

Shang Quan nodded lightly at the side as he tried to calm the bearded man down.

Finally realizing that he was a little over the top, the bearded man calmed himself as his face flushed with embarrassment.

When he thought about the four weapons that Shang Quan was handing over to him to fix and customize, he soon lost control of his emotions again.

After estimating the resources he would require from the Shang Clan to carry out the specifications, he requested for another batch of herbs from Shang Quan.

Finally appeasing the craftsman of the Shang Clan, Shang Quan arranged for someone to send them tea. However, he felt a sudden fluctuation of energy coming from the room above.

Shang Quan wasn't the only one who felt it. The bearded man raised an eyebrow suspiciously and looked upwards.

Soon, their expressions changed. The heaven and earth qi in the surroundings started to move as they charged straight for the room at the very top! There seemed to be some sort of black hole up there sucking up all the heaven and earth qi.

Now that the heaven and earth qi in the surrounding were absorbed by something at the top of the tower, more heaven and earth qi started to move to replenish it. They were lucky they were on the Tongyou Peak. The protection formation had the ability to regulate heaven and earth qi and it directed a whole lot of it towards the Shang Pavilion the moment an abnormality was detected. If they were in the wilderness, the sudden disappearance of so much heaven and earth qi would cause the surrounding to turn into a wasteland.

“What’s going on?” The bearded man asked as he got ready for battle.

Suppressing the fright in his heart, Shang Quan forced a chuckle, “It’s nothing special, this is just an accident.”

Before the bearded man could continue his line of questioning, Shang Quan interrupted him. “I’ll hand over the items you need as soon as possible. After you repair the knives and fan, grind away the insignia of the Hundred Profession Pavilion, I’ll personally head over and beg my little sister to allow you to use the full accumulation of our treasury to create a graded weapon!”

Shang Quan paused slightly, and he turned serious. “It’s time for our Shang Clan to nurture a master craftsman who can create graded weapons!”

The bearded man’s expression turned a lot more solemn when he heard what Shang Quan said.

After sending the bearded man away, Shang Quan headed up to the highest floor of the Shang Pavilion. When he noticed Shang Xia still deep in seclusion, he left quietly.

...

In his cultivation room, Shang Xia gasped in fright. He didn’t expect to create such a huge commotion when he circulated the Triple Mystery Polarity Art for the first time.

“I was too careless... I didn’t think that it would transform so much after I fused the secret art with the Yin Yang Diagram! Looks like my cultivation method will be completely different from what I imagined...” Shang Xia thought to himself.

Ordinary cultivators would slowly work their way up with their newfound techniques, starting from scratch. When they started cultivating after entering the Martial Extremity Realm, they would start with a single element before going to the next one. In fact, they would try to reach a certain level of control over a single element before progressing. That could be considered to be at the small completion stage of a cultivator at the Martial Extremity Realm. When that was done, they would focus on the second element.

When they finally controlled the second element as well as the first, they would achieve a new sense of balance. They would reach the large completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm.

Only then would a cultivator be able to touch on the entrance towards the Third Order of the Primary Realm, the Martial Intent Realm!

Throughout the process, if one wanted to make their foundations a little more stable to increase their chances of breaking through, they would comprehend a martial intent. Supplementing their understanding over the elements they controlled, they would be able to reach the grand completion stage of controlling their elements.

When cultivating, one could choose not to focus on one element. If they trained in both elements at the same time, they would need to ensure that their control over both elements was at the same level. The moment one element got out of control they would experience cultivation deviation instantly.

As such, training in both elements was not feasible for a majority of cultivators! After all, one would meet special situations like the phenomenon with the dual suns in the sky. That would instantly cause one element to overpower the other!

Moreover, if a cultivator had to focus on keeping both elements in check, they wouldn't be able to do anything else!

As such, training one element at a time would be the way to go.

There were even some of them who sealed off the other element in order not to receive any distractions when cultivating.

Shang Xia's way of training was completely different from theirs. The Yin Yang Diagram in his dantian ensured that the elements were balanced at all times. Regardless of which element he trained in, the equilibrium wouldn't be broken.

Or so to say, the training methods in the Azure Origin World weren't suited for Shang Xia at all! There was no point in classifying him at different levels in the Martial Extremity Realm. Shang Xia could train however he liked!

After circulating the Triple Mystery Polarity Art, the Yin Yang Diagram in his dantian seemed to experience a transformation and he started to suck in heaven and earth qi frantically.

During his cultivation session, he tried to transform the Yin Yang Essence Qi in his dantian into the fire and water element respectively. When he was done with one circulation, the fire and water qi returned back to the Yin Yang Essence Qi it had once been. Shang Xia rejoiced in his heart. With the method recorded in the manual, he started to change the form of the Yin Yang Essence Qi to the qi of strength and softness as recorded in the second part of the manual.

In the Triple Mystery Polarity Art, the author mentioned that the second level would be much harder than the first. One would be putting their life on the line, and they needed to exercise extreme caution when doing so. However, Shang Xia was training in it recklessly!

The initial stage of the Triple Mystery Polarity Art indicated the element of fire and ice. The second extremity was the difference of softness and strength. The final level was to harness the power of the void and reality.

Fire and water, softness and strength, void and reality... Those were the three mysteries!

In the Scripture Depository of the Tongyou Peak, Shang Xia only managed to obtain the first volume of the Triple Mystery Polarity Art. He needed to return to the institution to obtain the second part. The second part volume would contain the transformation process to the void and reality.

“But... Do I really need the method?” Shang Xia sneered when he noticed the inner qi in his body already had the properties of softness and strength. A third transformation process began immediately.

As the Yin Yang Diagram in his dantian started to turn blurry, half of it seemed as though it would disappear entirely.

The other half slowly started to turn solid and it became so real that Shang Xia felt he could touch it.

That was the third level of the Triple Mystery Polarity Art.

From everything that happened, Shang Xia seemed to have fused the secret art into his own technique!

Shang Xia could transform his qi however he wanted!

He could even increase the types of qi he controlled after doing a little more research and understanding the different types of qi...

Feeling the change in his body, a sudden thought crossed Shang Xia's mind.

The Second Order of the Primary Realm was called the Martial Extremity Realm now, but in the past, it used to be called the Extremity Realm! That seemed to be a more appropriate name for his cultivation level!

Even though Shang Xia was young, his knowledge on the history of cultivation couldn't be doubted.

Before the calamity happened, the martial world had so many classifications of cultivation levels that it was getting messy.

Cultivators from different regions would have to exchange pointers in order to understand how strong the other party's cultivation actually was.

There were too many hot headed cultivators in the past, and the contest could actually turn into an all out battle. Many lives were lost in the process.

When the battlefield between two worlds appeared, the seniors of the Azure Origin World came together and fixed the terms of cultivation due to the pressure coming from the Azure Spiritual World. Only then did a unified term come about.

From the Martial Realm, Martial Extremity Realm, Martial Intent Realm, the term of every cultivation realm was created twenty years ago.

“If they used the term Extremity Realm to classify this level, they won’t be able to properly show off their strength...” Even though he was currently in a cultivation world, there wasn’t anything they could brag about.

As a person who transmigrated, Shang Xia would definitely compare the achievements of his own world to the one he was currently in...

“‘Martial Extremity Realm’, ‘Extremity Realm’... None of their cultivation terms make sense!”

Shang Xia ended his first training session just like that and before he left the room, he muttered to himself, “Should I give my own realm a term of its own? I can probably call it ‘Yin Yang Realm’... Wait a minute, they probably wouldn’t know what it means...”

“Maybe the term ‘Heaven and Earth Realm’ would be better...”

#### Chapter 53: Bad Premonition

After leaving the room, Shang Xia wanted to head downstairs but a roaring laughter boomed in his ears.

A grin slowly formed on Shang Xia’s face as he raced downstairs only to be greeted by another stocky man.

“Seventh Uncle, why are you here?”

The man was none other than Yan Qi.

“Young master!” Yan Qi laughed. “The Tongyou City received news of your disappearance and the lady sent me over to look for you. The heavens help the worthy indeed... Young master managed to return unharmed, and your cultivation also increased! I was delighted to hear the news!”

Shang Quan added from the side, “Little Qi here followed another patrol squad to look for you and the outer disciples. Luck didn’t seem to be on his side. However, he managed to join the ambush on the Wind Swallow Race.”

Shang Xia’s eyes lit up and he asked, “Seventh Uncle, tell me what happened during the ambush! Did Tang Yuan really make his move?”

Yan Qi’s expression sank and he became extremely serious. “Indeed... Tang Yuan’s cultivation had already reached the grand completion stage of the Martial Intent Realm! One of the Martial Intent Realm cultivators on the Wind Swallow Race’s side who was only at the large completion stage was caught off guard and seriously injured. His appearance in the battle instantly changed the tides in our favor.”



“However, the expert of the Wind Swallow Race was no pushover. After suffering his injury, he went all out and tried to injure Tang Yuan at the cost of his life. Just like that, he managed to crack our formation and give his companions a chance to escape. Because of his sacrifice, Tang Yuan chose to hold back in order to preserve the Tongyou Peak’s fighting strength. The other Martial Intent Realm cultivator of the Wind Swallow Race charged out of our encirclement with several disciples...”

“Tang Yuan actually entered the grand completion stage of the Martial Intent Realm!” Shang Quan frowned. “It’s no wonder he didn’t appear even after all the commotion the raid caused. He didn’t appear when Liu Jitang deployed away a large portion of the patrol squads... He was probably trying to break through then! If he was sitting at his post, Liu Jitang wouldn’t have been able to move so many personnel around as he liked...”

Tang Yuan wasn’t just the head of the patrol squads. He was also one of Ji Wenlong’s capable generals.

Now that he entered the grand completion stage of the Martial Intent Realm, the strength Ji Wenlong controlled would take a huge leap forward!

Even though they suffered some backlash when the convoy was attacked, his breakthrough would definitely give the Protection Division a huge morale boost. With the victory they achieved against the Wind Swallow Race, Tang Yuan’s reputation in the Tongyou Peak and institution would increase greatly!

Even though the Tongyou Institution was the greatest power in the city controlling everything, the four clans under it were fighting with each other either in the dark or openly. The battle would sometimes stretch into the administration of the Tongyou Institution.

Glancing at Shang Quan, Shang Xia could roughly guess that his uncle was slowly evaluating the strength of the four clans.

The silence was broken by Yan Qi. “During the final part of the battle, a sudden change occurred and experts of the Wind Swallow Race appeared outside our formation to assist those trapped. They killed two of our disciples and helped their companions escape...”

Shang Xia’s mind turned to Yan Ming who had hunted him down during the raid on the convoy. Even though Yan Qi didn’t say anything about the people who appeared at the end, Shang Xia could practically confirm that it was her.

Even though he was curious, Shang Xia knew that it wasn’t time to ask Yan Qi such questions. He needed to verify something else.

“Seventh Uncle, was there anything unusual back in the clan before you came? Did anything happen in the city?”

Shang Quan’s train of thought was broken by Shang Xia’s sudden question and he turned to look at the kid in shock.

Yan Qi had no idea what Shang Xia referred to and he replied after some time. “There shouldn’t be anything unusual. The lady panicked a little when she sent us out to look for you, but that was it... As for the city...”

Yan Qi paused for a second when he spoke up to that point.

“What happened to the city?” Shang Xia asked.

“They imposed martial law. The reason was because of the cultivators of the Azure Spiritual World. Is that something unusual?” Yan Qi frowned.

The city implementing martial law wasn’t something new. Every time a huge event happened in the battlefield between two worlds, the city would enter a state of emergency.

Even though it wasn’t very often, it would still happen from time to time.

It didn’t happen too often due to the cultivators of the two worlds restraining themselves in recent years.

When the battlefield between the two worlds just formed, the killing that happened caused rivers of blood to form. When that happened, Tongyou City implemented martial law once and it lasted an entire year!

Shang Xia’s expression turned serious and he continued, “Seventh Uncle, how many cultivators did the clan send other than you?”

An awkward expression formed on Yan Qi’s face. “Young master, please don’t get mad... The lady was placed in a difficult situation and a lot of our members were sent to protect the institution. We only managed to...”

Shang Xia’s expression sank and he waved his hand hastily. “You misunderstood. It was a simple question. I’m not mad at anything...”

Shang Quan looked outside and fell deep into thought.

Yan Qi might not understand Shang Xia’s thoughts, but Shang Quan was much sharper. “Xia’er, you seem to think that something happened in the city... Is that it?”

“It will be great if it’s just our city...” Shang Xia wasn’t planning to explain further and he quickly changed the topic. “Uncle Quan, it’s been so long. Has there been no news on my fifth grandpa?”

“I sent a report to Uncle Ke previously. However, there hasn’t been a reply...” Shang Quan hesitated slightly. “Xia’er, do you know what is going on?”

Shang Xia forced himself to calm down before going through his thought process. “I received some bad news and I was planning to verify it. However...”

Shang Quan nodded his head to indicate his understanding. A bitter smile appeared on his face. “Right now, the higher ups of the institution and the various families cannot be contacted. If not for Tang Yuan’s appearance, I would have thought that all the Martial Intent Realm cultivators in the Tongyou Peak had disappeared.”

Shang Xia sucked in a cold breath and sighed, "Looks like we have no other choice. I have to look for Tang Yuan."

Turning to look at Shang Quan, Shang Xia asked, "Uncle Quan, can you make an arrangement for me to meet him?"

"Leave it to me." Shang Quan nodded. However, he hesitated slightly before saying, "Is this really important? Will it affect our Shang Clan?"

"It's a matter of life and death..." Shang Xia's expression sank.

With his face turning pale, Shang Quan rushed out of the pavilion. "I'll go right now."

...

The location of the Patrol Hall was at the foot of the mountain. It took up a massive area and from afar, it looked like a massive stadium.

"Our Tongyou Peak placed the Patrol Hall at the foot of the mountain so that it'll be easy for them to head out. They wouldn't be able to fit on the peak either." Shang Quan explained to Shang Xia.

Since Shang Xia was in such a rush, Shang Quan brought him over directly.

The two of them were stopped at the entrance, and Shang Quan bowed slightly and requested, "I am Shang Quan of the Shang Pavilion and I need to meet Tang Yuan immediately."

His actions were humble and he looked like nothing more than a businessman.

The guard at the entrance was no fool. He retrieved a letter Shang Quan handed over and he looked at Shang Xia standing behind him quietly. "Manager Shang, please wait a moment. I'll relay your message."

Shang Xia muttered at the side, "Looks like he's starting to put on airs now that he broke through..."

"Well, it's only going to get worse." Shang Quan whispered at the side.

Nodding, Shang Xia agreed with what his uncle said.

The guard who went into the Patrol Hall earlier ran out after some time and invited them in. "Please enter. The head of our Patrol Hall, Master Tang Yuan, is ready to see you."

Shang Quan nodded slightly and entered the Patrol Hall. He wasn't unfamiliar with the place.

After passing through a small passage, Shang Xia saw a group of disciples training in a field nearby.

"Shang Xia!" A voice rang through the air and a horse charged towards him. It stopped a foot away from Shang Xia, displaying the rider's amazing horsemanship.

"What are you doing here?" The rider removed his facepiece and stared at Shang Xia vigilantly.

“Zhang Jianfei? Did you enter the Protection Division too?” Shang Xia frowned. “I need to meet with Master Tang Yuan immediately. I’m too busy to mess around with you.” He turned away after speaking, but he was stopped by a yell.

“Hold it right there!” Zhang Jianfei leaped off his horse and charged towards Shang Xia instantly.

Twisting his body around, Shang Xia sent a palm flying towards Zhang Jianfei.

Unable to stop himself from rushing forward, Zhang Jianfei was pushed back by Shang Xia’s sudden actions.

After stabilizing himself, a trace of rage formed in his heart. “You...”

His expression changed abruptly as he felt another wave of energy traveling towards him.

Snorting loudly, he circulated his inner qi hastily. Too bad it was useless as the wave of energy crashed into his body without the slightest bit of resistance.

The power of softness and strength showed itself at that moment. He was sent flying by Shang Xia before he could react.

Trying to crawl to his feet, he felt yet another wave rushing towards him. He could only roll on the ground in order to avoid the strikes.

With grass and dirt all over his body, he looked extremely disheveled. With rage clouding his heart, he didn’t notice his sorry appearance as he glared at Shang Xia. He didn’t understand how he lost without the ability to fight back.

When he was still stuck in a daze, Shang Xia was nowhere to be seen. Only his voice rang in Zhang Jianfei’s ears. “Since you joined the Protection Division, didn’t Ju Hang tell you that I broke through to the Martial Extremity Realm?”

“Martial Extremity Realm?! Is this the dao of softness and strength or void and reality?!” Zhang Jianfei spat, but anger filled his heart. “Damn it! Ju Hang, no wonder you talked so much shit previously! You definitely lost to this brat and want me to experience the same fate!”

Chapter 54: A Panicky Tang Yuan

“Is that your fellow outer disciple?” Shang Quan asked after they left.

Shang Xia chuckled, “Yeah. He was one of my opponents in the outer division.”

“Looks like you improved quite a bit. He couldn’t even take a single strike from you!” Shang Quan muttered.

Shang Xia laughed in response and a trace of contentment flashed in his eyes.

As they chattered with each other, they quickly arrived at the main hall.

Shang Quan sniggered under his breath when he saw that there wasn’t a single guard at the entrance. However, he quickly suppressed his amusement.

“This is absolutely disgraceful! Are all of you stupid or something?! How dare you frame Junior Brother Yuan?! With your guts, are you going to slander me in the future?!” A roar rang through the air as the two of them approached the main hall.

A soft cough followed by a weak response could be heard. “Senior Brother Yuan, please calm down. They’re too young and don’t think through their words... Let’s stop here. We have guests coming and it wouldn’t be nice to embarrass ourselves in front of them.”

Silence filled the air for some time, but a loud yell soon filled the air. “Your position of vice captain is stripped and I’ll dock half a year of your pay! Get out! Are you trying to embarrass yourself by staying here?”

A sorry figure limped out of the hall and his expression changed when he saw Shang Quan and Shang Xia standing outside. He quickly scuttled away.

Shang Xia could see that the person who was kicked out of the hall was Jiang Changyu who was throwing all sorts of accusations at him the other day.

Looking at his sorry figure, Shang Xia tapped Shang Quan’s shoulder and whispered, “Uncle Shang, do you know what’s going on?”

When Shang Xia saw the shit-eating grin on Shang Quan’s face, he understood everything...

When the two of them entered the hall, they saw a figure sitting in the main seat. He had a narrow forehead and large chin, and his nose was unusually big for his face. It was none other than the head of the patrol squads, Tang Yuan!

Another middle aged expert was sitting on his right. From his robes, Shang Xia recognized that his position was comparable to Yuan Zilu. He was probably another deacon from the Protection Division.

Several captains stood behind him and Shang Xia recognized three of them. Ji Sheng, Tang Youqian, and Yu Shenglong were people he had seen before.

On Tang Yuan’s left was a man who was coughing lightly. His complexion didn’t look too good, and he was Yuan Zilu who held the experts of the Wind Swallow Race back during the raid.

“Haha, I wonder what wind managed to blow the great manager of the Shang Pavilion over to my humble hall! Your presence brings light to our tiny little Patrol Hall... Please, take a seat!”

Tang Yuan released a hearty laughter and he gestured for them to sit. Shang Quan might only be at the Martial Extremity Realm, but he was the person who held the authority of the Shang Clan when Shang Ke was absent.

Since Shang Quan requested an audience, Tang Yuan should have greeted him at the entrance. Even if he didn’t, he should have stood up when greeting the man. From the looks of it, he wasn’t showing Shang Quan much respect.

Of course, Shang Quan turned a blind eye to his actions. He looked for a random seat in the hall and laughed, “I wouldn’t dare to receive your compliment! I’m here because my nephew wishes to meet Master Tang Yuan.”

After he spoke, he greeted Yuan Zilu before drinking his tea nonchalantly. He threw Shang Xia over to do whatever he wanted.

“Oh?” The smile on Tang Yuan’s face started to fade as he got comfortable in his chair. He looked at Shang Xia and sighed, “Alright, speak your mind. I’m a little tired from the battle against the members of the Azure Spiritual World.”

As if on cue, he released a long yawn to show that Shang Xia was interrupting his rest.

Cupping his fist, Shang Xia asked, “I wonder if Master Tang Yuan can contact Deputy Patriarch Ji. This junior has something serious to report!”

“Heh...” Tang Yuan seemed to have heard the greatest joke of his life and he snorted, “Looks like this old man is merely a messenger in your eyes... What’s so serious that you can’t tell me?”

Shang Xia replied, “Indeed... The matter is extremely serious. I hope that Master Tang Yuan will listen to my request.”

Tang Yuan finally snapped. He sneered in contempt, “Deputy Patriarch Ji is busy defending the Tongyou Peak! Do you really think you can disturb him with any little request you want?! Hmph. I don’t even know what you have to say to him... How am I supposed to request for an audience with him?! Even if you’re someone from the Shang Clan, you can’t do as you wish here!”

The corners of Shang Xia’s lips curled upwards and a trace of amusement flashed in his eyes. An ‘awkward’ expression soon appeared on his face and he sighed, “Does Master Tang Yuan really wish to know? I haven’t even told Uncle Quan what happened... Can I really say it in front of everyone here?”

He swept his gaze across everyone in the hall with a worried look on his face. It was as though they were not fit to listen to what was going to come out of his mouth.

Snorts left the lips of the various captains and those in the hall.

“Alright... I’ll really say it...”

“Hehe...” Tang Yuan’s second in command couldn’t control his laughter and neither could the captains behind him. All of them revealed mocking expressions while looking at Shang Xia.

“The Rose Party sent the cultivators of the Azure Spiritual World a secret report that our patriarch, Kou Chongxue, is seriously injured and missing!”

Shang Xia didn’t speak too quickly. He looked at everyone in the hall with a mysterious expression on his face.

Even so, his words were like a massive storm that swept through the hearts of those present.

As for Tang Yuan, he realized that things were going south the moment he heard the name ‘Rose Party’.

When he heard the words 'secret report', he grabbed his armrests to get up, but he crushed them into dust in a fit of anxiety. As his body shook unsteadily, the greatest bomb was released.

Tang Yuan leaped to his feet with all his might as the chair he was sitting on crumbled to dust.

When Yuan Zilu heard the news, his already weak body trembled violently and the cup in his hand crashed into the ground.

"Pui!" Shang Quan spat out the tea in his mouth. He didn't expect Shang Xia to actually say something like that.

The captains and deacon sitting opposite him were completely dumbstruck.

"Preposterous!" Tang Yuan roared as he released his aura completely. The strength of a cultivator at the grand completion stage of the Martial Intent Realm was on full display as a formless pressure came crashing down on Shang Xia.

"How dare you spread rumors like that?! Do you think this is something you can joke about as you please?" Shang Quan yelled at Shang Xia all of a sudden, but his figure appeared in front of his nephew as he resisted the pressure coming from Tang Yuan.

His face turned pale, but he stood his ground.

The captains and deacon came back to reality and started to yell at Shang Xia in unison.

With Tang Yuan's aura crushing him, Shang Xia found it hard to speak. For an expert at the Martial Intent Realm, they could suppress cultivators weaker than them with their divine sense alone!

If ordinary cultivators at the Martial Intent Realm could do that, there was no need to speak for Tang Yuan who was at the grand completion stage of the Martial Intent Realm. He was an existence who was headed towards the Fourth Order of the Primary Realm!

Luckily for Shang Xia, Shang Quan came over to share the pressure with him. As the Yin Yang Diagram in his dantian rotated violently, it started to grind away at the pressure crushing him. He only managed to speak after some time.

Shang Xia might be a cultivator who just broke through to the Martial Extremity Realm and his words didn't carry much weight, but Tang Yuan knew what he was saying was the truth.

There was no way he could have made it up. After all, even Martial Intent Realm cultivators in the Tongyou Peak might not have heard of the name 'Rose Party' before. There was no way in hell Shang Xia would know about them unless he heard some reliable news.

As the head of the patrol squads, Tang Yuan was considered part of the upper echelons of the Tongyou Peak even if he wasn't considered to be the core of the organization. Everything that was going on seemed to back Shang Xia's words up.

That was exactly the reason he didn't wish for Shang Xia to continue talking.

The rage he was displaying was merely a facade to hide the panic brewing in his heart.

If what he said was true...

Tang Yuan didn't dare to imagine what would happen next!

When he released his aura to pressure Shang Xia, he expected Shang Quan to interfere. Even so, he had half a mind to punish the uncle and nephew pair. However, something unexpected happened. He discovered that Shang Xia's inner qi was flowing a little strangely. Not only could it grind away his aura, it was using the pressure to strengthen his will!

It might seem minuscule, but he could feel his martial intent slowly disappearing.

There was definitely something weird about the brat!

The thought flashed through his mind, but he was interrupted by a soft voice.

“Master Tang, if I were you, I'll report this immediately! Regardless of the validity of the news, you no longer have the authority to suppress it.” Shang Xia spat word by word.

Shang Quan stared at him incredulously, but he couldn't utter a single word.

“You...” Tang Yuan was raging in his heart, but he knew that whatever Shang Xia said was true. Regardless of whether what Shang Xia said was a rumor, it was out of his reach. He could only swallow his unhappiness.

“No one in this hall is allowed to leave!” Understanding the severity of the situation, Tang Yuan locked down the place instantly.

The deacon sitting on his right snapped back to reality. Even though he was extremely flustered, he knew how serious things were. He glared at Shang Xia and snapped, “Who else knows about this?!”

Chapter 55: Ji Wenlong

“Who else knows about this?!”

As Tang Yuan dispersed his aura, the entire hall fell silent.

Shang Xia chuckled lightly and shrugged, “Every single outer disciple from the third division heard about this back in the valley.”

Seeing Tang Yuan's face turn green, Shang Xia continued, “Calm down. I have long since told them to keep the news to themselves. They know how serious the implications are. If any of them wanted to spread the rumor, they would have long since done so.”

Tang Yuan stared sternly at Shang Xia and he swept his gaze across everyone present. “I'll look for Deputy Patriarch Ji right now. Before I return, anyone who tries to leave the hall will be a traitor of the Tongyou Peak and will be punished with death!”

Shang Xia knew that if Kou Chongxue was really injured, the higher ups of the Tongyou Institution would definitely be in the loop.

One couldn't be sure that Tang Yuan's hysteria was due to Shang Xia's revelation. He might be afraid that the news was actually leaked to the outside world!

Shang Xia knowing about it wasn't terrifying. But from what he said, he learned the news from the members of the Azure Spiritual World.

What would that mean?!



That meant that there was definitely a traitor in the institution!

Moreover, the traitor's position in the institution wasn't low. There was no way he would be able to come into contact with such sensitive news otherwise.

As the pillar of support of the You Continent, if the Tongyou Institution was in trouble, there was no way the Four Spiritual Peak would remain quiet.

One had to know that the Tongyou Peak was in a precarious situation. All of them thought that it was because of the lack of manpower due to Liu Jitang's departure, but if that wasn't the real reason, the situation might be worse than they thought.

If the members of the Azure Spiritual World attacked in order to verify their intelligence, the Tongyou Peak would be in true danger.

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If they failed to assess the situation properly, the results would be catastrophic.

Now that Shang Xia reported the news to Tang Yuan that the cultivators of the Azure Spiritual World might be aware of Kou Chongxue's injury, the situation had to be reassessed by the higher ups immediately!

In the past, they had been taking precautionary measures to deal with Liu Jitang's departure. From what it seemed, they might have fallen into their opponent's trap!

That was the true reason behind Tang Yuan's panic.

The moment he left, the entire hall sank into an uneasy silence.

The gaze of everyone present was concentrated on one man, Shang Xia.

As the person of interest, Shang Xia didn't really care too much. He simply sat down and turned to the other deacon. "How can I address you, teacher?"

As long as he wasn't talking to a fellow student, it was never wrong to call them a teacher.

The deacon chuckled unnaturally. "You can call me Sang Youqi..."

"Instructor Sang... Glad to meet you!" Shang Xia heard that there were three deacons of the patrol hall, and he finally met one of them.

Shang Xia thought back to when Shang Quan told him about Liu Jitang deploying the patrol squads in Tang Yuan's absence and he couldn't help to think that the other two deacons were brought away by him.

Shang Xia nodded slightly and he turned to whisper to Shang Quan, "Uncle Quan, what is the Rose Party exactly? They seem to be some group of people who like to admire flowers from the name of their organization..."

"Ahem!" Yuan Zilu coughed softly and Shang Quan turned to look at him.

Glancing at Deacon Sang, Shang Quan observed the various captains behind him. "Since we have reached this point, there is no need to keep any more secrets. They'll know soon anyway."

It was clear he was talking to Yuan Zilu and Sang Youqi.

As they didn't respond, Shang Quan knew that they had given their consent.

"All of you might not know about the Rose Party, but you should have heard of the Evil Remnants of the five great families."

The expression on several captains' faces changed.

"Evil Remnants? Are they the traitors of the five great families of the past? Shang Xia asked.

When Shang Quan was about to explain, his expression stiffened as he turned to look at the entrance of the hall.

A terrifying pressure surrounded the hall as everyone felt their bodies growing numb.

"Indeed... The Evil Remnants refer to the traitors of our continents. They come from different families and clans that stood tall in the past..." A tall figure strode into the hall and his hair was combed back in a slick fashion. His hands were clasped behind his back as he approached the main seat.

He emitted a dignified air, and from the moment he entered, he caught their attention. Everyone looked at him as they seemed to ignore the existence of the group of cultivators behind him.

The person who appeared was the strongest deputy patriarch of the Tongyou Institution, and his strength was second only to Kou Chongxue! Deputy Patriarch Ji Wenlong strode quickly towards the main seat.

By the time he arrived, a new chair had been prepared for him.

A wave of energy swept through the hall after he sat down, causing everyone to break out of their trance.

Shang Xia and the others finally noticed that there were several other cultivators behind him. All of them were heavyweight figures in the Tongyou Institution, and Tang Yuan was only qualified to walk at the very back.

Those seated in the hall quickly got up.

Shang Quan and Shang Xia turned to look at a bearded elder who entered with Ji Wenlong.

"Uncle Ke!"

"Fifth grandpa!"

The two of them greeted in unison.

The elder nodded slightly in response before sitting on the first seat on Ji Wenlong's right.

Shang Xia and Shang Quan headed over and stood behind him respectfully.

When everyone got to their seats, Shang Xia looked around and fell deep into thought.

All of a sudden, Shang Xia felt a piercing gaze on him.

In the hall, no one dared to release their aura. Neither did anyone dare to suppress him with their divine sense. Even so, Shang Xia felt an undeniable pressure pushing down on him. It was countless times more terrifying than what Tang Yuan did earlier.

Shang Ke waved his hand casually and sighed, "This junior of mine was too rash. Let's not trouble a kid..."

The pressure dissipated in an instant and Shang Xia heaved a sigh of relief.

However, Shang Ke turned his head the next instant and chided Shang Xia, "Brat, you alarmed so many people... What are you waiting for? Hurry up and spill what you heard. If you dare to hide anything else, our Shang Clan won't be able to protect you."

Shang Xia hiccuped and he repeated everything he heard from the cultivators of the Wind Swallow Race.

Even though many of them had prepared themselves, it was a different feeling when they heard the words come out of Shang Xia's mouth.

Only after a long time did laughter break the silence. A middle aged man sitting beside Shang Ke said, "Since the cultivators were easily killed by Little Shang Xia over here, they have to be ordinary cultivators. Can't you tell from their names? They don't even share the proper family name of the Wind Swallow Race, 'Yan'! How can they know anything? They might..."

"Enough! Stop lying to yourself!" Ji Wenlong snapped, causing an awkward expression to appear on the man's face.

Shang Quan whispered to Shang Xia, "That man is called Ji Min and he's a Martial Intent Realm expert of the Ji Family..."

Shang Xia nodded and he heard someone else asking cautiously, "Deputy Patriarch Ji, is Patriarch Kou really... Really injured?"

Everyone turned to look at Ji Wenlong in an instant.

That was the true question plaguing their hearts.

Shang Quan took the chance to mutter into Shang Xia's ear, "That's Deacon Zhao Yang of the Scripture Depository."

"I've seen him before."

As the core figure of Tongyou City, Ji Wenlong was the only one who had the authority to say anything about the matter.

Without any fluctuations in his expression, Ji Wenlong muttered indifferently, "There's no need for any of you to know this."

The faces of many people in the hall changed.

However, Ji Wenlong turned his gaze to the four people sitting beside him before anyone else could say anything. "Has there been any news from the Outreach Division? When will Qian Sitong be back?"

“That’s Deacon Li Zengyu of the Outreach Division. Qian Sitong is his superior.” Shang Quan added, “Qian Sitong left with Liu Jitang previously.”

Shang Xia might not recognize the man, but he had long since heard of Qian Sitong’s great name.

Facing Ji Wenlong’s questioning, Li Zengyu was clearly flustered. He got to his feet and apologized, “Other than the news of Tongyou City’s lockdown, we received nothing out of the ordinary... Also... We... We can’t seem to contact Chief Qian...”

Ji Wenlong stared at the rest and asked, “Alright, since we are all here, update me on everything that happened. Now is not the time to keep any secrets.”

After a short silence, someone stood up and spoke. “I’ll start. Please feel free to correct me if I’m wrong. First, I would like to talk about the situation at hand.”

“If things are really as Shang Xia had said and Patriarch Kou suffered serious injuries, the Rose Party will definitely join hands with the Four Spiritual Peak. We will be in a precarious situation when that happens. If the Rose Party makes their move, Tongyou City will be thrown into chaos. We won’t be able to receive any reinforcements from the institution when that happens. Next, Deputy Patriarch Liu left with a huge portion of our strength. We have a serious gap in our defenses right now, and even though Deputy Patriarch Ji came to hold the fort, we’ll be in trouble if the Four Spiritual Peak launches an offensive. If we fail to receive support from the institution...”

He couldn’t help but shake his head silently after speaking up to that point.

#### Chapter 56: Snapping Awake

Due to Liu Jitang’s sudden departure and the change in the situation, Ji Wenlong only brought along Yuan Zhen, one of the heads of the Protective Division.

He was also the one analyzing the situation on the Tongyou Peak at the moment.

“As such, I am extremely unsure if we can succeed in protecting the Tongyou Peak!” Yuan Zhen shook his head while forcing a smile. “Of course, this is just my view on the matter. Feel free to bring up your thoughts.”

“So what do you propose?” Shang Ke asked all of a sudden.

Sucking in a cold breath, Yuan Zhen’s voice sank. “We give up on the Tongyou Peak and return to protect the city. We’ll fight our way back in the future!”

“Absolutely not!” Yuan Zilu roared while disregarding his injury. “Even though this is a serious matter, it’s not completely hopeless. Deputy Patriarch Liu might come back at any time and our defenses will increase significantly. With the protection formation, we can defend ourselves against the Four Spiritual Peak!”

Yuan Zhen sighed, “Brother Yuan, you’ve been resting all this while and you have no idea what we’ve been doing. Deputy Patriarch Ji brought us out to fight experts outside the Tongyou Peak the

past few days in order to restrain the experts of the Four Spiritual Peak. Our plan was also to raise such a huge commotion to catch Deputy Patriarch Liu's attention. We sent out multiple squads to look for him, but we received nothing in return."

Yuan Zilu sighed softly, "The Tongyou Peak was built using twenty years of hard work! So many fellow disciples have left their lives here..."

Yuan Zhen shook his head in response, "Of course I know that... But..."

Everyone looked at Ji Wenlong, waiting for the final decision.

A low voice left Ji Wenlong's mouth. "We cannot give up on the Tongyou Peak so easily."

Shang Ke nodded. "Forsaking the Tongyou Peak would mean that we would give up on the battlefield between two worlds. We would fall into a passive state for the foreseeable future."

As a member of the Ji Family, Ji Min wouldn't go against Ji Wenlong. He declared solemnly, "We can only choose to battle to the death!"

Yun Yishu, a member of the Yun Family, proclaimed, "My Yun Family will follow everyone into battle!"

Since three of the four great clans had already spoken, there was no longer anything else to say.

Seeing as the outcome had been decided, Yuan Zhen continued, "Since that's the case, we'll have to make preparations to fight to the death. Let's hope Deputy Patriarch Liu will be able to return in time!"

As soon as the words left his lips, a question that remained on everyone's mind rang through the air. "Why did Deputy Patriarch Liu leave the Tongyou Peak anyway?"

Deacon Zhao Yang's question was like a bucket of cold water that rained over their heads.

A mocking smile appeared on Zhao Yang's face. "Wait... Am I the only one who doesn't know?"

Li Zengyu looked at him and opened his mouth, but he eventually swallowed his words.

Shang Xia wanted to pipe in, but a thought flashed through his head. "Could he be looking for traces of the Zhu Family?!"

From the looks of their faces, it seemed that many of them knew.

Only experts like Zhao Yang who would mind their own business most of the time would be kept in the dark.

Ji Wenlong was evidently not planning to go deeper into the topic. He looked at the person sitting on his right who hadn't spoken a word since the start and he spoke respectfully, "I wonder how Brother Shang views the matter?"

He wasn't from the Shang Family and he was the head of the Contribution Division. He was called Shang Bing, and he was from the same generation as Ji Wenlong and Shang Ke. Ever since he entered the hall, he hadn't said a word as though nothing was related to him.

Hearing Ji Wenlong's question, Shang Bing slowly opened his eyes and a sharp light flashed through them. "I've been thinking about this for a while and I thought of a problem."

After pausing the second, he pointed at Shang Xia and said, "From what he said, the Rose Party not only revealed the fact that Patriarch Kou was injured. They seem to be trying to form an alliance with the Four Spiritual Peak. If they only plan on revealing the information, they would be able to do it with any single spy. However, they revealed themselves to the Four Spiritual Peak. In order to coordinate their actions, the upper echelons of both sides would have to meet."

"There's the problem. Where and when will they meet?" Shang Bing's words cleared their minds instantly. Yun Yishu slapped his thighs and yelled, "That's right! If the two of them want to meet, the Rose Party will have to enter the battlefield between two worlds! Otherwise, the experts of the Azure Spiritual World would have to enter our Azure Origin World!"

"Those who can participate in the meeting have to be in the Fourth Order of the Primary Realm. It's not possible for experts like that to avoid detection when entering or leaving the battlefield between two worlds..." Yun Yishu's voice became smaller and smaller as he spoke. Eventually, he didn't dare to continue.

From what he was implying, the Tongyou Institution definitely had a traitor in their midst! He could even be implying that Liu Jitang, who had left the Tongyou Peak, was part of the Evil Remnants!

Ji Wenlong broke the silence eventually. His voice was steady and the words that came out of his mouth next were unquestionable. "Liu Jitang is no traitor."

Even though his words disproved everything that they were talking about earlier, everyone heaved a sigh of relief.

Shang Bing had long since expected Ji Wenlong to say that and he nodded slowly. "Alright, it doesn't matter whose side we're talking about. No Martial Extermination Realm expert would be able to meet under our noses. That rules out the Tongyou Institution and the area we control. There's only a single possibility left."

Shang Bing looked at the important figures of the Tongyou Institution and spat, "Another passage between our Azure Origin World and the battlefield opened up and we have no idea where it is."

"That's impossible!" Li Zengyu was the first to oppose him. "If a second connection appeared, there would definitely be a sign in the You Continent! Our Outreach Division would have caught wind of it!"

Shang Bing looked at Li Zengyu and muttered, "What if it's just a passage that allows one to enter but not leave?"

Before Li Zengyu could respond, Shang Bing explained, "If that were to happen, the sign would only appear in the battlefield between two worlds! It might even bring about a small-scale Origin Tide!"

Shang Xia's face changed and he stared at Shang Bing.

"No one would be able to discover any abnormality unless they are close to it. Since Liu Jitang's departure, our strength has greatly reduced. Our control over our territory weakened and we might have missed it."

Tang Yuan, who hadn't said a word since the appearance of the higher ups, couldn't help but speak. "Even though this is extremely reasonable, the existence of a passage is questionable. The Rose Party doesn't have the ability to create a passage of their own. Otherwise, why wouldn't they try in the past twenty years?"

Shang Bing looked at Ji Wenlong and fell silent.

Ji Wenlong seemed to be thinking carefully about his next words. However, he saw a tiny arm shooting into the skies all of a sudden.

Ji Wenlong wasn't the only one who was surprised. Everyone in the hall turned to look at him.

Shang Xia lowered his hand and sighed, "It really is possible for such a passage to appear."

Silence descended on the lands.

"Ridiculous!" Shang Ke slapped the table by his side and yelled in apparent anger, "Brat, why did you keep something so serious from us?! Spit it all out!"

Shang Xia wanted to cry out in indignation. How was he to know that the Origin Tide was a serious event?!

He didn't hesitate as he told them about the Origin Tide he experienced.

Of course, he casually left out the part where he broke through.

He didn't think that someone would actually make a conjecture based on his story. Shang Bing sighed, "Looks like my guesses were true..."

Yuan Zilu added, "From the looks of it, the appearance of the Wind Swallow Race had something to do with the Rose Party!"

Tang Yuan didn't expect the proof to come so quickly.

When he thought about how many times he was questioned and accused by the Contribution Division because of the raid, Tang Yuan's impression on Shang Bing fell again.

However, he had to say something now that they proved him wrong. "If that's the case, the actions of those from the Wind Swallow Race make sense. They didn't leave even after robbing us. Could they be there to welcome the members of the Rose Party?"

Shang Xia coughed lightly, "The reason they chose to stay was to attract your attention. Also, they were waiting for someone with a pure bloodline to return to their side..."

Chapter 57: Enemies are Destined to Meet

"Looks like a massive battle is about to break loose... I wonder how many people will live after this war..." Shang Xia muttered to himself.

In the hall, countless battle plans were thrown out and they eventually decided on the entire course they were going to take. A huge battle loomed over their heads.

Contrary to the oppression Shang Xia should be feeling, he felt a trace of excitement bubbling in his heart.

After he gave them the intel on the Origin Tide, the upper echelons of the Tongyou Institution quickly predicted the actions the Four Spiritual Peak and Rose Party were going to take.

Even without Liu Jitang and the men he brought away, those in the hall felt as though their chances of winning had increased.

No one spoke about abandoning the Tongyou Peak any longer.

Now that everyone was of one mind to charge straight into battle, the undercurrents that were brewing around the Tongyou Peak stopped instantly. Every single individual of importance left the main hall of the Patrol Hall and started their preparations.

Countless pieces of information flew out of the Tongyou Peak. Many reports and orders were thrown out in a hurry.

Seeing as nothing would concern him at the moment, Shang Xia decided to return to the Shang Pavilion to continue his cultivation.

Even though the battle could break out at any time, Shang Xia felt that any amount of strength he could accumulate would prove to be invaluable.

Since he just entered the Martial Extremity Realm, it was time for him to increase his strength as much as possible! Especially since he just started training in his secret art.

He didn't wish to waste a single second!

Who would have thought that before Shang Xia could return, Shang Quan would appear to drag him back to the Patrol Hall.

By the time he returned, most of the people had already left. The only ones left were Ji Wenlong, Shang Ke, Ji Min, Yun Yishu, and Shang Bing.

"Kid, I heard that you managed to capture a live Mutated Rain Swallow. Why don't you bring it out for us to see? Are you afraid that it will run away?" Shang Bing spoke the moment he arrived.

Shang Xia didn't know how to react.

Out of those present, Shang Bing was known to be an extremely serious man. No one had seen him joke around with an ordinary disciple before.

Shang Ke beckoned Shang Xia over and said seriously, "You managed to tame the Mutated Rain Swallow but you allowed it to run free all this while. Are you sure it will still listen to you? The bird is extremely crucial to our future plans. I hope you don't let us down at the critical moment... This concerns the safety of our Tongyou Peak..."

Shang Xia stared at them in silence, but a smile soon formed on his face. "Of course it does!"

Shang Ke looked at Ji Wenlong and nodded slightly.

Receiving the confirmation, Ji Wenlong said, "Ji Min, you should stay here and start our battle preparations. Shang Ke, Brother Shang Bing, Little Yun, let's go see the kid's pet."

...



The Four Spiritual Peak was located thousands of miles away from the Tongyou Peak, and it was made up of four mountains. It was the location where experts of the Azure Spiritual Race gathered in the battlefield between two worlds.

This time, Ji Wenlong and the others went straight towards the steepest of the four peaks, the Spiritual Swallow Peak.

The distance between the peaks could be crossed by Ji Wenlong in a mere hour. After all, he was able to travel through the air by manipulating the qi in the air.

As for Shang Ke and the others who were at the Martial Realm, they could probably arrive in slightly more than two hours.

Due to the fact that they had to bring the kid who had barely broken through to the Martial Extremity Realm, they took four whole hours before arriving.

The only reason they moved so quickly was because Shang Ke taught Shang Xia a movement technique along the way, the Irregular Steps!

Otherwise, they would have to waste more time waiting for Shang Xia to move at his own pace!

Shang Xia's desire to learn a movement technique had already been ignited when he was hunted down by Yan Ming the other time.

In the Scripture Depository, he wanted to look for a suitable one but he felt that they were far too lacking compared to the Shang Clan's Irregular Steps!

The movement techniques available to the general population of cultivators were either focused on close combat battles or traveling far distances. Only rarely would one find movement techniques that did both.

Of course, focusing on both would mean that they couldn't bring out the benefits of either side fully.

The Irregular Steps was praised by Kou Chongxue to be the second best movement technique in Tongyou City! It only lost to the Yun Family's Delicate Cloud Steps.

His evaluation was enough to prove the technique's worth.

Due to the fact that the Irregular Steps focused on speed, it was the only aspect that was better than the Yun Family's Delicate Cloud Steps. With Shang Ke's teaching and experts at the level of Yun Yishu and Shang Bing giving Shang Xia pointers at the side,, he managed to learn it extremely quickly. His speed increased visibly, reducing the burden he brought to the rest.

Naturally, Shang Xia only managed to gain a preliminary understanding of the Irregular Steps. He had to practice a lot more in the future.

Ever since Shang Xia entered the Martial Realm, he hadn't truly cultivated a technique that belonged solely to the Shang Clan. Now that he was imparted the Irregular Steps, it was the first inheritance technique he received.

As they approached the Four Spiritual Peak, the five of them started to withdraw their aura as they selected the most complicated of terrain. They needed to avoid detection at all costs.

In the last fifty miles, Ji Wenlong brought out five talismans and handed them to everyone in the party.

When Shang Xia held the talisman in his hand, he could feel that it was made with a type of special material.

He looked at the runes inscribed on it and saw that it was much more complicated than what he had drawn in the past. He had no idea what the runes represented.

“This is a concealment talisman. It can hide our aura and prevent it from leaking to the outside world.” Shang Ke’s voice entered Shang Xia’s ear and he introduced it briefly.

Shang Xia followed Shang Ke’s instructions and imbued his inner qi into the talisman. After doing it, he slapped it against his chest.

As the light around them started to distort, their figures became blurry.

“This is only effective for two hours at best. Once we see that old swallow, let’s wrap it up as soon as we can.”

That was the first time Shang Xia heard Ji Wenlong say anything during the entire trip.

His tone was firm and there was no room for negotiation. Shang Xia wouldn’t dare to say anything that went against him, but Shang Ke and the rest seemed to be accustomed to it.

“Two hours... It would be a little difficult to convince that old hag...”

“You should know how cautious they are... They won’t give us anything without obtaining some benefits upfront. Now that we’re looking for them in such haste, they’ll definitely try to rip us off!”

Ji Wenlong snorted, “Alright. I’ll do the negotiating then.”

“Absolutely not!”

“No fucking way!”

Shang Xia might not be able to see anyone who spoke but he could guess how ugly Ji Wenlong’s expression was.

When Shang Xia let his thoughts run wild, a formless hand slapped his shoulder and Yun Yishu spoke in an unwavering voice. “Enough! Little brat, you’ll be in charge of negotiating with the old hag!”

“...”?What the fuck?

As they approached the Spiritual Swallow Peak, they avoided several patrol squads and went towards a hidden entrance.

Ji Wenlong’s voice rang in their heads all of a sudden. “She’s here...”

A chuckle came from the depths of the valley as soon as he spoke. “Since all of you are here, why don’t you reveal yourselves? Are you waiting for me to personally welcome you?”

Ji Wenlong was the first to reveal himself. He walked straight into the valley.

Shang Xia slowly tore off the talisman from his chest. He discovered that the talisman was completely intact but it started to leak heaven and earth qi.

Shang Ke and Shang Bing did the same, but Shang Xia discovered that he couldn't feel the slightest trace of Yun Yishu.

"Head on in. I'll keep a lookout." Yun Yishu's voice echoed in Shang Xia's mind.

That was the Yun Clan's secret concealment technique. It was also the reason why the Yun Clan was in charge of the Outreach Division in the Tongyou Institution.

Shang Xia kept the talisman in his robes before following behind the three seniors.

As soon as they entered, they saw a kind old lady looking at them.

She held a staff that was much taller than her, but the smile on her face didn't fade as she looked at those who came.

Shang Xia's gaze quickly fell on the person behind the old woman.

It was someone extremely familiar, and he was greeted with a glare. As their gazes clashed in mid air, Shang Xia cursed in his heart. Why is she here?!

Chapter 58: Hehehe

The moment the two of them noticed each other, a sense of disdain filled their hearts. Shang Xia could only think about how unlucky he was.

Of course, the others didn't notice their exchange at all. They had no idea what the two kids were thinking about.

The old lady standing on the other side laughed, "Why do we have to behave so secretly... All of us are old friends! There's no need for such pettiness... To the one standing outside, why don't you come in for a chat? There's no need to behave so cautiously. I have complete control over the territory I own. If word gets out that you have to stand guard outside, people might think that I'm mistreating my guests."

There wasn't the slightest trace of movement that came from the entrance and the old woman wasn't angered in the slightest. Instead, a look of surprise appeared on her face. "Oh? What a mysterious concealment art. It's no wonder it feels so familiar."

Ji Wenlong interrupted her as a trace of irritation flashed through his eyes. "Enough. There's no need for all this nonsense. Let's get straight to the point. If your Wind Swallow Race chooses not to take part in the battle, we can reach an agreement on something."

The old woman revealed a grin but a trace of mockery could be seen in her eyes. "Old bastard, all you can do is fight. Your brain can't handle this. Who am I supposed to be talking to today?"

Ji Wenlong snorted in contempt. However, he remained silent after. It was true that he was absolute trash at negotiating. Shang Ke and Shang Bing emerged from behind him.

Despite that, the old woman didn't look at them. Her gaze fell onto Shang Xia who was a distance away.

“Oh my, whose descendant is this? He looks so likable... Wait a minute. He looks pretty familiar too.” As she spoke, she gestured for him to come closer. She looked like a kind old grandmother beckoning for her grandson to approach.

As Shang Xia walked forward slowly, he thought about the way she spoke to Ji Wenlong. There was no doubt she was also an expert at the Fourth Order of the Primary Realm. Those creatures they know as old monsters who devoured their opponents without spitting out so much as bones should be used to describe her.

Coughing lightly, Shang Ke interrupted, “Elder, you shouldn’t scare the kids. All of us are pressed for time. Let’s talk about something more practical, shall we? The longer we stay here, the more likely it is for us to catch someone’s attention. I don’t think you want to be caught talking to us, no?”

The old lady finally retrieved her gaze and she stared at Shang Ke. “I know you. You’re the next in line of the Shang Clan!”

“Ahem... I’m the fifth in line. Shang Bo is my third brother...” Shang Ke explained.

The old woman didn’t care too much about what he said. The smile on her face didn’t fade as she continued, “Is that the kid who caught the Mutated Rain Swallow?”

“You’ve seen him. Let’s talk about what we agreed on...”

“Hehehehehe.” She interrupted him again. “Well, I changed my mind!”

Ji Wenlong, who had been standing passively at the side perked up all of a sudden. As he got ready to fight the old swallow, an uneasy silence descended in the valley.

Shang Ke’s expression changed slightly. “You’re the ancestor of the Wind Swallow Race. Are you going to go back on your words?”

She chuckled in response, “There’s no need to rush things. Why don’t you listen to my suggestion?”

She glanced at Ji Wenlong at the side before ignoring him completely.

Shang Bing stepped up and attempted to diffuse the situation. “Please.”

Raising an eyebrow in surprise, she didn’t seem to recognize him. However, she eventually spoke. “My promise remains. If you get the kid to hand over the method to tame a Mutated Rain Swallow, I’ll find another reason to withdraw an expert at the Martial Intent Realm. I’ll also personally promise not to touch anyone on the Tongyou Peak who has a cultivation base lower than the Fourth Order Primary Realm. What do you think?”

Shang Bing sank into contemplation.

In fact, her suggestion was extremely tempting. If they took into account the battle that was about to break out, every single Martial Intent Realm cultivator made a difference.

As for her promise, it was enough to stop her from going for those who were weaker than her.

Shang Ke chuckled in response, “Looks like you’re facing a lot of pressure too!”

The old woman glanced at him and snorted, “Het, that’s not an attitude you should be coming in with. Don’t forget, I haven’t even seen the live Mutated Rain Swallow. I’m already showing my trust in you guys by agreeing to this.”

Even though she seemed to be compromising, the threat behind her words couldn’t be more clear.

If not for Ji Wenlong’s presence, Shang Ke and Shang Bing would have been crushed by the pressure she was emitting.

A helpless smile formed on Shang Ke’s face. “We’re not bringing the bird out because we’re afraid you’ll change your mind again.”

“What?” Her expression changed all of a sudden. “You brought it with you? Is that why that brat outside isn’t coming in? Is he afraid that I’ll snatch it from you?”

“You won’t dare to do it.” Ji Wenlong snorted at the side.

His words were like a fart that the old lady ignored. Instead, an interested expression formed on her face. “Alright, bring it out. I promise not to change my promise. Hehehe, I might even add some favorable conditions for you guys if I see it.”

Shang Ke looked at Shang Bing and they suppressed the smile that was threatening to break out on their faces. They weren’t surprised by her reaction at all. Turning around, Shang Ke signaled to Shang Xia.

At that moment, Shang Xia was listening to their conversation casually. He didn’t expect to be called on so soon.

Since they were afraid that the members of the Wind Swallow Race would do something stupid, they advised him not to approach.

When he thought about how Yan Ni’er was going to be used as a bargaining chip with those from the Wind Swallow Race, a sense of distaste filled Shang Xia’s mind.

It was true that the deal would greatly reduce the casualties of the Tongyou Peak, and Yan Ni’er wouldn’t be in much danger. However, he hated the feeling that his fate was controlled by others!

Even if Yan Ni’er was a mere bird, she was Shang Xia’s bird!

Seeing Shang Ke’s signal, Shang Xia could only call for Yan Ni’er despite his reluctance.

It didn’t take long before a loud cry was heard and a tiny figure shot towards him.

The tiny black figure was headed straight to Shang Xia, but when she felt the terrifying aura coming from inside the valley, she started to chirp noisily in mid air. Yan Ni’er circled the skies trying to make sense of the situation.

The look on the old woman’s face had long since changed. Her eyes were wide as she stared at the tiny bird circling the air. Her grip on her staff tightened and her fingers were trembling slightly.

Even with her countless years of cultivation, her thoughts were in a mess.

If not for Ji Wenlong ready to pounce, she might have chosen to risk it all.

Tamed... The brat actually managed to tame a Mutated Rain Swallow!

What did that represent?

With the thinning of the Wind Swallow Race's bloodline, a live Mutated Rain Swallow was the only hope for them to purify their bloodline!

Now, their only hope lay in the hands of the little kid standing before them!

It was no wonder Shang Ke was afraid she would change her mind again.

There was a point where she actually thought of sacrificing herself to capture the Mutated Rain Swallow!

No... She also wanted the kid who could tame them!

The last part of her rationality brought her back to reality. Of course, there was also Ji Wenlong who was standing at the side.

After Shang Xia reassured it again and again, Yan Ni'er finally returned to his shoulder.

When that happened, the old woman of the Wind Swallow Race wasn't the only one who was surprised. Ji Wenlong and the others were equally as shocked.

They might have heard that Shang Xia tamed the Mutated Rain Swallow, but they couldn't believe their eyes.

Sucking in a cold breath, the kind look on the old woman's face was nowhere to be seen. She forced a smile and said, "You're right. I changed my mind."

Shang Ke nodded. He had expected as much. "Hurry up and add your conditions. However, I'll remind you that killing a golden goose won't provide you with much returns."

The old woman stared at Shang Ke before revealing a wide smile. She addressed Shang Xia out of the blue. "Little brother, do you have any arranged engagements?"

Seeing the stunned expression on Shang Xia's face, she continued while dragging Yan Ming over. "This is my baby granddaughter. What do you think about taking her as your wife?"

Before Shang Xia could say anything, she continued, "Look at her. She's a great beauty in my Wind Swallow Race! She has a great figure and people will kill for her looks! Look! She has a tiny waist and a beautiful butt... She looks good in clothes or without!"

"Grandma..."

The old woman ignored the cries of her granddaughter. "As long as you marry her, I'll give you anything in my power! All I ask for is for the two of you to quickly give birth to some grandkids for me..."

Shang Xia waved his hand in haste and declined instantly. "Many thanks for senior's kind grace. I'm afraid that my lifespan will shorten if I accept your offer... Thanks, but no thanks!"

The smile on the old lady's face didn't fade, but her tone became a lot more serious. "Kid, think about it carefully. As long as you marry my granddaughter, you will receive my protection!"

"Ahem... My ancestor Shang Bo will protect me anyway... There's no need to trouble senior!" Shang Xia rejected the offer again.

## Chapter 59: I Have A Lot of Birds!

Shang Xia couldn't understand their desire for Yan Ni'er. How was the blood of a swallow supposed to transform their bloodline?

However, there were tons of mysteries in the world of cultivation. Not everything made sense.

Shang Xia wouldn't bother getting to the bottom of things. To him, the most important thing was to receive all the benefits he could from the situation while changing the situation for the better for the Tongyou Peak.

"Senior, since your descendants' bloodline is growing thinner and thinner, why would you want to join such a huge battle? If a few more of them die in battle, wouldn't it be a huge loss to your race? From what I see, you should leave the battle entirely. In the future, I'll provide all the blood you need for you to purify your bloodline. How about that?"

"Little kid, what do you know? If my race chooses to forsake the battle, wouldn't we be betraying our world? Moreover, you only have a single Mutated Rain Swallow. We can probably obtain a drop of blood essence every three to five years. How am I supposed to strengthen my whole race?" The old lady frowned at Shang Xia's suggestion.

"I'll just tame a few more of them!" Shang Xia cried.

"How dare you! Are you trying to force my race into submission by using the threat of the Mutated Rain Swallow?"

"Senior, you think too much! Since I showed you my abilities, it's time for you to bring out some sincerity!" Shang Xia bargained.

"Humph. My race will never back out of such a huge war. I have to send several Martial Intent Realm cultivators at the very least. No matter what, I can promise you that I will never allow descendants with a pure bloodline to join the battle. I'll join the battle and put up a show with that old bastard. This is the greatest concession I can make!"

Shang Xia understood that like Yan Ming, all members with a pure bloodline would be given the surname 'Yan'. That meant that most of their experts wouldn't be joining the battle.

Clapping, Shang Xia laughed, "What a great plan! You can stop tongues from wagging when you join the battle, and you don't even have to sacrifice any of your pure blooded descendants. At the same time, our Tongyou Peak will get rid of those of your race who have some sort of conflict with you... What an amazing plan! This junior here seriously admire your schemes."

The old woman glared at Shang Xia while snapping, "Humph, what do you know?"

Shang Xia remained impassive as he continued to explain, “Do you really think it’s that hard to guess? There’s no way you can command the entire race by yourself. There are bound to be several old monsters you dislike and wish to get rid of. What better way than to send them to fight us?”

“Kid, are you really not going to consider marrying my granddaughter?” The old lady changed the topic instantly.

Shang Xia glanced at Yan Ming and he pouted slightly, “You can keep her for yourself. I won’t be fortunate enough to enjoy the marriage.”

Yan Ming saw his reaction and fury caused her face to twist up in anger. However, she didn’t dare to say anything with the old ancestor of her race present and she could only swallow her anger.

As the two of them bargained with each other, Shang Ke and the rest could only remain passively at the side.

Only at that moment did they realize that their role had been taken over by the little kid.

Seeing how he wasn’t losing ground when negotiating with the ancestor of the Wind Swallow Race, they looked at each other quietly before letting things roll.

They could see that the little brat had a lot more up his sleeves than they had initially thought.

That was Shang Xia’s intentions precisely. He managed to tame Yan Ni’er, and the hope of the entire Wind Swallow Race rested in his hands. Now that they had to beg him for it, he could use the chance to get rid of a huge enemy for the Tongyou Peak.

There was no way he would let up now.

The ancestor of the Wind Swallow Race sighed softly. “Since you do not wish to marry my granddaughter, my final offer does not change.”

Soon a sneer left her lips. “It’s your turn. Prove to me that you have the ability to tame more of them.”

“That’s easy.” Shang Xia laughed. He didn’t bother communicating with Shang Ke and the others and he whistled again.

The face of everyone present changed as the ancestor of the Wind Swallow Race widened her eyes in shock. “Don’t tell me you tamed more than one...”

As soon as the words left her lips, a silver streak tore through the air and landed on his other shoulder.

“Lightning Bird!”

“It’s that damn lightning chicken!”

Shang Bing and Yan Ming cried out in unison.

The Lightning Bird experienced a huge transformation after advancing. It stood haughtily on Shang Xia’s shoulder as it looked around casually.



Shang Xia grinned, "Senior, you should have tracked the pack of birds for quite some time now. You should know the relationship between a Lightning Bird and a pack of Mutated Rain Swallows. Yan Ni'er is merely one of the partners of this Lightning Bird!"

The ancestor of the Wind Swallow Race experienced more shock in a span of several minutes than she did in the past few years of her life. She tried to suppress the excitement building in her heart and she snapped, "Alright, what else do you want?"

Shang Xia looked at Shang Ke and the others and realized that they were handing the baton over to him. He continued, "I wish to know when the three other races are planning to attack the Tongyou Peak. I also want detailed information on their strength."

"Kid, your scheme won't work. I might choose to abstain from the war, but I will never betray my comrades. That's my bottom line."

However, her tone turned a tad softer in the next instant. "Although, I can give you information about something else. I'm sure it will interest you."

Shang Xia pressed his lips together and acted all nonchalant. "Don't tell me that the information you're providing me concerns the Rose Party joining the war."

"How do you know?!"

This time, she was seriously shocked. However, she shook her head the next instant. "Well, they're not there for the Tongyou Peak."

It was Shang Xia's turn to be surprised. However, he reacted quickly. "Well, they're there for Liu Jitang. Do they actually know where he is?"

The ancestor of the Wind Swallow Race lost her composure. "Fine! I'll give you a piece of information for free. Even though they won't attack the Tongyou Peak with us, they'll help us destroy your protective formation from the inside!"

Ji Wenlong and the others turned serious, but they weren't too shocked by the news.

Since the Rose Party could gain information on Kou Chongxue's injury and Liu Jitang's location, they had to be in the upper echelon of the Tongyou Institution. It wouldn't surprise them that the plan was to destroy the protective formation from the inside.

Ji Wenlong spoke all of a sudden. "It's time for us to leave."

Time passed in a flash and they spent close to two hours in the valley. Since they needed a little time to leave the core region of the Four Spiritual Peak, they had to make their move now.

Shang Xia asked hurriedly, "How strong are those in the Rose Party? When will they make their move?"

Ji Wenlong grabbed Shang Xia's collar and started dragging him away.

"Hehe, why should I tell you?" The old lady smiled at Shang Xia.

Even though he was being dragged away, it didn't stop him from yelling, "Heh, the number of cards I have up my sleeves is more than you can imagine. Since you refuse to answer this simple question of mine, I won't show you anything else!"

“Are you sure you will have the chance to impress me anymore?”

“You better not force me!” Shang Xia roared. He looked at the Lightning Bird and Yan Ni’er circling him. “Yan Ni’er, you thieving bird, call for backup! Show them who’s boss!”

By that time, they were already approaching the entrance.

Yan Ni’er chirped loudly, as though trying to convince the lightning bird to listen to Shang Xia.

Releasing a reluctant cry, the Lightning Bird turned into a silver streak that shot towards the heavens.

All of a sudden, countless cries filled the air as a dense cloud of Mutated Rain Swallows arrived.

Ji Wenlong who was dragging Shang Xia by the neck at that point whispered in his ear, “Brat, are you really able to control the entire swarm?!”

In the valley, the ancestor of the Wind Swallow Race held her mouth in shock.

“An entire flock of them! This... This... The chance for our race to rise up again has arrived! No! The fate of our race is held in his hand!”

Shang Xia’s voice echoed from outside the valley, “Old Woman, answer me!”

After calming herself, she growled, “A single expert at the third layer of the Martial Extermination Realm, a first layer expert of the Martial Extermination Realm and five Martial Intent Realm disciples! That’s our complete battle strength in the upcoming war!”

Her voice turned into a beam that entered Ji Wenlong and Shang Xia’s ears. “I don’t know when the Rose Party will attack, but they plan to destroy all the bridges connecting the main peak to the others. You should know better than me what that entails!”

“Not enough!” Shang Xia’s voice became softer as he was dragged further away. “You should know better than me what this flock of Mutated Rain Swallows means to your race!”

The expression on her face changed several times and she finally came to a decision. Her chest caved in and she spat out a mouthful of blood.

“Ancestor!” Yan Ming screamed before rushing over to help her.

The moment she touched her ancestor, she was flung through the air. She fainted in mid air, missing out on what happened next.

When Shang Xia and the others ran away as quickly as they could, a roar pierced through the air, “Old bastard Ji, How dare you sneak attack me on the Spiritual Swallow Peak?!”

Chapter 60: Fourth Order, Martial Extermination Realm

“You despicable bastard!...”

When her voice rang through the skies, Ji Wenlong nearly tripped over himself.

“Heh, old hag, you’re really something else for thinking up something like this.”

“Hurry up and run! If she alerted the other races...”

“Heh, now, there’s no need for her to put up an act. She can use the excuse to avoid the battle entirely. Haha! Deputy Patriarch Ji, you’ll have to take all the credit for this.”

“Xia’er gained huge credit this time... Shang Bing, how do you think your Contribution Division will grade his contribution this time?”

Shang Xia was completely stunned by the conversation going on around him.

He had to give it to the ancestor of the Wind Swallow Race. She actually came up with such a method.

“Ji Wenlong, how dare you barge into the Four Spiritual Peak?!” A roar came from behind them, scaring Shang Xia shitless.

Ji Wenlong tossed Shang Xia over to Shang Ke and yelled, “Alright, since we’re acting, we’ll go all the way. I’ll go play with Lang Xiaoyun for a bit. Take the chance to escape.”

Shang Ke and Shang Bing grabbed Shang Xia’s arms and dragged him away.

Shang Xia barely managed to turn his head when he saw four different colored lights emerging from Ji Wenlong’s body.

As he stepped into the air, he got ready for battle!

That was what an expert at the Fourth Order of the Primary Realm, a Martial Extermination Realm cultivator, could do!

At his level, he could tread on air and soar through the clouds!

A horrifying jade green hurricane arrived abruptly, and it shattered the clouds above.

“You’re right on time!” Ji Wenlong roared. A large blade that was five feet long appeared in his hand and he slashed ruthlessly at the black cloud above.

A massive blast rocked the world and all sound seemed to be lost.

Shang Xia noticed the giant jade green hurricane in the air trying to tear through Ji Wenlong’s four colored qi before being forced back into a tiny corner.

As the rumbling subsided, shockwaves tore through the lands.

When it smashed into one of the large mountains in the distance, the entire area turned into a flat wasteland.

“AH!” A cry of pain rang through the air.

“Lang Xiaoyun, do you really think you’re capable of taking me on by yourself?!” Ji Wenlong sneered.

“What if I join in?” Another voice appeared and a long spear cut through the air.

Two streams of light surrounded the tip of the spear as it joined with the jade green hurricane before finally gaining enough power to resist Ji Wenlong’s attack.

The concealment talisman wore off that instant, but Shang Ke and Shang Bing managed to bring Shang Xia dozens of miles away from the battle by then.

As he looked at the battle raging on behind him, Shang Xia started to worry. "Will Senior Ji be fine?"

Shang Bing shrugged his shoulders nonchalantly and Yun Yishu appeared out of nowhere. "Relax. Uncle Ji has already reached the peak of the Martial Extermination Realm. He shouldn't run into a problem if it's just the two of them. Well, unless another one arrives."

"Let's go! Let's not waste the chance he bought us." Shang Xia circulated his inner qi. In this situation of life and death, his understanding of the Irregular Steps increased once again.

The four of them ran away as quickly as possible as the battle raging behind experienced another change.

"Heh! He's injured!" The second person who arrived to the battle laughed.

As soon as he spoke, he increased the amount of energy he used and found a way to counter attack. Ji Wenlong who was holding the firm advantage started to show signs of weakness as he started to retreat.

"Heh, if not for that old hag going all out at the last moment, you two clowns won't be able to hold me down! Hehe!"

Ji Wenlong grunted in apparent pain.

Shang Xia and the others looked at each other in confusion. When the hell did he suffer injuries?!

"Fuck! That old freak learned how to mess with the enemy!" Shang Xia looked at the old experts around him and gasped.

"Hey, you have to admit... He's pretty good at acting..." Shang Bing sneered.

"The old woman shouldn't expose him, right?" Shang Xia asked.

Yun Yishu chuckled at the side, "All of them are old monsters who lived for countless years. Uncle Ji screamed so loudly... The old hag will probably play along."

"Alright, alright, time to go. He's planning to retreat." Shang Bing waved and called for the others to hurry up.

Since Ji Wenlong was just planning to mess with them, he would retreat shortly. After all, he was supposed to be 'injured'.

"Wait!" Shang Xia muttered. Even so, his tone was firm.

Turning to look at him in confusion, they saw him looking up at the skies above.

"Chirp, chirp!" A lone Mutated Rain Swallow was hovering above them as it cried out incessantly. That was the first time they had noticed the bird.

“There’s someone up ahead and they’re closing in on us. We might run into them...”  
After Shang Xia tamed Yan Ni’er, he somewhat managed to understand what the birds were saying.

“This is really close to the Four Spiritual Peak... Those ahead shouldn’t be from our Tongyou Peak...”

Shang Xia lowered his head slowly and noticed the weird looks he was getting from the other three. Feeling slightly uncomfortable, Shang Xia couldn’t help but try to dissolve the awkward situation. “Should we... Should we head in another direction?”

Yun Yishu gasped with a complicated expression, “Kid, are you actually able to use the Mutated Rain Swallow to observe your surroundings?”

...

In the valley where Ji Wenlong and the others met the ancestor of the Wind Swallow Race...

Her grip on her staff was firm, but her body trembled slightly. “Ran Biluo, why did you come here instead of hunting down the old freak?”

The ancestor of the Wind Swallow Race revealed a hostile expression when she looked at the middle aged beauty before her.

Ran Biluo chuckled lightly in response, “Elder Su’er is reading too much into it. I’m concerned about you and came over to see if I can help. The two of them should be more than enough to stop him. He won’t be in the mood to stay and fight anyway... There’s no need for me to join in the battle.”

Yan Su’er, the ancestor of the Wind Swallow Race, didn’t let down her guard after hearing what Ran Biluo said. Instead, a sneer slowly left her lips. “Stop pretending. You can’t wait for me to die... You came all the way here the moment he ran to see if you could finish me off.”

All of a sudden, a cry from outside alarmed them. “Ha! He’s injured!”

“Sister Su’er, you actually managed to injure the old freak?!” A light flashed in Ran Biluo’s eyes and she became a little warier of the ancestor of the Wind Swallow Race. “Since you don’t welcome me here, I’ll take my leave!”

The pretty middle aged lady spun around and turned into a streak of pink light that flew through the air. She disappeared in the blink of an eye, leaving behind the scent of her perfume.

After seeing her leave, Yan Su’er straightened her back and her body stopped trembling entirely. The haggard and sorry look she had previously had disappeared.

Tapping the ground lightly with her staff, the scent that filled the valley dissipated instantly. At the same time, Yan Ming was awakened by the soft rumbling in the ground.

“Grandma, you...” Yan Ming quickly recalled everything that happened and she looked at Yan Su’er in confusion.

A trace of worry flashed in the old ancestor’s eyes and she sighed, “Ming’er, do you think our Wind Swallow Race will be broken into smaller powers after my death?”

Yan Ming ran over to support the old lady and she cried, "Grandma, you won't die! You'll live till the end of time and our Wind Swallow Race will never be divided! We'll only grow stronger!"

"Haha..." Yan Su'er laughed lightly before revealing a grave expression, "Ming'er, keep this in mind. Never allow our Wind Swallow Race to fall! Never! Everything I do is for the sake of our race!"

Yan Ming hesitated for a moment before nodding. "Ming'er understands grandma's intentions!"

"Alright, bring me back to the Spiritual Swallow Peak. Don't forget... I'm seriously injured by the old man."

With Yan Ming's help, Yan Su'er left the valley slowly.

"Oh! Grandma, my knives! We forgot to take them back from that brat!" Yan Ming cried out all of a sudden.

"Forget it... We're asking him for a lot right now. An entire flock of Mutated Rain Swallows... He holds the fate of our race in his hands." Yan Su'er sighed helplessly.

...

Not too long after Shang Xia and the others returned, Ji Wenlong arrived.

However, his expression was really grim.

"How is it?" Shang Ke asked.

"Lang Xiaoyun and She Zhiqing made their move. Ran Biluo was hiding in the shadows, trying to find an opportunity to sneak attack me. Other than Yan Su'er, there should be a fifth cultivator at the Fourth Order Primary Realm hiding on the Four Spiritual Peak." Ji Wenlong muttered.

"Looks like the Four Spiritual Peak is determined to go all out!" Shang Bing sighed. He stared into the distance and he turned a lot more serious.

Yun Yishu turned to Shang Xia and said hurriedly, "Why don't we let the kid go look for Uncle Liu? He can use the flock of birds to cover a greater area. He might even be able to discover the place they're looking for! Once Uncle Liu returns, we'll be in a much better situation to take on the Four Spiritual Peak!"

Before anyone else could say a word, Shang Xia disagreed. "It's going to be a bloodbath and we're going to battle to our deaths... There is no need to think of ways to send me away. I'm more than ready to join the upcoming battle."