

## The Heavens 621

Chapter 621: Kou Chongxue's Next Step

“Shang Xia, what do you say? Do you think I should refine this fate dipper?”

Kou Chongxue's question caught Shang Xia completely off guard. An astonished expression hung on his face.

Before Shang Xia could say anything, Shang Bo spoke up, “This concerns your cultivation! Why are you messing around?!”

Surprisingly, Kou Chongxue snorted at him in annoyance. “How am I messing about? Don't forget, he's an expert at the grand completion stage of the Martial Extermination Realm now. No matter if it's his cultivation level or combat strength, he's ranked right under Chief Ji, You, and I. Moreover, he created a new path of cultivation. Do you think he has no idea how cultivation works?”

“This...” Shang Bo was stumped and he didn't know how to respond.

Kou Chongxue wasn't done. “Also, did you forget that he was the one who suggested for me to go into seclusion in a space rich with water element when I was heavily injured back then? That is how I managed to regain a portion of my fighting strength back during the War of the Tongyou Mysterious World. He was also the one who directed me to refine the Water Origin Fate Dipper after obtaining it back then. That was how I dealt with the hidden injuries that were caused by my imbalanced fate dippers.”

Shang Bo could only chuckle bitterly in response.

Kou Chongxue turned to look at Shang Xia again only to be greeted by an awkward and forced smile.

“Speak your mind! There's no need to care about anything else. You better not hide anything from us... This old man here is really ambitious. I have hopes of breaking through to the legendary Sixth Order of the Primary Realm in the future...” Kou Chongxue chuckled.

Glancing at his grandfather and not receiving any response, Shang Xia eventually revealed a proper smile. “Patriarch Kou, you must be joking, I only know a little and...”

Kou Chongxue raised his hand to stop Shang Xia from speaking any further. “Don't give me all that nonsense. Just tell me if I should refine the Flowing Wind Formless Fate Dipper.”

“This disciple thinks that you should think twice.” Shang Xia continued without any prompting from the others. “I don't know how to put it, but I feel that there should be some sort of connection between the fate dippers experts at your level refine. They should form a complete cycle, and you have refined the Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper, the Origin Water Fate Dipper, and the Eternal Spring Fate Dipper. Back then, your fate dippers were in a state of disequilibrium and you used the Origin Water Fate Dipper to restore balance. There, you formed some sort of mutual restraint.”

“In other words, the Origin Water Fate Dipper is the key to maintaining the balance between your fate dippers at the moment.”

“If my guess is correct and one’s fate dippers have some sort of relationship where they complement and restrain each other, your next fate dipper should either be connected to your Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper or your Eternal Spring Fate Dipper.”

“No matter how I look at it, the Flowing Wind Formless Fate Dipper doesn’t correspond to either of them.”

When Shang Xia was done with his lengthy explanation, Yun Jing asked, “How are you able to determine that they aren’t connected?”

“Disciple doesn’t know. Perhaps... It has something to do with my instincts...” Shang Xia shook his head and sighed.

It wasn’t as though Shang Xia really didn’t know what was going on. At the very least, he had some basic understanding of the five elements. However, it was easy for him to say since he knew the principles behind it. Those who didn’t know would find it hard to understand. Moreover, if he tried to explain the matter, he would inevitably drag other topics in. They would definitely dig deeper, and that would only bring even more questions. Shang Xia wouldn’t be able to answer them as even he had no idea about those concepts.

In the end, he chose to not talk about the topics he wasn’t really clear about and used his instinct as a reason to shut everyone up.

Shaking her head slightly, Yun Jing clearly expressed her doubt that Shang Xia’s explanation would be able to convince those present.

However, Kou Chongxue didn’t seem to agree with her. He had an unconcerned expression on his face as he laughed before asking another question. “Do you have any suggestions as to what fate dipper I should be refining next?”

Shang Xia thought about it for a second and replied, “You should probably refine a fate dipper that is related to the element of fire. In fact, you could also refine one that is related to the earth.”

“Oh.” Kou Chongxue seemed to have thought of something and he smiled at the side, “A fire element fate dipper and an earth element fate dipper.. You didn’t just give me a suggestion for my fourth fate dipper. You even thought about my fifth!”

Yun Jing looked at Kou Chongxue who seemed serious and she couldn’t help but yell, “Are you serious?!”

“Of course!” Kou Chongxue responded with confidence.

He then turned to address Shang Xia again. “Chief Ji’s Earth Core Fate Dipper should be related to the earth element, right?”

Shang Xia nodded in affirmation.

Kou Chongxue seemed to have thought of something else and he fell deep into contemplation.

Everyone fell silent after seeing the state he was in and no one had the guts to interrupt his thought process.

Luckily, he didn't remain in that state for a long time. Snapping back to attention, he laughed, "Haha! I was distracted by what he said. Anyway, Fourth Brother Shang, carry on. Let's take a look at what the expert of the Spirit Abundance World had!"

Shang Bo nodded and placed another cube-like crystalline object on the tablet.

Yun Jing couldn't help but reveal a shocked gaze and she exchanged a glance with Shang Xia. "Fate dipper fragment! He actually had a fate dipper fragment on him!"

Kou Chongxue learned about the existence of fate dipper fragments from the experts of the institution back then and he picked it up curiously. "Is this actually a fate dipper fragment? Isn't it said to be able to transform into a complete Origin Dipper after being nurtured by a strand of fate dipper essence? Hmm... It has really pure world origin. It's no wonder..."

Shang Xia thought about it for a second before taking out his own. He placed it beside the fate dipper fragment and muttered, "These fate dipper fragments are really similar. Looks like the other one is also produced from the Manyu Continent. For a Martial Dipper Realm expert to possess one... It's probably a tribute by the Martial Extermination Realm experts they sent to the Manyu Continent."

Kou Chongxue glanced at the fate dipper fragment in his hand and quickly snatched it over to take a closer look. He noticed the fate dipper essence contained within and the fact that it resembled a wisp of smoke. He couldn't help but pay more attention to it and he carefully evaluated, "Your fate dipper fragment looks smaller than the other one. Is it because the world origin contained within is being absorbed by the fate dipper essence?"

"That's what disciple thinks too..." Shang Xia replied. After a short pause, he continued, "Patriarch Kou, do you know what fate dipper essence is contained within?"

Examining it closely, Kou Chongxue frowned. "It seems similar to the Heaven's Will White Dew Fate Dipper..."

"Heaven's Will White Dew Fate Dipper?" Shang Xia gasped. "How is it compared to your Origin Water Fate Dipper?"

Kou Chongxue chuckled softly in response. "They have their own specialties and can be said to be of the same quality."

Shang Bo glanced at Shang Xia from the corner of his eye before taking out something else. Actually, it was more accurate to describe it as a small stack of items.

"Beast skin?!" Yan Su'er, who hadn't said anything for some time, was the first to yell. She looked surprised by the sudden revelation and she wanted to pick it up to take a look. However, she stopped herself midway through.

Kou Chongxue couldn't help but comment on it. "Elder Yan, you seem to have noticed something. Why don't you take a closer look?"

An embarrassed smile appeared on Yan Su'er's face and she finally picked up a piece of skin that was pretty well preserved. She looked at it closely and she nodded her head as though she had already expected as much. She turned the rest and said, "This definitely belonged to a rank five spiritual beast."

The look in everyone's eyes turned a little more serious when they looked at the pile of beast skins again.

Even Shang Bo couldn't control himself and asked again, "Is it really the skin of rank five spiritual beasts?!"

"This isn't just the skin of an ordinary beast. It belonged to an impressive existence in the fifth rank. The skin is pliable and tough, and it belonged to the Moon Worshiping Beast. The skin is extremely precious and it can be considered of the highest grade even among rank five treasures!"

Everyone had their guesses when they saw the stack of beast skin earlier, but they didn't think Yan Su'er would give it such a high evaluation. Their minds blanked and no one knew what they could do with it for a second.

Yun Jing couldn't help but chuckle bitterly, "Treasures like that don't come by easily. If he actually managed to gather so much of it, does it mean that creatures of that level are everywhere in the Spirit Abundance World?"

"How could it be possible? If they were truly as rich as that, they wouldn't think of so many ways to invade us! Why would they try so hard to locate our worlds in the vast sea of stars?" Yan Su'er replied.

To that, Kou Chongxue laughed, "Elder Yan is right! Also, about these beast skins... If we don't have anything better to use them for, let's just turn all of them into rank five talisman paper!"

Shocked faces could be seen all around and Kou Chongxue couldn't help but point at Shang Xia while revealing a bitter smile, "At least the little fellow is a rank four Talisman Grandmaster. He has hopes of entering the fifth rank in the future, and he can make use of them..."

Everyone couldn't help but snicker in response, but there was a hidden trace of bitterness in their voice. Compared to the holy lands out there, the Tongyou Institution truly had a short history. They couldn't compare in terms of foundations or accumulations as they didn't even have their own rank five Talisman Grandmaster.

Soon after, Shang Bo took out several more items. Even though they were pretty special and precious, they paled in comparison to the first few items. There were graded weapons among them, but it was clear none of those present could be bothered with them.

After taking everything out, Shang Bo stood silently at the side. Kou Chongxue would be in charge of distributing the treasures next.

Kou Chongxue didn't waste everyone's time either. He turned to Shang Bo and asked directly, "Fourth Brother, does anything here catch your eye?"

Shaang Bo picked up the broken golden shuttle with a wide smile on his face. "I was given the opportunity to enter the Martial Dipper Realm by the institution and I shouldn't make extravagant demands. However, this broken weapon seems really compatible with me. I'll be a little shameless and choose it then. I hope everyone doesn't take offense."

Kou Chongxue waved his hands casually in response. "It's just half a broken weapon. Even though it's made from rank five metals, it won't be possible for you to turn your Champion's Spear into a divine weapon. Just take it anyway and don't think too much about it."

Shaang Bo laughed before keeping the broken golden shuttle.

Kou Chongxue turned to look at Yan Su'er next. "Elder Yan, what about you?"

A trace of hesitation flashed across her face.

An amicable smile appeared on Kou Chongxue's face as he explained, "Elder Yan, there's no need to stand on ceremony. You will enter the institution to take on an important role. Moreover, the cultivators of your Swallow Race made great contributions in the battlefield between the two worlds. You also helped the Tongyou Island avoid a huge calamity back in the vast sea of stars. You deserve this reward."

"Patriarch, you're too kind!" Yan Su'er no longer rejected his offer. She casually picked 2 ordinary rank four treasures on the table for herself.

When it came to Yun Jing, Kou Chongxue didn't let her choose whatever she pleased. Instead, he spoke decisively, "Your cultivation has already reached the large completion stage of the Martial Extermination Realm. You should try to enter the grand completion stage next. We'll leave the Flowing Wind Formless Fate Dipper for you!"

Chapter 622: 3/10

After making the decision to give the Flowing Wind Formless Fate Dipper to Yun Jing, Kou Chongxue sighed with melancholy. "A little more than 20 years ago, we established the Tongyou Institution. Even if we don't mention Second Brother Liu who is no longer with us, you're the only one left who hasn't reached the Martial Dipper Realm. Even this little brat became stronger than you... There's no need for you to reject the fate dipper."

Shang Xia looked around awkwardly after hearing what Kou Chongxue said to Yun Jing.

Not bothering with Shang Xia, Yun Jing laughed softly. She didn't reject the fate dipper and retrieved it from the table.

Instead of turning to Shang Xia next, Kou Chongxue addressed Yan Su'er again. "Elder Yan, your foundations were damaged. Even though it's difficult for you to enter the Martial Dipper Realm, I hereby promise you that as long as a trace of hope appears, the Tongyou Institution will give you our full support to break through!"

Despite her long experience and having seen past the vicissitudes of life, Yan Su'er couldn't help but feel a little moved then. "Many thanks for your concern, but I know my condition best. Patriarch Kou, you don't have to waste your time or energy on my old bones any longer..."

Kou Chongxue waved his hand and stopped her from saying more. “Elder Yan, there’s no need to be so courteous with all of us. We’re all family now. We need to work together to overcome our challenges.”

When he was done, he finally turned to Shang Xia. “Alright little fellow, what do you want?”

Shang Xia hesitated for a moment and under their surprised gaze, he took out a jade case and placed it on the tablet.

“Huh? What does this mean? Are you planning to give away this fate dipper?” Kou Chongxue knew the case contained the Imperial Star Fate Dipper the moment he brought it out.

That was a complete Origin Dipper they were talking about. Moreover, the Imperial Star Fate Dipper was of a pretty high grade among the ranks of fate dippers.

Back in the region where the source of the Manyu Continent’s World’s Will was, Shang Xia obtained the Imperial Star Fate Dipper from someone who tried to sabotage his attempt at escaping. He also managed to obtain 2 strands of fate dipper essence.

“I couldn’t have obtained this Origin Dipper on my own. Moreover, the importance of an Origin Dipper is clear to all and I believe I shouldn’t keep it for myself.” Shang Xia explained seriously.

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Hearing his explanation, Shang Bo nodded at the side while maintaining his indifferent expression.

Who would have thought that Kou Chongxue would break into laughter after hearing what he said? “Hey, I was asking what treasure you wanted. Now, you brought out an Origin Dipper and tossed the problem back to me. What the hell? Are you messing around with me or something?!”

Shang Xia chuckled and he didn’t plan to hide his intentions. “Disciple does have something I need guidance with. However, I am sincerely handing this Imperial Star Fate Dipper to the institution.”

Yun Jing broke out into laughter the next moment. “You’re at the grand completion stage of the Martial Extermination Realm right now and the gate of the Martial Dipper Realm is right in front of your eyes. Don’t you wish to refine this fate dipper to take that step?” She paused for a moment before turning serious. “We can talk about the ownership of this Origin Dipper here casually, but the moment you step out of this pavilion, do you believe that several Martial Dipper Realm experts will show up to fight for this Origin Dipper the moment its existence is revealed to the world? It’s a really precious treasure!”

Shang Xia paused for a second, but he didn’t change his mind. “Actually, I won’t be able to use it anyway. Rather than letting it collect dust with me, we might as well make use of it. We might be able to produce another Martial Dipper Realm expert for the institution. We can even let one of our Martial Dipper Realm Ancestors take another step forward.”

Kou Chongxue’s expression changed after hearing his explanation on why he didn’t want to keep it. His jaws nearly dropped in fright when he spoke to Shang Xia again. “Have you already figured out how to enter the Martial Dipper Realm?”

A faint smile appeared on Shang Xia's face. "Yeah, I have some ideas."

Kou Chongxue didn't continue to dig deeper and he simply concluded the conversation after Shang Xia's reply. "Alright then. I'll make the decision on behalf of the institution to accept the Imperial Star Fate Dipper. Feel free to raise any request you have. As long as the bunch of us old fellows can do it, we'll do our best to fulfill it."

Shang Xia cupped his hands in thanks and spoke, "Disciple needs different types of fate dipper essence!"

Without a change in expression, Kou Chongxue immediately agreed, "Sure. How many do you need and are there specific ones you want?"

"I need at least 10 of them."

Shang Bo, Yun Jing, and Yan Su'er felt their faces cramping up the second the words left his lips.

It was true that fate dipper essence wasn't worth as much as Origin Dippers, but that didn't mean that they were easy to find!

Moreover, the damn kid needed at least 10 different ones! The difficulty of locating them all was probably even more difficult than getting 3 complete Origin Dippers...

"I'm not too sure what fate dipper essence I require exactly..." Shang Xia continued.

Yun Jing could no longer hold back and she cried, "How the hell are we supposed to start looking if you don't even know what you need? Finding a fate dipper essence is like looking for a needle in the sea to begin with. Now, we don't even know what the needle looks like!"

A trace of hesitation flashed across Shang Xia's face. From what he knew after the Crimson Soul Tablet's deduction, he needed 10 strands of fate dipper essence that corresponded to the 5 elements. Moreover, he needed them to be of the yin and yang type for each element.

That was where the problem came. Shang Xia could probably determine if the fate dipper essence was related to one of the 5 elements. However, he was helpless if he had to confirm if it was of the yin or yang type.

Kou Chongxue seemed to mutter to himself as he reached into his sleeves to pull out a faint cyan colored strand of light.

"Take a look at this."

Shang Xia reached out to accept the strand of light. He summoned his extermination origins before holding on to it. Everything happened in a split second and Shang Xia was acting on instincts.

When he finally touched the strand of light, his expression changed slightly. Everyone's attention was on him but he stood there in a daze without any reaction.

Feeling that his grandson was acting disrespectfully in front of Kou Chongxue and the others, Shang Bo wanted to say something to snap him out of it but he was stopped by a slight gesture from the patriarch. Kou Chongxue even signaled for him to relax.

Currently, Shang Xia's attention was focused on the Crimson Soul Tablet in his sea of consciousness.

The second he touched the cyan colored light, the surface of the Crimson Soul Tablet emitted a faint glow. Several words appeared on it. “*Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper Essence. Geng Metal fate dipper essence.*”

The tablet actually gave an accurate analysis on the fate dipper essence the moment he touched it! It was a function that Shang Xia had expected it to possess.

Gasping to himself, Shang Xia wondered if it was an ability it developed after absorbing so much world origin back on the Manyu Continent.

Well, whatever the case, Shang Xia’s worries started to disappear now that he learned that the Crimson Soul Tablet could determine what kind of fate dipper essence it was.

Finally snapping back to reality, Shang Xia raised his head and gasped, “This... Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper Essence?”

His cry shocked everyone present.

Even though they didn’t know that the Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper Essence was of the Geng Metal element, they knew that the Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper was a top-tier Origin Dipper. It was the Origin Dipper Kou Chongxue used to ascend to the Martial Dipper Realm, and it was the foundation of his tyrannical strength. What surprised them even more was the fact that he still had a strand of Primal Yang Copper Fate Dipper Essence.

Kou Chongxue seemed pretty nonchalant about the entire matter. A soft chuckle left his lips. “How about it? Can you use it?”

Shang Xia nodded his head immediately. “Yes, I can. It’s extremely compatible with what I need!”

“Alright, since that’s the case, it’s yours now.” Kou Chongxue smiled.

“Many thanks, Patriarch Kou, this is part of the 10 fate dipper essence I need.” Shang Xia thanked.

Shang Bo also spoke up suddenly. “Oh right, I too, have a fate dipper essence. Take a look and see if it meets your requirements.”

After he spoke, a silvery-gray strand of light landed on Shang Xia’s palm.

Interacting with it, the words on the Crimson Soul Tablet changed once again. “*Grand Silk Silver Sand Fate Dipper Essence. Xin Metal fate dipper essence.*”

It actually had the properties of Xin Metal!

Shang Xia felt a burst of joy in his heart. He needed 5 pairs of fate dipper essence in order to make his Five Elements Paradoxical Yin Yang Paste. In a flash, he already collected the pair of metal fate dipper essence!

The very next moment, delusion took over. He suddenly felt as though it wouldn’t be difficult to gather them all. Eventually, his voice of reason took over. The only reason he was able to gather the pair of metal fate dipper essence was because of pure luck.

However, that only applied to Shang Xia as he knew how difficult it was. When the others saw how Shang Xia obtained 2 of the 10 fate dipper essence he required, they started to feel a sense of relief. They thought that his request wasn’t as difficult as it seemed.

Yun Jing laughed, “Oh yeah, what about the fate dipper in your fate dipper fragment? Can you make use of that?”

Shang Xia’s mind lit up and he took out his fate dipper fragment again.

Even though he asked Kou Chongxue about the origin of the fate dipper essence and learned that it might be the Heaven’s Will White Dew fate Fate Dipper, he hadn’t tried using the Crimson Soul Tablet to check it out.

Because he didn’t actually touch it previously, the tablet couldn’t do its thing. He quickly extracted it from the fate dipper fragment and held it in his hand.

*“Heaven’s Will White Dew fate Fate Dipper, Ren Water fate dipper essence.”*

Shang Xia sighed in his heart. *I actually collected 3 of the 10 required...*

Nodding his head while he looked at everyone, Shang Xia muttered, “Yup, this is also one of the fated dipper essence I need.”

Yun Jing clapped and laughed, “Oh right, don’t forget, you stored another fate dipper essence in the Nine Blossom Jade Formation Disc back then!”

Raising his hand and making a gesture, Kou Chongxue summoned a tiny spatial channel above the Beyond Heavens Pavilion. It didn’t take long for a dark gold strand of fate dipper essence to appear before Shang Xia.

Using the same method, Shang Xia touched it.

*“Dark Void Life Extermination Evasion Fate Dipper Essence.”*

This time, only the name was displayed. The tablet didn’t mention what element it was or if Shang Xia could use it.

Shang Xia could pretty much understand that since the tablet didn’t display anything else, the fate dipper essence wasn’t of much use to him.

Shaking his head, he sighed, “I’m afraid I won’t be able to use this fate dipper essence...”

Yun Jing sighed once. She thought that Shang Xia would be able to use a lot of different fate dipper essence since the previous 3 were all compatible with him. Well, at least her curiosity had been sated.

Kou Chongxue didn’t say much and he sent the fate dipper essence back to where it came from.

Chapter 623: Gathering Half in an Instant

Back when he saw the requirements on the Crimson Soul Tablet, Shang Xia thought that locating the fate dipper essence would be a long and arduous process. Who would have thought that he could gather 3 useful ones in the short while he returned to the Beyond Heavens Pavilion?

His mood finally lifted and his originally dispirited feelings started to let up.

After sending the Dark Void Life Extermination Evasion Fate Dipper Essence back, Kou Chongxue chuckled, “From what I know, Old Man Ji doesn’t have any fate dipper essence. However, I will pass down the order for every Martial Extermination Realm expert of our institution to look for fate dipper essence. I hope we can gather everything you need as soon as possible.”

“Elders, you have given me too much. I don’t dare to hope for much and I won’t accept the rest of the fate dipper essence for nothing in return. I will definitely use treasures of equal worth to trade for them.” Shang Xia explained.

Pointing at the jade case that contained the Imperial Star Fate Dipper, Kou Chongxue snorted, “Hey, that’s a peak-grade Origin Dipper in there. Do you really think it’s worth less than a few strands of fate dipper essence?”

Shang Bo also couldn’t help but speak. “Are you sure you don’t need an Origin Dipper?”

He wasn’t concerned about the Imperial Star Fate Dipper at that point. He was just in a state of disbelief that Shang Xia managed to discover his own way of entering the Martial Dipper Realm.

He wasn’t the only one. Yun Jing, Yan Su’er, and even Kou Chongxue, understood the meaning behind Shang Bo’s question. If they claimed that they weren’t curious about Shang Xia’s advancement method, they would be lying to themselves.

After a short hesitation, Shang Xia muttered, “Well... I don’t need it for now. Of course, that’s because the Imperial Star Fate Dipper isn’t suitable for me. Only by using those that are compatible with my cultivation method will I be able to cultivate properly.”

They became even more surprised after Shang Xia’s explanation.

If he didn’t need the Origin Dipper, that could only mean that he would be refining those fate dipper essences to enter the Martial Dipper Realm. For him to be able to advance without a complete Origin Dipper... What could that possibly entail?

The moment he entered the Martial Dipper Realm and proved that his method was viable, everyone present could foresee that a massive storm would sweep through the Azure Origin World and Azure Spiritual World.

That was because it would signify the fact that the barrier to entering the Martial Dipper Realm would be much lower than before!

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Even though gathering fate dipper essence wasn’t exactly an easy matter, it was way more possible to do so than to locate a complete Origin Dipper! Naturally, Shang Xia’s requirement of 10 fate dipper essence was a special case.

Shang Xia’s revelation at the end where he would be able to refine suitable Origin Dippers didn’t come as a surprise. After all, it was a lot more believable than whatever he was planning to do.

Kou Chongxue sighed softly. “It doesn’t matter if he succeeds or not. Our conversation will not be leaked to the outside world. Anyone who reveals what has been said here can’t blame me for acting mercilessly when my blade comes for your neck.”

Yun Jing, Shang Bo, and Yan Su’er nodded absentmindedly. It seemed as though they were still trying to digest what Shang Xia said earlier.

Turning to look at Shang Xia, Kou Chongxue said resolutely, “Just tell us if you need anything else. We’ll deal with it all as long as it falls within the scope of our abilities.”

Thinking about it for a second, Shang Xia continued, “Oh right, I also need 5 rank five spiritual treasures and 5 rank four spiritual treasures. They have to be related to the metal, wood, fire, earth, and water elements.”

Shang Xia’s requirements actually revealed a lot. At the very least, they would be able to gain a slight understanding of how he would be entering the Martial Dipper Realm.

Everyone sank into contemplation after hearing what he said, but Shang Xia wasn’t affected at all. He knew that searching for all of them alone was a lost cause. If he had to rely on himself to locate the fate dipper essence, along with all the treasures he required, god knew when he would gather them all.

Only by borrowing the strength of the institution would he be able to complete his preparation to break through to the Five Elements Realm!

As for the price he would have to pay along with the favors he owed, everything could be solved after he broke through. Once he entered the Five Elements Realm, none of them would be a problem! There were many people who were willing to help out Shang Xia at that moment so that they could get him to owe them one. In fact, there would be many who were willing to give him the treasures for free!

Well, using the resources of the institution was one thing. Shang Xia wasn’t afraid that his advancement medicine recipe could be leaked. After all, they probably wouldn’t be able to use it themselves.

Back when Shang Xia entered the Four Constellation Realm, he discovered a terrifying fact. The reason he managed to break through wasn’t completely related to the advancement medicine. The Crimson Soul Tablet also played a crucial role.

Without the help of the tablet, he wouldn’t have been able to refine his Four Seasons Extermination Origins successfully.

By the same logic, if Shang Xia wasn’t mistaken, he would need the help of the Crimson Soul Tablet if he wished to successfully lay the foundation of his fate dippers and complete the harmonization of yin and yang. Otherwise, it would be nearly impossible for him to do it.

Yan Su’er, who hadn’t spoken much, spoke suddenly. There was a trace of speculation and admiration in her voice. “You refined 4 extermination origins simultaneously when entering the Martial Extermination Realm. Now that you’re planning to break through to the Martial Dipper Realm, are you going to do the same and refine all 5 fate dippers at once?”

She wasn’t the only one who thought of that.

Everyone’s gaze landed on Shang Xia once again.

Scratching his head subconsciously, Shang Xia gave a silly grin. “It’s a little too soon to think about this...”

“Hehe, your advancement medicine seems a little expensive. 5 rank five spiritual treasures and 5 rank four spiritual treasures... Which advancement formula out there requires such an extravagant lineup?” Yun Jing snorted.

Kou Chongxue also laughed, “Don’t forget... His rank four advancement formula was also really complicated...”

Yun Jing nodded in response. “That’s true. However, he achieved the magnificent feat of refining 4 extermination origins at once. If he really manages to refine 5 fate dippers this time...”

Yun Jing shook her head before reaching out for the tablet again. She didn’t grab anything. Instead, she placed a jade bottle down with a plop. “I don’t have rank five spiritual treasures. However, there are 12 drops of Origin Essence Dew in here. It’s a rank four spiritual treasure. See if it fits your requirements.”

Cupping his fists to express his thanks, he reached for the bottle and opened the restriction on it.

A tranquil yet distant fragrance entered his nose and the words on the Crimson Soul Tablet changed once again.

*“Origin Essence Dew. Rank Four Water Attributed Spiritual Treasure.”*

Shang Xia nodded. “This is useful indeed. Many thanks, Deputy Patriarch Yun!”

“It’s good that you can use it.” Yun Jing smiled.

Next, Shang Bo pointed at the table and several golden pieces appeared. “These are the fragments that fell after the golden shuttle was broken back then. I brought it to the Weapons Hall back then and they could tell that it contained a large amount of rank five metal. You should bring it to the Weapons Hall for a round of extraction and purification if you want to make use of it.”

Shang Xia played with the tiny pieces that were the size of one segment of his finger and the words on the Crimson Soul Tablet changed again. *“Celestial Gold. Rank Five Metal Attributed Spiritual Treasure. Impure.”*

Nodding, Shang Xia kept the pieces.

There was obviously no need for him to act too formally with his grandfather.

Yan Su’er had been thinking long and hard after Yun Jing and Shang Bo brought out their treasures. After some time, she retrieved something from her sleeves. “Little Friend Shang Xia, have a look at this.”

Shang Xia turned to see a palm-sized jade that was a deep red in color sitting in her palm.

Yan Su’er explained, “I obtained this during my adventures in the Changbai Mountains a long time ago. I found a piece of warm jade in a lake near the mountain peak and it maintains its temperature no matter the season. Recently, it’s been getting hotter and hotter. There are times when it feels like a piece of burning coal. Feel free to see if it’s of use to you.”

Shang Xia started to hesitate after hearing the origin of the jade. “Senior Yan, you’ve been carrying this jade for a long time. I can’t accept this.”

Chuckling softly, Yan Su’er muttered, “it’s just a toy in my hands. I can’t use it for much. If it helps you to break through to the Martial Dipper Realm, that would be for the best.”

Since things had gotten to that point, Shang Xia didn’t reject the gift. He held the jade in his hand and looked at the changes on the Crimson Soul Tablet.

*“Lava Fire Jade. Rank Four Fire Attributed Spiritual Treasure.”*

“I can make use of this. Many thanks, Senior Yan.” Shang Xia nodded slightly.

“You’re welcome.” A contented smile appeared on Yan Su’er’s face.

Finally, Kou Chongxue’s chuckle interrupted all of them. “Hey kid, you’re pretty lucky. However, do you remember the place we first met?”

“Of course. Back then, I guessed that we were in the depths of the Thousand Leaf Mountain Range. Only after some time did I learn that we were somewhere inside the spatial barrier that separated us from the battlefield between the two worlds.” Shang Xia replied.

Kou Chongxue sighed softly and continued, “It’s a pity that the place is destroyed. However, I still have some Eternal Spring Fate Dipper Essence I gathered. I also managed to find some stuff after digging through the ruins. That’s why you’re really lucky!”

He placed 2 items on the table before Shang Xia after he spoke.

One of them was a sealed spiritual case, and the moment it was opened, a burst of vitality emerged.

“This is called the White Bone Grass. It contains a huge amount of life force and it’s been called the White Bone of Life by others. It’s a rank four spiritual herb!” Kou Chongxue introduced before opening the other sealed spiritual case. There was a bamboo-shaped jade contained within that was half a foot long lying within. He became a little more serious and continued, “This is a segment of a Ten Thousand Year Bamboo. I discovered this back then but didn’t notice how special it was. It takes a long time to grow, and actually calling it a Ten Thousand Year Bamboo might be an exaggeration. However, It’s definitely a thousand years or older. This segment alone definitely reached the fifth rank because of how long it existed.”

Shang Xia accepted both treasures and evaluated them with the Crimson Soul Tablet. They were pretty much as Kou Chongxue had said and they were wood attributed spiritual treasures that were of the fourth and fifth rank respectively.

He quickly thanked Kou Chongxue for the treasures.

After the treasures had been distributed, Shang Xia managed to obtain a good portion of what he required. He had rank five Celestial Gold that represented the Metal element and a segment of Ten Thousand Year Bamboo that represented the Wood element. Next came the rank four treasures which were the White Bone Grass that represented the Wood element, Origin Essence Dew that represented the Water element, and a piece of Lava Fire Jade that represented the Fire element.

Chapter 624: Trade Fair

Of the spiritual treasures Shang Xia needed, he gathered half of them in an instant!

Complicated feelings filled his heart. He didn't know if he should be happy or he should just thank his lucky stars. Whatever the case, Shang Xia knew that he would owe them big time for the grace they had shown him.

After Kou Chongxue had distributed the treasures on the table, Shang Bo swept most of the rest up and threw them in his spatial artifact. He would bring the rest to the institution's treasury and place them under the charge of the Warehouse Division.

A portion of manuals, jade booklets, and documents were placed in the charge of the Scripture Depository.

Those treasures could possibly come in handy when they had to deal with the Spirit Abundance World in the future. In their current position, the worth of that information was invaluable.

The appearance of the Spirit Abundance was like a sharp sword that hung above the Azure Origin World and Azure Spiritual World. Because of its appearance, the conflict between both worlds had been greatly toned down during the fusion process.

After all, the destruction of the Manyu Continent happened not too long ago. The various powers that went there were witnesses to the fate of a fallen world. They didn't wish to become fertilizer for the Spirit Abundance World and suffer the same end as the Manyu Continent.

...

Shang Bo might have kept most of the treasures on the stone table, but the rank five beast skin remained.

Kou Chongxue turned to Shang Xia and chuckled, "Even though we're planning to turn this beast skin into rank five talisman paper which would be used by you, our institution doesn't have a single expert capable of crafting them. I'll keep it for now and try to look for ways to turn it into rank five talisman paper."

Shang Xia obviously wouldn't say no and he responded hurriedly, "Of course. That would be great."

Kou Chongxue reached out to grab the rank five beast skin and he kept it properly.

All of a sudden, Yun Jing seemed to have thought of something and she addressed Kou Chongxue while laughing, "Oh right, isn't a trade fair usually held during set periods of time among the various factions in the Beyond Heavens Pavilion? Now that everyone is back from the Manyu Continent, they definitely gained a lot. You were here the whole time... Did you get any news regarding the next one?"

She turned to Shang Xia the next moment, "This little fellow needs a lot of spiritual treasures... He might be able to get something he needs if he took part in it."

Shang Xia's expression changed after learning about the trade fair. A look of anticipation quickly appeared on his face.

"Oh right! I nearly forgot about that. A massive trade fair would be held soon, but it wouldn't be in the Beyond Heavens Pavilion this time." Kou Chongxue replied. He didn't continue after that in order to build the suspense.

Raising an eyebrow curiously, Yun Jing asked, “Where would it be held if they plan to host it outside the Beyond Heavens Pavilion?”

Shang Bo and Shang Xia were equally as curious and they looked at the patriarch for a response.

Reaching slowly to point to the void above his head, Kou Chongxue grinned, “It’s going to be held there!”

Yun Jing gasped softly. “Are they holding it in the void out in space?!”

“Could it be on one of the floating islands around the Beyond Heavens Pavilion?”

Shang Xia blurted out all of a sudden.

Other than Kou Chongxue, everyone else revealed an expression of realization..

“I wonder which faction is generous enough to loan out their island to hold the trade fair...” Yun Jing wondered out loud.

She was met with a bout of laughter from Kou Chongxue. “It’s not just 1 of them. There are 3 of them in total! Moreover, the trade fair this time wouldn’t just be limited to the Azure Origin World. Experts of the Azure Spiritual World can also take part in it!”

Yun Jing, Shang Bo, and Yan Su’er revealed expressions of shock, but they connected the dots.

Shang Xia spoke up from the side, “Are the 3 factions the Eternal Sect, Divine Capital Sect, and the Northern Sea Mystic Sect?”

Kou Chongxue nodded in response and the smile on his face started to fade. “In order to stop the Spirit Abundance World, they revealed the existence of their experts at the Sixth Order of the Primary Realm. They don’t seem to plan to hold back any longer and formed an alliance to create the Three Unity Island to host the trade fair.”

“That’s a huge display of strength alright...” Yun Jing snorted.

Shang Bo muttered softly after Yun Jing expressed her surprise. “Where will the island be and how will we get there?”

“They didn’t say where it would be held, but we should be able to locate the island with this invitation. However, they said that even if one didn’t have an invitation, they would be allowed to take part in the trade fair as long as they arrived on the island.” Kou Chongxue waved an invitation in the air and explained.

A sneer left Shang Bo’s lips. “It’s not easy to travel in space. Even Martial Extermination Realm experts wouldn’t be able to remain here for long. With the restrictions they’re placing, they’re clearly limiting the attendees to experts in the Martial Extermination Realm experts or higher!”

Kou Chongxue merely nodded his head in response before turning to Shang Xia. “I recall that you know how to craft a rank four talisman that allows you to affect the void...”

A light flashed in Shang Xia’s eyes and he replied, “That’s right. It’s a rank four Abyssal Void Shattering Talisman.”

“Why don’t you make a few more of them and try selling it there?” Kou Chongxue chuckled in amusement.

Realizing the patriarch’s intent, a wide smile appeared on Shang Xia’s face. “I’ll try to make a few more of them when I get back. Anyway, from what you said, the 3 superpowers seem to have intentionally joined their islands in space. Are they planning to revamp the process of holding the trade fair such that it would always be held there in the future?”

That was probably why Kou Chongxue brought up the Abyssal Void Shattering Talismans. It had the ability to let experts in the Martial Extermination Realm travel in the void for some time.

The invitation that pointed to the island was most likely a single-use item, but the Three Unity Island might be where all future trade fairs would be held. As such, Martial Extermination Realm experts would definitely be drawn to it. Those who went before might know how to get there, but it wouldn’t hurt to prepare an Abyssal Void Shattering Talisman or two in case of unforeseen trouble. It would be especially so for experts who just entered the Martial Extermination Realm.

“When will it be held?” Yun Jing asked the question that was burning in everyone’s mind.

Unfortunately, Kou Chongxue shook his head in response before handing the invitation over to Shang Xia. “Since they decided to hold it together, they have to make the necessary preparations. It should take pretty long for them to do it and I believe the invitation will change to indicate the time once it has been confirmed. Keep it well and prepare to receive the notification when they are ready.”

Shang Xia reached out with both his hands to accept the invitation. Sending some divine perception into it, he could feel that the invitation emitted faint spatial fluctuations and it seemed to resonate with a certain point in the void.

...

After leaving the pavilion, Kou Chongxue sent Yun Jing and Yan Su’er back to the You Continent.

Shang Bo stopped Shang Xia from returning after saying that there was something they needed to discuss.

When Yun Jing and Yan Su’er was gone, Kou Chongxue turned a lot more serious when he turned to Shang Xia. He said in a low voice, “Kid, let me see the imprint on your hand.”

Shang Xia seemed to have expected it and he quickly opened his left palm.

Because the wound had already healed, they couldn’t see anything. Shang Xia started to circulate his inner qi and he concentrated it on his palm to reveal the Tracing Imprint that was left behind by Huang Yu.

“Can you try to copy it onto something else?” Kou Chongxue studied it carefully while asking.

Shang Xia shook his head and sighed, “I tried it before and it didn’t work.”

Nodding slowly, Kou Chongxue didn’t continue to ask about it.

Shang Xia was the only Talisman Grandmaster in the Tongyou Institution. If he said it wasn't possible, Kou Chongxue had to take his word for it.

"This definitely looks like it points to a coordinate in the vast sea of stars. Moreover, it seems to resemble some sort of token. It might be something that proves that you have the authority to enter and leave that place as you wish..." Kou Chongxue nodded slightly in Shang Bo's direction.

"Could this actually point to the Spirit Abundance World?" Shang Bo asked curiously. Forcing a hoarse laugh, Kou Chongxue snorted, "How is that possible?"

Shang Bo also knew that it was a long stretch, but he naturally held on to the tiny glimmer of hope that it might be possible.

Turning to look at Shang Xia, Kou Chongxue sighed softly, "Kid, I'm afraid you need to head over there personally when the time comes. You need to enter the Martial Dipper Realm as soon as possible. Tell us what you need to break through and we'll try our best to get it for you."

Shang Bo's expression changed slightly but he chose to remain silent.

Shang Xia was also taken aback by what Kou Chongxue said. It seemed as though they would have to take a trip through the vast sea of stars if they wanted to make use of the Tracing Imprint on his palm.

He knew all the risks he would have to take if that was the case, but seeing as his grandfather hadn't said anything, Shang Xia simply nodded his head in response.

#### Chapter 625: New Teacher

Currently, the Tongyou Mysterious World had turned into the transit point for cultivators returning from the Beyond Heavens Pavilion.

Shang Xia thought that when they returned, Kou Chongxue would immediately make use of the world origin from the Manyu Continent to upgrade the Tongyou Mysterious World into the Tongyou Paradise.

However, it seemed as though he was wrong. He might have been thinking about things too simply, but the institution might also have other plans. Whatever the case, all he knew was that nothing seemed to happen despite Kou Chongxue sending the Nine Blossom Jade Formation Disc back.

Well... it wasn't as though everything remained completely the same...

At the very least, he discovered that the density of heaven and earth qi in the air grew by a lot when he returned to the mysterious world.

That wasn't all. Unlike before, the Tongyou Mysterious World seemed a lot more well organized. There were many more structures built in the 3 different regions like pavilions, cultivation chambers, and many more. Shang Xia also discovered a lot more cultivators in the Tongyou Mysterious World than before.

Whatever it was, he didn't remain in the mysterious world for a long time as he quickly made his way back to the institution.

The Tongyou Institution was a lot livelier than he remembered.

It was the start of the new semester, and students were rushing back from the different parts of the You Continent to start their lessons. There were even cultivators who came from other continents. The entire city was bustling with activity due to the great influx of cultivators.

Looking around, Shang Xia even noticed that there were a few cultivators from the Manyu Continent among the batch of new students. They were either members of the Ren Clan, or cultivators who were saved when the Tongyou Island passed through the belt of land fragments.

As for the cultivators who came from the other continents, Shang Xia knew that they were probably offsprings of cultivators of the You Continent who migrated after the collision of the worlds.

All they needed to do to enter the Tongyou Institution was to prove that either one of their parents came from the You Continent. Naturally, they would also have to possess strong cultivation foundations. After a quick investigation by the Outreach Division, they would be able to enroll as disciples of the Outer Division and become formal students of the Tongyou Institution.

Other than cultivators from the 2 categories before, Shang Xia also noticed quite a few of them from the Azure Spiritual World. They were youngsters of the Swallow Race and they also joined the institution.

There were even several Martial Intent Realm experts of the Swallow Race who took on positions as teachers in the institution. There were also some of them who entered the various divisions like the Outreach Division and the Protection Division.

In recent years, the Tongyou Institution experienced a huge increase in strength. Due to their escapades in the Thousand Leaf Mountain Range, Taihang Mountains, and even the most recent Manyu Continent, the institution managed to gain a steady stream of resources.

Because of those resources, the institution grew even stronger!

Entering the Tongyou Institution silently, Shang Xia managed to gain a lot of information from the conversations happening around him. He learned that each outer division took in more students. Back when Shang Xia was still a student, there were only 6 outer divisions and each of them had 30 students each. Now, there were 12 outer divisions in total and each of them had 40 students!

One Custodian was allocated to each outer division, and due to the lack of manpower, students in the Upper Division who had excellent performance would be chosen to take on the role.

Now, there were 2 Custodians per outer division. One of them was the Main Custodian while the other was the Assistant Custodian. Disciples in the Upper Division could fight for the position through some form of competition, but they would only be able to take on a role as an Assistant Custodian regardless. Only after 2 years of evaluation would they be given the opportunity to become the Main Custodian.

Other than the Outer Division, there had been an increase in students in the Inner and Upper Divisions respectively.

Back then, there were a total of 20 Advisors in the Teaching Division. They were in charge of most lessons, from cultivation to special skills. Now, the number of Advisors increased by 4 and Shang Xia was one of them.

As for instructors, the Outer, Inner, and Upper Division used to have a single Instructor each. With the Tongyou Institution's increased strength, an Assistant Instructor was added. At the same time, the strength of an Instructor of the institution had to be in the Martial Extermination Realm or higher.

After learning of the changes to the institution, Shang Xia went to report to the Teaching Division. He retrieved a special Teacher's Jade Plaque from Liu Qinglan who was still an Instructor of the Upper Division. However, she had more than one post currently and she was also the Assistant Head Instructor of the institution.

He learned from Liu Qinglan that there were 2 new Assistant Head Instructors. Yan Su'er took on the other position.

Yan Ming, Yan Su'er's granddaughter, chose to enter the Outreach Division. As she had already entered the Martial Extermination Realm, she became an Assistant Deacon who worked under Yun Jing.

Now that Shang Xia obtained the Teacher's Jade Plaque, he officially took on his role. He would be able to receive a monthly stipend from the institution in the form of silver essence. Other than his official job of teaching students, Shang Xia would also be able to record extra contributions he made in his jade plaque.

With those contribution points, Shang Xia would be able to trade cultivation resources with a higher priority. He might also be entitled to a discount.

Anyway, Liu Qinglan didn't send him away after he received his Teacher's Jade Plaque. She got him to confirm whatever he was going to teach.

She knew that Shang Xia wouldn't be holding his post for long anyway. As such, the target of his teachings wouldn't include the Outer Division. He would mainly be teaching students in the Inner or Upper Division who had already entered the path of cultivation.

Students in the Outer Division should be focused on building their foundations and they shouldn't be exposed to things far exceeding their abilities. Moreover, Shang Xia couldn't possibly be sent to teach those new students how to build their foundations. It would be a colossal waste of resources.

After thinking for some time, Shang Xia split the things he was going to teach into 2 parts.

One portion of it would be the art of talisman crafting. He would teach them the basics of how to craft talismans, how to use talismans, and how to respond when talismans were used against them.

Previously, Talisman Master Gong came up with the curriculum for talisman crafting. However, he was getting older as the years passed and his cultivation hadn't been improving. His condition was on a slight decline and he had already given up on becoming a rank four Talisman Grandmaster. He started to focus on nurturing the next generation of Talisman Masters, and he eventually came up with a talisman course for the various divisions.

What Shang Xia was going to teach was the practical use of talismans and problems they might run into on the battlefield.

Naturally, Shang Xia couldn't possibly talk about that forever. It would be enough for him to guide them on the topic every ten days or so. The teaching process was also really flexible and Shang Xia

was free to change and readjust the content he was teaching about the use of talismans whenever he wished.

The other part he was planning to teach had something to do with his own cultivation. He planned to use his experience to teach the new generation of students about cultivation.

That included the Essence Realm he extrapolated from his knowledge of cultivation, which corresponded to the Martial Realm in the Azure Origin World. He would also be imparting his knowledge on the Yin Yang Realm, and the Triple Command Realm. It even included some explanation and his understanding of his Four Constellation Realm.

It also went without saying that Shang Xia would reveal his entire path of cultivation. That would only serve to cause chaos among the students and confuse them on whatever they already knew. Moreover, not everyone in the institution would agree with his teachings.

Currently, Shang Xia could only use his limited knowledge of cultivation to find an entirely new path. One could say that he was mixing what he was learning with whatever he knew, or one could even say that he was replacing the original meaning of it with his own interpretation. No matter what it was, it would clash with the current cultivation system.

That was something Kou Chongxue and Shang Bo had mentioned to him multiple times.

After some discussion with Liu Qinglan, Shang Xia decided that he would lecture on the topic once a month. He could also adjust his lesson however he saw fit.

From that, one could see that even Liu Qinglan, who knew a little more about Shang Xia's unique cultivation method, was acting very prudently when it came to him sharing his knowledge.

At the end of the day, she wasn't against him teaching his cultivation method to others. Instead, she seemed more inclined to protect him.

After leaving the Teaching Division, Shang Xia suddenly recalled his position as a Talisman Grandmaster of the institution. He should have been receiving his salary for that every month, but he hadn't gotten a single payment!

According to his original plan, he wanted to return home to take a nice break for several days. Now that he thought about it, he turned immediately to head for the Talisman Hall.

After returning, he learned that it was already the 849th year of the Divine Martial Calendar. He left for the Manyu Continent in the 847th year, and 2 years had passed in the blink of an eye. He didn't know the current state of the Talisman Hall and was curious to find out.

...

When Shang Xia was doing whatever it was he was doing, Yun Jing went to look for Liu Zhiyuan.

As the patriarch of the Great Liu Clan, he had been placed in charge of the Warehouse Division of the institution a long time ago.

Since the older generation had started to retreat behind the scenes, they were slowly handing their authority over to the members of the younger generation. Liu Zhiyuan could be considered part of the highest authority due to this status.

“Aunt Yun, is something the matter?” Liu Zhiyuan maintained his respectful mannerisms in front of Yun Jing despite his position in the institution at the moment.

Ever since Liu Jitang sacrificed himself in the Coral Forest, the Liu Clan seemed to be on a massive decline. They didn’t even seem to deserve their spot as a great clan of the Tongyou City any longer.

However, the foundations of the Liu Clan were still intact. With the support of Kou Chongxue, Shang Bo, Yun Jing, and the others, Liu Zhiyuan was quickly pushed into the Martial Extermination Realm to maintain the status of the Liu Clan.

Even though Liu Zhiyuan had been gaining some fame in the recent years and had status that rivaled Yun Jing as the patriarch of the Liu Clan, he would still act deferentially when he spoke to Yun Jing.

Yun Jing chuckled in response, “We haven’t met for 2 to 3 years... I heard about your achievements and what you did after coming back and I believe Second Brother Liu’s spirit in heaven will feel extremely gratified.

Liu Zhiyuan replied solemnly, “The Liu Clan and I only managed to retain what we have today because of the support of the various elders. I wouldn’t dare to be lazy when it comes to dealing with matters of the clan and institution!”

“That’s great!” Yun Jing revealed a wide smile in response. However, her tone changed suddenly and she muttered in a profound voice, “From what I can see, you entered the second layer of the Martial Extermination Realm for some time now. However, you haven’t made much improvement in recent years...”

Liu Zhiyuan’s expression froze for a second and he sighed, “I... I was distracted by my responsibilities...”

“Even if you have a lot to do, you should spend a little more effort when it comes to cultivation. One’s cultivation is the root of their power. In front of absolute strength, everything else is nothing!” Yun Jing sighed.

Lowering his head slightly, Liu Zhiyuan muttered, “Aunt Yun, I understand what you mean. However, there are too many new students joining us recently and the institution has been expanding rapidly over the past years. It’s chaos every time the new semester starts. After getting through this period, I plan on handing my responsibilities over to several others and concentrate on my cultivation for some time.”

Yun Jing’s gaze was deep when she looked at him again. Eventually, she muttered, “Since you already have a plan, I won’t say anymore. You can do it your way. However, there’s something that requires your Liu Clan’s assistance.”

Raising his head with a slight trace of shock, Liu Zhiyuan asked, “Aunt Yun, is there anything you need me to do?”

“Go take a look in your Liu Clan’s treasury. If you have any spiritual treasure of the metal or earth element of the fourth, or even fifth rank, send a portion over to the Shang Clan.”

“What? Why?!” Liu Zhiyuan cried in shock.

Chapter 626: I Need Guidance Please

“What? Why?!” Liu Zhiyuan cried out in shock.

His reaction was a little unexpected, but Yun Jing didn't bother too much with it. Instead, she started a patient explanation. “Your Fourth Uncle's grandson, Shang Xia, has already reached the grand completion stage of the Martial Extermination Realm. He's preparing the resources he needs to enter the Martial Dipper Realm and our clans have always been supporting each other. If your Liu Clan has any suitable spiritual treasure, you should send it over to trade it for a favor in the future. You can strengthen the bond between our clans and repay your Fourth Uncle for his support in the past while you're at it.”

“What?! Do you mean to tell me that Shang Ze's kid has already entered the grand completion stage of the Martial Extermination Realm?!” Liu Zhiyuan asked again. He clearly failed to contain his shock.

Yun Jing sighed in response, “Exactly. Right now, that kid has the highest hope of breaking through to the Martial Dipper Realm next among all of us.”

Liu Zhiyuan remained silent as he tried to digest all the information he was fed.

Yun Jing didn't try to rush him as she quietly awaited his answer.

After some time, Liu Zhiyuan took a deep breath and broke the silence. “My Liu Clan can most definitely give him the spiritual treasure... I recall that my clan has a rank four jade-stone type treasure. I wonder if he can make use of it.”

Yun Jing nodded contentedly and a gratified smile was starting to appear on her face.

However, she was interrupted the next moment as Liu Zhiyuan growled softly, “Aunt Yun, it's just that...”

Seeing the look of hesitation on his face, Yun Jing asked indifferently, “What do you want to say?”

Liu Zhiyuan could obviously hear the tone of warning in her voice, but he gritted his teeth and continued, “Don't you feel that Fourth Uncle Shang's clan is growing too strong?! They have already reached an extremely dangerous level of power...”

Since he decided to speak, Liu Zhiyuan chose not to hold back. He added, “Fourth Uncle Shang has stepped into the Martial Dipper Realm, and his brother, Shang Ke, is also an expert in the Martial Extermination Realm. Shang Jian of the second generation of the Shang Clan, and Shang Pei who's acting like a bandit out there have also broken through to the Martial Extermination Realm. Now, even the third generation of the Shang Clan produced an expert who's about to break through to the Martial Dipper Realm!”

“Even though we're known as the Four Great Clans of the You Continent, from what I can see, the Shang Clan is the strongest among all of us.”

“If Fourth Uncle Shang’s grandson is truly successful in his breakthrough, the Shang Clan will possess 2 Martial Dipper Realm Ancestors alone. When that happens, wouldn’t Patriarch Kou have to reconsider even if he wishes to deal with them?”

Yun Jing stared at him and muttered, “Since you can see that happening and chose to speak out, you should have thought of a plan, right?”

“If not for Patriarch Kou’s support back then, the Shang Clan would still remain a nobody in our Tongyou City! How would they be able to reach their current heights?”

“Moreover, the Shang Clan can’t compare with my Liu Clan, your Yun Clan, or the Ji Clan in terms of foundations!”

“At the end of the day, the Shang Clan is just a bloodsucker who obtained too many resources from the institution that doesn’t belong to them! As long as...”

Yun Jing raised her hand to stop him from speaking further. Liu Zhiyuan had no choice but to stop, but the look of astonishment in his eyes never faded.

She pinched her glabella and sighed, “I’m starting to regret not bringing you to the Manyu Continent. Anyway, have you visited Liu Jikun ever since he came back?”

Liu Zhiyuan’s expression sank further. “Aunt Yun, you know what happened back then. Liu Jikun and my father have never seen eye to eye. Otherwise, I wouldn’t have been kept in the dark after he followed Patriarch Kou to the Beyond Heavens Pavilion back then. All the while, I thought that he had died. “

Yun Jing finally snapped and she lashed out at him. “What the hell do the grudges of the previous generations have to do with you?! If you show up with a proper greeting and ask for him to impart some knowledge to you, do you think he’s going to throw you out?!”

Liu Zhiyuan was at a loss for words. No one knew what thoughts were running through his mind but Yun Jing didn’t bother waiting for him to respond. She sighed, “It’s not possible for huge clans like ours to be perfect. Back then, many members of the second generation of the Shang Clan left. Today, they’re back here in the You Continent. We can’t keep living in the past. We have to plan for the future and work towards it.”

“Many thanks for Aunt Yun’s teachings!” Liu Zhiyuan maintained his respectful attitude before her.

She shot a glance at him and muttered, “I don’t know if you can understand what I’m about to say, but I’m going to say it anyway. I won’t repeat myself and what you do with it is up to you.”

Pausing to collect her thoughts, she started to ramble off. “Firstly, the fusion of our Azure Origin World and the Azure Spiritual World has already begun. It will take 3 years at most, and if the progress is accelerated, it might be done in a year. We will ascend to become a new world, and when that happens, there will definitely be a period of chaos. The Tongyou Institution needs to strengthen ourselves in order to fight for the most benefits during that period of time.”

“Secondly, I’ll let you know right now that both worlds have factions that managed to turn themselves into an Elysium. They possess existences at the Sixth Order of the Primary Realm.”

“Thirdly... A superior world might invade us at any time!”

Yun jing threw out 3 massive bombs at once, causing Liu Zhiyuan’s eyes to widen in shock. He didn’t know how to respond.

Yun Jing released a sigh after she was done. “As the patriarch of the Liu Clan, you have the qualifications to learn about these. I hope that you can consider the big picture. Stop limiting yourself to our tiny city. Perhaps, you need some time to properly think about all these matters...”

Waving her hand, Yun Jing signaled for him to leave.

When he was finally gone, Ji Wenlong’s voice rang in her mind. “This kid looks like he’s walking down the wrong path... I hope he understands what you just said...”

“He’s no longer a kid. I said everything that should be said. He will have to choose how he wishes to proceed. As long as we didn’t do anything to disappoint Second Brother, there’s nothing more we can do.”

...

“This...” Shang Xia stared at Fan Yuanhui and Lou Zizhang in fright. They brought along a group of Talisman Masters to greet him, and Fan Yuanhui even presented 3 pieces of rank four talisman paper the moment he returned. A strange atmosphere lingered in the Talisman Hall.

After passing the talisman paper to Shang Xia, Fan Yuanhui chuckled, “Mister Gong isn’t here at the moment. He turned his focus to giving lessons in the institution instead of putting his attention on us. However, he has always been reminding us that we have to make up for all the salary you missed.”

Gesturing to the talisman papers, Fan Yuanhui smiled, “There you go!”

Shang Xia was lying if he said he wasn’t taken aback. His intention when he came over was to ask how much he was owed, but he didn’t actually mean it. It was more of an attempt at banter than anything else.

He didn’t think that someone in the Talisman Hall would have paid attention to the matter and prepared everything before his arrival.

From the time he entered the Talisman Hall, more than 3 years had passed. Now that they had given him 3 pieces of rank four talisman paper, wouldn’t that mean that his wages were worth one piece of rank four talisman paper a year?

“Is Teacher Gong... Is the elder doing alright?” Shang Xia asked after indicating for everyone else to leave. Only Fan Yuanhui and Lou Zizhang the 2 rank three Talisman Masters, were left.

Fan Yuanhui sighed. “About that... Mister Gong... Age is really catching up with him. His condition has been deteriorating and his hands aren't as steady as before. He can't craft rank three talismans anymore...”

Shang Xia's eyes widened in shock, but he eventually released a soft sigh.

Adjusting his composure, Shang Xia continued, “Let's keep everything running as per usual. The two of you can discuss among yourselves about what we should do. I came back on Patriarch Kou's order and I plan to continue crafting rank four talismans. Why don't you give me a short summary of the situation? How many rank four talisman papers do we have at our disposal?”

Looking at each other, Fan Yuanhui eventually stood out to make the reply. “Ever since Grandmaster Shang left, the Talisman Hall received the help of the institution to gather rank four talisman paper. We managed to gather 11 rank four talisman paper and 2 different types of rank four talisman ink. Each type of talisman ink should be able to craft 3 rank four talismans...”

Shang Xia's eyes lit up and he cried, “You actually managed to gather 11 pieces?! Wouldn't that mean that there are 14 pieces if you add up those I have? Is it really that easy to obtain rank four talisman paper now?”

Lou Zizhang took over and explained, “Changes happened in the battlefield between the two worlds in the past 2 years. Many spiritual beasts left their territory and some of them were killed after our experts joined hands. Their hides were sent back to us and our craftsmen managed to turn them into talisman paper.”

“So that's the case...” Shang Xia nodded. Soon after, he started to discuss matters of talisman crafting with the 2 of them.

Even though Shang Xia wasn't able to craft talismans on the Manyu Continent, he never stopped practicing the art of crafting talismans.

Both rank three Talisman Masters learned a lot from Shang Xia be it his experience or techniques. They gained quite a lot in that short exchange.

As the only Talisman Grandmaster of the Tongyou Institution, he received the salary he was owed. Therefore, he had to give it his all and complete his responsibilities.

With requests made by both Fan Yuanhui and Lou Zizhang, Shang Xia held an assembly in the Talisman Hall that lasted for several days. He personally demonstrated the act of creating lower-leveled talismans.

At his current level, he would hardly make a mistake when it came to crafting talismans of the third rank and below.

The assembly he held didn't just affect the Talisman Hall. It roused the entire institution and news of it even reached the rest of the city.

Because of that, many cultivators made use of their connections and special methods to run all the way over to the Talisman Hall just to observe Shang Xia's teachings. One could say that the Talisman Hall was so crowded that not a drop of water could trickle through it.

5 days later the assembly was finally concluded. The Talisman Masters and cultivators who came to watch left quickly in order to enter seclusion. They had to digest everything they learned, and Shang Xia finally found some time to relax.

...

A slight disturbance caused Shang Xia to leave the Talisman Hall. He ran straight for the Formations Hall while thinking back to things that happened in the past. He recalled the beef both halls had with each other in the past. The problem stemmed from the conflict between Chu Jia and Shang Xia, but at the end of the day, Shang Xia knew that Chu Jia was considered half his teacher if they took into account their seniority.

This time, he was personally visiting the Formations Hall and no one had a reason to stop him. They quickly directed him to Chu Jia.

Seeing as Shang Xia had arrived, Chu Jia immediately sneered in contempt. "I heard you've been basking in the limelight the past few days... Grandmaster Shang, why aren't you crafting talismans in your Talisman Hall? Why did you run all the way over to our quiet Formations Hall?"

After their interaction from the time he stepped foot onto the Manyu Continent, Shang Xia basically understood Chu Jia's personality. He wasn't annoyed by her sarcastic tone and he chuckled, "I'm here because I have something I need to ask you."

Shang Xia maintained the attitude of a student when he addressed Chu Jia.

Snorting once, Chu Jia grunted resentfully. Despite her tone, she didn't turn him away. "Is there something I can help you with? Is there something the great Grandmaster Shang doesn't know?"

Unaffected, Shang Xia asked, "Have you heard of a spiritual treasure that contains many different elemental attributes?"

#### Chapter 627: Unexpected Surprise

Shang Xia wasn't there to ask Chu Jia about the Five Elements Jade because of a moment of impulse.

Back in the Beyond Heavens Pavilion, he tried his luck and sought guidance from Kou Chongxue, Shang Bo, and the others regarding the matter of the Five Elements Jade only to learn that they had no idea either.

Regardless if it was Kou Chongxue or Shang Bo, neither of them had ever seen a spiritual treasure that contained the elements of Metal, Wood, Water, Fire, and Earth.

Without the Five Elements Jade, Shang Xia understood that he couldn't balance the 5 elements in his advancement medicine. That would also mean that he wouldn't be able to enter the Five Elements Realm without it.

In the institution, there were several great sources of knowledge. The Scripture Depository would definitely take the number 1 spot due to their massive collection of books and scrolls. The Outreach Division came next, and the Formations Hall would be ranked right after that.

Laying down formations would involve countless types of treasures. As such, every single Formation Master could be considered an experienced expert when it came to treasures of different properties.

As the only Formations Grandmaster in the Tongyou Institution, Chu Jia definitely knew a lot more than the other Formation Masters.

When she heard about the properties of the item Shang Xia was looking for, she chuckled in amusement. "There actually is something like that."

Shang Xia's eyes widened in shock and he didn't believe his ears. In all honesty, he was trying his luck when he came to seek guidance from Chu Jia. He didn't wish to let off any possibility of learning about the Five Elements Jade. He didn't expect to find his answer in the Formations Hall. When he was making his way over earlier, he only planned to ask them to help him keep a lookout before leaving for the Scripture Depository to look for Zhang Haogu.

That was how his plan would go. He wanted to ask Zhang Haogu for records that might have something to do with the Five Elements Jade.

The last part would involve him heading to the Outreach Division to request for them to take note of any treasure like that in the Azure Origin World.

Never in his wildest imagination would he have thought that Chu Jia would be able to give him a confirmation!

Not knowing how to react, Shang Xia only managed to respond after some time. He didn't seem too convinced and he asked again, "Sorry, can you repeat yourself?"

The smile on Chu Jia's face grew even wider after noticing how anxious Shang Xia seemed. "I said, there's actually something like that."

Shang Xia's eyes widened in shock but he still looked unconvinced.

Seeing through his thoughts, Chu Jia's voice sank and she growled, "What's the matter?! Do you not believe me?"

"Please enlighten me..." Shang Xia snapped back to reality and said respectfully.

"Hehe! There's hope for this kid..." It was clear Chu Jia enjoyed his respectful act. Eventually, the playful look on her face disappeared and she started to turn serious. "If you're looking for a treasure that's born naturally while containing the 5 elements, there might be something like that out there. However, I have never seen it before..." Chu Jia paused for a second to watch Shang Xia's expression sinking. "... Well, that's referring to naturally born treasures. If you don't mind a man-made treasure, I should be able to create one!"

Shang Xia was completely dumbfounded after hearing her response. It was also then that Shang Xia realized he had been mistaken the entire time. The Crimson Soul Tablet indicated that he had to find the Five Elements Jade, but it never said anything about it being a naturally formed treasure.

At the end of the day, all the Five Elements Jade had to do was regulate the elements and maintain them in an equilibrium when he broke through. It didn't matter if it was naturally formed or man-made!

To prevent him from making another mistake, Shang Xia once again sank his consciousness into his sea of consciousness to study the recipe for his Five Elements Paradoxical Yin Yang Paste.

Indeed... The tablet didn't say anything else about the Five Elements Jade other than its name. The only time it gave any indication of what the treasure should be was when it mentioned 'spiritual treasure' for the fourth and fifth rank!

"Hey! What are you thinking about?! Did you hear what I said?!" Chu Jia's voice boomed in his mind, shocking him awake.

"Oh, oh! Yeah, sorry! I was still shocked by what you said earlier. I didn't think that your knowledge of formations had already reached such an amazing level!" Shang Xia reacted quickly and shifted her attention away by giving her some slight praise.

"Hmph! It's good that you know now..." Chu Jia pouted, but a look of delight appeared on her face. She then continued, "Well, looks like you're pretty lucky. If this was before I saw and made use of the Nine Blossom Jade Formation Disc, I wouldn't be confident that I would be able to create whatever you said.

"Nine Blossom Jade Formation Disc?" Shang Xia raised his eyebrows curiously. He didn't know what that had to do with the Five Elements Jade.

Glancing at him from the corner of her eye, Chu Jia explained, "The Nine Blossom Jade Formation Disc is the key to our Tongyou Mysterious World's ascension to the Tongyou Paradise. It even has the ability to store a massive amount of world origin. The Five Elements Jade you're talking about can barely be compared to it. You should know that world origin is the source of everything. It created Origin Dippers and various spiritual treasures. No matter how impressive your Five Elements Jade is, it can't be ranked higher than a complete Origin Dipper..."

Shang Xia understood what she meant. Even though the Five Elements Jade sounded impressive as it contained the properties of all 5 primary elements, it was truly nothing when compared to the Nine Blossom Jade Formation Disc.

"It's just that..." Shang Xia spoke after a short moment of contemplation. "The Nine Blossom Jade Formation Disc is still considered pretty big... The Five Elements Jade I require should be really small in size as it needs to be used with my advancement medicine..."

Shang Xia decided to reveal the fact that he was already starting to prepare to enter the Martial Dipper Realm to Chu Jia. Also, he directly indicated the size of the jade. His advancement medicine was called the Five Elements Paradoxical Yin Yang Paste, and he had to ingest a portion of it while applying the other portion to his body. If Chu Jia really created something the size of the Nine Blossom Jade Formation Disc, he wouldn't be able to eat it no matter how hard he tried.

Also, Chu Jia could tell that Shang Xia truly trusted her now that he had revealed the fact that the Five Elements Jade was a key to his advancement to the Martial Dipper Realm.

She had been partly teasing Shang Xia while maintaining a mere shred of seriousness. She was also trying to rile Shang Xia up for fun the whole time. Now that she heard how important the Five Elements Jade was, she turned serious. Even the way she spoke changed.

“You don’t have to worry so much about this. I gained some inspiration from the Nine Blossom Jade Formation Disc and I’m fairly certain I can craft the treasure you require. However, I won’t be able to succeed in a single try. I’ll probably fail a few times and the byproducts would be useless. Throughout the process, I will be extremely careful in my use of resources to prevent wastage, but that would also mean that the end product would be really tiny...”

Shang Xia heaved a sigh of relief after hearing her explanation. Not a trace of playfulness could be heard in his voice as he continued, “That would be great. If you really go all out and craft it through the wanton use of resources, I’ll probably go broke...”

“Don’t give me that! There’s no use acting pitiful in front of me... If we’re talking about personal wealth, you’re probably the richest person in our Tongyou Institution if we don’t count the Martial Dipper Realm Ancestors! In fact, even if we look through the entire You Continent, that will still hold true!”

Shang Xia felt that he most definitely couldn’t admit to that in front of Chu Jia and he responded quickly, “How can that be true? Teacher Chu, you’re exaggerating!”

“Hmph! Shameless fellow...” Chu Jia glared at Shang Xia before returning back on track. “Whatever it is, you should get me several pieces of high-grade spirit jade. You probably don’t need me to tell you why I need them but... Those spirit jade can’t be of inferior quality since we’re fusing rank four or five spiritual treasures into them!”

Shang Xia didn’t expect that the massive headache he was getting from finding the Five Elements Jade would be solved just like that! Naturally, he wouldn’t reject Chu Jia’s request for high-quality spirit jade.

Feeling a massive weight lifted off his heart now that the matter of the Five Elements Jade was settled, Shang Xia decided to bid farewell and take his leave.

Who would have thought that he would be interrupted by Chu Jia the moment he stood up?

“Are you leaving just like that?! Aren’t you planning to show your sincerity after I promised to craft your Five Elements Jade?!” Chu Jia grumbled softly.

Shang Xia’s eyes widened in shock. He was so relieved that he finally found a way to obtain the Five Elements Jade that he forgot that he was asking Chu Jia for a favor. Now that he had sent himself over for a slaughterfest, Chu Jia definitely wouldn’t give up a chance to milk him for his treasures.

“Teacher Chu, is there anything I can help you with? I’ll promise to do it as long as it’s within the scope of my capabilities.” Shang Xia replied. He knew that he couldn’t show the slightest bit of hesitation at moments like that. In order to get his hands on the Five Elements Jade, he would agree to any demands she had.

“Alright! I want you to help me create a Formation Diagram!” Chu Jia smiled. Seeing the confused look on Shang Xia’s face, she continued, “If you manage to step into the

Martial Dipper Realm in the future, you need to help me craft a rank five Formation Diagram!”

“Talisman Masters and Formation Masters have always been working hand in hand... There’s no point in me rejecting your request, but a rank five Formation Diagram...” Shang Xia muttered.

Chu Jia seemed to be able to see through his thoughts. Her tone changed and she spoke with utmost sincerity, “Shang Xia, I don’t know how you plan on entering the Martial Dipper Realm, but from your requirement of the Five Elements Jade, I can tell that it has something to do with the interaction of elements... Don’t you think the principles behind that can be used to create an amazing formation?”

He was taken aback by her explanation. He might have been agreeing blindly earlier, but he could somewhat understand that the interaction of the 5 elements could also be used as a base of formation creation.

Shang Xia couldn’t help but sigh inwardly. Chu Jia definitely deserved her reputation as the most talented Formation Grandmaster in the history of the Tongyou Institution. She had extremely sharp senses and her knowledge of formations was vast. She managed to connect the dots the moment he spoke about the Five Elements Jade and he couldn’t help but admire her for it.

She continued, “I have no idea how you’re planning to use the jade that contains the properties of all 5 primary elements, and I’m not sure if you’re clear about it either. However, I’m sure of one thing. After you enter the Martial Dipper Realm, you will definitely have experienced it for yourself. With what you learned from it, my request won’t pose a problem!”

After thinking about it, Shang Xia nodded solemnly. “It’s a deal.”

A look of joy bloomed on Chu Jia’s face. “That’s great! My instincts tell me that the Formation Diagram would most likely be the key for me to become a rank five Formations Grandmaster!”

“Actually, it might even...” She paused for a second and her voice wavered slightly. She might be a little concerned that her excitement would cause her to speak a little too loudly and she suppressed her voice before she continued, “... It might even be the key to my breakthrough to the Martial Dipper Realm in the future...”

Carefully examining Chu Jia again, Shang Xia discovered that her cultivation had already reached the second layer of the Martial Extermination Realm!

They had merely returned for a few days, but Chu Jia had already refined her second extermination origin!

Chapter 628: Audience

Finally leaving the institution, Shang Xia returned to the Shang Clan. Shang Jian, Shang Xi, Shang Quan, Shang Tai, and many other influential figures in the clan learned of his return and quickly came out to welcome him.

The moment he saw them, he cried out in shock, “There’s no need to come personally! This is truly overkill...”

Turning to look at his Ninth Uncle, Shang Yang, he said, "Ninth Uncle, your cultivation has improved since we last met! Congratulations!"

An awkward smile appeared on Shang Yang's face. "It's nothing much. I know my limits and abilities and I probably won't be able to go much further. I only hope you can guide your 2 cousin brothers in the future. I won't be able to thank you enough if you do!"

Shang Xia chuckled in response. "We're all family here. There's no need to go around thanking each other!"

"Your Ninth Uncle isn't that old but he sounds like he's going to die or something... Little Xia, he's just afraid that you would hold a grudge against him for what he did!" Shang Xi teased from the side.

"What?! Of course not..." Shang Yang waved his hands in apparent terror and everyone broke out in laughter.

As they conversed casually, they entered the rear of the residence. A huge group of Shang Clan disciples followed behind them and formed a massive entourage. Shang Xia's cousins stared at their parents who were laughing away beside Shang Xia and complicated emotions filled their hearts.

After completing their welcome for Shang Xia and messing around with some jokes, a banquet was arranged to take place that very night. When everything was set, everyone finally left with the exception of Shang Quan and Shang Tai who found an excuse to stay.

"The great craftsman of the Talisman Hall, Mister Ren Huan, along with another expert, Mister Ren Bainian, are here to visit you. They're waiting in the side hall." Shang Quan reported.

"Huh?" Shang Xia got to his feet quickly. A wide smile appeared on his face and he gestured to Shang Quan. "Quick, invite them over!"

As Ren Huan and Ren Bainian made their way over to the main hall, they noticed Shang Xia standing outside from afar. He came all the way out to welcome them!"

After they seated themselves in the hall, tea was served before Ren Huan laughed happily, "I received the news of your return the moment you stepped into the institution. I ran all the way here immediately, but you held some assembly in the Talisman Hall to impart your knowledge. Just like that, 5 days passed! It was an amazing scene back then and because of our relationship, you don't know how many people came looking for me to bring them into the Talisman Hall just to observe your lesson!"

Ren Huan looked at Shang Quan and Shang Tai at the side and chuckled, "I believe even more people harassed them than me though..."

Shang Quan and Shang Tai roared with laughter and revealed a look of delight.

Shang Xia's assembly back then to impart the way of talisman crafting definitely brought honor to the Shang Clan. he also managed to raise his own prestige.

Unwilling to keep harping on the topic, Shang Xia waited for the laughter to die down before turning to Ren Huan. “Brother Ren, looks like you have also stepped into the Martial Extermination Realm!”

“Hehe...” Ren Huan sniggered softly in response. “It’s all because of our friendship! In the past 2 years, spiritual beasts had been emerging from their hiding spots in the battlefield between the two worlds. The institution formed many squads to hunt them down and because of my abilities to craft rank four talisman paper, along with the intentional support of the Talisman Hall, I was rewarded with a strand of extermination origin. Luckily, I succeeded in my attempt at my breakthrough.”

“Brother Ren, it has nothing to do with luck. I believe you were prepared for it.” Shang Xia smiled.

Because of the Tongyou Institution’s plan for their expedition to the Manyu Continent, they brought away most of the Martial Extermination Realm experts. It resulted in a lack of manpower in their defense in the battlefield between the two worlds.

In order to make up for their lack of high-leveled combat strength, the Tongyou Institution had been ramping up their support for experts to enter the Martial Extermination Realm.

The reason squads had been formed to kill rank four spiritual beasts in the battlefield between the two worlds was also to harvest their extermination origins.

Ren Huan managed to capitalize on the window of opportunity to obtain the qualifications to enter the Martial Extermination Realm.

With a peal of laughter, Ren Huan continued, “Right, other than celebrating your return, I actually came to ask you for some help.”

He brought out a sealed spirit case after he spoke. “These are the rank four talisman papers I managed to save up. There are 3 of them and they were made from the skin of spiritual beasts. According to the usual practice, I hope you can help me to craft a single rank four talisman.”

Raising his eyebrows in surprise, Shang Xia hesitated slightly. “Brother Ren, there’s no need for this...”

Currently, Ren Huan was also an expert in the Martial Extermination Realm. He was someone of a decent status in the institution and his authority level had risen.

Back when Shang Xia left the Manyu Continent 2 years ago, Ren Huan learned about Shang Xia’s success rate when crafting rank four talismans. It exceeded the standard 30 percent mark.

Now that 2 years had passed, Shang Xia’s cultivation took a huge leap forward. His ability to craft talismans should have risen proportionally.

Now that he brought 3 pieces of rank four talisman paper over to ask Shang Xia for the favor, he was actually giving him 3 extra chances to craft rank four talismans!

Moreover, with the friendship they shared, there was no need for Ren Huan to use so many pieces of talisman paper to request a single rank four talisman. After all, the price of 3 rank four talisman paper for 1 rank four talisman was the price publicized to the outside world.

Before Shang Xia could continue, Ren Huan interrupted him, “Brother Shang, let’s talk about all that after you deal with everything you need to do. Today, there’s no need to be courteous. Also, I sincerely hope you can help me to craft a rank four talisman.”

Shang Xia muttered softly, “Alright, I won’t stand on ceremony then. Brother Ren, what talisman do you want?”

Ren Huan seemed to have thought about it a long time ago and he replied almost instantly, “I just entered the Martial Extermination Realm and I’m not very good at combat. I wish to obtain something powerful. Yup, the effects of the talisman should be huge. The attack radius should also be massive...”

Speaking up to that point, Ren Huan suddenly felt a little self aware and he chuckled in embarrassment, “Brother Shang, is my request a little too unreasonable?”

“It’s alright. The Extermination Lightning Attracting Talisman seems to fit your criteria.” Shang Xia replied.

The Extermination Lightning Attracting Talisman could be ranked among the best among all the talismans Shang Xia knew in terms of power or difficulty.

Ren Huan nearly yelped in celebration. “In that case, I’ll have to trouble Brother Shang!”

Now that Ren Huan achieved his goal, he exchanged several more pleasantries with Shang Xia before taking his leave.

After he was gone, Shang Xia turned to Ren Bainian who had been sitting in silence the entire time. “I apologize for the wait, Senior Ren, I wonder if you have been able to settle your clansmen down in the Tongyou City? Have you adapted to the Azure Origin World?”

Back on the Tongyou Island, Ren Bainian personally witnessed how Shang Bo stepped into the Martial Dipper Realm. He also experienced a lot in his days on the Azure Origin World and he became even more respectful in front of Shang Xia. He even envied Ren Huan who had had such a great relationship with Shang Xia.

Hearing his question, Ren Bainian quickly responded, “Young friend, there’s no need to apologize! It’s my Ren Clan’s good luck to be accepted into a superior world. The heaven and earth qi here is rich and there are plenty of cultivation resources available. It’s really an eye-opener for us. How can we have any problems over here? We can only complain that we didn’t come earlier...”

Shang Xia broke into laughter. “It’s great that Senior Ren managed to adapt to our world. I saw several youngsters of your Ren Clan and the Manyu Continent entering the Outer Division of the institution. The progress is excellent.”

Pausing for a moment, he seemed to have thought of something and asked, “Oh right, where did you choose to settle down? Do you need our Shang Clan’s assistance?”

Ren Bainian replied immediately, “Young Friend Shang, there’s no need for you to worry. The institution made the arrangements themselves. Our Ren Clan and a portion of the cultivators from the Manyu Continent have temporarily established a small village 30 miles outside the city. Equipment to build houses and plow the lands has already been given to us. It’s also convenient for us to enter and leave the city at will.”

Shang Xia nodded his head in response. "That's great. Anyway, is something the matter?"

"The first reason I came over today was to pay you a visit. I wanted to thank you for all the care and help you have shown us along the journey here. Secondly... I came here because of this!" He retrieved a long case from his sleeves and opened it to reveal a Talisman Brush that emitted a milky white glow.

Shang Xia leaped to his feet in surprise and he gasped, "Senior Ren, did you actually manage to restore the White Bone Brush?"

"I didn't fail you!" Ren Bainian revealed a wide smile in response.

The look of joy on Shang Xia's face grew deeper and he reached out to hold the White Bone Brush. Sending a trace of his inner qi into the brush, he felt it turning into an extension of his own arm.

He clearly recalled the feeling he had back when he used the brush for the first time. Back then, it could barely be considered a mid-grade brush. He wasted a lot of inner qi when using it.

Even without using the brush to craft a talisman, Shang Xia could feel that the brush had been restored perfectly! In fact, it was even better than the Purple Bamboo Brush that belonged to the institution!

"Nice... This is great! This is truly amazing!" Shang Xia yelled with joy before turning to Ren Bainian again. "Senior Ren, with your skills in repairing artifacts, everyone in the institution who has a good weapon will probably be lining up for your services!"

Even though the Azure Origin World was ranked higher than the Manyu Continent, the number of experts who possessed graded weapons was still in the minority.

Under such circumstances, many experts greatly cherished their weapons. However, it was inevitable that their weapons would be damaged after repeated battles. In order to obtain a new weapon, they would have to pay a sky-high price. As such, they would usually fix and repair their weapons whenever possible.

Ren Bainian smiled at the praise, "This old man hopes to find a footing in the Tongyou City so as to allow my clan to grow stronger. I also hope to quickly assimilate into the Azure Origin World. I can't think of a way to start, and I was hoping to get your help..."

"Oh." Shang Xia raised his eyebrows before turning to look at Shang Quan and Shang Tai.

"This isn't a problem. Our Shang Clan has a store in the southern street. It's pretty big, and the rent is relatively cheap. Senior Ren, you can send a couple of your clansmen over to take a look to see if it's suitable for use."

"Yes, yes. We can definitely make use of it." Ren Bainian replied immediately. "I'm content to find a place to establish my clan in the city. There are 2 juniors in my clan who are also proficient in fixing weapons. They might not be as good as me, but they're pretty good. They can take on their roles as craftsmen there."

Seeing as the problem had been settled easily, Shang Xia continued, “Senior Ren, what are your future plans? Did the institution arrange anything for you?”

Shang Quan didn’t wait for Ren Bainian to answer as he immediately interrupted, “Little Xia, you might not have heard yet, but Senior Ren has already entered the Weapons Hall. At the same time, he took on a role as the Assistant Instructor of the Upper Division!”

“Oh!” Shang Xia chuckled happily. “Looks like I have to congratulate Senior Ren then!”

Yan Su’er took on the role of the Assistant Head Instructor, and it could be said that she became his grandfather’s aide. Now, Ren Bainian was also going to become an Assistant Instructor of the Upper Division and become Liu Qinglan’s deputy in command.

It seemed as though the Tongyou Institution had given their statuses and strength proper consideration!

After Ren Bainian left, Shang Quan made another report. “3 days ago, Ji Yu and Liu Zhidao came to pay us a visit. At the same time, they brought over really precious gifts. They said that the gifts were meant for you and we have no idea how to deal with them. When we were still stuck in a dilemma, Fifth Uncle passed down instructions for us to just accept them...”

#### Chapter 629: Taihang Alliance

After hearing that the gifts came from Ji Yu and Liu Zhidao, Shang Xia had a general idea of what was going on. His heart trembled slightly in excitement “Since Fifth Grandpa gave the order, we’ll just accept them! Why don’t you bring it out so that we can see what they are?”

Shang Quan had long since been prepared. He opened the first case in his possession. A pebble the size of an egg laid within.

“Liu Zhidao sent this item over. Do you know what treasure it is?” Shang Quan asked. Even though he had been in charge of managing the Shang Clan’s businesses and had vast knowledge of treasures and artifacts, he couldn’t recognize what was in the case. After all, his cultivation was limited. He hadn’t come into contact with many high-grade spiritual treasures in the fourth rank and above.

Shang Xia took a deep breath. He didn’t seem too familiar with it either, but he slowly reached out to hold it. The second he did, several words appeared on the surface of the Crimson Soul Tablet. “Flowing Stream Cascade Rock. Rank four earth attribute spiritual treasure.”

Seeing as Shang Xia was keeping quiet, Shang Quan asked, “What’s the matter? Is there a problem with this treasure?”

Gasping softly, Shang Xia chuckled, “There’s nothing wrong with it. It’s just that the name of the treasure is a little strange. It’s called the Flowing Stream Cascade Rock and it’s something I need.”

“That’s perfect then! Take a look at this. See if it’s also something you can use.” Shang Quan brought out the other box.

Opening it carefully, Shang Xia smiled, “If these treasures were sent over by the Ji and Liu Clans, they should be useful...”

A light blue colored piece of metal laid in the case and when Shang Xia touched it, the tablet gave its evaluation. "Singularity Origin Black Metal. Rank four metal attributed spiritual treasure."

"Is this also something useful?" Shang Quan asked.

Barely containing the joy in his heart, Shang Xia nodded. "Indeed!"

Just like that, Shang Xia gathered all the rank four spiritual treasures he needed! There was the Singularity Origin Black Metal of the Metal element, the White Bone Grass of the Wood element, the Origin Essence Dew of the Water element, the Lava Fire Jade of the Fire element, and the Flowing Stream Cascade Rock of the Earth element.

Even Shang Xia didn't think that he would collect all the rank four spiritual treasures required in several short days!

They might be mere rank four treasures that were much easier to find than rank five spiritual treasures, but it was enough cause for celebration for Shang Xia.

Shang Quan and Shang Tai were also happy for him after seeing his reaction.

"Little Xia, are you going to start crafting talismans immediately now that you're back?" Shang Quan asked.

"Yes. I plan on taking part in a trade fair of a massive scale and Patriarch Kou informed me to prepare several types of talismans. They might come in handy during the trade fair itself."

Even though he didn't reveal the scale or location of the trade fair, he didn't hide its existence from them.

Shang Quan and Shang Tai shot each other a glance before Shang Quan took out several items.

Shang Xia stared at them in shock and he gasped, "Rank four talisman paper? Rank three ink? Uncle Quan, have you entered the ranks of a rank three talisman ink craftsman?"

A bitter smile appeared on Shang Quan's face. "I'm truly ashamed of myself. I wasted so much time and resources before finally crafting several slabs of solid rank three talisman ink. Well, these talisman papers were obtained by your Second Uncle and Sixth Aunt..."

Shang Xia nodded in response. "Uncle Quan, it's great that you can craft rank three talisman ink now. I don't know about the others, but in our You Continent, talisman ink is much rarer than talisman paper. Having been a rank four Talisman Grandmaster for so long, I've always been lacking in rank three talisman ink."

Shang Quan sighed, "Yeah, we knew about that. If you managed to get your hands on suitable talisman ink and a proper brush, your success rate should increase by quite a bit."

"Well, enough of this!" Shang Xia waved his hand and laughed suddenly. He turned to Shang Tai and asked, "Uncle Tai, is there something you wish to tell me too?"

"Hehe..." Shang Tai chortled under his breath and took out 14 pieces of rank four talisman paper. Under Shang Xia's shocked expression, he also took out a bottle of rank four talisman ink.

One had to know that 2 years ago when Shang Xia was planning to leave for the Manyu Continent, the institution only managed to collect 11 pieces of rank four talisman paper.

Shang Xia didn't have to ask when Shang Tai started his explanation. "Of these 14 pieces of rank four talisman paper, 2 of them were collected personally by your Third Aunt. The rest came from various strongholds and powers in the Taihang Mountains. They passed them to her and hope that you can craft talismans for them."

Taking some time to organize his thoughts, Shang Tai continued, "Your Third Aunt received their requests and I'll quote her in the message she wants to relay to you. 'The exchange rate will be set at 3 talisman papers for a rank four talisman. Do your best and you can keep the leftover talisman papers'!"

Shang Xia's eyes widened slightly and he took a deep breath. "Third Aunt actually has such wide connections in the Taihang Mountains! That's a place with crouching tigers and hidden dragons indeed. They actually managed to gather so many pieces of rank four talisman paper!"

Shang Tai broke into laughter. "We've been responsible for communicating with your Third Aunt for the past 2 years and we gained quite a good understanding of the situation in the Taihang Mountains. A good portion of scattered cultivators from the You, Ji, Bing, Yan, and Si Continents have gathered there. If not for the fact that the Taihang Mountains is nearly ten thousand miles long and the powers there aren't united, with the exception of the Si Continent, none of the rest would be able to stand against them if they gathered together. After all, there are tons of experts there. They will be able to form an enormous power if all of them banded together."

Shang Xia nodded in understanding. He had been to the Taihang Mountains in the past and he understood the situation there. He knew that Shang Tai wasn't exaggerating.

All of a sudden, he seemed to have thought of something and he asked, "I recall that the Sixth Pass of the Taihang Mountains created a new alliance back then called the Five Mountains Alliance with Yin Wanxiang as their leader. Third Aunt seemed to have entered their alliance back then..."

"The Five Mountains Alliance have already changed their title to the Taihang Alliance. Yin Wanxiang has entered the grand completion stage of the Martial Extermination Realm and he's an existence whose reputation has spread past the Taihang Mountains. Even the Ji, Bing, and Yan Continents are wary of him." Shang Tai mentioned. "From reports your Third Aunt sent back to the clan, the Taihang Alliance didn't just unify the experts of the Sixth Pass. They took down the Seventh Pass and a good half of the powers in the Eighth Pass. It's not an exaggeration to say that they have unified a third of the Taihang Mountains."

"Currently, the Taihang Alliance has 14 experts in the Martial Extermination Realm. There are rumors going around that Yin Wanxiang found a way to break through to the Martial Dipper Realm and is currently making his preparations."

"Among the talisman papers your Third Aunt sent back, a good chunk came from the Taihang Alliance for you to craft talismans for them..."

Shang Xia listened to Shang Tai's report seriously before exhaling a long breath. "Looks like Third Aunt is in a pretty good position in the Taihang Alliance..."

Shang Tai nodded and continued, "Even though the Third Lady didn't reveal much, rumors have been spreading around that the Taihang Alliance is supported by our Tongyou Institution. The Third Lady might be the institution's representative in the alliance."

Grunting once, Shang Xia knew that those rumors weren't actually baseless. It was true that Shang Pei was representing the Tongyou Institution.

...

After a 3 day break in the Shang Clan Manor, Shang Xia returned to the Talisman Hall.

Unlike the previous time, he didn't stop for long. He took a bunch of rank three talisman paper he would use as warm up before heading into the Tongyou Mysterious World. He got ready to enter seclusion to craft talismans.

As he didn't know when the trade fair would be held, he could only make full use of his time to complete the production of his talismans.

After returning to the wooden hut that was surrounded by a line of fences, Shang Xia took out everything he had and carefully took stock of them. He had 18 pieces of rank three talisman paper and 34 pieces of rank four talisman paper.

The reason he had so little rank three talisman paper was because of the Swallow Race. The day before he returned, Yan Ming, the young clan leader appeared to trade rank three talisman paper for a slab of rank four Blood Ink.

Shang Xia was initially afraid that he wouldn't be able to make use of the rank four talisman ink due to the difference in cultivation systems between the worlds, but after a series of tests when crafting rank three talisman paper, he discovered that there wasn't a serious discrepancy.

He would be able to make use of the rank four Blood Ink, and even though it wasn't ideal, it was much better than rank three talisman ink.

In total, he gathered 3 slabs and 1 bottle of rank four talisman ink. He also had 3 bottles of Abyssal Ink and 3 bottles of Pine Smoke Purple Scale Ink. They were crafted by Shang Quan and they were ink with special qualities. Other than that, he also had 3 bottles of rank three talisman ink prepared by the Talisman Hall.

Shang Xia became a little spoiled for choice when it came to brushes. He had his high-grade White Bone Brush, and the Talisman Hall also prepared their high-grade Purple Bamboo Brush in case he needed it.

Nearly 3 years had passed since he crafted 10 or so rank four talismans in a single session of seclusion. That was the last time he crafted talismans.

It wasn't often a Talisman Master would go so long without practice, and even though Shang Xia had been running through simulations of talisman crafting in his mind, nothing could be compared to the real thing.

His cultivation might have reached the grand completion stage of the Martial Extermination Realm, but he needed some time to translate the increase in his cultivation into an improvement in his skills in crafting talismans. He also needed a period of time to adapt to his increased strength.

That was precisely why he chose to craft rank three talismans as warm up.

The earliest rank three talisman he crafted was called the Golden Lightning Spear Talisman. It could be considered one of the talismans he was the most familiar with and understood the most about.

With his powerful divine perception, Shang Xia crafted 5 of them in one go. In the past, his divine sense would be greatly exhausted because of the consumption. Now, he didn't feel the least bit tired. The amount of divine perception he used was nearly negligible. That wasn't all. He didn't fail a single time when crafting the Golden Lightning Spear Talismans!

When he was done with them, Shang Xia decided to craft some Tranquil Water Screen Talismans. The Tranquil Water Screen Talisman was a defensive rank three talisman, and it was a lot more difficult to craft compared to the Golden Lightning Spear Talisman.

Like before, he attempted to craft 5 of them without rest. Because he pressed his brush down a little too hard during one of his attempts, it ended as a failure. In the end, he only managed to craft 4 Tranquil Water Screen Talismans.

Only after he was done did he feel slightly tired. However, the sharp instincts and familiar feeling he had for crafting talismans were starting to return.

After resting for a day, Shang Xia returned to his peak state and continued crafting rank three talismans.

This time, he planned to craft the Void Breaking Bamboo Talisman which was of the highest difficulty among all the rank three talismans he knew. Like before, he attempted to craft 5 of them in one go, but he ended up with 4 of them after failing once.

Feeling confident that he was ready to craft rank four talismans, Shang Xia used 2 whole days to adjust his condition before he started crafting them.

According to how he had been crafting rank three talismans, he planned to craft the easier talismans before slowly progressing to the more complicated ones. His intention was to use 3 rank four talisman papers to craft Golden Sun Inferno Talismans which he was the most familiar with.

The only difference between the previous time he crafted them and his current attempt was that he planned to use the White Bone Brush, instead of the Purple Bamboo Brush he was a little more used to.

During the process of crafting rank three talismans, he discovered that the White Bone Brush was a little more inclined to fire attribute as it resonated a little more when he poured fiery qi into it.

Because of that, and maybe some extra luck, it didn't matter that he hadn't been crafting rank four talismans for a long time or the fact that he was using a new brush. He managed to succeed twice and the completed Golden Sun Inferno Talismans sat on the table before him. It was an amazing start to the entire process.

Chapter 630: A Terrifying Success Rate

Now that he was crafting talismans again after close to 3 years of not doing so, he managed to complete 2 Golden Sun Inferno Talismans in 3 attempts. It was a great start and Shang Xia's confidence immediately ballooned.

Throughout the crafting process, Shang Xia could clearly feel the changes his higher cultivation brought. His divine perception was much sharper than before, and it was a lot more stable. His inner qi was abundant and it flowed through his body at a much stronger rate. He was also able to recover a lot faster than when he crafted talismans back then.

Everything he had experienced pointed to one thing. Shang Xia's art of talisman crafting had progressed and he was starting to approach a higher level. After consolidating what he learned, he might be able to take the next step.

Now that he successfully crafted 2 Golden Sun Inferno Talismans, Shang Xia didn't wish to change the pace of whatever he was doing. He took a break for a few days to adjust his condition before picking up his White Bone Brush again. This time, he planned to craft the Thousand Yang Sword Talisman.

It was also a talisman that would resonate with the fire attribute of the White Bone Brush, and Shang Xia felt that he managed to grasp the rhythm of the qi flowing through the brush. He focused and tried to fuse it into the Thousand Yang Sword Talisman.

Like before, he succeeded twice out of 3 attempts. 2 Thousand Yang Sword Talisman sat on the tablet before him.

A massive grin appeared on Shang Xia's face all of a sudden. He seemed to have discovered the best way to make use of his high-grade White Bone Brush.

Without any reservations, Shang Xia brought out the rank three Abyssal Ink Shang Quan made and prepared to craft the main objective of his entire session. He had to craft as many Abyssal Void Shattering Talismans as he could!

Of all the rank four talismans Shang Xia knew how to craft, the Abyssal Void Shattering Talisman was of the above average difficulty level. Even though it was less complicated than the Divine Restraint Talisman, Needle Extermination Light Talisman, and Extermination Lightning Attracting Talisman, it was still considerably difficult to craft. At the very least, it was more difficult than making a Spiritual Protection Substitution Talisman.

He failed on his very first attempt, but Shang Xia seemed to become even more confident after that. Proceeding on with the crafting process, Shang Xia managed to craft 2 Abyssal Void Shattering Talismans despite his initial failure.

Taking several days to restore himself to his peak state, Shang Xia suddenly felt a rush of power. He felt that he could control everything and do anything he wanted and he didn't hesitate to start crafting even more Abyssal Void Shattering Talismans.

It was a shame luck wasn't on his side this time. He made a mistake on his very first attempt, wasting a piece of rank four talisman paper. Fortunately, he succeeded on his second try but his third attempt also ended in failure.

With the next batch of rank four talisman papers, Shang Xia only managed to craft 1 Abyssal Void Shattering Talisman.

The sudden failure came as a bolt from the blue and shocked Shang Xia. However, he managed to clear his mind thanks to the wake up call. He became a little more rational, but he maintained the confidence he built up before.

After some reflection, Shang Xia discovered that he completely controlled the unique property of his White Bone Brush. The feeling of extreme focus he had experienced in the past also returned.

This time, he didn't wait to return to his peak state. He immediately brought out some resources to continue crafting Abyssal Void Shattering Talismans.

With another batch of 3 rank four talisman papers, Shang Xia completed 2 of them.

Instead of stopping, Shang Xia opened the bottle of rank four talisman ink. Not stopping to take a break, he continued to craft Abyssal Void Shattering Talismans. He knew that he wouldn't be able to stay in his special state forever, and he wanted to make the most out of it.

Holding his brush in his right hand, it didn't tremble in the slightest as it made fluid motions on the talisman paper. His left hand didn't remain idle as he continuously calculated the best time, position, and strength of his next stroke. Of course, the amount of inner qi he would be using was also included in the calculations.

The way he was crafting talismans was something he created, and through his constant use, he was perfecting it.

With his fourth Abyssal Void Shattering Talisman complete, the fifth was also created without a hitch. Only when he began crafting his sixth Abyssal Void Shattering Talisman did he realize that he hadn't taken a break in more than 10 days!

According to how he had planned things out, Shang Xia would take some time to rest after using up a batch of rank four talisman paper. He would consolidate everything he had learned before adjusting his condition to its peak before starting on the next batch of talismans.

Because his cultivation had reached the grand completion stage of the Martial Extermination Realm, his divine perception was terrifyingly strong. Regardless of the quantity or its recovery rate, they were much higher than before.

Every time he used up a batch of talisman papers, the consumption of his divine perception wasn't serious enough to exhaust him. Because of that, Shang Xia had the ability to craft multiple rank four talismans in a row. In the past, he would rest after every attempt. Now, he only took a break after 3 tries.

The change served to prove how confident Shang Xia was in his abilities. He knew that no matter what, he would succeed once in every batch.

Because of the sudden burst of inspiration that caused him to enter a special state of mind, Shang Xia started another batch without much rest. He was forced out of his special state after succeeding twice in a row. However, he couldn't possibly stop on his third attempt. He forced himself to continue.

Eventually, the third Abyssal Void Shattering Talisman in a row was complete. Shang Xia actually made 6 crafting attempts in a row, and he didn't fail a single time in his final 3 tries.

In summary, he used 6 pieces of rank four talisman paper to craft 5 Abyssal Void Shattering Talismans...

If they considered those 6 attempts alone, Shang Xia's success rate had reached a horrifying level.

As soon as he was done, the final bit of inspiration disappeared. Lethargy battered against his mind in giant waves, and the familiar ache of exhausting his divine perception arrived. He felt as though all his inner qi had left his body. At that moment, Shang Xia experienced true burnout.

Moving his body slightly, he tossed himself into the soft mattress at the corner of his hut before falling asleep immediately.

Just like that, he slept for 3 days straight. When he finally woke up, he felt the world spinning around him. The state of weakness remained for 3 more days before he finally regained some sort of clarity.

With his divine perception recovering and his soul nourished, Shang Xia circulated his inner qi to recover. By the time he finally restored himself to his peak state, yet another 3 more days had passed.

The feeling of utter exhaustion after making 6 attempts without rest actually frightened him. Fear lingered in his heart and he didn't dare to start crafting talismans right away.

Meditating and regulating his state for another 3 days, he felt his divine perception becoming a little sharper than before and his soul was slightly strengthened. His inner qi started to return to its original state and he could finally heave a sigh of relief.

Currently, he used 18 of the 34 rank four talisman papers he had.

Of the talisman ink he had, he used a portion of rank three talisman ink prepared by the institution, a slab of Pine Smoke Purple Scale Ink, and all 3 slabs of Abyssal Ink Shang Quan made. A bottle of rank four ink was also used to craft the Abyssal Void Shattering Talismans.

He was left with 2 bottles of ordinary rank three talisman ink, 2 slabs of Pine Smoke Purple Scale Ink, a portion of rank four Blood Ink from the Azure Spiritual World, a stick of rank four talisman ink, and another slab of ink that was also of the fourth rank.

Also, a slab of ink, a stick of ink, and a bottle of ink were considered a single portion and they could be used to craft 3 talismans in total.

After taking stock of everything he had and completing his preparations, he decided to start crafting talismans again. Even though he was no longer in the wondrous state of mind, he felt that he managed to step through a certain bottleneck because of his past experience. He made a few changes to his talisman crafting method and instead of making 3 attempts, he would craft 4 talismans in each batch.

Shang Xia wasn't overestimating himself when he decided to do that. Instead, it was a conclusion he came to after consolidating his experience after his past attempts. Continuous crafting would allow him to maintain the quality and success rate as long as he didn't go overboard.

It also went without saying that Shang Xia's foundations would have to be strong enough to sustain the consumption of his divine perception and inner qi throughout the entire process.

That was why cultivation was the most important factor no matter what.

Making a quick calculation, Shang Xia realized that the rank four ink he had wouldn't be enough for him to craft 16 rank four talismans. As such, he took out a portion of the Pine Smoke Purple Scale Ink and carefully ground it into liquid ink before attempting to craft Spiritual Protection Substitution Talismans. He also swapped his White Bone Brush for the Purple Bamboo Brush he used back then.

Crafting a Spiritual Protection Substitution Talisman might be slightly easier than the Abyssal Void Shattering Talisman, but it was still a precious defensive rank four talisman at the end of the day. Shang Xia felt that the offensive and fire properties of the White Bone Brush weren't as suitable and decided to make the switch.

Starting with his first batch of 4 rank four talisman paper, Shang Xia actually succeeded thrice!

He took a break after the talismans were complete, and after a few days of rest, he decided to craft some Thousand Mechanism Extermination Guidance Talismans. The Thousand Mechanism Extermination Guidance Talisman was slightly more complicated than the Abyssal Void Shattering Talisman but even so, it didn't possess much offensive or defensive qualities. It served to assist cultivators in searching for extermination origins which was pretty important to many cultivators.

After 2 attempts, Shang Xia changed the ink he was using to rank four Blood Ink.

Perhaps he wasn't too familiar with crafting Thousand Mechanism Extermination Guidance Talismans, but he only managed to produce 2 of them despite using 4 pieces of rank four talisman paper.

Shang Xia didn't give up his usual practice of taking a break after finishing a batch of talisman paper, and during his rest, he decided to craft Extermination Lightning Attracting Talismans next.

He was still using rank four talisman ink, but he swapped his brush back for the White Bone Brush. He eventually managed to craft 2 Extermination Lightning Attracting Talismans.

The Extermination Lightning Attracting Talisman was much more complicated than the Thousand Mechanism Extermination Guidance Talisman, and it was pretty impressive for him to have achieved such a huge success rate.

With his last batch of rank four talisman paper, Shang Xia decided to craft the most complicated talismans out of those he knew. He wanted to make Divine Restraint Talismans.

Swapping back to the Purple Bamboo Brush, Shang Xia used the last of his rank four ink and successfully created 2 of them!

Shang Xia's success rate when crafting talismans seemed lower when he used his last 16 pieces of rank four talisman paper. However, every talisman he made was of a higher quality than the last!

When Shang Xia used up the last of his talisman papers and talisman ink, regret filled his heart.

That was because he obtained a talisman inheritance back on the Manyu Continent and he hadn't tried crafting any of it. There was a rank four talisman called the Clone Talisman that he wanted to try his hand at.

After all, the Clone Talisman was part of a complete rank five talisman inheritance Shang Xia obtained from an expert from the Spirit Abundance World.

Well, whatever the case, he ran out of talisman paper and there was no need to think about it anymore. Looking at all the rank four talismans he crafted, Shagn Xia found it slightly unbelievable.

He used 34 pieces of rank four talisman papers in total and managed to craft 21 rank four talismans!

His success rate had crossed the 60 percent mark!