

The Heavens 641

Chapter 641: Shang Xia's Confidence

Trying his hand at creating a rank two talisman seal, Shang Xia chose the simplest rank two talisman he knew. It was also the one he was the most familiar with.

He decided to craft a rank two Golden Sword Talisman Seal.

Unfortunately, the creation of the Golden Sword Talisman Seal wasn't smooth at all. Even though he had the experience of making 4 rank one talisman seals previously, how could they compare to the difficulty of a rank two talisman seal?

Shang Xia might have prepared himself for failure, but when the slab in his hand crumbled after he crafted a quarter of it, he felt a wave of heartache.

Summarizing his failure, he tried again. This time, he completed a third of the seal before it shattered.

Not discouraged at all, Shang Xia picked out another smaller fragment that fell off the Impaled Stone to start another attempt.

Even though progress seemed slow the third time, Shang Xia was confident he would succeed. In fact, he became even more sure of the path he had to take.

In the past, Shang Xia was like a blind fly that was making random attempts at crafting talisman seals. Everything was foreign to him, but now that he succeeded in crafting rank one talisman seals, he was no longer as clueless as before. All he needed to do was to build on what he had learned and refine his methods.

Unfortunately, his third attempt at crafting a rank two Golden Sword Talisman Seal ended midway. When he completed half of it, someone thumped urgently on the door to his room.

Helpless, Shang Xia could only stop for the time being. When he opened the door, he saw the other 5 members of the Tongyou Institution staring back at him. Shocked by their sudden appearance, he noticed the looks of fright, and surprise on some of their faces. Of course, there were also some who stared at him sternly.

"Everyone, this... Did something happen?" Shang Xia raised an eyebrow in surprise. He had no idea what was going on.

Liu Qinglan opened her hand all of a sudden and revealed several stone fragments. They seemed to be the remnants of the Stimulation Talisman Seal Shang Xia handed over to Chu Jia earlier.

"Did you make this?" Liu Qinglan asked seriously.

Shang Xia glanced at Chu Jia who was hiding behind Liu Qinglan at the moment. When their gazes met, he broke into laughter. "Yup! I was messing around and... Did all of you come because of that?"

"We'll talk more inside." Liu Qinglan muttered before barging into his room with the others behind her.

Obviously, Shang Xia didn't dare to stop her. He moved to the side quickly and allowed her to pass. Shang Xia looked at everyone as they streamed in and noticed that even Yun Yichen had a solemn expression on her face. Seeing as how both she and Chu Jia had come, Shang Xia knew that they probably closed the Tongyou Hall for this.

By the time he turned around after everyone walked past him, he noticed that Liu Qinglan had picked up his half-completed rank two Golden Sword Talisman Seal. She was playing with it as she examined it closely.

Everyone else looked at the many other broken shards on the table.

"Are all of you... Are you here for the talisman seal?" Shang Xia was surprised at how quickly they noticed the importance of the treasure.

"Are you already starting to craft rank two talisman seals?" Liu Qinglan asked while holding the Golden Sword Talisman Seal.

A chuckle left Shang Xia's lips. "I merely started with rank two ones. I haven't been able to make a rank two talisman seal yet."

"Oh? Wouldn't that mean that you have more rank one talisman seals?" Liu Qinglan asked.

With a wide grin on his face, Shang Xia brought out a rank one Wind Arrow Talisman Seal and the other Stimulation Talisman Seal. "If we include the one you're holding, these are all I have. Crafting a rank one talisman seal is too much of a waste. I only managed to make 2 of them before starting on rank two ones."

Frowning, Liu Qinglan stared at the shards on the table and asked, "Did you experience many unsuccessful attempts?"

Shang Xia forced a smile in response. "There shouldn't be much problem when it comes to the theoretical part of crafting them. My skills are the problem here."

Heaving a sigh of relief, Liu Qinglan nodded slowly. However, her expression turned even more serious. "Do you know... Do you know the significance of these talisman seals?"

Before Shang Xia could say anything, Liu Qinglan continued, "After I discovered the talisman seal Little Chu was playing with, I tested it on a piece of rank one talisman paper. There was no need for a talisman brush and I'm no Talisman Master. Even so, all I did was to imbue some inner qi into the seal and a piece of rank one Stimulation Talisman was created!"

Shang Xia was surprised by the fact that Liu Qinglan actually had talisman ink on her to test it out, but other than that, he wasn't too shocked. After all, he knew what he made.

One had to know that he was the only Talisman Grandmaster, or Talisman Master among them. Strictly speaking, he should be the only one who had talisman ink.

Liu Qinglan could see that Shang Xia wanted to say something, but she didn't give him the chance as she added, "Of course, a rank one talisman seal won't affect the big picture if it's revealed to the world. However, do you know the implications when ordinary cultivators can start churning out talismans with the seal in hand?"

“If a rank one talisman seal can appear, there will definitely be rank two talisman seals in the future. There might even be rank three, or rank four talisman seals! Who’s to say talisman seals of a higher level wouldn’t appear? If news of this were to spread, the entire world would be in an upheaval. Countless people with bad intentions will start hunting for you!” Liu Qinglan paused to catch her breath. She seemed to be reprimanding Shang Xia, but he could tell that she was merely concerned for his safety. Anyway, she wasn’t done. “Since you have already taken that step, you should keep the talisman seals a secret. How can you give Chu Jia the talisman seal without telling her the various implications if news of it were to leak?! Do you know how much trouble you will be in if word of this gets out there?”

Chu Jia couldn’t help but stick her tongue out while still hiding behind Liu Qinglan.

Contrary to how they thought he would act, Shang Xia revealed a massive grin. “Instructor Liu, relax! It won’t be easy for anyone to copy my methods or learn how to craft them.”

With her eyes widening in shock, Liu Qinglan snapped at him. “What the hell are you talking about? The runes are clearly visible on the talisman seal! Do you think any Talisman Master out there won’t understand what you had carved? There’s always a taller mountain out there. You’re not the only Talisman Grandmaster in our Azure Origin World and the Azure Spiritual World. You can’t be overconfident..”

Looking at Shang Xia, Liu Qinglan eventually calmed down and muttered, “Are you sure they won’t be able to replicate it easily?”

Shang Xia held up one of the seals and explained with a smile, “Instructor Liu, you might not know this, but the stone it’s carved on is really unique. I called it the Impaled Stone as it was used to contain the Abyssal Blade I obtained back in the Abyssal Secret Region. I haven’t found anything similar to it and I played around with other materials only to discover that there’s nothing similar enough to produce a talisman seal.”

He continued, “Of course, it’s not safe to only rely on the material to keep the talisman seals a secret. The world out there is massive and we can’t be sure that the Impaled Stone is one of a kind. It might not be easy to find a material like it, but there’s always a possibility. Regardless, the technique used to craft the seal is unique. Currently, it’s something only I know as I developed it myself. Even if others wish to replicate it, it won’t be easy. They won’t be able to make another talisman seal just by copying the carvings on it.”

After hearing his explanation, Liu Qinglan felt much more reassured. She finally laughed, “It’s great that you’re so confident. After all, it always pays to be more careful.”

Shang Xia nodded while maintaining a wide smile on his face.

Seeing the crafty grin that was forming on his face, Liu Qinglan’s eyes widened in shock. “Were you planning to sell it so people would learn about talisman seals?!”

“Well... As long as talismans made from the seals are used, the secret will be exposed sooner or later. Moreover, it’s not like no one will think of this eventually. They just haven’t thought of a way to do it.” Shang Xia muttered.

“It doesn’t matter! Just keep it a secret for as long as we can. Moreover, you haven’t even produced a rank two talisman seal yet.” Liu Qinglan growled. “For you to take the seal out now... Are you planning to sell it to make a fortune during the trade fair?”

Shang Xia forced a smile. “Looks like I can’t keep anything from you. Even though I received a lot of support from the clans and the institution, I can’t sit still after learning how much the 3 super factions made. I wasn’t confident in obtaining much from the trade fair with the limited funds I have and decided to sell some talisman seals.”

Before Liu Qinglan could blow up at him, Shang Xia added hastily, “Instructor Liu, please rest assured that no one will be able to learn the method of crafting a talisman seal. The method is truly unique to me and even if anyone went down the road of crafting talisman seals, they will have to come up with their own way of doing it.”

Understanding that there was no changing his mind after hearing what he said, Liu Qinglan could only sigh softly, “Since you’re so sure about it, we should come up with a proper plan...”

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When Liu Qinglan and the others left, they brought away the other rank one talisman seals he made.

Shang Xia continued to work on his rank two Golden Sword Talisman Seal. However, he no longer had a feel for it now that he had stopped. In order to start work on it again, he had to regain the feeling he had. The strength he used earlier, along with the location of every stroke. He also had to pay attention to the speed of which he used when making each movement. The process would be extremely complicated.

Moreover, he hadn’t completed a single rank two talisman seal. Not too long after he started again, his inner qi failed to resonate with the chunk in his hand and it crumbled to dust.

Despite the failure, Shang Xia seemed to have gained a lot. Because of how he stopped halfway, he had to think back to every stroke he made on the seal. Looking back, he realized there were many areas in which he could make an improvement.

Trying again, Shang Xia chose a chunk of stone that was an inch and a half wide. It was 1.5 times the size of the original chunks he used, and the thickness of it was a nice 7 centimeters instead of the 5 previously used.

Compared to a rank one talisman seal, a rank two talisman seal was much harder to craft. However, if someone who had no idea what they were doing were to look at them, they would only see that the runes on a rank two talisman seal were much more complicated and packed together. They would have no idea how much more difficult it was to craft.

Since that was the case, Shang Xia decided to make it a little larger. He would have more room to work with, and the difficulty of crafting it would be slightly reduced.

Just like that, the fourth attempt at crafting a rank two Golden Sword Talisman Seal was a success.

The only difference was that the change increased the cost of making the seal. After all, he would quickly use up all the chunks that fell off the main stone at the rate he was going. One had to know that even Shang Xia had no idea where to go looking for a second Impaled Stone after using it all up.

Chapter 642: Opening of the Pagoda

After the successful creation of the first rank two talisman seal, Shang Xia fully opened the gates to his path of crafting rank two talisman seals.

He completely immersed himself in the crafting process earlier, and he seemed to have forgotten about the time that passed. He continued his crafting process after locking himself in his room.

The other 5 members of the Tongyou Institution who came along to the Three Unity Island knew better than to disturb him randomly. As such, none of them would head over to knock on his door.

Not too long after the completion of his Golden Sword Talisman Seal, he decided to craft a different rank two talisman seal. This time, it was for the Golden Lantern Barrier Talisman.

It was a talisman that could create a wall of heaven and earth qi in times of need. It could protect the user, and its difficulty and value were way above that of the Golden Sword Talisman.

As long as he successfully created it, it would signify that his art of crafting talisman seals had gone up. At the same time, it would also mean that there wouldn't be many rank two talisman seals that would pose a challenge to him. All he had to do was to familiarize himself with the rest.

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When he was finally done with the creation of the Golden Lantern Barrier Talisman Seal, he started to set his sights on rank three talisman seals.

The logic was similar to when he was done with rank one talisman seals. It was a huge waste of resources for him to only craft rank two talisman seals. After all, the number of fragments he had that were less than 2 inches wide was running out.

Whatever the case, creating a rank three talisman seal would be a new challenge for Shang Xia. It would be much harder than before!

That was because the skills required to craft rank three talismans were on a whole new level. The amount of energy that would be consumed would also no longer be as insignificant as before. Shang Xia would probably also need to use a lot more time to make a single rank three talisman.

When he crafted rank one and two talisman seals, the amount of inner qi he used up couldn't affect him in the slightest. That was also why he could make attempt after attempt. The runes he needed to carve out were also pretty simple. The time taken to make each seal couldn't be considered long at all.

However, the crafting process would become a lot more complicated when it came to rank three talismans. The runes he had to draw would be a lot more complex, and carving them out would be much more difficult than before. He would also have to use up a portion of his divine perception.

Inner qi was one thing, but even for experts at Shang Xia's level, exhausting a portion of his divine perception was something he couldn't ignore!

That was why Shang Xia didn't immediately start crafting rank three talisman seals after he was done with the Golden Lantern Barrier Talisman Seal. Instead, he started to make his preparations.

One of the things he had to do was to confirm the current situation on the Three Unity Island before anything else.

“Are you finally out? Did you succeed in creating a rank two talisman seal?” Chu Jia was slightly surprised by Shang Xia’s sudden appearance, but a look of joy quickly appeared on her face as she asked.

With a wide grin on his face, Shang Xia handed over the Golden Sword Talisman Seal and Golden Lantern Barrier Talisman Seal for Chu Jia and Yun Yichen to play with.

They admired the seal in their hands and they examined it again and again. It was clear they were feeling really curious about it.

“Regardless of who it is, they just have to dip the seal in some talisman ink and stamp it on a piece of rank two talisman paper to create a rank two talisman... This is unbelievable! Wouldn’t that mean they will replace Talisman Masters?” Yun Yichen muttered to herself. She knew how the talisman seal worked a long time ago, but she didn’t forget to give Shang Xia a subtle warning that he might offend the entire class of Talisman Masters with his creation.

“Hehe, he’s just trying to be lazy. That’s how he came up with the idea for something like that in the first place!” Chu Jia chuckled.

“Oh? Seems like you know a lot about him.” Yun Yichen teased.

Chu Jia wanted to say something, but she seemed to have thought of something. Her face flushed red and she yelled, “Nonsense!”

Shang Xia chuckled at the side, “Actually, there are still many differences between a talisman created by the talisman seal and an actual talisman. The seal might allow us to create talismans quickly, but the power it contains wouldn’t be as great. Also, the talisman wouldn’t be able to last as long as one created by a proper Talisman Master as their inner qi wouldn’t be sealed into the paper.”

Keeping a straight face, Yun Yichen continued, “It doesn’t matter. To allow a talisman to be crafted quickly and by anyone, it’s alright for the talisman to be unable to last for a long time.”

As the 3 of them conversed happily, Liu Qinglan entered the courtyard suddenly. She was shocked to see Shang Xia, but a smile quickly formed on her face. She laughed, “This is great! The Three Unity Pagoda is about to open and I was thinking if I should notify you. I was afraid I would interrupt you again...”

“I made 2 rank two talisman seals. I plan to try crafting a rank three one, but it’s going to take a long time. I came out here to take a look at our current situation, but I didn’t think that I would be so lucky to catch the opening of the Three Unity Pagoda.”

Yun Jing already noticed the 2 seals in Chu Jia and Yun Yichen’s hand and she reached out to take them. Looking at the carvings on them, she gestured to Shang Xia.

He quickly brought out some ink and 2 pieces of rank two talisman paper.

Holding the Golden Sword Talisman Seal in her hand, she dipped it carefully in the ink before stamping it on the talisman paper. Throughout the process, she followed Shang Xia’s instructions and poured her inner qi into the seal.

Shang Xia had been watching the entire process and his expression changed suddenly. He yelled, “Be careful!”

By the time the words left his lips, the talisman paper blew up. Sharp sword qi scattered through the area.

Luckily, everyone present was an expert at the Martial Extermination Realm. The sword qi that emerged couldn't even touch their clothes as they were destroyed by the aura rolling off those present.

Seeing how Liu Qinglan had turned to him, Shang Xia sighed helplessly, “You need to spread your inner qi evenly through the seal. Moreover, you cannot use extermination qi when you do it. You have to reduce your extermination qi in your dantian back to extremity qi when you pour it into the seal.”

Letting out a light chuckle, Liu Qinglan used the other talisman paper to easily craft a rank two Golden Sword Seal.

Shang Xia wanted to bring out another piece of talisman paper so that she could try out the Golden Lantern Barrier Talisman, but she shook her hands and signaled for him to retrieve both seals. With a slightly serious expression, she asked, “Are you sure you wish to reveal the existence of the talisman seals?”

“Of course, that's only if I have no other choice. If I can gather everything I need without selling away the seals, I won't have a need to reveal their existence.”

Nodding slowly, Liu Qinglan muttered, “Do what you must.”

Ji Yu and Liu Zhidao arrived back the next moment. They also brought back news that the Three Unity Pagoda was about to open. Shang Xia knew that there was no time for him to try his hand at crafting a rank three talisman seal.

After everything they had been through, the value of an essence crystal was basically decided.

That was precisely the reason the 3 super factions decided to open the Three Unity Pagoda and start the real trade fair.

The 6 members of the Tongyou Institution would all enter the pagoda, and as such, the Tongyou Hall would cease operations for the time being.

As they left the courtyard together, they started to tell the rest everything they gathered after their time on the Three Unity Island.

“The Three Unity Island will definitely become a permanent trading ground situated in space. As a major faction, our Tongyou Institution will definitely possess the qualification to keep our courtyard here to act as our base camp. Looks like we will have to settle down a batch of elite cultivators here for the long term.” Ji Yu was the first to speak.

Liu Qinglan nodded in agreement. “The 3 super factions released this piece of news on purpose. All of us also managed to learn about this.”

Liu Zhidao added, "There's also another rumor going around the island to say that the interior of the Three Unity Pagoda is actually a mysterious world!"

"Are you sure?!" Chu Jia yelled. She seemed extremely suspicious of the news.

However, Yun Yichen started to analyze the situation. "I guess only the 3 super factions would be able to do something like this."

Ji Yu gasped in shock. "My goodness... I also heard that the Three Unity Pagoda was specially made to host the trade fair here. Wouldn't that mean that they only used half a year to build the mysterious world? With such foundations... It's no wonder they're considered the strongest powers in both worlds."

Liu Qinglan thought for a second before speaking. "If that is true, the Three Unity Island might be a show of strength the 3 super factions are intentionally showing off. They probably wish to protect their prestige and shock the various factions out there."

Chu Jia, who was walking slightly behind Liu Qinglan and the others, nudged Shang Xia. "What are you thinking about? Why are you staying so silent?"

"Oh?" Shang Xia raised his head only to see that everyone was looking at him. He quickly replied, "I was listening to all of you... Anyway, I have no idea what the prices of things are at the moment. What is the purchasing power of an essence crystal anyway?"

Yun Yichen answered almost immediately. "Essence crystal has already become a common currency among those present. We can use it freely to buy goods and at the same time, cultivators in the Martial Intent Realm and above can also use it to cultivate. It holds quite a strong value."

"Today, a complete rank two advancement medicine costs 20 to 30 essence crystals. A complete rank three advancement medicine would cost around 80 to 120 essence crystals, and there are no records of rank four advancement medicine being traded. There were some who were asking for 800 essence crystals, but the price is negotiable. They only received 5 replies, but there hasn't been anyone who agreed to trade. Of course, that's just the medicine. A complete advancement formula would be much more expensive."

"The prices of weapons and secret treasures fluctuate a lot more. Even though weapons and treasures are of the same grade, weapons are much more expensive than the others. Whatever the case, a single low-grade weapon would cost anywhere between 30 to 50 essence crystals. A mid grade weapon would be around 100 to 200 crystals. We haven't heard anyone trade high-grade weapons, but someone wanted 500 essence crystals for one."

"Talismans also vary in price. Depending on its nature, whether its an offensive, defensive, assistive, or other types, the price would change accordingly. If we consider talismans of the same grade, defensive talismans cost the most. Offensive

talismans came after that and assistive talismans are the cheapest. Of course, everything is dependent on the buyer's needs. For example, your Abyssal Void Shattering Talisman was sold for 50 essence crystals, and there were numerous Martial Extermination Realm experts who came asking about another one. Unfortunately, the number of trades taking place between experts at our level are few and far between. It's not a good reference. Rank three talismans would range from 5 to 10 essence crystals, and there isn't a good market for rank two talismans. Ordinarily, they would be sold in bulk."

Chapter 643: My Dear Ticking Time Bomb

As Shang Xia listened to Yun Yichen introducing the prices of various goods on the island, they eventually arrived at the central region, under the Three Unity Pagoda.

The area that housed the pagoda was close to a hectare large and there were 4 entrances directly leading up the pagoda. Experts from all directions were streaming over from different parts of the island.

The members of the Tongyou Institution weren't in a hurry to get in. They raised their heads in unison as they observed the giant tower.

A low chuckle left Shang Xia's lips. "Even though we haven't gone in, I believe that the rumors of the interior being a mysterious world are true."

Liu Qinglan swept her gaze over the experts who had gathered and muttered, "There seems to be some sort of barrier around the entrance of the Three Unity Pagoda. Cultivators under the Martial Extermination Realm definitely won't be able to enter."

"We expected as much." Shang Xia laughed.

"Alright. Let's head in." Liu Qinglan eventually spoke. However, she saw that Shang Xia was standing completely still and she didn't continue walking. She turned to look at him. "What's wrong?"

The corners of Shang Xia's lips curled upwards as he replied, "I think I see someone I know. You guys can head on in first. I'll be right there."

Chu Jia wanted to ask Shang Xia what he was about to do, but Liu Qinglan pulled her by the sleeves before speaking on her behalf. "Alright. Don't waste too much time. We'll enter the pagoda and wait for you there."

After speaking, she continued to drag Chu Jia in the direction of the entrance. Yun Yichen and the others smiled at Shang Xia before following behind Liu Qinglan.

Turning abruptly, Shang Xia started to head in a certain direction that led back to the street.

A hundred or so feet away from where the members of the Tongyou Institution once stood, there were 4 Martial Extermination Realm experts making their way to another entrance of the pagoda while chatting happily with each other.

Suddenly, one of them froze for a second and he didn't keep up with the others.

“Junior Brother Zheng?” The person who was leading the way immediately detected his strange actions and turned to look at him.

Zheng Chang reacted quickly. Acting as though nothing was wrong, he muttered, “Senior Brothers, please go ahead. I seem to have seen someone I’m familiar with. I’ll catch up.”

Glancing at their surroundings, the person in the lead didn’t know who Zheng Chang was talking about but he replied anyway. “Make it quick. Don’t waste too much time.”

“Senior Brother, please rest assured. I’ve been looking forward to the trade fair for a long time. I know what I have to do.” Zheng Chang laughed.

After they left, Zheng Chang’s expression sank immediately. He hurriedly ran over to the street covered by many residences where he saw a young man who was slightly older than 20 smiling at him.

“Brother Zheng, it’s been a while since we last met in the Manyu Continent!”

Obviously, the person who greeted him was Shang Xia, and he had been waiting for some time now.

Instinctively, Zheng Chang wanted to cup his fists to show his respect, but his expression changed the next second. A look of anger flashed across his face. “Seni... You’re Young Master Shang from the Tongyou Institution of the You Continent. Hmph, yeah, long time no see.”

Raising an eyebrow slightly, Shang Xia was slightly surprised that Zheng Chang found out who he was. “Oh? Looks like Brother Zheng Chang learned about me.”

With the corners of his eye twitching, Zheng Chang growled, “Of course. Our Great Young Master Shang of the Tongyou Institution isn’t some nameless cultivator. Is it strange for me to know of your identity?”

Shang Xia glanced at him from the corner of his eye before speaking indifferently, “Oh. Seeing how enthusiastic you seem to be right now, I don’t think you managed to get rid of the restriction I placed on your dantian. I wonder if you have a better idea of it right now?”

“You!” Zheng Chang nearly lost control of his emotions but he managed to suppress his fury when he saw the indifferent yet terrifying smile on the youngster’s face before him. Gritting his teeth, he responded, “What do you want?!”

“Oh? I don’t want anything. I just wish to catch up with an old friend.” Shang Xia spoke casually. “If not for the fact that I ran into you here, I would have forgotten that I still had such a nice acquaintance in the Lushan Sect!”

Zheng Chang lowered his voice and muttered, “Don’t think that you can mess around with me just because of the restriction you placed on my dantian. If you push me far enough, I’ll just go all out and we can both suffer together!”

A light chuckle left Shang Xia’s lips. Shooting Zheng Chang a deep gaze, Shang Xia said, “Brother Zheng, relax. There’s no need to go all out, and no one needs to suffer. Don’t scare yourself.”

“What the hell do you want?!” Zheng Chang’s temples thumped in annoyance and he growled angrily at Shang Xia.

“Well, there’s nothing much. I was planning to catch up, and also check on the Four Constellation Restriction on your dantian. Seems like it didn’t get worse... Brother Zheng Chang, you’re really careful alright. Looks like you didn’t try to mess with it...” A wide smile formed on Shang Xia’s face.

Zheng Chang’s temples throbbed even harder and his veins could be seen protruding on his forehead.

“Oh yeah, and also...” Shang Xia thought for a second before adding, “I wonder what the members of the Lushan Sect brought to join the trade fair this time?”

Raising his head abruptly, Zheng Chang snapped, “What the hell are you playing at?! That’s the treasures of my sect you’re asking about!”

Sniggering softly, Shang Xia replied slowly, “Brother Zheng, there’s no need to get so worked up. I merely plan to make a trade with you in advance since we managed to run into each other before the trade fair started. Not to worry, I won’t let you suffer a disadvantage in our trade!”

Seeing the look of doubt on Zheng Chang’s face, Shang Xia sighed softly, “Brother Zheng, you’re an important figure in your sect. I have to make full use of you. Not to worry, I definitely won’t kill my golden goose. Wouldn’t it be better for me to leave you alone so as to achieve greater goals in the future?”

The anxious expression on Zheng Chang’s face loosened up to a large extent after hearing what Shang Xia had said. A sneer left his lips. “Heh, seems like you’re really up to no good. Are you plotting against my sect?”

“Brother Zheng, don’t refuse a toast, only to drink a forfeit. I have been more than patient with you.”

A cold smile remained on Zheng Chang’s face for some time and he wanted to continue speaking. However, when he finally met Shang Xia’s gaze again, all the courage he managed to gather deflated immediately. He quickly shifted his gaze away and muttered, “What do you wish to know?”

“Fate dipper essence, rank five spiritual treasures. High-level talisman paper, talisman ink, or treasures like that. Just let me take a look at whatever you have. I will definitely give you a fair price if I wish to trade any of them with you.” Shang Xia spoke slowly.

Glancing at Shang Xia, a trace of doubt remained in Zheng Chang’s eyes. However, he could see that Shang Xia was being really sincere.

Lowering his head slightly, Zheng Chang explained, “Our Lushan Sect sent my senior brothers and me over to the Three Unity Island to take part in the trade fair. All the treasures were spread between us. I only have a small portion of it and the most important stuff is with my Senior Brother Tang.”

Zheng Chang brought out 4 sealed spiritual cases as he spoke.

Looking at the cases he brought out, Shang Xia sighed, “Brother Zheng, get rid of the restrictions and let me take a look.”

With his eyes widening slightly, Zheng Chang took a step back in caution.

However, Shang Xia's figure had already blurred as it arrived right before him. A hand pressed down firmly against his shoulders.

No one can make a move on the Three Unity Island!

Even though Zheng Chang's first instinct was to resist, the strange ball of qi Shang Xia placed in his dantian started to spread around. His face paled and the inner qi he was about to rouse scattered. Shang Xia's hand was still placed on his shoulders but they looked more like they were great friends exchanging a greeting.

A soft whisper that couldn't be heard by anyone else entered Zheng Chang's ears. "Previously, my cultivation wasn't sufficient and I could only use such a simple and crude method to lay down a restriction in your dantian. I apologize for nearly harming Brother Zheng!"

As soon as the words left his lips, Zheng Chang felt another strange feeling invading his body. It was also a stream of foreign extermination qi, but he wasn't able to resist it in the slightest. It entered his dantian directly and interacted with the ball of qi Shang Xia placed before. They fused together the next second.

"Oh? Brother Zheng, you've been hiding your cultivation! You have already refined your third extermination origin and you should be considered a qualified expert in the Martial Extermination Realm now." Shang Xia discovered what Zheng Chang was trying to hide immediately.

Zheng Chang's face turned as white as a sheet the next instant.

Chapter 645: Discovery

"Is the news reliable?" Shang Xia couldn't help but ask. The news that he just received from Zheng Chang was just too shocking.

With no intention to hide anything from Shang Xia, Zheng Chang told him everything he knew. "Back when the various factions brought their islands back to the Azure Origin World and the Azure Spiritual World, they suffered varying degrees of attack from the experts of the Spirit Abundance World. In order to prevent any hidden methods the members of the Spirit Abundance World might have left behind to locate us, the 3 super factions suggested for all of us to leave our islands outside the Beyond Heavens Pavilion."

Shang Xia nodded slightly. He heard the same news from Kou Chongxue and he felt that it had something to do with the imminent fusion of the worlds and their subsequent upgrade. Now, it seemed like there was another reason.

Zheng Chang continued, "Unfortunately, the various factions brought back experts from the Manyu Continent and integrated them into the world... There is news coming down to us that there might be experts disguised as members of the Manyu Continent to infiltrate our world..."

A frown appeared on Shang Xia's face and he interrupted Zheng Chang. "That doesn't seem right. No matter which faction it was, the cultivators they brought back from the Manyu Continent were screened by a Martial Dipper Realm Ancestor after coming back. How would a cultivator from the Spirit Abundance World avoid detection?"

“That’s precisely the reason why no one would suspect them...” Zheng Chang replied.

Seeing how Shang Xia was still confused, he continued his explanation. “If those cultivators used some sort of secret method to hide themselves, or were in possession of a secret treasure that could suppress their cultivation and conceal their aura, it wouldn’t matter if they hid themselves among the aboriginal cultivators. There would be a chance for us to locate them. What if they sent ordinary mortals over?”

Shaking his head, Shang Xia rejected the possibility. “That’s not possible. Even if they had a Martial Dipper Realm expert to help them, they would have to possess the cultivation of a Martial Extermination Realm expert if they wish to...”

“What if they weren’t assisted by a Martial Dipper Realm Ancestor? What if there was an expert at the Sixth Order of the Primary Realm acting behind the scenes?” Zheng Chang interrupted before Shang Xia could finish. “Who would know how powerful an existence in the Sixth Order of the Primary Realm could be or their true abilities? At the end of the day, the Spirit Abundance World is a world that outranks us. There might be more experts in the Sixth Order of the Primary Realm than we think! Moreover, the Manyu Continent was separated from the Spirit Abundance World to begin with. I believe Young Master Shang already knows that.”

“What are you trying to say?” Shang Xia asked.

Now that he finally regained the initiative by revealing something Shang Xia didn’t know, Zheng Chang felt a lot better. He even felt like he was teaching a clueless junior as he continued, “Is there anyone who can be sure that the experts of the Spirit Abundance World only discovered the Manyu Continent at the same time as us? They might have found it a hundred or so years ago. With the time they had, it wouldn’t be difficult for them to integrate themselves and leave some offspring behind. Our takeover of the Manyu Continent might have been a giant scheme! Don’t you think that the appearance of the experts of the Spirit Abundance World on the Manyu Continent was too coincidental?”

Shang Xia turned serious and he muttered, “Are you trying to say that the Spirit Abundance World used the Manyu Continent as bait and our Azure Origin World and the Azure Spiritual World were the fishes who took it?”

Zheng Chang muttered, “The Spirit Abundance World is a Spirit World at the end of the day. Even if they reclaimed the Manyu Continent, what benefits would they gain? They might as well treat it as trash and use it as bait. If they managed to draw an Azure World or two over, they would gain a whole lot more by invading them!”

Shang Xia finally nodded in agreement. Even though a large portion of whatever Zheng Chang said was mere speculation, he couldn’t help but agree that the logic made sense. Moreover, Shang Xia had a feeling that whatever he said might actually be true.

He only wondered if Kou Chongxue and the others were truly kept in the dark about the matter.

A trace of suspicion bloomed in Shang Xia’s heart. Even if Kou Chongxue and the others weren’t notified, they definitely had to have made some guesses.

Shang Xia thought back to the time in the Beyond Heavens Pavilion when Kou Chongxue gave him a 'hint' to craft more Abyssal Void Shattering Talismans. It seemed as though there was a hidden meaning behind his words!

Also, Shang Xia knew the method to craft the rank five Abyssal Emptiness Talisman that was ranked even higher than the Abyssal Void Shattering Talisman!

As thoughts ran through his mind, Shang Xia opened another sealed spirit case absentmindedly.

The moment he did, he saw something that resembled fine sand and had a deep brown color. Extermination qi filled the air around him the moment the box was opened.

“Hey! Hurry up and close that! It’s the Mysterious Sea Scale Sand Extermination Origin. Don’t let the extermination qi escape!” Zheng Chang reminded with haste when he saw what Shang Xia had done.

Shutting the case immediately, Shang Xia muttered, “Mysterious Sea Scale Sand Extermination Origin? I haven’t heard of anything like it. Did it come from the sea?”

Zheng Chang stared at him and explained, “That’s right. It was gathered after they collected the trace of extermination qi from the sand at the bottom of the sea. It took the effort of several dozen cultivators in the Martial Extremity Realm and the Martial Intent Realm. Moreover, they only managed to collect it after several years.”

Nodding, Shang Xia understood that that was how extermination origins were usually gathered.

In actuality, there was a batch of disciples from the institution working under the Protection Division and the Outreach Division responsible for gathering extermination qi.

Seeing as Shang Xia had sealed the case and shoved it back into his sleeves, Zheng Chang raised his eyebrows in surprise and asked, “Don’t you need that?”

Shang Xia picked up the last case nonchalantly and muttered, “No one would hate gathering more extermination origins. However, I won’t be able to use it. The treasures I have should be used to trade with others during the trade fair for things I really need. I can only give up on the extermination origin for the time being.”

The next second, Shang Xia raised his head and stared directly into Zheng Chang’s eye. “What’s the matter? Brother Zheng, are you feeling generous right now? Are you thinking of giving me the extermination origin to prove your sincerity? I won’t hesitate to accept it.”

Shaking his head violently, Zheng Chang refused immediately.

Holding the last case in his hand, Shang Xia didn’t open it directly. Instead, he asked, “What’s in here?”

Zheng Chang hesitated slightly before replying, “It contains a high-grade needle called the Tongyang Needle.”

“For it to be classified as a high-grade weapon, it shouldn’t have been easy for you guys to craft this, right?” Shang Xia gasped.

“Indeed... However, the number of experts who can make use of it are few and far between. The needle has been left in the sect for more than a hundred years now and some mid-level personnel would borrow it from time to time. They would only do so in a pinch and the moment they find a more suitable weapon, they would return it to the armory. As such, our sect plans to use it to trade for other treasures during the trade fair.” Zheng Chang sighed.

Opening the case, Shang Xia examined it carefully. A deep frown could be seen on his face, but no one knew what he was thinking.

Noticing his expression, Zheng Chang asked quickly, “Are you interested in it? Do you want to make a trade?”

Before he replied, Shang Xia went to look at everything in his Spatial Pouch. Because of Chu Jia’s persistence to open the Tongyou Hall, most of his low-leveled treasures had been swept away by her. The only treasures he had left were of a pretty impressive level and he planned to use them to trade for items he needed in the upcoming trade fair.

Thinking about it for a moment, Shang Xia took out a rope that was close to 10 feet from all the spoils of war he obtained after killing many opponents in the past.

“This is called the Spirit Binding Rope. It’s effective at restraining the flow of one’s inner qi and it’s a high-grade weapon...” Shang Xia introduced.

“Deal! I’ll trade it with you!” Zheng Chang yelled without hesitation.

“Nonsense! Do you think the needle alone is enough?” Shang Xia snapped.

Zheng Chang grumbled, “Young Master Shang, your Spirit Binding Rope might be pretty good, but my Tongyang Needle is also a high-grade weapon! There are differences between high-grade weapons and if we consider the quality of the needle, it’s a lot better than your rope...”

A chuckle left Shang Xia’s lips. “That’s true, but you best not forget that it’s been lying in your armory for more than a hundred years. The Spirit Binding Rope is something many people can make use of. So what if your weapon is of superior quality? It’s useless if no one can make use of it.”

“If both treasures are of similar worth, it doesn’t make sense for me to give you anything more.” Zheng Chang replied.

The smile on Shang Xia’s face didn’t fade. “Well, it doesn’t matter. I said it’s not enough.”

“What do you want then?!” Zheng Chang growled helplessly.

Grabbing another item out from Zheng Chang’s pouch, Shang Xia grinned. “It’s fine. You can just make up for it with a single essence crystal.”

“What the fuck! That’s my only mid-grade essence crystal! A hundred low-grade essence crystals is enough to buy a mid-grade weapon. Do you think the price

difference between your Spirit Binding Rope and my Tongyang Needle is worth a mid-grade weapon?!"

Shang Xia was too lazy to care about him. He could tell that Zheng Chang had 1000 essence crystals on him, and he was merely taking away a tenth of that. If Shang Xia decided to play dirty, he wouldn't mind finding a way to retrieve the other 900.

Obviously, Zheng Chang realized what was going on and he simply shut his mouth after grumbling about it slightly. There was a trace of grievance in his eyes when he glared at Shang Xia again.

It was a shame he wasn't done. Taking out a pair of intricately carved bottles that were completely identical, Shang Xia asked, "What's in this?"

Seeing how Zheng Chang was hesitating, Shang Xia decided to open the bottles to take a look for himself.

Right before he could open them, Zheng Chang yelled, "Wait, don't do that! Those are rank four advancement medicine!"

The grin on Shang Xia's face threatened to split it apart and he chuckled. "I guessed as much. You guys even brought rank four advancement medicine to the trade fair. What were you planning to trade them for?"

"Do you want it? If you do, make an offer." Zheng Chang didn't give him an answer. Instead, he skillfully shifted the topic.

"Alright? What do you want?" Shang Xia responded.

With a trace of mockery in his voice, Zheng Chang snapped, "I want an Origin Dipper. Do you have it?"

The look of anger on Zheng Chang's face changed after he yelled at Shang Xia. It seemed as though he gave Shang Xia the reply he wanted anyway.

Muttering to himself, Shang Xia returned the bottles under Zheng Chang's worried gaze.

Even though he got the advancement medicine back, he was greatly taken aback. He couldn't help but ask, "Wait, you don't want them?"

"How many Martial Dipper Realm Ancestors are there in your Lushan Sect?" Shang Xia tossed out a bomb suddenly.

"Two... Wait. Why do you want to know that?!" Zheng Chang stared at Shang Xia warily.

Bursting out into a chuckle, Shang Xia replied, "Looks like the expert who was trying to make a breakthrough on your island failed!"

"Do you think you can conclude something like that because we're trying to get our hands on an Origin Dipper? Is there any faction who will complain about having too many of them?" Zheng Chang retorted immediately.

Shang Xia didn't continue to harp on the topic. Instead, he spoke about something else. "I took both your talisman papers and talisman ink. However, you got my rank four Abyssal Void Shattering Talismans in exchange. Even though I took a teeny bit of advantage from that deal, you managed to find another source of rank four talismans for your sect. No matter what, you should be able to give them a reasonable explanation of why you didn't profit much from the deal. The same goes for your Tongyang Needle. As for the mid-grade essence crystal, you can just make up for it yourself. You're a proper expert in the high-level Martial Extermination Realm and that shouldn't pose too much of a problem for you. Of course, if I take away your advancement medicine now and give you something of equal value, your Lushan Sect will definitely start getting suspicious of how you managed to trade so many items before the fair started."

Shang Xia became a little more serious and he continued, "I do not wish to let the Lushan Sect learn about our little cooperation."

"Oh wow! I'm really thankful for your consideration! What a considerate man!" Zheng Chang snorted in response.

Shang Xia didn't mind his tone at all. Returning the pouch, Shang Xia muttered, "The others definitely have other treasures they brought for the fair. If any of them has fate dipper essence or rank five spiritual treasures, you can introduce them to me to make a trade. This time, I promise I'll give you a fair offer."

"Heh, looks like you actually know you took advantage of me earlier." Zheng Chang continued to grumble.

After he had spoken, he turned to leave without giving him a proper answer. He started to walk in the direction of the pagoda.

Scratching his chin, Shang Xia muttered sinisterly to himself, "Should I have pushed him further? Was that not enough? Why do I feel like this asshole is hiding something important from me? Looks like the Lushan Sect's failure to produce a third Martial Dipper Realm Ancestor affected them greatly. Hmm... They seem to feel some sort of crisis though. I wonder if it's from the other factions or from within... External factors might also have something to do with it..."

Chapter 646: Fishing Platform

Shang Xia might have let Zheng Chang go for now, but before he left, he still managed to force a list of treasures from the man. Everything his other senior brothers brought on behalf of the Lushan Sect was recorded on it.

There were some precious treasures there that could even move Shang Xia, but the rest weren't too useful to him.

He fell deep into thought when he saw one of the fate dipper essence and a rank five spiritual treasure.

Unfortunately, he wouldn't be able to tell if he could make use of them if they weren't directly in front of him.

With nothing else left to do, Shang Xia decided to enter the Three Unity Pagoda. The moment he did, he was sure that the interior of the pagoda was made up of a mysterious world.

Even though there had been rumors and guesses going around, nothing beat seeing it for himself. Looking at the mysterious world that was contained in the pagoda, Shang Xia was still shocked and awed by the strength and foundations of the 3 super factions.

The mysterious world that made up the Three Unity Pagoda was unique. It was made up of 3 levels in a ring-like formation.

Because Shang Xia left a trace of his divine perception on the members of the Tongyou Institution, he quickly located the others.

“Is this... Is this a fishing platform?” Shang Xia stared at the stone platform before him in shock. There was also a fishing pole resting on it.

Carefully walking over to look over the edge, Shang Xia noticed that there was nothing but a huge sea of clouds. The fishing line extended past the clouds and disappeared within.

Looking at his surroundings, Shang Xia noticed that the middle ring he was standing on had multiple platforms experts from the same faction would be chatting happily on the one that belonged to them. Many different fishing poles could be seen extended over the edge.

Shang Xia’s attention was quickly drawn to the figures on the platform who had slightly blurry factual appearances.

When he extended his divine perception over to other platforms, he discovered that the distance was actually terrifyingly large. He failed to reach over to detect anything.

Finally, he came to the conclusion that his divine perception had been restricted within the Three Unity Pagoda. It was to prevent spying by the various factions.

Looking down from another angle, Shang Xia noticed that he could see the third ring that made up the mysterious world under him.

Like the middle ring he was on, it also surrounded a sea of clouds. However, the sea of clouds seemed a little larger, but it also meant that they were further away from the core of the Cloud Sea that way.

The situation on the third ring looked to be a lot more chaotic than the rest. There wasn’t a platform allocated to a specific faction and anyone could head on up to one and start fishing.

Unfortunately, there weren’t fishing poles provided down there and there would only be an occasional expert or two carrying one to the side of a platform before casting their line.

Shang Xia suddenly raised his head to observe the situation above him.

Indeed. Several dozen feet above him, there was another smaller ring where intricately carved fishing rods that were made of exquisite white jade hung over the edge. They could cast their lines much closer to the core of the Cloud Sea that way.

Turning back to look at the others, Shang Xia asked, “How are the different regions allocated? Why were we sent to the middle ring?”

“The upper ring consists of the holy lands and their experts. However, they make up the least number of people in the pagoda.” Chu Jia explained.

“People like us who are from factions with a certain status and have strength second to only holy lands were allocated to the middle ring.”

“As for those down there, most of them are scattered cultivators. There are also some from smaller powers, and heads of large clans make up a bulk of them.”

A snort left Shang Xia’s lips. “Holy lands? Hehe, After our Tongyou Mysterious World upgrades to become a holy land, I wonder if we will be sent up there...”

Sweeping his gaze around, Shang Xia chuckled, “From the looks of it, the trade fair would have something to do with the sea of clouds. All of you came a little earlier. Do you know how it’s going to take place?”

Liu Qinglan smiled, “They have yet to announce what will take place, but we discovered that the Cloud Sea can restrict everyone’s senses and it should be the key to the entire event.”

“I think we should get a few more fishing poles... One might not be enough.” Yun Yichen suggested.

Liu Qinglan immediately agreed. “Indeed. There are many other platforms with 2 to 3 fishing poles... We should go get more of them.”

When Yun Yichen made her suggestion earlier, Shang Xia had already reached out to grab the fishing pole resting on their platform.

“Huh?” Shang Xia noticed that his divine perception had entered the Cloud Sea the moment he held the pole.

Earlier, they discovered that their divine perception was greatly limited in the Three Unity Pagoda. It was especially so when it came to the Cloud Sea as their divine perception failed to penetrate it in the slightest.

Shang Xia discovered that he was able to extend his divine perception into the interior of the Cloud Sea through the fishing line, but he also discovered that his senses were limited to a region 5 feet around the end of a jade coin that hung on the other end of the fishing line.

That was right. There wasn’t bait on the other end of the fishing line. Instead, it held a circular palm-sized jade coin.

Shang Xia felt his consciousness tremble slightly. Pushing his divine perception into the jade coin, rows of words appeared on its surface according to his intentions.

With a simple intention, the words on the coin that appeared earlier disappeared. Soon, a chime left the jade coin and another row of words appeared on it. “Willing to buy many types of fate dipper essence. Willing sellers can take a look at it.”

A formless sound wave seemed to travel through the Cloud Sea, but Shang Xia noticed that his divine perception was still confined to a 5 feet diameter.

Releasing the fishing pole, Shang Xia turned around to look at Liu Qinglan. He chuckled, “I wonder how much it costs to make one of these. I’ll wish to get one too.”

A moment later, Yun Yichen returned with 2 other fishing poles in hand.

Handing one over to Shang Xia, she replied, “They are only renting them out. A single pole costs 2 essence crystals to rent, and if we break it, we have to pay them 10 essence crystals.”

Shang Xia handed over 2 essence crystals, and Yun Yichen had no reason to reject them.

Yun Yichen planned to rotate the other fishing pole among herself, Liu Zhidao, and Ji Yu. Liu Qinglan and Chu Jia would use the last fishing pole.

Pressing her lips together, Chu Jia grumbled, “The 3 super factions sure know their way around doing business. They gained another huge windfall by renting out these fishing poles!”

Shang Xia carefully inspected how the fishing poles were made and he suddenly asked, “Aunt Yun, did you see if there were different types of fishing poles?”

“Yeah. They were split into 3 different types. The fishing poles used by those on the third ring are made from bamboo and it costs 1 essence crystal to rent and it allows one’s divine perception to reach 3 feet away. Our fishing poles are made from frost metal and it allows us to feel 5 feet away. The other is made from jade, and it costs 3 essence crystals. It’s said that one will be able to extend their divine perception to cover a range of 10 feet if they use the jade poles.” Yun Yichen replied.

“Can’t we use the jade fishing poles?” Chu Jia asked.

Unfortunately, Yun Yichen shook her head in response. “Nope. That’s the rules set by the Three Unity Pagoda. Only those from the top ring would be able to use jade fishing poles. We can only use the frost metal fishing poles, while those in the third ring would only be able to use bamboo fishing poles.”

The next second, Shang Xia discovered 3 majestic auras appearing at the tallest point of the Three Unity Pagoda. Their aura descended the next second and filled the pagoda.

“Martial Dipper Realm Ancestors!” Shang Xia reminded the others behind so that they wouldn’t panic.

Those auras weren’t foreign to him. He noticed them when the Three Unity Pagoda Descended back then.

Their sudden appearance caused silence to descend on the pagoda. Not a single expert dared to speak.

Perhaps when the 3 ancestors were moving the pagoda, they were still too far away from Shang Xia. Now that they were a lot closer, Shang Xia was able to carefully examine their aura as it filled the space around him. He discovered that one of them was extremely familiar, and it was someone he had interacted with in the past.

It belonged to Zhui Fengzi of the Northern Sea Mystic Sect!

That could only mean that his breakthrough to the Martial Dipper Realm during their escapade in the Many Continent was successful!

Back then, Zhui Fengzi wasn’t the only candidate the Northern Sea Mystic Sect had who could break through to the Martial Dipper Realm. There was also Chen Yuanzi, another expert at the peak

of the Martial Extermination Realm. However, he gave up his chance of entering the Martial Dipper Realm in order to get a hold of Shang Xia, and the chance fell directly on Zhui Fengzi's head. It was a shame that Chen Yuanzi eventually fell at Shang Xia's hand.

“Fellow cultivators of the Azure Origin World and the Azure Spiritual World, I am Zhui Fengzi of the Northern Sea Mystic Sect. Ninth Sand Palace Elder from the Divine Capital Sect and Elder Yi Guang from the Eternal Palace are also present.”

Zhui Fengzi was the first to speak, and he also introduced the others.

Soon after, an aged voice rang in the ears of those present. “This trade fair has been jointly hosted by the Northern Sea Mystic Sect, Divine Capital Sect, and the Eternal Palace. This event is meant to benefit both sides and strengthen the experts of both worlds. I hope everyone can respect the rules so as not to trouble the 3 of us.”

After he spoke, the final voice that seemed a lot more gentle than those that came before announced, “We will announce the way the trade fair will be carried out in a little while. I shall not bore you by going into great detail, but the 3 of us can represent our factions to make everyone a guarantee with our reputations on the line. All of you can trade freely. There will not be anything fishy going on throughout the entire event!”

When the final word left his mouth, their auras receded like the tide and it was as though it was never there to begin with.

None of the 3 showed their faces from start to end.

Chu Jia, who had been looking around even though the 3 Martial Dipper Realm Ancestors had been talking, pointed at the 3 fishing poles and yelled, “Quick, take a look at that!”

By the time the rest went to look, their fishing poles had already bent downwards. It was as though there were fishes in the Cloud Sea biting on the other end.

Of course, all of them knew that there wasn't bait on the other end of the fishing line. There was only a single jade coin.

Shang Xia noticed cultivators on other platforms reeling their fishing lines, and a giant fish that was floundering around appeared in their hands.

Chu Jia quickly took an interest in what was going on. She grabbed the fishing pole from Liu Qinglan and yanked it hard. At the same time, she yelled at Yun Yichen and Shang Xia. “Quick, pull it up! Take a look at what is there!”

Chapter 647: Willing Parties

As they reeled in their line, 3 figures eventually appeared from the Cloud Sea and giant fishes that differed in color were pulled up.

“These... These are Talisman Fishes!” Shang Xia gestured at the fishes and they turned into pieces of talismans. It contained instructions on how the trade fair would take place.

After those holding the talismans read through them, they passed them on to the others. Eventually, all 3 pieces returned to whoever held them first.

Glancing at each other, they sent a trace of extermination qi into the talisman in their hands and turned them back into talisman fishes that splashed about on the platform. No matter how hard they tried, they failed to toss their talisman fishes back into the Cloud Sea.

Soon after, they took out some treasures. With a giant leap, those fishes ate the treasures before jumping off the platform back into the Cloud Sea.

Shang Xia, Liu Qinglan, and Yun Yichen turned around to exchange a few words with Chu Jia and the others before handing the fishing poles to them.

Each of them sent a trace of their extermination origins into the Cloud Sea through the poles and 3 other talisman fishes were fished up.

With the same method, they brought out some treasures for the fish to swallow before tossing them back into the Cloud Sea.

At the same time, cultivators from the other platforms did the same.

When Shang Xia took back his fishing pole, his divine perception entered the Cloud Sea through the jade coin at the bottom. A hazy light surrounded the coin and extended 10 feet away.

It was also that time when a row of words appeared on the jade coin along with a loud chime. "Requesting for fate dipper essence!"

After the words appeared, Shang Xia closed his eyes and no longer bothered himself with the surroundings of the jade coin. His consciousness entered the talisman fish that contained his extermination origin earlier.

A flash of light filled the eyes of a fish in the Cloud Sea and it started to swim rapidly onwards.

The moment his consciousness descended, Shang Xia discovered that he was unable to control its movement. He was like a spectator who could see what the fish experienced as it swam through the sea of clouds.

It was then when undulations swept through the Cloud Sea. The fish Shang Xia's consciousness flew out the surface and he noticed dozens of other fishes leaping out of the middle segment as they were brought to the core of the Cloud Sea.

That was where the fishing poles of the various holy lands of both worlds were gathered, and the 3 super factions were also present.

When Shang Xia's fish entered the Cloud Sea again, it quickly started to swim towards a ball of red light that seemed to possess the ability to attract talisman fish.

By the time it closed in on the red light, Shang Xia discovered that there were 3 other fishes waiting close by.

A jade coin glowing a bright scarlet could be seen in the middle of the ball of light and from time to time, a talisman fish would approach it from different directions to tap the jade coin. They looked like sly fishes who were testing to see if the jade coin was bait.

Looking at the jade coin, Shang Xia knew that the words on it were related to the items the user wished to obtain. Those fishes who were dragged over probably had what they were looking for.

The red ball of light prevented the rest of the fish from approaching the jade coin. Only a single fish could enter the confines of the light at any point in time.

Shang Xia understood that the fisherman was probably interacting with the consciousness in the fish. When they reached an agreement, the fish would swallow the jade coin and be fished up by the other party.

On the platform, the fish would spit out the items from its belly and swallow the items provided by the fisherman for the deal to happen.

Next, the fish would return to the Cloud Sea and return to the owner of the extermination origin in its body. When it was brought back to its original owner, it would spit out the items it obtained and the deal would be considered complete.

The 3 super factions used such a complicated method to carry out the trade fair due to several reasons. One was to prevent several factions from intentionally raising the prices of items after reaching some sort of agreement, and the second was to protect the identities of both parties. They wanted to prevent any hatred or grudges from forming in case different parties managed to see what others obtained.

Of course, the larger the area covered by the light emitted by the jade coin, the stronger its ability to attract talisman fishes. That was the difference between the fishing poles used by cultivators from the 3 rings.

Not only were those in the higher rings closer to the core of the Cloud Sea, they could also draw over talisman fishes across a larger area.

From how he entered the core region and noticed crimson lights that extended 10 feet away from the jade coins, he knew that by extension, the light that came from his jade coin would only extend 5 feet away. Those from the lower ring would only be able to cover 3 feet. As such, those in the lowest ring wouldn't have the least ability to attract other fishes.

Even though the 3 super factions promised that nothing fishy would take place in the trade fair, the status and strength of the various factions were naturally different. At the end of the day, the treatment they received was also different.

The next moment, the talisman fish that was tapping the jade coin within the ball of red light stopped. It seemed like they didn't manage to reach an agreement as the talisman fish turned around to leave.

Shang Xia quickly tried to urge his fish to enter the area covered in the light, but it was useless. As he experienced earlier, he couldn't control the fish his consciousness was trapped in.

One of the other fishes entered the region covered by the red light, and it started to tap against the jade coin...

As he was unable to control the movement of the fish, Shang Xia could only wait patiently outside the ball of light.

It didn't take long before Shang Xia noticed an interesting phenomenon. After 5 fishes gathered around the ball of light, no other fishes were drawn over.

Of course, that could only mean that only 5 talisman fishes had treasures that the fisherman desired, but Shang Xia felt that the possibility of that happening was low.

Eventually, the second fish within the ball of light turned to leave, and the third fish that arrived entered.

If they still failed to reach a deal, Shang Xia would be the next in line.

Noticing the other talisman fishes around him, Shang Xia saw that there were only 3 others left. Soon, another fish swam over. Now that there were 5 of them gathered around the ball of light, Shang Xia felt that his guess was correct.

As he patiently awaited his turn, he felt a slight jolt in his consciousness.

He realized it didn't come from the talisman fish he had placed his consciousness in. Instead, it was from his jade coin connected to his fishing pole back on the Tongyou Institution's stone platform.

Chapter 648: Fate Dipper Essence and Essence Crystals

Shang Xia didn't think that someone else would arrive to try to make a deal with him before his turn to try to make a trade with someone else.

Splitting his focus, a trace of his consciousness entered the jade coin connected to his fishing pole. He heard a thick voice coming from the talisman fish down below. "I have a strand of Howling Lightning Wind Tearing Fate Dipper Essence. What do you wish to trade it for?"

Shang Xia was slightly taken aback by his sudden revelation. However, he muttered apologetically the next moment. "I'm sorry. I do not need the Howling Lightning Wind Tearing Fate Dipper Essence. I wonder if you have any others?"

"Hmph, of course not. What a waste of my time!" The talisman fish snorted before swimming away. It disappeared into the Cloud Sea the next second.

Shang Xia didn't think that their exchange would be so brief. After all, the other party barely exchanged 2 sentences before leaving.

The cultivator on the other end seemed extremely impatient, but that might be intentional.

Shang Xia could only shake his head helplessly. He once heard Kou Chongxue talking about the Howling Lightning Wind Tearing Fate Dipper Essence, and he knew that it possessed great power. However, it was also extremely tyrannical and it would be difficult to turn it into an Origin Dipper.

Well, whatever. Shang Xia didn't need a fate dipper essence of the lightning element when breaking through. As such, there was no point in getting it.

When Shang Xia was still feeling a slight sense of disappointment, his consciousness in the talisman fish trembled.

Quickly turning his attention back to the fish, Shang Xia noticed that he wasn't beside the ball of light any longer. Instead, he was back in the Cloud Sea.

Shang Xia found it a little strange, but he quickly understood what was going on. It seemed as though the fish before him completed the deal and was fished up by the fisherman. Since the other fishes couldn't feel the presence of the jade coin, they left.

It seemed as though he wasn't having a great start at the moment!

Helpless, he could only release a bitter chuckle. Calming down slightly, he continued to wait patiently.

A moment later, the talisman fish felt another trace of attraction and started to swim in another direction.

Shang Xia might be feeling a little anxious, but he could only wait as the talisman fish slowly swam to its destination.

Once again, he approached a ball of red light. It looked the same as before and Shang Xia felt as though he had returned to the same place as before.

However, he quickly discovered that that wasn't the case. After all, the jade coins from the various cultivators from the middle and top rings of the pagoda also emitted the same type of red light.

As his talisman fish approached another ball of red light, he noticed a fish swimming away from it. Soon after, another fish entered the range covered by the ball of light and there was another in line.

Taking the chance when he was waiting, Shang Xia's consciousness went back to his fishing pole only to discover that it was all quiet back on his side.

Because his divine perception was unable to reach over to the other platforms, he couldn't tell how many people already completed their deals. He could only see people reeling in fish from time to time.

Looking around him, he noticed that Liu Qinglan and Yun Yichen hadn't pulled up any fish. It seemed as though they hadn't gained anything either.

...

This time, Shang Xia seemed to have gotten lucky. The fish before his talisman fish swam away from the ball of red light and his turn eventually came.

When he finally entered the region covered by light, the fish tapped on the jade coin and a loud chime rang in his ears. "I need a high-grade heavy weapon!"

Shang Xia's divine perception was also no longer limited to the talisman fish and he quickly replied, "I have a high-grade jade axe. What do you think?"

"How big is it? How is it built? Are there any restrictions to its use?" A surprised voice came from the other side.

Shang Xia described the jade axe he obtained from an expert from Su Jinyuan of the Spirit Abundance World after killing him back on the Manyu Continent. He even mentioned the feeling he had when wielding the axe before asking once again, "What is your offer?"

The person on the other side didn't respond immediately. They seemed to think for a moment before a somewhat distorted voice came from above. "300 essence crystals. Are you agreeable?"

Shang Xia burst out laughing. "Fellow cultivator, you must be joking. There have been people trying to purchase high-grade weapons outside the pagoda for 500 essence crystals. Not to mention the fact that my jade axe is superior, even among other high-grade weapons."

“Alright, 500 essence crystals then!” The reply came quickly this time.

Shang Xia felt a trace of annoyance at the response. “Fellow cultivator, if you are sincere in buying the weapon, please give me a reasonable price. Otherwise, I’m going to look for the next person.”

After a short pause, a voice came again. “What do you have in mind?”

“Do you have any fate dipper essence or rank five spiritual treasures?” Shang Xia asked.

The fisherman ignored Shang Xia’s question completely and gave another offer. “600 essence crystals!”

Shang Xia was naturally unwilling to give up just like that. He tried again. “If you have fate dipper essence or rank five spiritual treasures, I am willing to lower the value of my weapon and make the trade.”

Unfortunately, the response he was waiting for didn’t come. Instead, the fisherman insisted, “600 essence crystals. If you’re unwilling to make the trade, feel free to leave.”

Shang Xia thought about it for a second. According to the prices that had been set in the Three Unity Island, 500 essence crystals was more than enough to buy an ordinary high-grade weapon.

However, the jade axe he was in possession of was far superior to any high-grade weapon in terms of quality and craftsmanship.

Obviously, the other party was also someone who knew his stuff. After Shang Xia rejected his offer, he immediately raised it to 600 essence crystals in a show of his sincerity.

Shang Xia might have been a little disappointed that the other party wasn’t willing to divulge if he was in possession of any fate dipper essence or rank five spiritual treasures, but that didn’t matter. He eventually made up his mind and gave a final counteroffer. “I want 700 essence crystals for my axe.”

The price might seem a little overkill for the Jade Axe, but Shang Xia could tell that the other party was truly interested and they really wanted the weapon. As such, Shang Xia wasn’t in a hurry for an answer. Instead, he patiently waited as his Talisman Fish swam around the jade coin freely.

After some time, a soft sigh rang in Shang Xia’s mind. “Fine. 700 essence crystals it is. However, I want to see the weapon for myself first.”

“Sure.” With a slight intention, Shang Xia realized that he was able to compel the Talisman Fish to bite onto the jade coin, but that was all the control he had over it. As it swallowed the jade coin, a strong force pulled it upwards. Another powerful restriction landed on his divine perception the moment he was pulled out of the water and he was unable to see nor feel anything. That should be the real restrictions of the Three Unity Pagoda.

All he could feel was the Talisman Fish spitting out the jade axe the fish swallowed previously.

Even though he couldn’t hear or see what was going on outside, he could hear a muffled praise. “Nice! This is a great weapon! Here’s 700 essence crystals!”

7 mid-grade essence crystals appeared on the platform and Shang Xia didn't have to do anything. The Talisman Fish twisted its body to swallow the crystals.

"Go!" The voice came again, and the next thing Shang Xia knew, he was falling back into the Cloud Sea.

...

On his platform, Shang Xia opened his eyes suddenly and pulled on his fishing pole. A lively fish returned.

"Oh? Did you get something you need?" Someone on the Tongyou Platform quickly noticed his actions and asked.

"Nope. However, I did make a deal to trade a high-grade weapon for 700 essence crystals." Shang Xia chuckled and tapped the Talisman Fish once. 700 essence crystals spilled out from its belly.

"High-grade weapon?! 700 essence crystals?!" Chu Jia screamed. She even managed to attract the attention of Liu Qinglan and the rest.

Raising an eyebrow, Liu Qinglan wanted to say something. However, she decided against it eventually.

Even the Tongyou Institution didn't have too many high-grade weapons. Despite their recent advancement, there were many Martial Extermination Realm experts who wielded mid to low-grade weapons.

Naturally, Yun Jing wanted to ask why Shang Xia didn't trade the weapon with the institution directly, but the weapon was his at the end of the day. He obtained it with his own strength, and they couldn't dictate how he used it.

The sky-high price of 700 essence crystals he managed to get for the weapon shocked Chu Jia and the rest.

One had to know that before entering the Three Unity Pagoda, someone tried to sell a high-grade weapon for 500 essence crystals. There were many who felt that the price was too high. Who would have thought that Shang Xia would be able to sell his for 700 essence crystals the moment the trade fair started?

Originally, Shang Xia had 3300 essence crystals. He 'carefully retrieved' a mid-grade essence crystal from Zheng Chang earlier and got 7 more of them in exchange for his Jade Axe. Even though he hadn't bought a single fate dipper essence or rank five spiritual treasure, he amassed a fortune of 4100 essence crystals.

An envious look could be seen in Chu Jia's eyes as she stared at him.

Casually reaching out, Shang Xia wanted to hand her the fishing pole. "Do you want to give it a shot?"

Chu Jia was truly tempted by the offer. However, she shook her head eventually. "I'll use Instructor Liu's fishing pole in a bit. She said that you should be making full use of your time and none of us should trouble you. I'll continue watching for now."

Shang Xia nodded and kept his essence crystals. Reaching into his sleeves, he pulled out a jade pendant and gave it to the Talisman Fish before sending it back into the Cloud Sea.

"What's the jade pendant for?" Chu Jia asked with her brows locked tightly together.

"Do you remember your suggestion back on the Tongyou Island for me to toss my fate dipper essence into the Nine Blossom Jade Formation Disc?" Shang Xia chuckled.

Nodding, Chu Jia muttered, "You sealed it in that jade pendant?"

Grunting once, Shang Xia explained, "Patriarch Kou said that the fate dipper essence is called the Dark Void Life Extermination Evasion Fate Dipper Essence..."

Chapter 649: Serene Immersion Clay

Shang Xia concluded his conversation with Chu Jia suddenly as he discovered a slight disturbance in the jade coin at the end of his fishing line.

Sending a trace of his consciousness into the jade coin, Shang Xia didn't know whether to laugh or cry. A Talisman Fish approached his jade coin, but it was the fish he just tossed out! A portion of his consciousness was still trapped in it!

"Ahem... Go, go! Go away!" Shang Xia muttered and he heard his voice back in his mind again.

After having been rejected, the Talisman Fish left the ball of light 5 feet wide before swimming deeper into the Cloud Sea.

Shang Xia was bewildered by the earlier interaction, but he found it extremely entertaining.

It wasn't hard to see that it was the first time the 3 super factions were using the method for the trade fair. There were still some problems they had yet to iron out.

An example of that would be that one couldn't control the fish despite having their consciousness stuck within. It greatly lowered the efficiency of trade.

There was also the matter where one's fish ran back into their jade coin.

The reason Shang Xia fed the fish a strand of fate dipper essence was that he wanted to use it to trade with other people for different types of fate dipper essence, but from how he only managed to attract a single party over, things weren't looking too good.

As his fish swam through the Cloud Sea in search of an opportunity, Shang Xia's consciousness returned to the Tongyou Platform. He saw Yun Yichen pull up a fish and complete a trade. However, something shocked him. Even though they were all on the same platform, he was unable to see what Yun Yichen obtained.

Instead of giving her fish more treasures, she turned around and handed the fishing pole over to Ji Yu.

There were 3 fishing poles on the Tongyou Platform and Shang Xia was in sole possession of one. Liu Qinglan was sharing hers with Chu Jia, and the last pole was shared among Yun Yichen, Ji Yu, and Liu Zhidao.

Before he could do anything else, he felt a sudden jolt in his mind. His Talisman Fish was summoned once again, and it started to accelerate in a certain direction.

Shang Xia turned his attention back to the fish and a ball of light that covered an area of 10 feet appeared in the distance. There wasn't anyone else around and his Talisman Fish directly entered the area covered in the light.

This time, there was no queue at all!

Slamming directly into the jade coin, a voice rang in Shang Xia's mind. "I wish to obtain fate dipper essence. I'll pay 300 essence crystals for one."

Shang Xia quickly gave a reply. "That's a little too low!"

The divine perception of the fisherman descended and the voice came again. "Fellow cultivator, 300 essence crystals is a fair price. After all, a complete Origin Dipper has the worth of 10 strands of fate dipper essence."

"Oh? If I give you 3000 essence crystals, will you give me a complete Origin Dipper?" Shang Xia asked.

A roaring laughter immediately rang in Shang Xia's mind. "Fellow cultivator, you must be joking. You can't look at it that way. A strand of fate dipper essence might be worth 300 essence crystals, but a complete Origin Dipper that is worth 10 of them costs 3500 essence crystals at the very least!"

Thinking about it for a moment, Shang Xia decided to move to his true objective. "I have a strand of fate dipper essence, but I only wish to trade it for another one!"

The owner of the divine perception immediately turned unfriendly at the request. "Aren't you just wasting my time in that case? Please take your leave."

Shang Xia wasn't willing to let a single possibility go and he yelled hastily, "The fate dipper essence I have isn't ordinary! It's the Dark Void Life..."

"I'm not trading fate dipper essence! Scram!" The voice rang again. Before Shang Xia's Talisman Fish could swim away, the snort came from above. A strong fluctuation came from the jade coin and pushed the fish out of the ball of light.

Shang Xia wasn't angry by how things progressed. Instead, he gasped softly, "One can actually use the jade coin that way..."

"For the light to cover an area of 10 feet, that would mean that the fisherman belongs to the upper ring. For him to be buying fate dipper essence would mean that they have a strong foundation. Seeing as there are little to no Talisman Fish in the surrounding area, his business can't be that good... Moreover, he seems to have a good grasp of how to use the fishing rod and the jade coin. That would mean that the

person on the other end of the fishing pole is a lot more familiar with the entire trading process..." Having thought of that, Shang Xia felt that things weren't great.

Shang Xia might have said that 300 essence crystals for a strand of fate dipper essence was low, but he could tell that the cultivator on the other side had already given a fair price.

As Talisman Fish with what he required would be attracted to his jade coin no matter where they were in the Cloud Sea, it wasn't hard to estimate that there weren't many people willing to trade fate dipper essences.

In order to gather enough fate dipper essence for his advancement medicine, he needed 7 more of them. He was far from obtaining what he required.

The more he thought about it, the more his heart started to pound in his chest.

The Talisman Fish his consciousness was sealed within also seemed to sense his anxiety as it started to swim quickly through the Cloud Sea. Unfortunately, he didn't feel a calling wherever he went.

That wasn't all. The jade coin he tossed over the platform wasn't attracting any fish either.

Reaching his divine perception into the jade coin below, he could see that there wasn't a single fish in the area.

Shang Xia thought that most fishes would be concentrated in the center of the Cloud Sea, but after what he experienced, he knew that that wasn't the case. If his Talisman Fish wasn't attracted to anything, it would swim randomly around.

As such, there should be Talisman Fish swimming everywhere. The platform they were on might not be near the central region, but they were close enough. How could there be no fish around?!

At the end of the day, there was only a single explanation. Not many people were willing to trade fate dipper essence!

When Shang Xia was thinking about whether he should retrieve his fish to change whatever treasure he had to trade to try his luck somewhere else, his Talisman Fish felt a calling and sped through the Cloud Sea.

A moment later, Shang Xia arrived at a ball of light that covered an area of 5 feet. It seemed as though he arrived at the middle regions, and he didn't expect anyone there to seek fate dipper essence.

As the thought ran through his mind, his Talisman Fish slammed into the jade coin suspended in the Cloud Sea.

A voice rang directly in his mind. "Sincerely looking to obtain fate dipper essence."

Feeling the divine perception entering the jade coin, Shang Xia spoke directly. "I'll do a trade for other treasures. I don't need essence crystals."

The divine perception that arrived didn't expect Shang Xia to immediately reject the most basic form of currency the moment he spoke. He grunted once and Shang Xia could hear the dissatisfaction in the other party's voice.

“Can I ask what trade you wish to make?” The voice returned and it still maintained a form of cordiality.

Due to the Three Unity Pagoda concealing their voice, no one could be sure whether or not they were hearing the real voice of the other party.

Shang Xia replied without hesitation. “Do you have any fate dipper essence yourself?”

His words caused the other party to be completely flabbergasted. Luckily, the other side seemed a little more friendly and a chuckle came. “Fellow cultivator, you have to be joking. If I had fate dipper essence, why would I be looking for them?!”

Shang Xia felt a wave of disappointment, but he still replied while keeping his civility. “Do you really not have any? If not for the fact that this strand of fate dipper essence isn’t suited to me, I wouldn’t go around looking to trade for another!”

The other party didn’t seem offended after Shang Xia revealed his intentions. Instead, a serious question came. “I wonder if fellow cultivator is interested in other types of trade?”

“Feel free to give me ideas. However, I don’t want essence crystals.” Shang Xia responded.

After some time, the voice rang in Shang Xia’s mind. “First, shouldn’t you tell me what type of fate dipper essence you have?”

“I have the Dark Void Life Extermination Evasion Fate Dipper Essence.” Shang Xia thought about it for a second before he replied.

“Huh?” A shocked cry came from the other side.

Shang Xia seemed to hear a trace of delight from the other party.

“If you truly have the rare Dark Void Life Extermination Evasion Fate Dipper Essence, I can accept most types of trades. I have mid and high-grade weapons, spiritual ingredients of different levels, spiritual treasures of the fourth and fifth rank. I can also accept weapon forging commissions. I will never make a mistake when it comes to crafting mid-grade weapons. I am also very confident when it comes to crafting high-grade weapons...”

The other party didn’t try to hide how excited he was at all.

With a sudden thought, Shang Xia interrupted the other party. “Fellow cultivator, are you a Grandmaster Blacksmith? Are you gathering fate dipper essence to craft a divine weapon?”

“Huh?! How did you guess that?!” A helpless cry rang in Shang Xia’s mind and it seemed as though the other party was really shocked by his deduction.

Shang Xia chuckled. “You just said that you were confident when it came to crafting high-grade weapons. Only Grandmaster Blacksmiths will have the confidence to say something like that. Moreover, every Grandmaster Blacksmith will be gathering fate dipper essence in preparation to craft a divine weapon. What else can you be buying fate dipper essence for?!”

“Is it really that obvious?” The other party didn’t seem to be that much of a schemer and he thought about what Shang Xia said for a second. However, he brought the topic back on track the next moment. “Oh yeah, are you still trading your Dark Void Life Extermination Evasion Fate Dipper Essence?”

“Did you say that you had rank five spiritual treasures earlier?” Shang Xia asked.

“Yeah, I do...” His tone seemed to turn a little guilty and he continued, “I have 3 or 4 of them. However, I prepared most of them to craft the divine weapon. I can only trade one of them. If you don’t need that treasure, I apologize, but I can’t give you the others.”

Shang Xia didn’t think that he would run into rank five spiritual treasures so easily and he asked, “What is it?”

“It’s a small piece of Serene Immersion Clay. if not for the fact that I have no idea if it can be used during the crafting process, I definitely wouldn’t take it out...” The voice replied. From Shang Xia’s words, he could feel an opportunity arriving.

Shang Xia was naturally unwilling to listen to him going on about it and he muttered, “I wish to take a look at it first.”

“Um...” Grunting softly, the other side muttered, “Sure, but...”

Shang Xia couldn’t care less and the Talisman Fish swallowed the jade coin.

Seemingly having thought of something, the other side didn’t pull him up immediately. Instead, his voice rang in Shang Xia’s mind again. “Let’s be clear about this. The value of my Serene Immersion Clay seems to be higher than your fate dipper essence...”

Shang Xia’s Talisman Fish didn’t respond, and it simply tugged at the fishing line violently in response.

Somewhat understanding that Shang Xia was getting impatient, the other side tugged on his fishing pole and pulled the fish up.

Unfortunately, he read Shang Xia’s emotions wrong earlier. Shang Xia wasn’t impatient. He was extremely eager to see if the spiritual treasure was something he needed.

Chapter 650: Hundred Bone Phosphorescent Fire Fate Dipper Essence

The same feeling when his senses were sealed overcame him as he was dragged up the platform.

“Huh? Is there really someone who is willing to sell you a fate dipper essence?” A voice came from the side, and it seemed to be a companion of the Grandmaster Blacksmith.

The voice that interacted with Shang Xia rang through the air the next moment with a trace of excitement. “This cultivator has a strand of Dark Void Life Extermination Evasion Fate Dipper Essence!”

“Oh? That’s a rare one. It will definitely benefit you when you craft weapons.” The other voice gasped after hearing the name ‘Dark Void Life Extermination Evasion Fate Dipper Essence’. However, he quickly followed up, “Oh right. What do you plan to trade for it?”

As the cultivator who spoke to Shang Xia earlier rummaged through his belongings, he replied, “I’m trading the piece of Serene Immersion Clay for it.”

“Oh? Are you going to make a loss again? His fate dipper essence might be hard to come by, and the price might be a little higher than other fate dipper essence. However, your Serene Immersion Clay is a rank five spiritual treasure and you have quite a lot of it. You might be suffering a disadvantage by trading it with him.”

His companion’s opinion caused him to hesitate slightly.

Shang Xia’s voice immediately came from the Talisman Fish when he noticed the change in atmosphere. “I can compensate you to a certain degree. Moreover, this deal benefits the both of us!”

The blacksmith’s companion replied immediately, “How do you plan to make up for the difference?”

Shang Xia felt a trace of relief washing over him and he thanked his lucky stars that he decided to let the fish swallow a bunch of essence crystals before sending it off. He asked, “How about an additional 50 essence crystals?”

“Of course! It’s a deal!” The blacksmith cried.

“Hey! You damn fellow, why haven’t you learned how to negotiate after so many years? You should at least get him to give you a mid-grade essence crystal” His companion snapped.

The blacksmith’s voice rang through the air nonchalantly, “It’s quite alright. A fate dipper essence will cost somewhere around the 300 essence crystal mark. His Dark Void Life Extermination Evasion Fate Dipper Essence is a little special, and it’s worth close to 350 essence crystals. I might have quite a bit of Serene Immersion Clay, but it’s reasonable to value it at 400 essence crystals.”

“Alright! Let’s do it.” The blacksmith’s voice rang in Shang Xia’s mind once again.

Having reached an agreement, Shang Xia’s Talisman Fish spat out the jade pendant before spitting out another mid-grade essence crystal.

The blacksmith’s companion immediately started to grumble. “See! I told you! You should have gotten him to give you a mid-grade essence crystal as compensation!”

Releasing a hearty chuckle, the blacksmith brought out some sludge that seemed to emit a soft green light before taking out 50 low-grade essence crystals.

Shang Xia’s Talisman Fish opened its mouth and swallowed it immediately. The moment he did, the extermination origin he sealed in the Talisman Fish back then came into contact with the Serene Immersion Clay and the Crimson Soul Tablet quickly gave its evaluation. “Serene Immersion Clay. Rank five Earth element spiritual treasure.”

Even though Shang Xia expected as much, he could heave a sigh of relief after seeing the tablet's confirmation.

The next moment, the blacksmith spoke again. "Since we have already reached a deal, I should send you back to the Cloud Sea."

Before he could do anything, Shang Xia hastily transmitted his voice over. "Please wait a second. I don't mean to offend you, but I wish to ask if you are truly confident in crafting a divine weapon?"

The blacksmith didn't say a word for some time and Shang Xia could feel that his sudden question caused some distress.

Indeed. The blacksmith's companion responded in his stead. "What do you mean by that?! What does our plan or action have anything to do with you? And you! Why are you standing there in a daze? Hurry up and throw him back into the sea!"

"Wait! Please don't misunderstand! I have long since been planning to craft a divine weapon, but I am unable to find a suitable Grandmaster Blacksmith to commission the weapon. I couldn't help but ask since you are already planning to craft one. I mean no harm and I hope that you won't misunderstand..."

The blacksmith eventually spoke. "I will fully immerse myself in preparation to craft my divine weapon soon and I'm afraid I won't be able to accept commissions in the short term. I apologize."

"That's a shame..." Shang Xia was disappointed, but he didn't give up. "I wonder if I can have the honor of getting to know your true name? Fellow cultivator, please rest assured that as a Grandmaster Blacksmith, there won't be too many people in the world who wish to do you harm."

Afraid that the other party might refuse to say anything, Shang Xia quickly added, "The faction I am from can be considered slightly powerful. There are seniors and experts stronger than me backing me up, and I might be able to provide several rare treasures you might need. If you wish to focus on your craft in the future, you might be able to use my services."

Perhaps Shang Xia's final sentence worked, the blacksmith's companion roared with laughter, "This person is pretty impressive. However, our sect is open for business anyway and we aren't afraid that other people might learn about us. It's alright to tell him."

A short moment of silence later, the blacksmith muttered, "Do you know the Hundred Weapons Mill?"

Shang Xia gasped in shock. No one knew if it was in realization or in shock.

Regardless, the blacksmith continued, "If you are truly sincere in looking for us, bring up the words 'Void Dark Life Extermination' when you arrive. I will definitely meet with you. Otherwise, my companion will convey my greetings."

A burst of joy filled Shang Xia's heart. "Many thanks, fellow cultivators! I will definitely pay you a visit in the future."

Soon after, Shang Xia heard the blacksmith's companion tutting softly, "That's a Dark Void Life Extermination Evasion Fate Dipper Essence... You're really lucky! Unfortunately, I have a strand of Hundred Bone Phosphorescent Fire Fate Dipper Essence that cannot be used to craft weapons..."

By the time the voice entered Shang Xia's mind, Shang Xia was about to be tossed back into the Cloud Sea. He screamed hastily, "Wait, wait, wait! Do you just say that you have a strand of Hundred Bone Phosphorescent Fire Fate Dipper Essence?!"

"Fellow cultivator, you better not push your luck any further." The blacksmith finally seemed to feel a little irritated by Shang Xia's repeated questions.

"Hold up!"

Shang Xia wasn't the one who spoke. Instead, the blacksmith's companion stopped him from throwing the fish back into the Cloud Sea and he asked, "Are you interested in my Hundred Bone Phosphorescent Fire Fate Dipper Essence?!"

Flopping back onto the platform, Shang Xia apologized to the blacksmith before chatting with his companion. "Fellow cultivator, are you willing to make a trade? If you are, I need to ensure that the Hundred Bone Phosphorescent Fire Fate Dipper Essence is something I can use."

"That's easy!" The blacksmith's companion spoke before passing something to the blacksmith. His explanation soon followed, "According to the rules set by the 3 super factions, you found the fish. You need to be the one to hand the treasure over."

Realizing that Shang Xia was serious and wasn't playing around, the blacksmith didn't hand the Hundred Bone Phosphorescent Fire Fate Dipper Essence over directly. Instead, he started to explain, "The Hundred Bone Phosphorescent Fire Fate Dipper Essence is extremely sinister in nature. It applies to both cultivation and weapon crafting. My companion obtained the Hundred Bone Phosphorescent Fire Fate Dipper Essence a long time ago, but he can't find a use for it. Well, that's not actually true. He just doesn't have the guts to do anything with it. I need to ensure that you're clear about this before you accept the trade."

A helpless sigh came from the side. "Ha... You simple-minded fellow! Since he already knows that the Hundred Bone Phosphorescent Fire Fate Dipper Essence is, what's the point of explaining it again?!"

The blacksmith ignored his companion as he awaited Shang Xia's answer.

Unlike what the companion said, Shang Xia didn't know jack shit about the Hundred Bone Phosphorescent Fire Fate Dipper Essence. He was shocked by the sudden introduction, but he wasn't too afraid. He had the Crimson Soul Tablet and he wasn't afraid of the backlash of a fate dipper essence.

Whatever the case, Shang Xia had to admit that the blacksmith was an honest and sincere person.

If anyone else was in his place, they would probably act like his companion. They would stop at nothing to sell the Hundred Bone Phosphorescent Fire Fate Dipper Essence. No one would bother with an explanation! At best, they would give him a reminder after the deal was done. Even that would make them seem really kind.

The more Shang Xia thought about it, the better his impression of the blacksmith. He chuckled happily, "It's alright! As long as you stuff the Hundred Bone Phosphorescent Fire Fate Dipper Essence into the fish's belly, I will be able to determine if it's of use to me."

The fisherman nodded before placing a cube beside the Talisman Fish. There was a smoldering green flame the size of a bean flickering in there and it resembled ghostfire that had been forcefully sealed in the object.

Swallowing the cube, Shang Xia's Crimson Soul Tablet quickly gave an evaluation. "Hundred Bone Phosphorescent Fire Fate Dipper Essence. Ding Fire Fate Dipper Essence."

Shang Xia made up his mind immediately. He didn't expect that he could find another useful treasure after obtaining the Serene Immersion Clay.

Spitting out the cube, Shang Xia asked, "What does your companion want in return?"