

The Heavens 661

Chapter 661: Surprise and Request from the Talisman Hall

As the third chime of the bell faded, the Cloud Sea started to dissipate. The trade fair that managed to gather hundreds of Martial Extermination Realm experts came to an end.

Before leaving the Three Unity Pagoda, Liu Qinglan handed Shang Xia another sealed spiritual case. Indicating for him to open it, he was shocked by the item within.

A fate dipper essence that emitted a slight azure hue was trapped in a piece of amber.

There was also another strand of golden fate dipper essence sealed in a piece of frosted jade.

Those weren't all. There was even a treasure that resembled a night pearl that was a rank five spiritual treasure.

Seeing the expression of shock on Shang Xia's face, Liu Qinglan smiled, "You can take a look at it and see if it's something you can use."

Shang Xia sucked in a cold breath before asking, "Instructor Liu, I don't understand. They can definitely keep all of these. Why did they trade it for other treasures? Fate dipper essence and rank five spiritual treasures are extremely hard to come by."

Already expecting the question, Liu Qinglan retorted, "Think about it. A fate dipper essence can only turn into an Origin Dipper after an extremely long time of nurturing. Do you think they would be waiting to craft a divine weapon with it? Moreover, rank five spiritual treasures are useless if they wish to establish their own faction. They don't even have a rank five advancement formula. They might as well obtain essence crystals or complete inheritances."

Shang Xia hesitated slightly before nodding. High-level treasures might be precious, but they wouldn't be useful for low-leveled cultivators.

Shang Xia no longer thought too much about it. Holding the piece of amber in his hand, the Crimson Soul Tablet quickly gave an evaluation. Unfortunately, he was disappointed by the result. "Azure Light Essence Fate Dipper Essence. Rank Five Light Attribute."

He was clearly down on his luck as the first fate dipper essence was useless for him.

Picking up the frost jade, Shang Xia felt a trace of coldness seeping into his bones. Even his divine perception froze for a second.

Circulating his inner qi, he got rid of the feeling instantly.

This time, he wasn't disappointed. "Incandescence Golden Fire Fate Dipper Essence. Bing Fire Fate Dipper Essence."

A look of joy could be seen on his face as he finally collected his eighth fate dipper essence.

He needed 10 fate dipper essences to advance to the Five Elements Realm, and the Yi Wood Fate Dipper Essence and Gui Water Fate Dipper Essence were the only two left.

When Liu Qinglan saw how happy he was, a smile also broke out on her face. "Just keep it for now. Take a look at the pearl and see what it is."

Shang Xia quickly held it and with a single thought, the Crimson Soul Tablet did its thing. “Essence Clam Spiritual Pear. Rank Five Illusory Treasure.”

Shang Xia shook his head slightly to indicate that he couldn't use it before sealing the pearl and the other fate dipper essence in the case before returning it to Liu Qinglan.

“There's no need to be disappointed. You'll be able to get what you need eventually...”
Liu Qinglan tried to comfort him.

A wide smile appeared on Shang Xia's face and he laughed, “I'm already fortunate to be able to receive the assistance of the institution. I'm not disappointed at all!”

“That's great.” Liu Qinglan chuckled softly.

As the six members of the Tongyou Institution left the pagoda and returned to their residence, they heard a low rumble. The earth started to shake beneath their feet and by the time they turned, they saw the Three Unity Pagoda rising into the air before disappearing into the void.

Liu Qinglan muttered, “Now that the pagoda is gone, we can consider the trade fair concluded. However, the Three Unity Island will still continue to drift in space above the worlds and remain a common trading group between us. After returning to the institution, we have to send some experts over to maintain the institution's business.”

Yun Yichen smiled in response. “Why don't all of you head back first while I maintain the Tongyou Hall? I can also be here to greet the members we send over and brief them on everything that has happened.”

Shang Xia thought about it for a second and brought up a problem. “I'm afraid bringing experts up here will be a problem. Martial Extermination Realm experts wouldn't be able to cultivate effectively up here, but we're not the 3 super factions and we don't have a way to bring Martial Intent Realm disciples over. We might have to trouble our Martial Dipper Realm Ancestors to make a move...”

Since the trade fair had come to a close, several powers started to leave the Three Unity Island for the Origin Azure World and Azure Spiritual World. The various factions might be leaving, but the low-leveled cultivators didn't seem to be in a rush to go.

The Divine Capital Sect, the Eternal Sect, and the Northern Sea Mystic Sect might only be able to use their methods of transport once every 3 months, but they seemed to have reached an agreement. One of them would be in charge of transport every month so that there would be a constant flow of cultivators on and off the island.

Since Yun Yichen chose to stay behind, the matter was concluded. However, Liu Qinglan and the others weren't in a rush to return to the Beyond Heavens Pavilion. They decided to avoid the huge rush of people leaving before getting off the Three Unity Island.

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As the various factions started to make their way back, many instances of experts running away desperately in space played out.

News quickly reached the others on the island that after several people left the safety of the island, they were hunted down by their old enemies.

There were even rumors about how many people accidentally revealed their tracks after leaving the island and were attacked because of the treasures they might have gained during the trade fair.

Overall, the killings mainly happened to wandering cultivators or those who hailed from smaller factions.

Experts who had the backing of a holy land or existences like the Tongyou Institution who had the protection of Martial Dipper Realm Ancestors naturally wouldn't be worried about that happening.

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Once again, Shang Xia brought out the Auspicious Cloud Cape and brought the others back to the Beyond Heavens Pavilion with Liu Qinglan's help. This time, they were much faster than before.

When they returned, they discovered that Kou Chongxue and Shang Bo weren't present in the pavilion beside the Void Abyss. Instead, Ji Wenlong was there waiting for them.

Liu Qinglan reported everything that happened on the Three Unity Island while the others returned to the institution through the Tongyou Mysterious World.

Because Shang Xia told everyone about what he heard from Zheng Chang about how the Spirit Abundance World might have already discovered the position of their worlds, there was no need for any of them to remain in the Beyond Heavens Pavilion.

Shang Xia returned to the Shang Clan as soon as he was back and handed a batch of cultivation resources he obtained from the fair to Shang Quan. He stored a bunch of them in the clan before returning to the Talisman Hall. He stored another batch of talisman papers he traded before informing the rest to start mass producing rank two and three talismans.

Finally, he went to the Weapons Hall. It didn't take long for him to find Ren Bainian.

"Young Master Shang, we have already completed the purification process for the Celestial Gold you brought back then. Please come with me!" Ren Bainian hadn't joined the Weapons Hall for long, but because of his cultivation level and astounding skills at repairing weapons, he was able to find his footing in the Weapons Hall quickly. His relationship with the other masters there wasn't too bad.

In the past, Shang Xia obtained a piece of impure Celestial Gold from his grandfather. He quickly sent it over to them to be purified. As the quality of the material was extremely high, they required a lot of effort in order to do so.

Fortunately, Ren Bainian had been there to oversee the process for him. In the short half a year they were gone, they managed to obtain several pieces of pure Celestial Gold.

Shang Xia thanked Ren Bainian and 2 other Blacksmiths that he brought along with him and handed over 50 essence crystals as thanks before retrieving his items. He then took out the impure Celestial Metal he obtained in the fair that was coated in Star Essence and the unknown piece of wood. "I have several items here I need help with. Firstly, I would like to know what this piece of wood is. Secondly, this piece of Celestial Metal has been coated with a layer of sand and Star Essence. I would like Seniors in the Weapons Hall to help to separate them."

With Shang Xia's current status, no one in the Weapons Hall would reject his request. Moreover, he even gave them some essence crystals as thanks! Even though separating the treasures would be troublesome, they would happily do it!

The piece of wood proved to be a little troublesome. Ren Bainian and one of the Blacksmiths stared at it with puzzled expressions as they couldn't identify it no matter how hard they tried. The other older Blacksmith fell deep into thought while staring at it. He seemed to have thought of something, but he didn't seem too sure.

Ren Bainian was naturally observant enough to notice what was going on. He bought a pot of tea over and asked, "Brother Dong, have you thought of something?"

Elder Dong thought for a second before grunting softly, "Actually, I'm not too sure. I have seen the records of a Spirit Nourishing Wood when looking through the Wood Artifact Records but it's said that the tree has long since been extinct. I wouldn't dare to carelessly determine its origin..."

Ren Bainian glanced at Shang Xia and laughed, "Brother Dong has always been extremely careful. He wouldn't dare to say something unless he is 100 percent sure of it. However, it should be very possible for this to be a piece of Spirit Nourishing Wood. The only question should be the rank of it and its properties. Of course, we might not know what it can be used for."

Stroking his beard, Elder Dong muttered, "The wood should be a rank three spiritual treasure, but even though it's not of an exceptional level, it can be used in a lot of places. It doesn't need to be tempered nor refined. You can simply make it into a wooden hairpin or bracelet and wear it on yourself. It helps in calming one down and nourishing one's soul. You can even use it when making medicine. It would be useful in making many different types of rank three advancement medicine as it's extremely useful in strengthening one's soul. It can also prevent one from experiencing cultivation deviation and it's also one of the key ingredients in crafting incense."

"Many thanks! I learned a lot from Elder Dong." Shang Xia cupped his fists and thanked.

The other Blacksmith added, "As for the piece of Celestial Metal, it won't be too difficult for us to separate it from the Star Essence. It's the sand and Star Essence that's the problem. However, it's just a matter of labor. We can call over several disciples to separate them when the time comes."

"No matter what, I would have to thank fellow seniors for the assistance!" Shang Xia thanked.

After leaving the Weapons Hall, Shang Xia took a trip over to the Formations Hall. He learned that Chu Jia had entered seclusion the moment she returned. She took the Formation Core Liu Qinglan handed to her for research.

Since he didn't manage to see her, Shang Xia didn't feel as excited as before when he shared the rank four talisman formation crafting method with them. After sharing the knowledge with several Formation Masters, he returned to the Talisman Hall to prepare to craft rank four talismans.

When he returned this time, Fan Yuanhui and Lou Zizhang came knocking. They hoped that he would organize a public talisman crafting session.

Chapter 662: Talisman Inheritance

After Shang Xia became a Talisman Grandmaster, he held a huge exhibition back then and caused a huge stir in the Tongyou City.

As the best Talisman Grandmaster in the Talisman Hall, Shang Xia knew he couldn't take all the credit to reach his current level. It was true that he relied on himself and his talent, but he never would have received enough resources without their full support.

Ever since he became a Talisman Grandmaster, he hadn't settled down to focus on passing down some skills to the members of the Talisman Hall. He had been extremely busy running all over the place to deal with matters or crafting high-leveled talismans alone.

The only time he actually shared his knowledge was during the exhibition he held some time ago, and if one looked at it from an objective perspective, he was truly undeserving of the title of the best Talisman Grandmaster in the Talisman Hall.

Now that Fan Yuanhui and Lou Zizhang came knocking, Shang Xia decided that he had to fulfill his duties. As such, he agreed immediately.

The news of Shang Xia holding a public talisman crafting session quickly spread through the institution. It didn't take long for it to also reach the rest of the city.

Many people used all their connections in order to enter the Talisman Hall on the day of the session so that they could watch it for themselves, but it seemed as though things were no longer like before. The Talisman Hall's stance was firm that the matter of the public talisman crafting session was an internal event. As it involved the secrets of talisman crafting, they strictly forbade anyone not from the institution from taking part. Even members of the Tongyou Institution wouldn't be allowed to enter the venue if they weren't members of the Talisman Hall.

The effects rippled and caused a huge wave to rip through the institution. Even the various instructors and deacons were alerted to the situation. Eventually, a Martial Dipper Realm Ancestor, Deputy Patriarch Ji Wenlong, had to personally step out to state that no one would be able to interfere with the matters of the Talisman Hall because of the matter before everything started to calm down.

When the world out there was pretty much on fire, Shang Xia was carefully analyzing the method to craft rank four talisman formations.

That was right. One of the examples he would be using during the demonstration would be the creation of a rank four Formation Talisman!

With his current achievements in the way of talisman crafting, he was quite sure he would be able to craft an elementary talisman like the rank four Formation Talisman.

Of course, he couldn't be completely sure. At the end of the day, he would be crafting it for the first time. He would have to craft it in front of so many people, and he wouldn't dare to say for sure he could succeed.

There were also several other concerns behind his decision to craft the rank four Formation Talisman. The true meaning of the session was to raise the standard of the Talisman Masters present.

From the current situation in the Tongyou Institution, they had several rank four Talisman Masters. The others were merely rank two Talisman Masters or rank one disciples who just started their journey in talisman crafting.

Due to their limited abilities, they wouldn't be able to learn much if Shang Xia started crafting high-level talismans on his own as they would fail to see through the intricacies.

As such, he didn't plan to craft the other rank four talismans he knew. After a rank four Formation Talisman, he would craft talismans of other ranks. While demonstrating the process of crafting rank one, two, and three talismans, he would also include their respective Formation Talismans as the foundation of whatever he was teaching.

The reason was to show off the true fundamentals of talisman crafting.

Also, he was fine teaching them the fundamentals. He wasn't worried that anyone would be able to steal his unique talisman crafting techniques from his short display as without pointers from him, no one would be able to understand his thought process. Demonstrating the techniques was one thing, but he would never share the true way he went about crafting talismans. Even if anyone else tried to mimic his actions, they wouldn't come into contact with the essence of it.

That was the reason he was fine with holding a public talisman crafting session.

Of course, with his current skills and accomplishments as a Talisman Grandmaster, even if the others could mimic a small portion of his abilities, they would already improve by a lot.

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As Talisman Masters required a peaceful environment when it came to crafting talismans, the Talisman Hall was filled with an aura of tranquility.

However, things were slightly different as the peace was broken with a massive congregation of Talisman Masters in the area.

Every single one of them, including disciples and craftsmen who made talisman paper, taliman ink, and any other talisman related items, were gathered in the main hall.

They filled every inch of space with the exception of an area in the middle.

Whispers filled the air, but despite them trying to keep their volumes down, they couldn't hide the excitement on their faces. From time to time, they would peek at the central area.

The only thing there was a sturdy wooden table. Talisman paper, talisman ink, and everything else he would need had already been prepared. There was also an incense burner filled with spirit stabilizing incense.

Talisman Master Gong, who hadn't been crafting talismans in recent years had already arrived. He was their Hall Master, and he was flanked by Fan Yuanhui and Lou Zizhang, the other rank three Talisman Masters.

Other than them, there were 3 other rank three Talisman Masters. One of them was a member of the institution, but he wasn't a part of the Talisman Hall. The other came from the Ji Clan and the last was a Talisman Master who was crafting talismans for a living in the Tongyou City.

Even though the session was supposed to be a private event and Shang Xia rejected many people's requests to be a part of it, he agreed to let the 3 of them attend.

With looks of anticipation all around, Shang Xia walked into the Talisman Hall. The hall that used to be bustling with excitement fell silent in an instant.

As he made his way over to the table, Shang Xia could feel the heated gazes thrown his way.

Arriving at his table, Shang Xia first turned to Talisman Master Gong and the rest of the rank three Talisman Masters and cupped his fists in greeting.

There were only 6 of them in total, but no matter which one of them he referred to, they were definitely older and more experienced than him. In terms of age and their study into the way of talisman crafting, they could be considered his seniors.

Of the 6, other than Talisman Master Gong, the others hastily cupped their hands to return his greeting.

Shang Xia swept his gaze across the rest of the hall before chuckling, “I received a lot of help from the Talisman Hall in recent years. However, I haven’t done much in return. I am really lucky to be able to hold this session today and hope to share some of my knowledge with you. I truly wish that all of us will be able to improve together.”

Shang Xia’s introduction caused everyone to stare at each other in shock as none of them knew how to respond.

Ignoring what they were thinking, Shang Xia immediately grabbed a random brush and rank one talisman paper. A smile appeared on his face as he said, “Now, I’ll start from the most basic of talismans, the rank one Formation Talisman...”

As strange looks appeared on the faces of many Talisman Masters, Shang Xia seemed to casually make his first stroke on the talisman paper before explaining the process of crafting a rank one talisman. What he spoke about was the fundamentals and basics of talisman crafting.

There were countless types of expressions in the crowd when he started his explanation.

There were some who were listening closely, and there were others who were thinking about something else. There were some who were trying to calm down to watch the demonstration, while there were also others who didn’t seem to care about the basics. Of course, there were those who watched in anticipation.

No matter what they felt at the moment, they forced themselves to maintain their calm. After all, Shang Xia was a super expert at the grand completion stage of the Martial Extermination Realm and an amazing Talisman Grandmaster.

Despite their attempts to show their respects, the vibe in the hall quickly started to turn strange.

Clearly, Shang Xia could feel the difference. But did he care? Obviously not. He continued to draw on the rank one talisman paper while speaking about his technique and the fundamentals of talisman crafting.

As a rank one Formation Talisman was easy to craft, it didn’t take long for him to complete the process.

He didn’t pause as he started on the rank two Formation Talisman immediately.

A rank two Formation Talisman was a lot more difficult to craft than a rank one Formation Talisman, but as Shang Xia’s fluid strokes landed on the talisman paper, many Talisman Disciples

who were aspiring to become a rank two Talisman Master placed their full attention to his teachings.

Teaching with the same style, Shang Xia drew his runes on the talisman paper while talking about whatever he could think of. He spoke about problems that came with talisman crafting or mistakes one might make and how to prevent them. Everything flowed like water.

That wasn't all. During the entire process, his brush landed with extreme accuracy. He made the simplest strokes possible and there was no flair to his technique. Everything was as simple and ordinary as possible.

Those who came in order to see an impressive display of talisman crafting could only feel disappointment in their hearts.

From the start, everything Shang Xia spoke about were things they had learned before. Not many found it interesting or new, and Talisman Masters in the crowd even thought that there was nothing impressive about what Shang Xia was doing.

Was it really that easy to become a Talisman Grandmaster?

That was most likely the thought running through a lot of minds at the moment.

There wasn't any technique he came up with, and neither was he teaching them his insights. Amazing techniques were nowhere to be seen, and all of them were watching the simplest and most basic way of talisman crafting. They felt that everything he was doing was merely a product of practice and they could easily replicate it.

There were even several Talisman Masters who started to shake their heads in disappointment as they felt that attending the session was a waste of their time.

With his powerful divine perception, Shang Xia could naturally detect what was happening. However, he didn't seem affected in the slightest. He continued his demonstration. At that point, he was only interested in teaching those who were really interested in the art of talisman crafting. There was no need to care about the expectations the others had of him.

As he completed the second talisman, he swapped out his brush for a mid-grade brush. Taking out a piece of rank three paper, he dipped his brush in some ink as he prepared to demonstrate how he would craft a rank three talisman.

The crowd that used to be excited and anticipating his demonstration was no longer as enthusiastic as before. When he started to craft the rank three talisman, many of them thought that he would continue to use the low-grade brush and lower-grade ink to show off his skills. After all, it wouldn't be difficult for him to do something like that.

Shang Xia seemed to be doing whatever Talisman Masters at that rank would do, which provided the most accurate representation of the current situation.

With the start of the demonstration of a rank three talisman, Shang Xia didn't change his approach. There were some in the crowd who tuned out what he taught earlier but started to realize what was happening.

Shang Xia was using the most fundamental talisman, the Formation Talisman, of each rank, to explain the basics of talisman crafting! He seemed to be outlining the talisman crafting inheritance the institution could use!

That was right. He seemed to be establishing a complete set of talisman crafting inheritance, and he was showing them off during the public talisman crafting session!

It was something the Tongyou Institution had planned to do for a long time, but never had the ability to accomplish!

In Shang Xia's hands, the institution's goal was taking shape.

Those who seemed disinterested during the demonstration earlier started to turn solemn. Lower-leveled Talisman Disciples and craftsmen might still be slightly confused, but those who had been paying attention the entire time would definitely receive the greatest benefit from the demonstration.

On a platform close to the central table, Talisman Master Gong, the true respected authority of the Talisman Hall, was feeling a buzz in his heart that was slowly getting out of control.

Chapter 663: 5s the Charm

Simplicity was perfection.

After thousands of tries and the hard work of the ancestors, there was almost no room for improvement. It wasn't as though the Talisman Hall never thought of establishing their own talisman inheritance.

However, the quality of Talisman Masters they had failed to reach the standard. Moreover, most of them had different schools of thought and their own methods of crafting talismans. It was difficult to find a system that most people could accept, and it was naturally impossible for them to create an inheritance.

Now that Shang Xia was using the most elementary Formation Talisman of each rank to demonstrate the fundamentals of talisman crafting to the rest of the Talisman Hall, he was in essence developing a complete talisman inheritance to them. The method he used might seem to be the most elementary and simple, but it contained the true essence of the way of talismans.

Those who couldn't see though his intentions were fools who were overestimating themselves.

Those who paid attention to his teachings from the very beginning were those who were truly devout to the way of talismans. They knew how to advance step by step.

Naturally, Shang Xia wasn't planning to keep his teachings from those who missed it because of a moment's folly. As long as they had the intention to listen to the rest of his teachings, they would still be able to raise their level of mastery to a certain degree after he released the inheritance to the Talisman Hall.

The only thing they would miss would be the personal preaching of a rank four Talisman Grandmaster. That would be the difference between themselves and those who had been paying attention the whole time.

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With the completion of his rank three talisman, Shang Xia seemed to have more to talk about. Waving his brush, he started on another rank three Formation Talisman while going into more details. Both talismans were the same to begin with, and he completed them in one smooth motion.

There was too much to talk about and the process continued as he started on his third rank three Formation Talisman. By the time he was done, he swept his divine perception through the crowd once again and discovered that there were 4 rank two Talisman Masters who had fallen deep into thought after hearing his explanation. Looks of joy were also apparent on their faces and it was obvious they gained a lot from his demonstration.

Perhaps, there would be a birth of a new batch of rank three Talisman Masters in the institution in the near future.

Shang Xia chuckled softly before exchanging the brush in his hand to the high-grade Purple Bamboo Brush. He pulled out a rank four talisman paper before getting ready to attempt crafting the rank four Formation Talisman.

There might have been 2 high-grade brushes on the table, but Shang Xia chose the Purple Bamboo Brush as it was a little more appropriate for what he was about to craft.

This time, he didn't choose to use rank four talisman ink. However, that wasn't because he was intentionally showing off. That was because rank four talisman ink was hard to come by and a rank four Formation Talisman wasn't too difficult to craft. As such, he planned to save in whatever way he could.

The crafting of a rank four talisman was finally starting!

This time, no matter what anyone thought of his earlier demonstration, they forced themselves to pay attention to the process.

Most people there were far from the level of being able to understand what he was doing and what he would be talking about, but they focused to the best of their abilities regardless. After all, even if they didn't know what was going on, they could easily go out and brag about it.

The Talisman Masters in the hall who knew the true meaning of what was going on finally started to feel a little worried.

They knew the increase in the difficulty of crafting increasingly high-ranked talismans.

Even though Shang Xia was a Talisman Grandmaster and possessed a frightening success rate when crafting talismans, he wouldn't be able to ensure that he would successfully craft a rank four every time.

Moreover, he had already displayed every rank four talisman he knew how to craft. None of them was a Formation Talisman.

That would mean that he would be crafting a rank four Formation Talisman for the first time in the demonstration. It would also mean that the risk of failure was extremely high!

With things in their current state, everything hinged on the successful creation of the rank four talisman. It would determine if the talisman inheritance could actually be established! Whatever it was, it could be said that he had to craft the rank four Formation Talisman no matter what, but crafting it might lead to unexpected consequences.

Shang Xia's hand didn't waver in the slightest. He maintained the calm expression on his face as every stroke he made on the rank four talisman paper was measured and precise. He didn't try to rush things at all.

It seemed to be progressing smoothly initially, but at the end of the day, it was his first time crafting a rank four Formation Talisman. After close to 4 hours, he eventually failed.

Just when everything thought that things would get awkward now that he messed up. The atmosphere froze a little and no one knew how to react. When everyone was still considering what they would do next, Shang Xia grunted once and an expression of enlightenment appeared on his face. He chuckled softly, "So that's it!"

He pulled out another rank four talisman paper under the shocked gazes of those present. He crafted 3 rank three talismans right before, and he failed an attempt at a rank four talisman. The consumption should be extreme, but he didn't bother taking a break. Dipping his brush into some rank three ink, he immediately started his next try.

Wasn't he going to rest?!

Is he pushing himself?!

Is he doing this because he has to regain his reputation for failing his past attempt?!

Strange thoughts filled the minds of those present and many of them felt a little afraid that things would progress out of hand.

There were also some of them present who had been paying full attention to Shang Xia's demonstration. Despite his failure, they didn't seem affected. They could learn something from him no matter the outcome.

The process of crafting a rank four talisman was complex. Not only did it exhaust one's divine perception and extermination qi, but the runes one had to draw were horrifyingly complicated. If he messed up even a little bit, everything would go to waste.

Even the most seasoned of rank four Talisman Grandmasters would only be able to complete the process of crafting a rank four talisman after countless hours, or even days.

After Shang Xia entered the grand completion stage of the Martial Extermination Realm, his divine perception and reserve of extermination qi far surpassed cultivators of the same level. As such, he needed much less time compared to other rank four Talisman Grandmasters when making talismans.

Even so, he required close to 6 hours to craft a rank four Formation Talisman.

Luckily, those who had the qualifications to enter the main hall were of the Martial Extremity Realm at the very least. Several hours were nothing to them. Even if they had to pay attention for a day or two, it wouldn't pose a problem.

As everyone watched on, Shang Xia started his second attempt. No accidents happened this time and a rank four Formation Talisman was completed.

The smooth process, intricate method, his exquisite control of his extermination qi, and his ultrasharp divine perception caused everyone who was seeing the creation of a rank four talisman for the first time to be completely awestruck.

The applause soon came and under the cheers and excited gazes, Shang Xia seemed completely unaffected. He simply frowned as though he wasn't satisfied with something.

When the cheers eventually died and silence descended again, Shang Xia pulled out yet another rank four talisman paper and started a third attempt.

Many people in the hall stared at each other, but most of them had looks of joy on their faces.

They only expected to watch a single creation of a rank four talisman. After all, that was a blessing in itself. Even if it failed eventually, they could still learn something. Shang Xia tried twice earlier and a ton of them couldn't be more excited. Now that Shang Xia had fully entered a state of concentration and started his third attempt, everyone knew that they couldn't miss it for the world.

Now that he was doing it for the third time, Shang Xia was a lot more familiar with it. Everything flowed smoothly and everyone lost track of time. By the time they snapped back to reality, the second rank four Formation Talisman was complete.

Still in his unique state of mind, Shang Xia pulled out yet another rank four talisman paper. Not a single squeak could be heard in the crowd as they witnessed the process.

6 hours later, a third rank four Formation Talisman was complete.

No one left the hall, and no one dared to breathe loudly. Everyone was watching with bated breaths as they awaited Shang Xia's next action.

Shang Xia, who had immersed himself in talisman crafting, seemed to have forgotten everything else. Nothing else other than the brush in his hand, and the talisman paper on the table before him mattered.

In less than 6 hours, he produced a fourth rank four Formation Talisman after using 5 pieces of rank four talisman paper.

The anticipation continued as Shang Xia brought out another talisman paper.

With the sixth piece of talisman paper, Shang Xia completed another rank four Formation Talisman in a short 5 hours!

Sighing softly, Shang Xia started to feel a little tired and decided to stop crafting talismans. Exiting his unique state of mind, he discovered that he was still standing in the middle of the main hall. Everyone was watching him intensely.

When he scanned his surroundings again, he discovered that several days had passed. Even so, not a single person left!

Almost everyone had bloodshot eyes, and lethargy filled their minds. Despite what they were feeling, they were watching him with excitement burning in their hearts. They witnessed a miracle he performed!

The news of Talisman Grandmaster Shang Xia's achievement of completing 5 rank four Formation Talismans in a row ripped through the Talisman Hall. It didn't stop there as it shook the Tongyou Institution to its core. In fact, even the Tongyou City was stirred.

Chapter 664: Teacher Shang Xia

“Uncle?” Hai Yuanyuan stared at Shang Xia a little timidly while calling out to him in an unsure voice.

The little lass who used to have a chubby and cute face had already grown into a little girl who wasn't as clueless as before.

Shang Xia patted her head lovingly and chuckled, “Are you hungry? Shall I bring you out for some tasty food?”

His familiar touch immediately brought back memories, but so did whatever he said. When she heard him say the words ‘tasty food’, she thought about the times when he would bring back some snacks for her every time he returned. Moreover, she would run after him everytime he would leave, asking him to bring back even more food. She couldn't help but feel slightly embarrassed.

Shang Xia couldn't help but release an involuntary chuckle. He turned to look at the young lady beside him who exuded an aura of indifference and whispered, “When did you arrive in the Tongyou City? Why didn't you inform me you were coming?”

“Even if I tried, you might not have received the notification...” A soft smile appeared on Hai Min's face.

Laughing helplessly, Shang Xia understood that he had been running all over the place in recent years. He wouldn't stay in the city for long, and most of the time he was back, he would be in seclusion to craft talismans. It wouldn't be easy for Hai Min to find him even if she tried.

“The route between the Changfeng City and the Tongyou City is a lot safer than before. Moreover, I have already entered the Martial Intent Realm. Nothing can go wrong...” Hai Min continued.

It was only then that Shang Xia noticed Hai Min's cultivation realm. From her degree of control of her inner qi, Shang Xia could tell that she had already consolidated her foundation. That meant that she stepped into the Martial Intent Realm quite some time ago.

Thinking about it for a second, Shang Xia muttered, “Since you're already here, you should stay. There's no need to return to the Changfeng City...”

“Yuanyuan is about to enter the institution. I'll stay here for some time to keep her company.” Hai Min nodded in response.

“Huh?” Shang Xia stared at the little girl in shock, but he was greeted with a semi-haughty look from her as she showed off her achievements.

“Heh... Six years have passed in the blink of an eye...” Shang Xia sighed. The first time he met Hai Min and Yuanyuan was on the 843rd year of the Divine Martial Calendar. When they first met, the year was coming to an end and the 844th year of the Divine Martial Calendar had already begun.

Yuanyuan was still a little lass who was 4 to 5 years old then. Now, she could be considered a young lady who was ready to step through the gates of cultivation at 10.

“Isn’t this a little too early?” Shang Xia hesitated for a second as he continued, “She’s only 10, and she should be working on her foundations. It won’t be too late for her to join the Outer Division of the Tongyou Institution after she strengthens her foundations after a few years.”

Hai Min shook her head as a strange look formed in her eyes while she stared at Shang Xia. “Hey, o mighty Talisman Grandmaster of the institution. Aren’t you a teacher there too? Why do you seem clueless about the institution’s progress? Right now, there’s a Preparation Class for students to build their foundations before entering the Outer Division. Students aspiring to join the institution would enroll in the Preparation Class for a year or two.”

She was right. Shang Xia had no idea what the Preparation Class was and he was in visible shock. “That’s actually really good. Anyway, since you’re already here in the city, I’ll arrange a residence for you. How about returning to the Shang Clan for a little bit?”

Hai Min shook her head and laughed softly, “It’s alright, let’s not do that. Anyway, Yuanyuan and I have already accustomed ourselves to our way of life. We also managed to find a place to stay. It’s in the western part of the city, and it’s a quiet courtyard like the one we had in the Changfeng City. It’s rather peaceful there. Anyway... You should come often. Yuanyuan... Yuanyuan seems to have always been treating you as her father...”

A grin appeared on Shang Xia’s face, but Hai Min avoided his gaze in a slight state of fluster. Feeling slightly embarrassed, she moved to a spot where Yuanyuan wouldn’t be able to see her before punching Shang Xia heavily.

...

After sending Hai Min and Yuanyuan back to their courtyard, Shang Xia settled them down. He only returned to the institution the next day.

Originally, he was planning to bring Yuanyuan over with him but the idea was shot down by Hai Min instantly.

Shang Xia was a monstrous legend in the institution at the moment and his fame was like the sun in the midday sky. Hai Min didn’t wish for their peaceful lives to be interrupted after they were associated with him.

In the end, Shang Xia could only return to the institution alone. At his current level, with the exception of the Martial Dipper Realm Ancestors, no one would be able to catch his tracks as long as he didn’t wish to be found.

Ever since he completed his feat of crafting 5 rank four Formation Talismans back during his demonstration and caused a massive uproar, he decided to lay low for a little while.

Unfortunately, the stir he caused was massive and even if he wanted to remain under the radar, it wasn’t quite possible.

According to his original set of plans, he wanted to remain in the Talisman Hall for some time and reward himself with some time to rest. However, his plans changed the day before as he received news of Hai Min’s appearance with Yuanyuan. When he went out to look for them, he was ambushed by Liu Qinglan’s notice for him to take up his position as a teacher for the institution.

When he returned from the Manyu Continent back then, he went to formally take on his post as a teacher. Even though he agreed to teach the students of the various divisions the art of talisman crafting and some combat skills as long as it didn't interfere with his duties in the Talisman Hall, he hadn't been actually doing much.

Before starting his job, he went into seclusion to craft high-level talismans for the trade fair held by the 3 super factions. That took a few months of time and next came the trade fair itself. When he returned from the Three Unity Island, the 850th year of the Divine Martial Calendar had already rolled around.

It was no wonder Liu Qinglan had to personally appear to hand him the notice to remind him to start paying attention to his duties. His first order of business was to take care of a class in the Inner Division.

...

In the Fifth Class, 26 students were scattered across the training plaza. They seemed pretty dispirited and down, and the atmosphere was pretty negative.

“Hey, Chief Yan, do you know who's going to be taking over as our teacher today? Why are you acting all mysterious? We haven't heard anything about it either.” A pale-looking youth who seemed to have just recovered from a massive illness asked. He was clad in tight-fitting black robes as he addressed another slightly thin-looking cultivator beside him.

Yan Weihai snapped back at him immediately. “Stop calling me your chief! What's the point of being the chief of the Fifth Class anyway? The only thing I know about our new teacher is that he isn't someone just assigned to us. It's just that he's been too busy to teach us since we entered the Inner Division. He seems to be someone really important...”

The other youngster turned to stare at a fellow student whose facial features made him look a little older than the rest before asking, “Brother Shi, you've been in the institution longer than us. Do you know anything about our teacher?”

Shi Huai hesitated for a moment before shaking his head slowly, “I have no idea. Our teacher seems to be someone really mysterious. No one heard of him and he should have already taken up his post when you guys entered the Inner Division...”

The disciple who asked the question seemed really adept at reading other people's facial cues and he quickly followed up after seeing the flash of hesitation on the other student's face, “Brother Shi, you truly spent more time in the institution than us and we've always come to you for advice... Do you really not know anything?”

Shi Huai was slightly taken aback by the follow-up but he eventually muttered, “I met Custodian Jiao Haitang yesterday. She was my Custodian back in the Outer Division and I tried to ask her about our teacher. She merely laughed and said that we're being given a great opportunity and to pay attention to everything he teaches when he comes.”

“Huh? Great opportunity? I guess that would mean that it's a teacher we haven't seen before. Hmm... Not a single teacher who came to teach us the last half a year or so

truly cared about us. They mostly came from the other classes and there has been no structure at all. None of them could teach us a full battle system or impart proper combat experience. That is why our Fifth Class never produced a true expert! We've been losing time and time again in the trials held in the battlefield between the two worlds!" The disciple cried.

Yan Weihai's expression sank even further after hearing what he said. He couldn't help but growl, "Wang Chenglin, will it kill you to shut up? Even if you don't speak, no one will think that you're a mute."

If Yan Weihai didn't say anything, that might have been the end of the grumbling and complaints. However, Wang Chenglin immediately blew up after being called out. "Look at the other classes! Every single one of their teachers is at the later stages of the Martial Intent Realm! The first and second classes are taught by Teacher Sun Haiwei! She's an expert in the Martial Extermination Realm! Of the ten strongest disciples in the eight different classes in the Inner Division, the first and second classes took 5 spots!"

Wang Chenglin grew more agitated the more he spoke. "In the trials held in the battlefield between the two worlds at the start of the year, only the members of their classes managed to retreat unscathed. Every other class experienced some sort of trouble. There were even some students who died! Our class suffered the most! Originally, we had 32 students. 2 of them died, and 2 more were crippled. There are also 2 of them who haven't recovered from their injuries. Look around! There are only 26 of us left! There are probably only 10 of us who suffered little to no injuries and the others are still trying to recover! I'm afraid they will need 10 more days to half a month in order to return to their peak state and we'll be left behind by the other classes by then! ...If I had to make a guess, I would say that our Fifth Class offended someone important unknowingly. The institution probably doesn't care about us anymore. Even if our new teacher comes, he's probably going to be someone they sent over for show."

Even though not too many people agreed with him, his conclusion seemed to resonate with the others and the air of depression got worse.

"Can you guys tell me more about what you experienced in the battlefield between the two worlds?" A soothing voice suddenly came from behind Wang Chenglin.

Jumping in fright, Wang Chenglin was utterly shocked. No matter what, he was a talented youth in the Martial Extremity Realm! Even so, he failed to detect when someone was standing behind him!

He wasn't the only one. The students scattered in the plaza stared at each other in shock as they didn't realize that someone else had appeared behind Wang Chenglin all of a sudden.

Twisting his body violently, Wang Chenglin saw a young cultivator not too much older holding his hands behind his back while smiling at him.

"Who are you?!" Wang Chenglin took several steps back before asking cautiously.

At the same time, Yan Weihai, Shi Huai, and the others also felt that something was off as they quickly gathered around Wang Chenglin. They stood close to each other as they were prepared to take on the person standing in front of them in case he acted against them.

The other students who hadn't entered the Martial Extremity Realm gathered close behind them and not a single person chose to back away on their own.

The young cultivator who appeared behind Wang Chenglin didn't say anything else as he smiled the whole time. He watched the reaction of the students of the Fifth Class with interest.

Even though he didn't move a single bit, the students of the Fifth Class felt their scalps going numb as they faced him.

“Who are you and how did you get here?!” Yan Weihai took a step forward and stood before the entire class before questioning the other party.

Even though he was the top student of the Fifth Class, his strength was ranked the lowest among the top students of the eight classes in the Inner Division. There wasn't a need to mention the top 10 disciples in the Inner Division. He would find it difficult to put himself in the top 20! That was why he found the title of chief disciple of the Fifth Class an insult. Regardless, he took on his responsibility as the chief disciple of the Fifth Class as he stood before the other students when facing the other party.

Not a single ripple could be seen in his gaze despite the smile he wore. Eventually, he spoke, “You can call me Shang Xia. I'm going to be your new teacher.”

Chapter 665: Competition

...

“We ran into a group of cultivators from the Azure Spiritual World who looked similar to us in age. After we came back, Teacher Sun Haiwei of the First and Second Classes told us that those were disciples from the Changbai Holy Land. They were also sent to the battlefield between the two worlds to temper themselves.” Yan Weihai described what happened back in the battlefield between the two worlds.

Shang Xia chuckled in amusement, “So... You guys weren't their opponent and lost to them?”

A look of dissatisfaction could be seen on Yan Weihai's face and he seemed wholly unresigned to admit the fact. However, he eventually grunted once in agreement.

After all, that was where the Fifth Class suffered their greatest loss. 2 fellow students were killed, and 2 more were crippled. 2 others were heavily injured and one of them suffered an injury to his dantian. Even if he didn't succumb to his injuries, he would no longer be able to cultivate.

Seeing as Shang Xia was barely older than them and his attitude when talking to them seemed pretty mild, Wang Chenglin quickly lost all the caution he initially had when Shang Xia appeared. He became slightly angry after thinking back to what happened. “Even though all of them are mostly Martial Extremity Realm cultivators, we might not lose to them in a one on one battle! However, it became an all out brawl after we ran into each other and the disciples of the Azure Spiritual World knew how to advance and retreat. Their teamwork was also really good. In the end, we were defeated.”

“Oh? So in that case, I won't be wrong to say that you guys are bad at team battles and don't know how to coordinate with each other.” Shang Xia chuckled.

Shaking his head hastily, Wang Chenglin yelled, “No, that’s not it! They’re just better than us when it comes to group battles!”

Shi Huai, who was standing beside Wang Chenglin, added, “It’s a battle formation! The disciples of the Changbai Holy Land should know some sort of battle formation. They were able to fight against us even when outnumbered. 2 of them could hold off 3, or even 4 of us! With 3 disciples, they could hold off 5 of us! If they had 4 people in the formation, they could fight 6, or even 7 of us! That’s how they managed to gain an advantage and force us into defeat.”

Shang Xia nodded slowly and explained, “That’s not strange at all. After all, the Changbai Holy Land has hundreds of years of foundations. They’re a holy land and have multiple ways to raise the ability of their disciples.”

“Teacher Shang, from what I know, the other classes are also practicing battle formations so that they can work better with one another. The students of the first and second classes are the strongest, and our Fifth Class can be considered weaker than the rest. Right now, almost half of us are injured and need some time to recover. The distance between us and the rest will only grow bigger. Please give us some advice on how we should proceed!” Yan Weihai asked suddenly.

His question was clearly a test for Shang Xia, and he stared at Yan Weihai with a strange look in his eyes. Even so, he didn’t expose Yan Weihai’s intentions and he chortled, “Actually, I have another piece of news that I need to tell you guys. It might not be that great…”

The students of the Fifth Class stared at Shang Xia in fright.

“Before coming over, I received a notice from the Teaching Division. The 8 classes of the Inner Division and 6 classes of the Upper Division will form teams of Martial Extremity Realm students to compete in a competition organized by the institution. The Protection Division, Outreach Division, Contributions Division, Warehouse Division, and Scripture Depository would also send their teams to take part in it.” Shang Xia explained.

The students of the Fifth Class of the Inner Division were dumbstruck after hearing the news.

Shang Xia quickly continued, “Originally, I thought that the institution came up with the competition on a whim. Now that I heard your experience in the battlefield between the two worlds, I understand why they’re holding it.”

Wang Chenglin yelled indignantly in response, “This isn’t fair! Even though the cultivation level has been restricted to the Martial Extremity Realm, all of our achievements in the Martial Extremity Realm are different! The students of the Upper Division and cultivators of the various Divisions have much more experience than us! They also have a ton more real-life combat opportunities…”

The smile on Shang Xia’s face remained. “That is why the institution made several extra rules. Any team in the Inner Division can consist of 7 students. Teams from the Upper Division, Scripture Depository, and Warehouse Division will only contain 6 disciples. Teams from the Protection Division, Outreach Division, and Contribution Division are limited to 5 disciples.”

“Why will the Scripture Depository and Warehouse Division be a part of this?” Shi Huai asked.

Shang Xia explained, “Well, as long as one is in the Martial Extremity Realm in the institution, they have the right to join the competition. It doesn’t matter which division they belong to.”

One of the other Martial Extremity Realm students of the Fifth Class asked, “Teacher Shang, do we know how many teams will be taking part and the rewards given to the winner?”

“The Inner and Upper Divisions consist of 14 classes, and there should be 14 teams in total. The 9 deacons of the Protection Division will send a team each, and the 4 deacons of the Outreach Division will send 2 teams of their own subordinates. The Contribution Division will send 4 teams, and the Warehouse Division gathered 3 teams. The Scripture Depository should also be able to form 2 different teams and there should be 40 teams in total.” Shang Xia broke things down clearly for them.

The faces of the students from the Fifth Class of the Inner Division immediately turned ugly.

Not stopping there, Shang Xia continued, “The teams would be split into 8 different groups and all every team would have to battle it out with the other teams in their group. The strongest 2 teams will advance. As long as you enter the top 16 teams, you’ll receive double of your yearly stipend. The 16 teams that remain will draw lots to decide their opponent. The winners will gain a chance to enter the Polarity Essence Gathering Pool to cultivate. If you win again and enter the top 4, you will obtain substantial benefits. Everyone in the top 4 teams will be given a rank three advancement medicine after reaching the grand completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm. If you manage to fight your way into the finals, the institution will craft a suitable low-rank weapon for each of you. Hehe... If you manage to come out on top, you will be able to obtain 50 essence crystals or a piece of rank four talisman.”

The students of the Fifth Class were listening carefully to the rewards. They were moved when they heard that the resources they received would double if they entered the top 16, but after hearing how they would be able to cultivate in the Polarity Essence Gathering Pool if they won again, many of them let out gasps of surprise. However, there were also some of them who had no idea what the Polarity Essence Gathering Pool was.

When they heard the next level of rewards that would allow them to enter the Martial Intent Realm for free, their expressions started to turn a little ugly.

It only got worse when Shang Xia spoke about the low-grade weapons that would be custom-made for those who entered the finals. Many people even started sighing.

After Shang Xia revealed the prize for the winners, looks of confusion could be seen all around.

“Even though rank four talismans can only be used once, it’s definitely a treasure we can use to turn the tides during the critical moment. It can even be said to be a trump card we can use to stay alive. However, what are essence crystals?”

“To be able to choose between a rank four talisman and 50 essence crystals... They should be of similar worth if the institution allows the winners to choose between them.”

“We haven’t even seen rank three talismans, much less rank four talismans! I heard that our institution has a Talisman Grandmaster who can produce rank four talismans! The final rewards should come from our Talisman Grandmaster, right?”

“Is there a point in thinking about all that? As if our Fifth Class can be the champions...”

“It will be great if we manage to make it out of the group stages. At least we won’t have to worry about cultivation resources for the rest of the year...”

“Hehe, with our strength, there won’t be a need to talk about leaving the group stages! As long as we don’t end up last, we should be thanking the gods!”

“Looks like all of you are thinking too much already. We might not even be able to gather 7 Martial Extremity Realm students to form a team!”

The more they spoke, the worse it got. When the final sentence was spoken, no one else felt like saying anything more. The atmosphere in the plaza fell to a freezing point and morale had never been worse.

The smile on Shang Xia’s face never faded since he arrived, and he stared at all of them without any intention of interfering.

When everyone finally fell silent and no longer spoke, he decided to break the silence. “Well, even if you can’t gather 7 people, you can join with 6.”

At that point, none of the students bothered replying. There were some who even felt that their new teacher’s brain was filled with water. They weren’t even confident about breaking out of the group stages with 7 people... Joining with 6 Martial Extremity Realm disciples seemed no different from giving up before the battle started.

There were even some who could imagine how their teams would be defeated again and again before turning into a laughing stock of the institution.

Yan Weihai felt that he couldn’t allow the feelings to fester any longer. Otherwise, every student in the Fifth Class would truly fall into despair. After a short moment of contemplation, he decided to speak up, “Teacher, dare I ask... When will the competition take place?”

Shang Xia swept his gaze across those present and maintained an air of nonchalance before replied, “You guys only have a month left.”

“Huh?! A month?! That’s not a lot of time! What can we even do?! We might as well give up and admit defeat!” Wang Chenglin yelled in a fit of anger.

“Wang Chenglin, what the hell are you talking about!” Yan Weihai snapped suddenly.

“We still have a month... If we manage to get lucky, Mu Songfang might be able to recover and join us. With her, we will be able to gather 7 Martial Extremity Realm students.” Shi Huai mumbled.

Wang Chenglin sighed, “So what if she manages to recover? We don’t know how much she would have recovered by then... She might not be able to help us and might even be a burden in the battles...”

Yan Weihai had enough and he snapped, “Wang Chenglin, would you shut up?!”

Shi Huai also seemed a little unhappy by that point. “We have to help her recover as quickly as possible. Let’s gather all the silver essence we have and get her a proper portion of rank two recovery powder.”

Wang Chenglin also realized that he angered everyone with his negativity and hurried to agree. “Yes, yes, yes. I agree! I’ll take out all the silver essence I have!”

With everyone agreeing, they managed to gather 300 silver essences. Handing it over to Yan Weihai and Shi Huai, they planned to head over to the Medicine Hall after class ended.

Only then did they realize that they were supposed to be having lessons at the moment. Their new teacher had been standing there and smiling at them the entire time.

Awkward expressions quickly appeared on the faces of the students of the Fifth Class.

Coughing once, Yan Weihai muttered, “This... Teacher Shang, since there is a month till the competition, what should we do?”

“I’ll teach you guys a battle formation too. It’s called the Extremity Yin Yang Formation.” Shang Xia laughed in response.

Chapter 666: Teacher Shang’s Lesson

Everyone in the upper echelons of the institution knew that Shang Xia created his own path of cultivation.

During an exchange with Kou Chongxue, he agreed to leave behind his inheritance in the institution. He wished to spread his knowledge about his own cultivation path and received the patriarch’s approval.

The only problem he was facing was how he would get the others to agree with his ideology and path of cultivation. He had to think long and hard about it. Otherwise, Shang Xia was afraid that even though his method of cultivation was unique, he would still be ostracized in the institution due to how different it was. It could even be suppressed by the current school of thought.

After Shang Xia received Liu Qinglan’s notification to teach the inner division and learned about the upcoming competition, he saw a chance within.

The Fifth Class of the Inner Division seemed to possess a much lower standard than the others, and it could be said to be the bottom of the barrel of the Inner Division.

It was especially so after they suffered a devastating defeat in the battlefield between the two worlds. Because of that, they might not even be able to gather enough students to form a proper team.

Everything might seem hopeless to them, but Shang Xia didn't think so. At the very least, they could band together and face their enemy when threatened. There were also a few of them who were willing to step out despite knowing how dangerous it was.

Compared to the other classes, the Fifth Class might not have many students who stood out from the rest. However, the number of them who were truly useless was actually a minority. Their individual cultivation also seemed to be the most balanced among those in the Inner Division.

Shang Xia's first lesson for all of them might not be anything special, but it definitely fulfilled the requirements. He didn't go into every topic of cultivation with a bunch of flowery words. Instead, he used the simplest of languages to describe everything. As long as one managed to pay attention, they would understand most of what he was saying.

As the lesson came to a close, several students would start to bring up questions they had about cultivation.

In the past, the Fifth Class had been taught by many different teachers. Most of them came over to fulfill their duty as posted by the institution and they lacked a sense of responsibility when compared to the class they were actually in charge of. They would quickly conclude the lesson and gloss over any questions the students had.

Now that the Fifth Class finally received their very own teacher, many students brought up questions they were facing during their cultivation. Moreover, they didn't have a question or two. They had a bunch of them regarding obstacles they faced.

Shang Xia patiently went through every single one of them. Even though his ability to teach was average at best, his cultivation could be said to have reached a terrifying level. He also had a bunch of experience and he was able to point out the key points to those questions they had. Even if he was unsure of something, he would understand what they faced after asking a question or two. In several words, he would clear their doubts and point them in the correct direction.

The more that happened, the more enthusiastic the students felt. The questions kept on rolling and the time it took for him to go through every one of them slowly increased.

Naturally, he wouldn't care about a little time. He patiently listened and answered their questions one by one.

While that was happening, students of other classes in the Inner Division started to leave their respective plazas as their lessons ended. When they passed by the training plaza allocated to the Fifth Class, some of them discovered what was happening within.

However, almost every other student had received news of the upcoming competition and they were discussing excitedly among themselves.

There were several more outstanding students who crowded around several teachers as they tried to fish for more information.

The teachers who were passing by the Fifth Class' training plaza also noticed what was happening within when they were looking around. As soon as they saw a certain someone, their jaws dropped in surprise. They couldn't be bothered with the students any longer and they casually found an excuse before leaving hastily, leaving behind a bunch of clueless students.

Nothing outside the plaza could be hidden from Shang Xia, but he couldn't care less about them.

After he finally concluded his lesson after clearing the last question, an hour past the lesson time had passed.

The students revealed embarrassed looks as they knew that the time of every teacher in the institution was precious. They usually wouldn't be willing to use too much time outside class to guide others.

Shang Xia didn't mind in the slightest. After all, he actually wasn't too busy. At the very least, he could only try to improve his foundations when cultivating. Without finding every treasure required to craft his rank five advancement medicine, he couldn't do anything!

Originally, Shang Xia planned to show the others the Yin Yang Sword Formation after they were done with their questions. Looking at the current situation, he couldn't do so anymore.

When they bade him farewell and got ready to leave, Shang Xia suddenly turned to stare in a certain direction.

Ju Hang was making his way over to the training plaza when he caught sight of the entire group from far away. Anger burned in his heart as he yelled, "What the hell are all of you doing?! I've been waiting for an hour! The competition hasn't started yet and you guys are already planning to give up?!"

As the Custodian of the Fifth Class of the Inner Division, the pressure Ju Hang had to endure was massive. He had been mocked by other teachers and Custodians because of his student's failures.

When Yan Weihai saw Ju Hang barreling over with a belly full of rage, he felt extremely guilty. They completely forgot about their next class as everyone was busy clearing their doubts with Shang Xia earlier.

"Disciple greets Custodian Ju!" Yan Weihai brought the others to greet him the moment he arrived.

Originally, Ju Hang planned to heavily chastise his students in order to get rid of the anger that he bottled up. However, the figure of someone he knew appeared as soon as all of them bowed.

The solemn expression on his face froze.

"You... I mean... Why are you here?!" Ju Hang stuttered incoherently.

The students of the Fifth Class thought that Ju Hang's strange tone was merely because he was surprised at seeing their long absent teacher.

Straightening their backs, they started to move to the side so that Ju Hang would be standing directly in front of Shang Xia.

Hesitating slightly, Ju Hang didn't know if he should be cupping his fists in greeting or if he should bow.

No matter if they were comparing status or cultivation, Shang Xia was far above him. However, the 2 of them had always been rivals when they were fellow students and he truly wasn't willing to lower himself.

Luckily, Shang Xia quickly got him out of his predicament. He took two steps forward and laughed, “What’s the matter, we were fellow students and old friends after all. It’s been long since we met, but there’s no need for you to act like this.”

Only then did the students of the Fifth Class learn that their new teacher was part of the same batch as their Custodian.

Heaving a sigh of relief, Ju Hang revealed a grateful expression.

It was true that they were fellow students, but it wouldn’t be accurate to call them old friends. After all, when Shang Xia was the Chief of the Outer Division back then, Ju Hang challenged him time and time again. Their relationship couldn’t be considered great.

Soon, Shang Xia’s cultivation started to rise like a rocket and his position of the chief disciple became unassailable. He made significant contributions to the institution continuously and it was difficult to even find Shang Xia. Ju Hang knew that they weren’t on the same level a long time ago.

The feeling of challenging Shang Xia died in him a long time ago.

“I never thought that you would come here personally...” Ju Hang said as complex emotions clouded his heart.

A laugh escaped Shang Xia’s lips and he sighed a little apologetically, “It’s my first class and I failed to take note of time. I wonder which teacher’s class I ate into?”

Ju Hang waved his hand and chuckled, “It’s my practical combat class but it’s alright.”

“Oh? You’re their Custodian, but you’re also teaching their practical combat class?”

Shang Xia gasped softly.

Ju Hang could probably guess that Shang Xia had no idea what was going on in the institution after so many years of changes and he started to explain patiently, “The institution has always been focused on teaching our students actual combat. As such, a good portion of disciples from the Protection Division and Outreach Division have been asked to take on roles as Custodians and teachers. Because of the manpower shortage, Custodians would usually be in charge of teaching the practical combat class.”

Shang Xia nodded slightly and responded, “Perfect. I promised to teach them a suitable battle formation earlier but I ran out of time. Since you’re their practical combat teacher, I won’t stand on ceremony. You can just stand there and pretend to be their opponent.”

“...”

Chapter 667: Extremity Yin Yang Formation

...

After the news of the competition among the various divisions spread, almost every team that was formed started to increase their training frequency. They wanted to grow stronger with the limited amount of time they had left.

In the training plaza of the Fifth Class of the Inner Division, Ju Hang was conducting the practical combat class, but the people he was teaching weren’t Martial Extremity Realm disciples of the Fifth

Class. The 6 Martial Extremity Realm students were on the other end of the plaza as they practiced some sort of battle formation.

As he taught the students, Ju Hang glanced over at the others and a weird gaze could be seen in his eyes.

Is that it?! Is that the so-called battle formation?

Ju Hang couldn't understand the intricacies of the battle formation as all they were doing was moving around patiently around the plaza.

The battle formation he had no idea about took the students 7 whole days to learn, even with Shang Xia's personal direction.

If not for the fact that Shang Xia was the person in charge of teaching them, Ju Hang would have already stopped their practice. In his eyes, they were wasting time!

Well, whatever the case, he would be able to see if the battle formation would be of any use soon.

According to their previous agreement, the students in the Martial Extremity Realm would challenge him to actual combat.

Currently, Ju Hang had an impressive cultivation base at the higher-levels of the Martial Intent Realm. Otherwise, he wouldn't have been given the role to teach students in the Fifth Class of the Inner Division practical combat skills.

Moreover, he had a lot of experience in the Protection Division and could be said to be a seasoned cultivator. He was ruthless and ferocious when it came to fights, and he was able to gain the upper hand over cultivators of the same level. As such, he didn't really take the students of the Fifth Class too seriously.

Glancing at the corner of the Training Plaza, Ju Hang noticed a female student sitting upright despite revealing a slightly anxious expression.

She was the seventh Martial Extremity Realm student of the Fifth Class, but she was heavily injured in the battlefield between the two worlds. Her cultivation was nearly crippled back then.

Back when the students of the Fifth Class heard about the competition 7 days ago, they gathered their silver essence and bought her a portion of recovery powder. It greatly increased the speed at which she could recover.

When they handed her the medicine, they told her to join them in the competition after she had fully recovered. They didn't think that she would be adamant about joining their training every day. She had been observing how the battle formation worked the entire time.

Ju Hang couldn't help but press his lips together in admiration of her determination. A trace of appreciation started to form in his heart.

The next moment, he noticed that Shang Xia had stopped the 6 of them at the other side of the plaza. He did the same and allowed the students who hadn't reached the Martial Extremity Realm to take a break.

Everyone seemed to know what was going to happen next and as soon as Ju Hang called for them to take a break, they ran to the middle of the plaza to get ready to watch the showdown between Ju Hang and the 6 who were practicing their battle formation.

Feeling slightly annoyed, Ju Hang could see that all his students were merely messing around earlier. They weren't taking the training session seriously and they might have already forgotten everything he was teaching them.

Well, whatever. He soon noticed that he was the same. He wasn't fully committed to teaching them earlier as he was thinking about the upcoming battle. Otherwise, with his cultivation at the Martial Intent Realm, he would have noticed that all of them weren't taking their training seriously with his divine sense.

Glaring at the other students who had already formed a circle around the middle of the platform and were ready to watch the show play out, he realized none of them were actually paying attention to him.

If they included the still-injured Mu Songfang, the Fifth Class would have 7 students in the Martial Extremity Realm. Of them, Yan Weihai, Shi Huai, and Mu Songfang were the only ones who were in the small completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm. The others had barely consolidated their foundations after breaking through.

Shang Xia strode over to the middle of the plaza and stared directly at Ju Hang. A look of confusion could be seen on Ju Hang's face as he muttered, "Are you... Are you really going to let them fight me?"

He wasn't showing off his cultivation of anything, but with his current strength, he felt that there was no way the disciples of the Fifth Class would be his opponent even if they rushed at him in unison.

The smile on Shang Xia's face grew wider and he chuckled, "Since we already agreed, we should keep our promise, right? Otherwise, won't you be slightly embarrassed as their practical combat teacher?"

His tone changed all of a sudden. "Right. Time is of the essence and they only managed to familiarize themselves with the way they should move about in their battle formation. Their performance isn't that great and I will have to join in as part of their last member."

With his eyes widening in shock and fright, Ju Hang couldn't be bothered to speak respectfully to Shang Xia. He yelled in shock, "Are you fucking kidding?!"

Students all around turned to stare at them, surprised by his sudden outburst.

Shang Xia couldn't care less and he chuckled, "Relax! The essence of their battle formation lies in the balance of the various extremity qi they will be using. I will have to greatly restrain myself when I join them in their battle formation. Anyway, you can rest assured that I will seal my cultivation base and limit it to the Martial Extremity Realm in order to not affect their battle formation."

"Heh... Your role in their battle formation should be to take charge and direct everything, right?! Affect their battle formation my ass..." Ju Hang muttered. However, he wasn't done. He had to check again and he confirmed, "Are you sure you will be sealing your cultivation base?!"

Lightly slapping the spot on his belly where his dantian was located, the aura he emitted started to weaken significantly. Even Ju Hang could tell that the qi he could muster would be limited to that of a cultivator at the Martial Extremity Realm.

Excitement started to boil in Ju Hang's heart. He had seen a chance where he could finally defeat Shang Xia!

In Shang Xia's entire time in the institution, from the time he was in the Outer Division, he had never lost the position of the Chief Disciple. He only grew stronger, and to people like Ju Hang or Zhang Jianfei, their hopes of ever defeating him were destroyed.

Now that Shang Xia had sealed his cultivation to the Martial Extremity Realm in an attempt to teach the students of the Fifth Class, Ju Hang couldn't care so much. A win was a win! A chance for him to defeat Shang Xia had finally arrived.

"You better not regret this!" A wicked look flashed in Ju Hang's eyes.

Chuckling softly, Shang Xia didn't respond. He simply turned around to gesture behind him to call Yan Weihai and the others who still seemed a little unsure of what was going on to take their positions.

When he saw their uneasy look, he couldn't help but laugh. "I won't join in the battle directly. I'll only be responsible for maintaining the smooth flow of qi through the formation. All of you should be much more used to the battle formation after practicing for so long. Go ahead and test it out."

Yan Weihai and the others stared at the bulky Ju Hang who was flexing his muscles at the moment and regulating his divine sense, they could feel battle intent rolling off him. Yan Weihai gulped weakly, "Teacher Shang Xia, are we really going to do it?"

The few of them had a clear sense of Ju Hang's strength. During their combat trial in the battlefield between the two worlds, they saw how Ju Hang defeated a large completion stage Martial Intent Realm cultivator of the Changbai Holy Land as a mere small completion stage Martial Intent Realm expert.

If not for him, the Fifth Class would have suffered an even greater defeat!

Shang Xia smiled nonchalantly before turning around to point the metal sword they were using in practice forward. He growled, "Maintain the balance of qi!"

The past 7 days of practice had already conditioned Yan Weihai and the others to respond to Shang Xia's commands. The moment he spoke, they took their positions as they waved their weapons in the air. Inner qi poured out from their bodies and with a single swipe from Shang Xia, they were split into clear and concise streams.

Everyone in the formation felt the boost from their companions' extremity qi and they discovered that they would receive backup from the other members in the formation the moment anything happened.

It was a miraculous feeling they were feeling for the first time, and it was as though a single movement from anyone in the formation would cause a ripple effect that would lead the others into battle.

Despite feeling it for the first time, they managed to suppress their shock. The unease they felt when facing Ju Hang earlier started to dissipate.

With Shang Xia's instructions, Yan Weihai and the others started to move through the battle formation like they practiced. They started to press closer to Ju Hang from different directions, and they quickly surrounded him.

In the next instant, Ju Hang's eyes snapped open as his divine sense emerged. It slammed heavily against the members in the formation.

When higher leveled cultivators faced those with weaker cultivation bases, they would use their aura to suppress their opponent in order to force them to lose their combat abilities.

Ju Hang's move might feel like a little overkill, but it wasn't inappropriate in a situation like that. After all, they were going through a practical combat demonstration. No expert would allow their opponents to attack freely without fighting back.

Ju Hang was no noob cultivator. He had been through many battles in the institution and the number of enemies who died in his hands wasn't small. His divine sense was tempered and strong as it emerged.

Yan Weihai and the others felt their consciousness shaking as their bodies started to freeze up.

If they were facing him without any tricks up their sleeves, the outcome of the battle would have already been decided. Unfortunately, Shang Xia was the person in charge of the formation.

The moment Ju Hang released his divine sense, Shang Xia growled, "Fusion of the Extremities!"

All 6 of them trained in different types of extremities but with the arrangement of their battle formation, their extremity qi could surprisingly merge with each other.

As soon as the fusion process was complete, everyone in the formation felt several times stronger. It was as though all of them had received a boost from the others and they managed to negate the impact of Ju Hang's divine sense. Their battle formation operated as smoothly as before.

With the 6 of them working together, they attacked Ju Hang from all directions and sealed off all routes of retreat.

As soon as they unleashed their techniques, Ju Hang could tell that every single one of them possessed the power surpassing what cultivators at the small completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm had.

Since he couldn't dodge them, he decided to face them head-on. He pulled out an object that was a foot long before flipping his wrist. It transformed into a metal whip and it danced around to clash with the 6 weapons coming his way.

Everyone in the plaza heard a loud explosion as the sound from the 6 impacts superimposed together. Sparks filled the air and the students gathered around broke out into cheers as they saw the huge figure in the middle of the formation rapidly changing postures as he sent out his attacks.

Chapter 668: Extremity Yin Yang Formation 2

The battle formation used by the members of the Fifth Class had the ability to prevent all sorts of essence qi from their clash from leaking out.

Despite how intense the battle looked between the 6 students of the Fifth Class and Ju Hang, they didn't heavily affect the space outside the training plaza. That was how the other students of the Fifth Class could watch on in peace.

On the battlefield, the exchange between both sides grew in intensity the longer it dragged out. The cheers of the surrounding students became louder and louder, cheering their fellow classmates on.

They didn't just cheer for the amazing movement and techniques used. Instead, they were expressing their excitement that their classmates could actually hold out against their Martial Intent Realm practical combat teacher for such a long time. That wasn't all. They seemed to be able to fight on even grounds, something none of the other students expected.

Things might be looking well for the students of the Fifth Class, but after tens of rounds of exchange, the 6 Martial Extremity Realm students of the Fifth Class crumbled without any warning! The battle formation was shattered by Ju Hang as 3 of them were sent flying.

If not for the fact that Ju Hang reduced the power in his attacks by 80 percent at the very last second, those students would have been seriously injured.

The atmosphere of excitement and delight was shattered instantly. The others didn't think that the situation would turn on its head so quickly and they cut short their cheers instantly.

Now that the battle had ended, Ju Hang didn't reveal a triumphant expression despite defeating the students of the Fifth Class. Instead, a look of shock could be seen on his face.

He noticed the dispirited looks on the faces of Yan Weihai and the others and he quickly spoke up, "I didn't think that you would be able to reach this stage. It's already an amazing feat."

When he was done, he no longer paid attention to the 6 of them who were trying to recover their inner qi. Instead, he turned to Shang Xia who seemed to be thinking about something, and asked, "What battle formation did you teach them?!"

"Huh?" Shang Xia snapped out of his thoughts and a smile returned to his face. He chuckled in response, "This is the Extremity Yin Yang Formation I came up with after studying my Yin Yang Sword Formation. It's suitable for cultivators in the Martial Extremity Realm."

"I can tell that they have a lot of room for improvement..." Ju Hang mumbled.

The smile on Shang Xia's face didn't fade as he nodded in agreement. "I came up with the battle formation from my knowledge and understanding of the Martial Extremity Realm. The core principles behind it are the balance, transformation, and fusion of the extremities. Right now, they are barely able to maintain the balance of their extremity qi in the battle formation. They would require me to make the adjustments if they want to complete the transformation of their extremity within the formation. At the end of the day, they haven't been practicing this for long enough. Well... If you're talking about the fusion of the extremities... I tried to push the fusion earlier but it failed."

"Balance, transformation, and fusion of the extremities..." Ju Hang mumbled to himself as the expression on his face turned more complicated by the second.

As someone who had entered the Martial Intent Realm some time ago, Ju Hang looked back on his cultivation at the Martial Extremity Realm. Naturally, he understood the importance of the 3 phases Shang Xia had mentioned and their implications to someone in the Martial Extremity Realm.

That was precisely why the complicated look in his eyes changed to one of envy when he turned to look at the 6 students of the Fifth Class again.

“You guys are really lucky... If you guys manage to perform the battle formation without help from Shang Xia one day and understand the true meaning behind the various phases, there will be no obstacle that can stand in your way in your path of cultivation all the way up till the Martial Intent Realm. At the very least, some of you would be able to step into the grand completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm.” Ju Hang said before turning back to look at Shang Xia. He ignored the looks of shock he was getting as they needed to figure out what he said themselves.

He addressed Shang Xia again, “So... What do you plan on doing now?”

“Shall we continue tomorrow?” Shang Xia laughed.

A trace of hesitation flashed through Ju Hang’s eyes but he quickly recovered and nodded in response. “Alright!”

In the next three days, Yan Weihai and gang continued to battle Ju Hang under Shang Xia’s lead. They continued to fix their flaws in the battle formation and each time they fought, the battle would drag out a little longer.

Of course, they were merely dragging things out. They were still some ways away from defeating Ju Hang.

If they weren’t able to comprehend the transformation phase of their extremity qi alone, they would be unable to display a greater level of strength with their battle formation. That would mean that the possibility of defeating Ju Hang was still close to 0.

From how things had progressed, the 6 of them were only able to maintain the battle formation in a state of extremity balance without Shang Xia’s help. Whenever they tried to reach the transformation phase, the battle formation would weaken considerably.

Without Shang Xia’s adjustment and regulation of their extremity qi, they wouldn’t be able to keep up their assault on Ju Hang.

Their weakness might have been showing, but that also displayed the strength of the battle formation. The students of the Fifth Class understood the strength of the Extremity Yin Yang Formation and strived to achieve the transformation phase.

That wasn’t all. In the short 10 or so days they had been training in the battle formation, they could feel a huge increase in their cultivation base.

It was especially so for Wang Chenglin who used to have an extremely negative outlook on the competition. He entered the small completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm and became the fourth among them to achieve that cultivation level.

What all of them didn't know was who Shang Xia was paying attention to the entire time. He wasn't focused on any of the 6 in the battle formation. Rather, his divine perception had locked on to Mu Songfang who was recuperating while watching the battles from the side.

Ever since she received the recovery powder, she had been recovering steadily.

On the fifth day of their practice, Shang Xia could tell that her speed of recovery increased significantly after he explained the principles of balance, transformation, and fusion.

With his powerful divine perception, he could tell that her inner qi was starting to transform after hearing what he had said. Like the others, she hadn't entered the small completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm for long, but the extremity qi in her body experienced a fundamental change and greatly hastened her recovery process.

...

Of the 6 members in the battle formation, Yan Weihai, the strongest of them all, could barely maintain a state of balance of extremity qi in the formation without affecting its overall flow during its execution. With Shang Xia present, they would eventually be able to reach the phase of extremity qi transformation.

After 2 more days of training, their control over their inner qi and the battle formation became much greater than before.

Shang Xia was considering if he should no longer be part of their battle formation when Mu Songfang suddenly indicated her interest in joining the training.

Before Shang Xia and Ju Hang could say anything, Yan Weihai and the others rejected her request.

"Songfang, you might have been listening at the side and paying attention the whole time, but you haven't actually practiced it with the rest of us. Why don't you wait for a few more days and we'll guide you through it after we become more familiar?" Yan Weihai muttered a little awkwardly.

The more they practiced the Extremity Yin Yang Formation, the more they discovered the intricacies. They were merely able to execute the formation after so many days of practice and with the addition of Mu Songfang, they would have to restart everything they have learned so far and waste even more time.

It was a matter of time before she had to join their battle formation, but Yan Weihai wouldn't agree for her to join right when they were about to fight their practical combat teacher, Ju Hang.

Shi Huai also wondered curiously at the side, "Songfang, have your injuries recovered? You shouldn't overexert yourself..."

Wang Chenglin also chuckled at the side, "Sister Songfang, there's no need for you to rush things. I have already entered the small completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm!"

Mu Songfang, who was slightly pale, couldn't help but chuckle once before her figure blurred. She charged at Wang Chenglin without any warning.

"Sister Songfang, are you planning to test my abilities, you're destined to be disa... Huh?! How can this be?!" Wang Chenglin still had a cheeky smile on his face as he got

ready to take on her attack. When he reached out to stop her, he missed completely and the back of his neck trembled slightly as a gust of wind produced by Mu Songfang's palm brushed by it.

If they were in a battle to the death, Wang Chenglin's fact would have been sealed the moment he missed his attempt to stop her. He would either be knocked out cold or be decapitated completely. Either way, the battle would have been over.

Her nimble movement didn't just surprise Wang Chenglin. The others couldn't contain their shock as they yelped in fright.

"You... This... You're in the large completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm! How is that possible?!" Shi Huai immediately noticed the change in Mu Songfang and he muttered in disbelief.

Wasn't she heavily injured?!

Even if she took the recovery powder, how long has it been since then? What's more, she might have made a full recovery, but it would be amazing if she kept her original level of strength. How did she improve?!

What everyone found hard to believe was the strength she displayed earlier. Even a cultivator at the large completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm shouldn't have been able to defeat Wang Chenglin in a single strike.

Not a single person in the Fifth Class possessed strength like hers, and with abilities like that, she could be ranked among the strongest experts in the Inner Division!

If they looked at it from another angle, with her revelation of strength and cultivation base, Mu Songfang had far surpassed Yan Weihai! She should take on the position of their chief.

Compared to the looks of shock the students of the Fifth Class were throwing her way, the look in Ju Hang's eyes was one of curiosity and probing. He seemed to understand the reason behind her sudden transformation and he couldn't help but glance at Shang Xia in fright.

At the side, Shang Xia couldn't help but chuckle happily, "Since you wish to give it a shot, go ahead! I'll watch by the side and you can take over my spot."

Chapter 669: Conflict of Ideology

Shang Xia gave his position to Mu Songfang and the others were at a loss for what to do.

A trace of unease flashed through Mu Songfang's heart, but she quickly mustered the courage to join the rest.

She had been observing their practice for the past ten days or so, and she had been listening to everything Shang Xia taught them. She couldn't be more familiar with what he had been saying. Of the many principles and notions Shang Xia had mentioned, Yan Weihai and the others found it hard to understand. They would try their best to implement it, but it would be forced at best. Mu Songfang didn't understand why they couldn't catch his meaning as they made some sense to her.

She might have joined the team, but there was no way they could immediately start fighting Ju Hang.

It was the first time the 7 Martial Extremity Realm students of the Fifth Class were working together again and they had to take some time to get used to each other. They would also need to test if Mu Songfang had grasped the workings of the battle formation after the time she spent listening at the side.

They suffered a few setbacks initially when she joined their battle formation but it didn't take long for her to integrate herself with the others. That wasn't all. Because she understood Shang Xia's philosophy behind his cultivation, along with her cultivation standing above the others, she quickly became the person in charge of leading the formation. She quickly replaced Shang Xia's position.

There was no doubt she couldn't match Shang Xia's ability to react quickly to any situation that might arise and his amazing control of the situation, but in the eyes of Shang Xia and Ju Hang, her ability to lead the rest was already a great blessing.

"After several days, I'm afraid you're going to have a hard time..." Shang Xia tilted his head to the side and whispered to Ju Hang.

If he was anyone else, Ju Hang would definitely have shot back with a snide remark. However, Shang Xia was the one speaking and he knew he had to be careful. He might not believe that it would happen but he couldn't help but ask, "Why is that?"

Shang Xia continued to observe the students as they practiced the battle formation and replied casually, "In the past, there were only 6 of them who were attacking you. Now, the seventh has arrived."

Shang Xia might have said that they would be able to give Ju Hang a run for his money, but that was in the future. The 7 of them were quickly defeated the first time they fought. The battle formation was nowhere near as powerful as when Shang Xia was the one directing them.

Despite their defeat, Mu Songfang and the others weren't feeling dispirited by their loss. Instead, traces of excitement could be seen on their faces and they were getting more worked up by the minute.

After the battle, Yan Weihai, Mu Songfang, and the others stayed behind to continue practicing their battle formation and strengthen their control over it.

Shang Xia and Ju Hang were about to leave when the sudden appearance of someone stopped them.

"Are you guys training in battle formations?" Sun Haiwei's arrival shocked Ju Hang, but Shang Xia didn't seem too surprised.

"Teacher Sun, why are you here?" Ju Hang frowned. Even though he wasn't too pleased with her presence, he still maintained a sense of respect.

After all, when Shang Xia and himself were students in the Outer Division, Sun Haiwei was already a student in the Upper Division and their Custodian.

Now that Sun Haiwei had broken into the Martial Extermination Realm, she was considered 1 of the 3 most outstanding disciples of her generation.

Of course, the other 2 were Chu Jia and Shang Xia...

“I discovered your practice almost 5 days ago... I came here today to take a look for myself.” Sun Haiwei replied casually.

Ju Hang didn't seem too pleased and he grumbled, “I'm afraid what you're doing isn't too nice, right?”

Even though the lessons and general teaching guidelines had been given to the various teachers, most of the details were left up to the individual. They could control what they wanted to teach, and to what degree.

It was highly frowned upon for teachers of other classes to interfere with each other's way of teaching.

Even though Sun Haiwei's authority and cultivation were high in the institution, and her teaching capabilities were evident from the way she taught the First and Second Classes, Ju Hang wasn't too happy with her actions.

He wasn't too affected by Shang Xia's method as he was still a part of their training. He might be their opponent, but Shang Xia integrated him into the process of teaching his students.

Sun Haiwei wasn't surprised by Ju Hang's reaction at all. She chuckled in response, “The battle formation is really interesting. I wish to allow my students of the First and Second Classes to join you. I wonder if that is possible?”

Ju Hang's first instinct was to reject her. However, he quickly noticed that she wasn't talking to him. She had been addressing Shang Xia the entire time.

Despite the suffocating feeling in his heart, Ju Hang decided not to speak first.

Sun Haiwei turned to Ju Hang out of the blue and explained, “Actually, you can consider this a joint lesson from the both of us. Since you're willing to teach the students of the Fifth Class with Junior Brother Shang, why can't my students join in?”

By saying that, she was taking his feelings into account. There was no point in getting angry at him and he even felt a little better after her explanation.

“I don't have any opinions on the matter. However, the battle formation was developed by Shang... By Teacher Shang Xia.” Ju Hang immediately tossed the ball over to Shang Xia.

What the hell... You Martial Extermination Realm experts can decide this on your own. I'm just here to be their sparring partner!

“Sure.” Shang Xia agreed readily. The reason he was teaching his Extremity Yin Yang Formation was because he wished to repay the favor the institution had shown him in the past anyway.

“Alright! I'll bring them over tomorrow!” Sun Haiwei smiled while nodding at Shang Xia. With a slight shake of her body, she disappeared and Ju Hang couldn't feel her movements.

He muttered to himself in a voice no one could hear, but no one was paying attention to him anyway.

Yan Weihai and the others who were training in their battle formation heard the conversation between their teachers and they felt a sense of crisis coming. They turned even more serious when they practiced their formation.

...

On the thirteenth day after the competition was announced, Shang Xia was still teaching his regular class. However, there were 2 fewer students from the Fifth Class that day.

After clearing all their doubts about cultivation and concluding their lesson, dozens of students streamed into the training plaza. They were from the First and Second Classes taught by Sun Haiwei, and there were even 2 other Custodians who followed them over. They were Martial Intent Realm cultivators from the Protection Division and Outreach Division respectively. Naturally, they were more than familiar with Ju Hang who also arrived.

They came because they wanted to see what was going on, but they felt a sense of disdain in their hearts when Sun Haiwei ordered them to go with their students over to the Fifth Class's training plaza. They had no choice but to obey as the order was given by a mighty Martial Extermination Realm expert.

Their way of thinking changed the moment they arrived. When they noticed Shang Xia, they immediately restrained themselves. They stood with their tails tucked between their legs beside Ju Hang like obedient students.

Disdain?! Disbelief? An intention to provoke the Fifth Class's teacher? Nonsense! The thought never even crossed my mind!

What the fuck! When the hell did this guy run over to a tiny Inner Division to become a teacher?! Why did no one tell us about it?!

The Custodians' gaze landed on Ju Hang as they cursed him in their hearts. They realized that he had been keeping the secret really well. He was silently climbing up the golden thighs of the legend of the institution and the other classes didn't receive the slightest news that Shang Xia was among them.

Ju Hang didn't know what they were thinking about, but if he did, he would probably curse and swear to express the injustice he felt. It was true that they were once classmates, but he had nothing to do with Shang Xia's arrival in the Fifth Class of the Inner Division! He didn't have the qualifications to arrange something like that!

Very quickly, the demonstration started. The Martial Intent Realm cultivators Sun Haiwei sent over were quickly arranged to be the students' sparring partners.

Since the students of the Fifth Class already had an idea of how the battle formation should be used, they went to the side to practice on their own.

Under Sun Haiwei's lead, the students of the First and Second Classes started to listen carefully to Shang Xia's explanation of the principles behind the Extremity Yin Yang Formation.

If Shang Xia were to speak truthfully, those students would only be able to display the true strength of the Extremity Yin Yang Formation after understanding the true essence behind the meaning of the Yin Yang Extremities. Otherwise, they would only be implementing the battle formation forcefully without understanding the reasoning behind it.

It didn't take long for Shang Xia to realize that something was off.

The students in the First and Second Classes were the strongest among the Inner Division and there were 22 of them who had entered the Martial Extremity Realm. Of those, 12 came from the First class and 10 were from the Second. They far surpassed the members of the Fifth Class.

Of the 22 students, more than half of them had reached the small completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm. There were 4 who reached the large completion stage, and there was even 1 of them who comprehended their martial intent and reached the grand completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm.

Despite them being the most elite of students in the Inner Division, they revealed a sense of rejection when they listened to Shang Xia's discussion of the principles behind the extremities. It was especially so for the student with the highest cultivation. He resisted Shang Xia's teaching the hardest among the rest

His name was Zhuang Su, and there were even several times when he spoke up to challenge Shang Xia's ideology. He was stopped by Sun Haiwei, but it was clear he couldn't take in anything Shang Xia was saying.

Of course, not everyone couldn't understand what Shang Xia was teaching. At the very least, he discovered several students who had just entered the Martial Extremity Realm absorbing his teachings quite well. There were also some in the small completion stage who could grasp the concepts of balance, transformation, and fusion he was talking about.

In any case, the higher their cultivation level, the worse they took Shang Xia's teachings. They were more obstinate with the way they had cultivation.

At the end of the day, their inability to listen to Shang Xia's teachings didn't mean that his cultivation ideology was bad. All of them had been receiving the traditional teachings of the institution and formed their own views and understanding of cultivation. The stronger they were, the stronger they would adhere to their viewpoints.

Shang Xia expected as much and that was the reason he chose to use the Extremity Yin Yang Formation as a breakthrough point to start his teachings.

With his current status and cultivation level, Liu Qinglan would much rather he become a teacher in the Upper Division.

However, the outstanding disciples of the Upper Division had already stepped into the Martial Intent Realm. They would be much more resistant to Shang Xia's teachings.

The moment they formed their divine sense, that would mean that they would have solidified their way in the martial dao. If Shang Xia tried to teach them what he knew, it wouldn't be a tiny conflict of ideology. It would be a massive blow they would have to face and it might even destroy their cultivation foundation.

That was why Shang Xia chose to teach in the Inner Division. The reason he chose the Fifth Class was because he wanted to try something out.

Reality taught him that he hadn't taught things out fully. In order to teach them his way of cultivation, he would have to start from the Outer Division where there were students who hadn't entered the Martial Realm.

Chapter 670: The True Implications

"Let's just begin your battle formation practice." After Shang Xia finished his lesson with some difficulty, Sun Haiwei quickly spoke. Clearly, she had also discovered the problem. Shang Xia's teaching was completely different from the current way of cultivation and students who had reached a certain level could no longer accept his viewpoints.

Shang Xia muttered, "If they want to unleash the true power of the battle formation without understanding..."

Before Shang Xia could finish speaking, he was interrupted by Sun Haiwei. "Your battle formation is truly marvelous. It even encompasses every manifestation of nature and even a Martial Extermination Realm cultivator like myself can't understand it fully. How much do you think they will catch? It's good enough if they manage to forcefully apply your teachings. Do you really think they can use it to defeat a Martial Intent Realm cultivator? It's good enough if they manage to escape if they were hunted down by one!"

Seeing the reluctant look on Shang Xia's face, Sun Haiwei continued, "The battle formation you came up with far surpassed what the Changbai Sect taught their students. Of our Azure Origin World and the Azure Spiritual World, do you think there are that many factions that surpass the Changbai Sect? How many of them will be able to develop a battle formation like that? Your Extremity Yin Yang Formation isn't just a random battle formation used to supplement the institution's knowledge. It can already be considered part of our core inheritance! It's something our institution never had in the past. The moment it's used in the competition, do you think the higher-ups will let you teach the essence of the battle formation as you please?"

An astonished expression hung on Shang Xia's face as he looked at Sun Haiwei. It was true. In the past half a month or so, he had been developing the Extremity Yin Yang Formation based on his Yin Yang Sword Formation. He completely forgot the value it held.

Only when Sun Haiwei gave him a reminder did he realize that even though Martial Extremity Realm disciples had the ability to use his Extremity Yin Yang Formation, they weren't the only ones who could do so.

Like how Shang Xia used his Yin Yang Sword Formation to heavily injure a Martial Extermination Realm expert of the Spirit Abundance World, the knowledge and principles behind it far surpassed the Martial Extremity Realm.

In all honesty, Shang Xia discovered it a long time ago. He just forgot. After all, every time the Crimson Soul Tablet came up with a special skill or secret art, it wasn't just useful for whatever his current cultivation base was then.

Shang Xia learned the Heavenly Lightning Blood collection Art back in the Essence Realm and could still strengthen his physique with it at his current level.

In the Yin Yang Realm, he comprehended the Yin Yang Sword Formation. However, it wasn't as simple as a mere sword formation as displayed from his current teachings.

After reaching the Triple Command Realm, Shang Xia received the Man and Heaven Synergy Chapter from the Crimson Soul Tablet. His soul became much stronger than the others as a result and his divine sense could reach a greater range. It was also a lot sharper than cultivators of the same level.

When he finally entered the Four Constellation Realm and comprehended his martial intent to enter the grand completion stage, the most obvious effect so far was his increased lifespan. His appearance remained the same the past few years thanks to it.

...

After Sun Haiwei's reminder, Shang Xia no longer concerned himself too much with whether the students understood the essence of his Extremity Yin Yang Formation.

He emphasized the movement and execution of the formation more than anything else. The degree of execution and what they could comprehend from the formation was left up to them.

Of course, if anyone were to look for him and earnestly request his teachings, he wouldn't hold back and teach them everything he knew.

When the training session was approaching its end, Yan Weihai, Mu Songfang, and the others challenged Ju Hang.

The battle shocked the members of the First and Second Classes when they witnessed the abilities of those from the Fifth Class.

Despite their eventual defeat, the other students in the Martial Extremity Realm couldn't believe the 7 members of the Fifth Class could fight a Martial Intent Realm expert to such a degree.

Perhaps it was because of the stimulation of the battle, the students of the First and Second Classes who had been doubting Shang Xia's teachings the whole time started to feel a little more serious when it came to the Extremity Yin Yang Formation.

The utilization of the Extremity Yin Yang Formation might have looked impressive when Yan Weihai and the others executed it, but they barely reached the level when Shang Xia was controlling it initially.

"Impressive... These kids are still improving! At their current pace, they should be able to fight me to a draw before the start of the competition." Ju Hang was very optimistic about their improvements.

As the Fifth Class' Custodian and practical combat teacher, the matter of his students achieving a good position in the upcoming competition didn't just affect his reputation. At the same time, the way the institution treated him would also improve.

The most obvious way was the essence crystal rewards he would receive.

Zhang Yuelin, who taught the First Class, muttered, “The battle formation is something special indeed... I wonder if cultivators at our level can make use of it?”

Liu Xiang, the teacher of the Second Class sighed, “I didn’t think that our institution would also have our own battle formation. It’s no wonder Teacher Sun would get us to bring our students over...”

Sun Haiwei glanced at Liu Xiang and snorted, “You’re thinking too much. The battle formation has nothing to do with the institution. Teacher Shang came up with it on his own.”

“Since I already decided to teach it to the students, there’s no need to hide it from the rest. Fellow teachers, you can decide whether or not to implement it after witnessing its true strength.” Shang Xia chuckled.

He wasn’t done as he turned to Zhang Yuelin. “If you’re willing, you can give it a shot. After all, even at my current level, it’s still pretty useful. I have no idea how it would apply to others though.”

Zhang Yuelin cupped his fists in thanks but seemed a little confused. “Teacher Shang, what do you mean by that? Aren’t these students using it well?”

A bitter chuckle left Shang Xia’s lips. “The Martial Extremity Realm is the minimum requirement to practice the battle formation. I believe all of you can see that the principles behind the formation are different from what you know. Not everyone can comprehend it and temporarily, we haven’t come up with a way to integrate both schools of thought together.

Zhang Yuelin and Lin Xiang fell into contemplation.

Along the way, Sun Haiwei turned to Ju Hang and said with a huge grin on her face, “Hey, do you want to make a bet?”

“What are we betting on?” Ju Hang seemed a little confused by her sudden question.”

Sun Haiwei continued, “I’ll bet that those kids will be able to defeat you before the competition begins!”

Ju Hang was no fool. After hearing her suggestion, he turned to look at Shang Xia for a clue. When he saw his calm expression and slightly amused smile, he rejected it without hesitation. “I’m not betting with you!”

Only a fool would bet after seeing how confident both Martial Extermination Realm experts were acting! Obviously, his previous judgment was flawed. He couldn’t possibly see things clearer than those monsters!

He might have rejected the bet, but he quickly turned to Sun Haiwei to ask, “Are you sure they’ll be able to defeat me?”

“Of the students in the Fifth Class, a few of them have already understood Junior Brother Shang’s teachings. Their cultivation is in the initial stages of transformation. Your earlier evaluation was based on their current level of strength and you forgot to take into account an increase in cultivation.” Sun Haiwei explained.

Widening his eyes in surprise, Ju Hang asked, “Is someone going to break through?!”

As the Custodian of the Fifth Class, Ju Hang clearly understood the strength and cultivation base of each of his students. He also knew how quickly they were improving. From what Sun Haiwei was saying, it seemed as though Mu Songfang wouldn't be the only one surprising him with a sudden breakthrough.

Shang Xia also chuckled at the side, "Actually, it wouldn't be easy for them to defeat you if they were fighting for real. Today, you're exchanging pointers at best. You stood passively, waiting for them to deploy their battle formation to attack you. If this was a true battle, would you allow yourself to be surrounded by them so easily?"

Sun Haiwei's gaze wandered about and she mumbled thoughtfully, "So... Looks like they haven't mastered the battle formation to the point they can use it with ease..."

"For a battle formation that consists of so many people, they have to lay a trap for their opponent if they wish to use it effectively. They would have to react to many changes on the spot. At the end of the day, it's still a little too passive. If anyone sees through their weakness and decides to just run away, they wouldn't be able to do anything!" Shang Xia explained.

"Oh yeah? Who are you referring to? To you, those students should be going around slaying Martial Intent Realm cultivators or something, right? Are you crazy? Do you think everyone is like you? During most battles, how many high-level cultivators would go around massacring those weaker than them? Who's going to take the responsibility and start killing low-leveled cultivators without permission?" Sun Haiwei sneered in response. It was clear Shang Xia had been training the students with the intention of getting them to kill Martial Intent Realm experts.

With her rebuttal, Shang Xia was truly at a loss for words.

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Several days passed again, and the students of the Fifth Class were much more familiar with the execution of their Extremity Yin Yang Formation. As they challenged Ju Hang time and time again, it was as Sun Haiwei had said. He was slowly falling to a disadvantage.

However, according to Shang Xia's initial plan, the way they would do battle changed. Ju Hang no longer needed to wait for them to surround him before the fighter started. Instead, he would pretend to walk into an ambush as the members of the Fifth Class launched their attacks from different directions. That would force Mu Songfang and the others to react to any unexpected situations that would arise from actual combat. Because of training like that, their mastery over the Extremity Yin Yang Formation quickly rose to the next level.

During that period of time, the Fifth Class welcomed 2 more Martial Extremity Realm students. They were the ones who disappeared back then as they were consolidating their foundations. Now that they were back, they quickly integrated themselves into the group consisting of Mu Songfang and the others.

A team from the Inner Division would only be made up of 7 people, but no one could be sure that none of their members would suffer some sort of injury midway through the competition. As such, these 2 new Martial Extremity Realm students could act as their substitutes.

The students of the First and Second Classes would still arrive at the Fifth Class' training plaza every day. However, they wouldn't listen to Shang Xia's teachings and would immediately begin their practice of the Extremity Yin Yang Formation.

As the number of people training in the battle formation increased, it was obvious it couldn't be kept as a secret for much longer. News started to spread through the Inner Division and everyone quickly heard of it.

While the students were still spreading the news, the various Custodians, teachers, and those who knew the true implications of the battle formation quickly arrived to see it for themselves.

It was unfortunate that the competition was drawing near and it would be impossible for the other classes to take part in the training.