## The Heavens 791

Chapter 791: Kou Chongxue's Disappearance?!

As the Tongyou Paradise continued to perfect itself, the Martial Extermination Realm experts of the institution were able to travel to the Beyond Heavens Pavilion and back more frequently.

Because of that, the use of the pavilion became a lot more widespread as many new structures were constructed around it. At the very least, Martial Extermination Realm experts who were cultivating in the Beyond Heavens Pavilion wouldn't have to stay in those straw huts any longer.

Shang Xia didn't hide his presence when he returned. Also, he brought 2 asteroids back with him and anyone who wasn't blind would discover him. He was noticed when he was still hundreds of miles away from the Beyond Heavens Pavilion.

"Is there something special about these asteroids?" The person who discovered Shang Xia waved his hand to dismiss the others behind him before approaching.

"Oh! Instructor Zhang... Why are you here?" Shang Xia immediately recognized Zhang Haogu and he yelped in fright. "Aren't you supposed to be stationed in the Scripture Depository? How did you get the time to come all the way up here to enjoy the scenery?"

Shang Xia knew that the Scripture Depository was a core part of the Tongyou Institution and it contained all the inheritance they had. The head of the Scripture Depository wasn't allowed to leave their post no matter what. Now that Zhang Haogu showed up in the Beyond Heavens Pavilion...

Sniggering softly, Zhang Haogu explained, "Now that the space in the Tongyou Paradise has completely stabilized, a portion of our inheritance has been copied over. The rest were brought over directly. After all, this is the most secure location our institution possesses at the moment. Now, the responsibility of being the head of the Scripture Depository has reduced by a whole lot and it can actually be considered a true land of inheritance. This old man has been stationed there for some time now and I decided I needed a change in scenery. I wanted to head to the Beyond Heavens Pavilion to take a look at what lies outside the Azure Ascension World. Well, the institution naturally has someone ready to take my position."

Shang Xia cupped his fists respectfully towards Zhang Haogu and muttered, "Disciple truly admires Instructor Zhang's contributions to the institution."

"Haha!" Zhang Haogu laughed. "This old man is getting on with age and all my potential was used up when I entered the Martial Extermination Realm. The institution is growing by the day and I naturally have to make way for the next generation..."

"Instructor Zhang, you might be getting older, but you're still bursting with vigor. You possess profound knowledge and juniors like me have a lot to learn..."

Waving his hands casually, Zhang Haogu interrupted him. "Let's not go there for now. Let's talk about these asteroids you brought back. I heard that you were patrolling the space outside our Azure

Ascension World tens of thousands of miles away. For you to bring them back uses up a lot of effort. What's their deal?"

Shang Xia chuckled and explained, "Most of the asteroids we saw when patrolling the sea of stars contain some sort of precious resource or spiritual herbs. However, these asteroids are worth the most out of everything I ran into."

Those asteroids he brought back weren't even of the same size. The larger of the two had a strange rhombus-like shape and was close to 200 feet tall. The smaller one was round but barely five feet tall.

Zhang Haogu was a learned man, and he quickly inspected the chunks after Shang Xia mentioned their worth.

Shang Xia didn't say anything as he waited for Zhang Haogu's evaluation.

Flying several rounds around the larger chunk, Zhang Haogu didn't even touch it once. He turned to Shang Xia and asked, "Is this a Mysterious Gold Ore deposit? Why did you drag an ore deposit all the way back? That's tens of thousands of miles you're talking about! Even if it's of pretty high quality... Oh? Wait. Is the Mysterious Gold Ore deposit capable of nurturing Mysterious Gold Extermination Origins?"

Shang Xia revealed a look of admiration and he praised, "Instructor Zhang, your eyes are really sharp. That's right. This deposit is really pure and it contains several strands of Mysterious Gold Extermination Origin. It's able to nurture more, and there isn't just a single one inside..."

Of the common currencies used in the You Continent, gold coins were made from Mysterious Gold.

Now that the Azure Ascension World was progressing to essence crystals as a currency, the currency used by the You Continent naturally started to get phased out.

However, the uses of Mysterious Gold are extremely widespread. Even if they're no longer used to make gold coins, their value didn't drop by a whole lot.

To obtain such a pure deposit of Mysterious Gold Ore, they would be able to refine tens of thousands of tons of Mysterious Gold if they melted it down. Just the value of it was astronomical!

Not to mention the fact that the deposit could nurture extermination origins!

Mysterious Gold Extermination Origin was considered a high-grade extermination origin and because Kou Chongxue refined a strand of Mysterious Gold Extermination Origin when he was in the Martial Extermination Realm, it possessed a special meaning to cultivators of the Tongyou Institution.

One could imagine how many people in the institution would fight for the Mysterious Gold Extermination Origin once news of it got out.

Unfortunately, the Martial Intent Realm cultivators in the institution who had the qualification to advance into the Martial Extermination Realm were pretty unlucky. They probably had no fate with the Mysterious Gold Extermination as Kou Chongxue once left a warning to not recommend anyone from entering the Martial Extermination Realm by refining the Mysterious Gold Extermination Origin.

Eventually, Zhang Haogu turned his attention to the second chunk that was five feet tall. He was surprised as he touched the surface of the rock. "Isn't this supposed to be from the asteroid belt? Why does it feel like a piece of raw jadestone?"

Shang Xia smiled and didn't respond. He allowed Zhang Haogu to continue his evaluation.

Noticing Shang Xia's reaction, Zhang Haogu didn't dally. He started to inspect the piece of rock carefully. Even so, he failed to come to a proper conclusion. He wondered out loud, "This is a piece of jadestone. Is it soft jade? Or is it warm jade? I can't be sure of its quality, but I know it's no lower than the fourth rank."

Shang Xia laughed and revealed what he knew. "At the very least, this should be Yang Jade and it might even be considered a Flame Jade Essence."

"Oh?" Zhang Haogu revealed a look of surprise. He flew two rounds around the chunk of rock again before muttering to himself, "Incredible..."

That wasn't to say that Zhang Haogu's knowledge of spiritual treasure couldn't be compared to Shang Xia. It was because of their difference in cultivation that Shang Xia could see through what it was.

As a cultivator in the Martial Dipper Realm, Shang Xia's divine will far surpassed those of the same level. Zhang Haogu was merely a Martial Extermination Realm cultivator.

Moreover, Shang Xia refined fate dipper essences of all five elements. From a certain standpoint, one could say that it was all-encompassing. He could tell what the spiritual treasure was by feeling its essence.

When he first tried feeling out the chunk that contained the Mysterious Gold Ore deposit, the Geng Metal Element in his body seemed to become a lot more active. When he felt the chunk of jade, the Bing Fire Element showed signs of activity.

Zhang Haogu asked again, "If this really is Yang Jade, or even Flame Jade Essence, what do you plan to do with it?"

"Let's see how much we can actually extract. I plan to try carving a rank four talisman seal from it if possible." Shang Xia muttered.

Zhang Haogu was one of those who knew the source of the talisman seals. He couldn't help but gasp in shock. "Wasn't it said that only the Impaled Stone can be used to craft talisman seals? Can Flame Jade Essence also be used?"

Shang Xia chuckled in response. "I'm just going to test it out. After all, the Impaled Stone is limited. It's good to save it as much as possible. After all, I haven't found anything similar to it."

Zhang Haogu grunted once before speaking again, "You're right. The Impaled Stone is indeed a rare treasure. I recall Patriarch Kou talking about it once. You better hide the fact that you crafted those talisman seals. We shouldn't allow others to know the secret of crafting them, and the other is to not expose the Impaled Stone. Also, Patriarch Kou seems to know something about the stone but he isn't fully sure... Then again, Flame Jade Essence is an extraordinary material anyway. If you fail, it will be an astronomical loss. Are you really willing to part with the treasure?"

"I can use the Impaled Stone to craft any type of talisman seal, but if I change a material, I might have to care about their elemental properties. If I craft a certain talisman seal with a specific type of material, it's possible to succeed." Shang Xia chuckled.

Zhang Haogu continued to ask, "Alright, in the case Yang Jade or Flame Jade Essence is contained in this chunk, what talisman seal do you plan to craft?"

"The Golden Sun Inferno Talisman of course!" Shang Xia declared matter of factly. "I will need to trouble Instructor Zhang to look for a good stone carver though..."

Zhang Haodu didn't bother raising his head as he continued to inspect the material when he replied, "Of course. Just leave those things to me. I promise there won't be much wastage when carving out the pieces you need."

A light flashed in Shang Xia's eyes and he thanked, "Looks like I really will have to trouble you then."

Zhang Haogu waved casually and muttered, "Alright, go look for Ji Wenlong and your grandfather. In recent years, there have been some changes to the situation in our You Continent. You should try to assimilate yourself into it."

Even without Zhang Haogu's reminder, Shang Xia was planning to look for them next. It was especially so since he brought back the jade book from Huang Yu. It recorded a lot of information related to the Spirit Abundance World and he even had a broken Stargazer inheritance. He needed to hand them over to the higher-ups of the institution as soon as he could.

Even so, he asked casually, "Instructor Zhang, do you know if Patriarch Kou has left seclusion?"

Who would have thought that his casual question would catch Zhang Haogu off guard? The old expert revealed a solemn expression as he seemed to hesitate whether to tell Shang Xia the news.

Realizing something was up, Shang Xia released his divine will and covered an area tens of miles around him. "Instructor Zhang, did something happen?"

Keeping his voice low, Zhang Haogu whispered, "There has been a rumor going around in the Azure Ascension World that Patriarch Kou has perished in the Tongyou Paradise ever since the battle back then..."

Shang Xia's eyebrows jumped slightly and he roared with laughter. "Is there anyone who believes in that?! Hasn't the patriarch been in seclusion this whole time?"

"It's been more than 7 years since the battle... Patriarch Kou hasn't shown himself since then." Zhang Haogu sighed.

A sneer left Shang Xia's lips. "There's nothing strange about that. After someone reaches Patriarch Kou's level of cultivation, they would enter seclusion for years at a time. Even tens of years won't seem like an exaggeration."

Shang Xia wasn't making things up. At his current level, he knew that something like that was indeed possible.

Eventually, he was met with another sigh from Zhang Haogu. "Since the creation of the Tongyou Institution more than 30 years ago, have you heard of Patriarch Kou entering seclusion for more than a year or two?"

## Chapter 792: Waves Are Rising

Shang Xia brought the jade book Huang Yu created back with him and it quickly attracted Ji Wenlong and Shang Bo. They rushed over to look for Shang Xia in order to read what Huang Yu had recorded, and they even sent news of it to Yun Jing who was in the Eastern Region of the You Continent informing her to return as soon as possible in order to learn more about the Spirit Abundance World.

The Tongyou Institution... No, the Azure Ascension World knew too little about their opponent.

There were some people who suspected that the 4 Elysiums weren't exactly clueless about the Spirit Abundance World, but they had no proof of it. Obviously, calling them out and asking about it directly wasn't something they could do.

"Hehe, this little brat went ahead with another arranged marriage there... He even has a kid who is several years old now... Hehehehehe..." Ji Wenlong giggled uncontrollably after reading to a certain point in the book. He quickly shared it with the rest and he even sounded to be taking joy in *someone's* misfortune.

"Hmph!" Shang Bo grunted heavily and started to grumble with dissatisfaction. "That little fucker can't forget about finding women wherever he goes... Isn't he afraid that they will become tools used to control him?"

"Even so, it might just be a way for him to gain the trust of the Lou Family. Marriage... Starting a family... Those are ordinary methods used to chain someone down. As someone in a foreign world, the situation he's in might be so complex that we can't start to fathom what's going on. He has to keep himself safe. It's best for us not to judge him for what he has done..." Yun Jing muttered.

Falling silent for a second, Shang Bo's tone became a little less harsh, even though it was still filled with discontent. "Look at the mess he left behind! No one knows how many flings that little asshole had in the Azure Spiritual World, and he even made the brat bring back Wei Qiongyi and a son after the incident in the Manyu Continent! He's doing it again in the Spirit Abundance World! Fuck! This old man is really interested in seeing how he deals with this in the future."

Shang Xia decided to go ahead and open his big mouth all of a sudden. "We'll just keep this secret for him! Wouldn't it be fine as long as his women and children don't know about each other's existence? After all, those flings he had are located in continents tens of thousands of miles away. There isn't even a need to mention what happened in the Spirit Abundance World... It's a whole other world anyway."

As soon as the words left his lips, the deputy patriarchs of the Tongyou Institution fell silent. A strange atmosphere descended.

Shang Xia glanced at them, confused. He couldn't help but ask, "What's the matter? Did I say something wrong?"

"Ahahahahaha!" Ji Wenlong roared with laughter before speaking in a strange voice, "Yeah, that makes sense!"

Yun Jing burst into laughter as well. "Well, it will definitely be exposed someday, but it's good to be able to hide it for some time."

Shang Bo snorted coldly once, but he no longer spoke.

"There are 9 Elysiums in the Spirit Abundance World and there might not be an exact number of existences at the Sixth Order, there should be 15 or 16 of them at the very least. The number of Martial Dipper Realm experts they have are also aplenty... The massive battle 7 years ago was merely a private war 3 of the Elysiums waged. Now that the presence of our Azure Ascension World has been revealed..." Yun Jing chuckled bitterly while waving the jade book in her hand. "If news of this gets out, I wonder what type of chaos it will bring to our Azure Ascension World."

"Should we not let the rest know for now?" Ji Wenlong frowned.

Shang Bo thought about it for a second and added, "The 4 Elysiums might not be clueless about the situation in the Spirit Abundance World. Other than informing everyone that the Spirit Abundance World might invade again, they kept a tight lid on anything else that might happen."

"I guess we can just keep it to ourselves for now. Other than the 4 of us here, we cannot let anyone know about what is going on." Yun Jing said.

However, Ji Wenlong didn't seem to be done with the topic. He continued, "The information recorded here is truly detailed. However, it's also really chaotic. We need someone to carefully filter everything written here. Only then will we be able to gain a clearer understanding of the Spirit Abundance World."

No one responded to what he said. Obviously, none of them were willing to do grunt work like that.

With a helpless sigh, Ji Wenlong continued, "I've been guarding the border this whole time..."

"This old man isn't free!" Shang Bo interrupted suddenly.

Yun Jing glanced at Shang Bo with a smile that wasn't really a smile before muttering, "The situation in the east isn't the best either. I can't leave for long."

Their gazes turned to Shang Xia the next moment.

Gasping softly, Shang Xia felt the hair on the back of his neck standing as they glared at him. He quickly replied. "I can recommend someone. He's definitely going to be interested in the contents here."

"Who?" Ji Wenlong frowned.

"Everything we talked about here shouldn't be spread... You should know that." Shang Bo chided Shang Xia slightly. "It's not impossible to get someone to arrange the information within. However, they need to be isolated from the rest of the world for some time after this. They will not be allowed to come in contact with others." Yun Jing added after a short moment of contemplation.

Shang Xia hurriedly continued, "How about Instructor Zhang Haogu who used to be the head of the Scripture Depository? I ran into him earlier when I was returning and he was strolling about the Beyond Heavens Pavilion while enjoying the scenery..."

"What?! That old man really has nothing better to do now, does he?!" Ji Wenlong roared suddenly.

Shang Bo also didn't seem too happy. "Us old men have been toiling away here… How the hell does he have time to act so leisurely? Heh, he can't keep himself out of this."

Yun Jing chuckled softly and muttered, "Alright. Let's get Zhang Haogu to do it then. It's settled."

As for what they would be doing with the information they learned about the Spirit Abundance World, the deputy patriarchs seemed to already have a plan.

They then told each other about the situation of the You Continent and the Azure Ascension World before informing each other of their future plans before taking their leave.

Shang Xia quickly yelled to stop them when he saw that they were about to disappear. "Wait! Do you... Do you guys know what's behind the rumor about Patriarch Kou?"

They turned in unison when they heard the question.

"What rumor? Where did you hear that from?" Shang Bo asked in a low voice.

"Those are just baseless rumors. You don't have to care about it." Ji Wenlong added.

Yun Jing didn't say anything, but her expression sank slightly as though there was something weighing on her heart.

Shang Xia thought about it for a moment and muttered, "There's no smoke without fire... It doesn't matter if those rumors are true or false. However, where did they originate from? Did it cause any negative impact to our Tongyou Institution or the You Continent?"

Shang Xia knew the answer to his question without even asking. Otherwise, why would Zhang Haogu reveal something like that to him?

Clearly, the rumor had been going around for some time now. It definitely caused some type of chaos among the low-level cultivators. There might even be some people who were starting to panic.

That was why as an elder of the institution, Zhang Haogu would try to use Shang Xia as a breakthrough point to find out more about what was going on and to try to verify the situation with the various deputy patriarchs.

Seeing how they were unwilling to answer the question directly, Shang Xia's heart sank. He turned serious. "What is his condition like right now?"

Staring at each other, Ji Wenlong eventually sighed, "We don't know."

Shang Xia's eyebrows twitched slightly. "Even if one enters seclusion, it's not as though they're closed off from the world and will never awaken! Didn't Patriarch Kou leave behind specific instructions on how to contact him? Didn't he tell us anything?"

"We tried contacting him multiple times in the past 2 years... We never received a reply..." Shang Bo sighed.

Ji Wenlong quickly added, "We didn't think too much of it initially. After all, we know that at our cultivation level, one would enter seclusion for 3 to 5 years if we truly focus. In fact, it won't be difficult for us to cultivate for 8 to 10 years in seclusion! However, it's like the rumors say. Ever since the establishment of the Tongyou Institution, he hasn't been missing for more than a year."

Shang Xia couldn't help but lament. It wasn't as though Kou Chongxue never had the habit of entering seclusion for a long time. It was probably because there was no one to take care of the institution during his absence. That was why he was held back all those years. He wondered out loud, "Have we tried calling for him outside his cultivation grounds?"

Shang Bo and Ji Wenlong didn't say anything this time. Instead, Yun Jing shook her head slightly and replied, "We tried. He didn't respond either."

Realizing how serious the problem was, Shang Xia didn't know how to respond.

Ji Wenlong muttered in a soft voice, "In the case... I'm saying if... If things progress to a point of no return, I'm afraid all of us will have to force our way in..."

Yun Jing raised her head abruptly, but the light in her eyes dimmed.

Ji Wenlong shifted his gaze to avoid looking at her, and Shang Bo sighed softly, "That's our last resort. After all, Patriarch Kou would lay down formations around his own cultivation chamber himself and if we try to break through forcefully, we will need to clear out the Tongyou Paradise. We will also need Chu Jia to coordinate with us. The Tongyou Institution will definitely be alerted to what we're doing."

"We definitely cannot forcefully break into his cultivation grounds. Once we do it, we will definitely walk right into a trap..." Shang Xia vetoed the plan immediately.

That was what Shang Xia said, but he was silently evaluating the difficulty of breaking through forcefully. At the very least, he felt that it wasn't impossible to silently shatter the restrictions if he worked together with Chu Jia.

Naturally, that was what he thought. He couldn't be 100 percent confident if he had to actually do it.

Shang Bo glanced at Shang Xia who was still wearing a strange look on his face and he muttered, "Do you have any ideas?"

Staying silent for a moment, Shang Xia mumbled, "First, we should take a guess and see why those rumors started to spread."

"Are they forcing him to reveal himself?" Ji Wenlong asked.

"Why would they need to do so? Is a mere rumor enough to force an invincible existence under the Sixth Order out of seclusion?" Shang Xia threw another question out. "This..." Ji Wenlong didn't know what to say and he simply tossed the question back at Shang Xia. "Tell us then. Why would they have done it?"

Yun Jing interrupted suddenly. "Could it be... Do they really think that the patriarch has fallen?"

The faces of Ji Wenlong and Shang Bo changed immediately. They wanted to say something but what Yun Jing said made them rethink their words. Despite opening their mouths, nothing came out of them.

Shang Xia started a lengthy explanation at the side. "After entering the Martial Dipper Realm, refining a single fate dipper is a massive risk. The higher one's cultivation gets, the greater the risk. That is why Martial Dipper Realm experts are the most active before entering the third element of the Martial Dipper Realm. Looking at the situation we faced during the battle against the Spirit Abundance World, how many experts in the fourth or fifth element of the Martial Dipper Realm did they send?"

"The patriarch fell into the schemes of those experts from our Azure Ascension World tens of years ago. He suffered heavy injuries and his fate dippers fell into a state of disequilibrium. Back then, he already entered the Martial Dipper Realm for close to 20 years. He was merely at the second element back then. In less than 10 years, he refined 3 fate dippers and his cultivation soared to the large completion stage of the Martial Dipper Realm. The sword qi he summoned back then crossed 30000 miles and slayed a few enemies. That feat alone was enough to shock the world."

"Every other cultivator would feel their cultivation slowing to a crawl as they raise their level, but Patriarch Kou is completely different. The higher his cultivation became, the faster he improved. Where is the logic in that?"

"That is most probably why everyone thinks that he lost his life after refining so many fate dippers in a short amount of time."

Chapter 793: Waves are Rising Pt.2

The last sentence Shang Xia mentioned caused their expressions to change drastically.

Even though there were rules in the institution about who had decision-making power, the various deputy patriarchs wouldn't ignore what Shang Xia said. After all, he broke down the problem really logically. They would naturally take his opinions and judgment seriously.

As one of the Martial Dipper Realm Ancestors of the Tongyou Institution and the person who created the second path of cultivation for the institution, Shang Xia's qualifications to talk about cultivation matters far surpassed Shang Bo and Ji Wenlong.

"In that case... Do you also think that the patriarch has fallen during his time in seclusion?" Yun Jing felt waves battering against her heart. It was rare for someone to see her in her current state as she was level headed and usually cool when dealing with huge matters related to the institution. Shaking his head, Shang Xia raised an eyebrow and muttered, "Of course not. If he really died while cultivating, there was no way he would go so quietly."

That was something Ji Wenlong, Shang Bo, and everyone else thought about. It was also why no one tried barging in to wake him forcefully yet.

What they didn't know was that Shang Xia was following a completely different road of reasoning. Actually, the idea of Kou Chongxue's fate dippers crashing and killing him never even crossed Shang Xia's mind. After all, he was the person who told Kou Chongxue about the philosophy behind the mutual restraint and amplification of the five elements.

Ji Wenlong sighed, "It's not a problem of whether or not we believe that Patriarch Kou died in seclusion. There are many people in the institution who are starting to waver. In fact, there have been many undercurrents that have started to flow..."

Ji Wenlong's reminder caused Shang Xia to become serious again. One had to know that the current Tongyou Institution had 3 Martial Dipper Realm experts.

Under such circumstances, the internal state of the institution should be completely unshakable. For undercurrents to be flowing, that didn't just mean that people were suspecting Kou Chongxue's death. They were also starting to doubt the 3 Martial Dipper Realm expert's ability to hold the institution together. There had to be someone stirring shit behind the scenes.

Is there a spy?

Shang Xia thought to himself. He couldn't help but think of the situation where spies of the Evil Remnants infiltrated the other border institutions and tried to destroy the Tongyou Institution.

The event happened more than 10 years ago, but it felt like yesterday.

In recent years, the Tongyou Institution was growing stronger by the day and their prestige also grew accordingly. The You Continent also increased their influence along with it. Despite that, some of the cultivators nurtured by the institution were unable to receive all the resources they required...

A large number of cultivators who left the You Continent in the past due to the collision of worlds started to make their way back, revitalizing the You Continent even further and allowing them to strengthen their control over their territory. However, it couldn't be helped that there were people with malicious intent among them.

In a low voice, Shang Xia mumbled, "Looks like it's time to clean house..."

The deputy patriarchs' expressions faintly changed at his words.

They weren't exactly surprised that there would be people trying to cause trouble within the Tongyou Institution. The only problem was that the current situation didn't allow them to start a cleanse.

Shang Bo was the first to respond to Shang Xia's words, "The situation is extremely unstable at the moment. If we carry out a purge, it will definitely cause greater unrest within the institution. If someone else makes use of that... The consequences will be unthinkable."

Ji Wenlong and Yun Jing didn't say anything else, but they were clearly leaning towards what Shang Bo said. They felt that stability should be key in times like that.

However, a strange look appeared in Shang Xia's eyes all of a sudden. "Is there any unrest that cannot be settled with 3 Martial Dipper Realm experts? Heh, about Patriarch Kou's seclusion, all we need is for all our deputy patriarchs to make a statement that he's perfectly alright. If there's anyone who tries to doubt that, that person is going to be someone we need to suspect to be part of those who wish harm on our Tongyou Institution."

Ji Wenlong frowned slightly. "If we try to force it through, wouldn't it be difficult for them to accept it?"

"It doesn't matter. As long as we can suppress it for a moment, everything will be fine when Patriarch Kou appears." Shang Xia replied without thinking too much about it.

"But what if he..." Yun Jing didn't finish her sentence, but everyone knew what she was referring to.

What if Kou Chongxue never shows up? What were they supposed to do when that happened?

Shang Xia sighed inwardly. It seemed as though even the Deputy Patriarchs were starting to waver!

In a deep voice, Shang Xia suddenly thought of another idea. "Alright, we'll release another piece of news then. Let's just admit that Patriarch Kou isn't in the Tongyou Paradise anymore. Instead, he discovered clues about how to enter the Sixth Order of the Primary Realm after exploring the remains of the Starry Marsh Elysium. In order to resist the future threat of the Spirit Abundance World, he ran off alone into the sea of stars to look for a chance to advance. We'll say that when he returns, the Azure Ascension World will have its fifth Sixth Order Ancestor!"

Ji Wenlong, Shang Bo, and Yun Jing stared at Shang Xia with their mouths agape. They couldn't think of what to say to that.

A moment later, Yun Jing surprisingly regained her wits before the old men and she mumbled to herself, "Are we fighting a rumor with another rumor? It's not exactly a bad idea. This can turn into many versions as it spreads across the land and we can even use it to our advantage to confuse those who are plotting against us."

Shang Bo seemed to have heard that there was a real possibility behind what Shang Xia said and he asked, "Do you really think that Patriarch Kou ran off into the sea of stars?"

"Probably? Isn't that why we've been unable to get a response from him even after so many tries?" Shang Xia muttered.

"But... But..." Ji Wenlong wanted to say something, but he failed to get it out.

"Patriarch Kou said that he wanted to enter seclusion, and he placed a bunch of powerful restrictions around his cultivation grounds... Did anyone actually see him enter his place of cultivation?" Shang Xia asked.

Shang Bo, Ji Wenlong, and Yun Jing stared at each other quietly. As they had their tasks to carry out, none of them were actually present when Kou Chongxue 'entered' seclusion.

Yun Jing thought about it for a moment and asked, "Would Chu Jia know? If Patriarch Kou wanted to place restrictions, he would definitely need her assistance. She created all the formations in the

Tongyou Paradise and she will definitely be the first to know about everything that happens in the Tongyou Paradise."

"Even if someone actually sees him enter, that doesn't actually mean anything. Who knows if what they saw was a Fate Dipper Clone entering the land of cultivation? Even if Patriarch Kou's true body went in, who would know if he left secretly and ran away from the Tongyou Paradise? If he doesn't want anyone to know, no one will be able to keep an eye on him!" Shang Xia laughed.

Yun Jing quickly regained her original wits and she said, "You seem to be really inclined to think that Patriarch Kou went into the vast sea of stars. Didn't you head to the remains of the Starry Marsh Elysium with the patriarch back then? He stayed there for some time while you returned... Did he find something in there?"

All 3 of them followed him into the celestial remains back then. Shang Xia knew that, and he asked, "Do you know about the ruined observatory?"

Ji Wenlong shook his head in confusion, but Shang Bo nodded. Yun Jing whispered, "He brought it up before..."

Shang Xia took out the damaged Stargazer inheritance he copied from Huang Yu and explained, "I suspect that the observatory is related to the Stargazer profession. Patriarch Kou stayed in the remains of the Starry Marsh Elysium for so long and he might have learned something from it."

"Why did he keep it a secret and not inform any of us?" Yun Jing couldn't help but ask.

Helpless, Shang Xia waved his hand and sighed, "About that... I don't know either. However, why don't we make a guess and think about who he's trying to guard against?"

The deputy patriarchs fell into deep thought.

For someone who reached the peak of the Martial Dipper Realm and was considered an invincible existence under the Sixth Order... Who else would he be wary of?

The titles of the 4 Sixth Order Ancestors from the Elysiums flashed across their minds.

"Why..." Yun Jing revealed a complicated expression. "Our Azure Ascension World is threatened with the invasion of the Spirit Abundance World... Wouldn't another expert in the Sixth Order increase our odds of winning?"

"That might be the case, but what if the new Sixth Order expert possesses potential far surpassing the others and he already has a grudge against them?" Shang Xia sighed.

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After meeting Shang Xia, the deputy patriarchs of the Tongyou Institution burst into a flurry of activity.

First, Ji Wenlong returned to the southwest border of the You Continent and continued to watch over things there. The Tongyou Institution's relationship with the Bing Continent maintained its stability on the surface, but the spiritual beasts in the Thousand Leaf Mountain Range were starting to make some moves.

After the alliance with the Changbai Holy Land, the northern region of the You Continent seemed a lot more stable. Yan Su'er was trusted by the institution and she had combat strength at the grand completion stage of the Martial Extermination Realm. The institution was more than assured to leave her there.

In the Eastern Region of the You Continent, Shang Bo took Yun Jing's place. Now, they weren't going to face the Martial Extermination Realm Yun Jing anymore. With the Martial Dipper Realm Shang Bo personally taking command, the Tongyou Institution continued to expand their influence outwards.

Yun Jing returned to the institution and took on her role as the head of the Outreach Division again and started to clean out the Tongyou Institution.

Of course, right before leaving for their posts, the deputy patriarchs gathered the higher-ups of the institution and informed them again about Patriarch Kou being in seclusion and wouldn't be paying attention to things in the institution for the time being.

Yun Jing spoke about the difficulties of how the Tongyou Institution progressed step by step to their current state as the Tongyou Paradise and mentioned everything Kou Chongxue has done for the past 30 or so years. As a Martial Dipper Realm expert, he never once cultivated for more than a year and it has greatly impacted his progress. Now that they possessed the Tongyou Paradise and everything was progressing smoothly, along with 3 other Martial Dipper Realm experts to hold the fort, Kou Chongxue decided to put everything down and focus on his cultivation for a period of time.

She also spoke about the threat of the Spirit Abundance World and as the strongest existence under the Sixth Order Ancestors, Kou Chongxue's seclusion could directly impact the result of future battles against the Spirit Abundance World.

In the end, she said that the Tongyou Institution had to band together as one, and if anyone else tried spreading rumors about the patriarch, she would immediately suspect them of having ulterior intentions and deal with it accordingly.

With both soft and hard approaches, Yun Jing managed to align the thoughts of those in the institution. She took note of several suspicious characters, but she didn't deal with them immediately. After all, they could have been led astray by others and didn't truly mean to harm the institution, or they might just be puppets for the culprits hiding in the dark. Either way, it wasn't time to deal with them yet.

At the same time, Shang Xia, who returned from his patrol in the sea of stars, entered seclusion and quickly faded out of everyone's sight.

The stability of the You Continent didn't just require unity from within. They would also have to settle several external influences. To that, Shang Xia had already made a plan and chosen his target.

Chapter 794: Progress

The news of Patriarch Kou's absence had been causing quite a stir in the institution for some time and even though the deputy patriarchs came out to say something about it and Yun Jing took her

position back in the institution to solidify their control, they couldn't stop the rumors from propagating.

In the end, they decided to go with Shang Xia's second approach and chose to spread the news of how Kou Chongxue might have left for another world to look for a way to break through to the Sixth Order. 2 of the deacons of the institution who were 'humiliated' by Yun Jing during her speech went to drink with their friends and started to complain about everything they heard. They accidentally revealed what Yun Jing said about how Kou Chongxue might have discovered another world and was finding a way to break through to the Sixth Order.

It didn't take long for the 'secret' to spread out of the You Continent.

News of what happened quickly reached the Outreach Division and the 2 deacons who revealed what Yun Jing said were brought back for investigation. Before long, they were never heard from again.

Very quickly, rumors regarding Kou Chongxue's disappearance or death started to spread through the city. It was as though someone was pushing for people to spread them.

There were many versions going around and there were some that seemed to contain some hints of truth behind it. There were also some that seemed extremely exaggerated. The original version that had been spread was quickly being washed away.

In the eyes of those who were truly paying attention to the matters, the different rumors related to Kou Chongxue seemed more like a smoke screen the institution released to cover up what was really going on.

As there were more and more guesses about what happened to Kou Congxue going around, things naturally blew out of proportion. However, the more absurd it got, the more the original version was proven to be 'true'.

When the Tongyou City was getting incomparably heated, the 859th year of the Divine Martial Calendar had already passed. Shang Xia welcomed the 860th year while residing in Hai Min's courtyard.

Hai Yuanyuan had already completed her divine sense transformation and she was given the responsibility of protecting an island the Tongyou Institution controlled. She could be considered an expert who could take charge of a territory by herself.

Because of that, the lass didn't return for the new year. Shang Xia managed to enjoy some nice alone time with Hai Min.

However, his days of leisure didn't last for long. After the fifth day of the new year, Chu Jia sent a transmission talisman to him every day to urge him to return to the institution.

Helpless, Shang Xia could only make his way back. He stopped by the Formation Hall once he returned, and he didn't just meet Chu Jia. Ren Bainian, Ren Huan, and Shang Quan had been waiting for him for some time.

"I knew it..." Shang Xia grumbled to himself before trudging into the hall. He randomly looked for a spot to sit. "Heh... Were you not planning to return after hiding in that nice and comfortable place you found?" Chu Jia mocked.

Ren Bainian, Ren Huan, and Shang Quan revealed expressions that showed they were in deep contemplation. They didn't seem to hear what Chu Jia said. However, they couldn't help but hear the sourness in her voice.

Glancing at her from the corner of his eye, Shang Xia mumbled, "Come on... You have to let me enjoy the coming of the new year in peace, right?!"

"Shut up. It's already the fifth day of the new year." Chu Jia rebuked immediately before pointing to the others. "Hey! I'm not the one looking for you anyway. They're the ones looking for you and they were afraid of interrupting your life. They could only look for me..."

"Alright, I got it..." Shang Xia sighed.

Chu Jia looked extremely pleased with herself. However, she heard how perfunctory Shang Xia's answer was and she immediately started to feel annoyed. She turned to Ren Bainian and the others and snapped, "Alright! Who's going to start talking first?!"

Shang Xia could tell that Chu Jia's state of mind was extremely unsteady at the moment, but he didn't know what was going on. He only felt as though the situation was slightly baffling.

Ren Bainian forced a chuckle and stepped out. "Alright. Let this old man start first..."

After he spoke, he brought out a long spiritual case that was sealed and muttered, "Manager Shang, this is the White Bone Brush that the Grandmaster Blacksmiths of the Hundred Weapons Mill modified!"

"Oh? They succeeded?!" Shang Xia's eyes lit up and he retrieved the case before asking, "Oh right, when did I become 'Manager Shang'?"

Instead of Ren Bainian, Ren Huan was the person who replied to his question. With a hearty laugh, Ren Huan started, "Well, no one was appointed to be the head of the Talisman Hall for a long time. All of us have been arranging our positions based on our knowledge in the way of talisman crafting. Originally, Master Gong was considered the head of the Talisman Hall, but Brother Shang, you quickly took over the position. Actually, since the start of the year, the institution decided to standardize the various positions. Brother Shang, you're naturally the person in charge of the Talisman Hall. Everyone will start to call you 'Manager Shang' from now on. Oh right, the person in charge of the Formation Hall will be Grandmaster Chu, and as for the others..."

Shang Xia's actions paused slightly when he opened the spiritual case and he quickly stopped Ren Huan from finishing. He said seriously, "I don't care what the heads of the other halls call themselves, but from now on, you can call me Hall Master Shang. If anyone... If anyone calls me Manager Shang from now on... I... I won't bother with anything related to the Talisman Hall from now on!"

Shang Xia still felt the need to emphasize again, "Right. This is extremely important to me!"

Ren Huan and the others glanced at each other in confusion. They didn't know why Shang Xia was so particular about the title, but none of them had the guts to question him. They could only agree and let Shang Xia know that they would relay the message to the Talisman Hall soon. After all, no one would piss off a rank five Talisman Grandmaster over a mere title.

Opening the case, Shang Xia saw a talisman brush lying quietly within. After retrieving the spirit bone from a rank five sea beast, 2 Grandmaster Blacksmiths worked together to modify the weapon. They swapped the original shaft out for the spirit bone from the beast in order to create the new brush.

Shang Xia carefully held the brush and he could tell the difference immediately. Ren Huan wondered at the side, "Senior Ren, what do you think of the skills those Grandmaster Blacksmiths possess? Did they say anything after they were done?"

Ren Bainian laughed, "Those Grandmaster Blacksmiths don't look too old to begin with... However, their methods are truly an eye-opener. I was merely watching from the side, but I learned a lot. I don't really have an opinion of them... However, they did have a suggestion..."

Ren Bainian paused as Shang Xia raised an eyebrow curiously.

"They... They suggested that Manag... Hall Master Shang should swap out your inkstone for a better one..." Ren Bainian coughed.

"Inkstone?" Shang Xia seemed to have thought of something as he inspected the tip of the brush. Indeed... He discovered that it was slightly damaged.

He originally thought that the damage came from crafting rank five talismans. However, from what the Grandmaster Blacksmiths were saying, it seemed as though swapping his inkstone out for a better one might be able to slightly mitigate the damage the brush suffered.

Shang Xia nodded in response. He also followed up with another question. "Right. Did they have any suggestions to raise the White Bone Brush to a divine artifact?"

"They said that after swapping out the shaft and tip of the brush, the White Bone Brush can basically be considered a completely new brush. There is no value in modifying it further. If Hall... Hall Master Shang can find spirit fur from any rank five spiritual beast in the future, it would be for the best if you can obtain its spirit bone too. If you refine a new brush with them, it would close in on the ranks of a divine artifact. You will have to rely on your luck if you wish to turn it into a divine artifact in the future..." Ren Bainian explained.

Shang Xia nodded and sank into contemplation.

After Ren Bainian was done, Ren Huan stepped forward to speak. "Hall Master..."

Shang Xia frowned and raised his hand to interrupt Ren Huan. "Brother Ren, is there a need for such formalities between us?"

Ren Huan chuckled and quickly changed his tone. "Brother Shang, there have been improvements when it comes to crafting talisman paper and talisman ink with the elemental essence crystals..."

"Oh? Your experiments must have cost a lot, right?" A trace of excitement flashed in Shang Xia's eyes.

"It's alright... At least it didn't go to waste!" Ren Huan laughed.

"After testing out different proportions of elemental essence crystal powder, we discovered that the talisman papers we made would have an effect of raising the success rate when they were used to craft talismans. Of course, that was only if the element used in the talisman is identical to that of the crystal we used. If it wasn't, the success rate would drop greatly! If we go back to the fundamentals and craft talisman paper of a specific element with different elemental essence crystal powder, the success rate when crafting a talisman with it will drop to 0!" Ren Huan explained.

Shang Quan, who hadn't said a word since the start, also stepped forward. "It's the same for talisman ink. Using specific talisman ink for specific talismans will greatly increase the success rate, but that isn't the case most of the time as talisman ink would be used to craft any sort of talisman... Now, the results of our experiments have taken shape and we're getting more data by the day. From now on, talisman paper and talisman ink will be crafted for specific Talisman Masters or Grandmasters according to the type of talisman they wish to craft."

Ren Huan added, "Oh right! We will need a lot more elemental essence crystals for that. Because of that, we stockpiled quite a bit of them back then."

Chu Jia interrupted all of a sudden, "The institution has been preparing for this 3 years ago. We discovered many places that would yield elemental essence crystals of different attributes and started to strengthen our control over those areas. We also continued to spread out influence to look for it and we managed to gain an advantage over those who aren't prepared to look for them."

After thinking for a little, Shang Xia muttered, "This is really an improvement. In the past, talisman paper and ink had to be made to accommodate any type of talisman. That's because a Talisman Master or Grandmaster only mastered a few types of talismans. They will obtain talisman paper and ink from anywhere they can find. Now that we have a lot more Talisman Masters, all of them only need to focus on several types of talismans. They can use talisman paper and ink based on the type of talisman they can craft and that will greatly increase their chances of success."

Soon after, Shang Xia continued to chat with them to learn more about the current situation in the Weapons Hall, Talisman Hall, and Shang Clan.

Seemingly having lost her patience, Chu Jia, who was standing at the side, finally interrupted when she felt that they were nearly done. "Enough! This is the Formation Hall for crying out loud! Why don't you continue this discussion in the Talisman Hall?!"

Ren Bainian, Ren Huan, and Shang Quan obviously caught the memo as they got to their feet immediately. They bade farewell to Shang Xia and Chu Jia before scurrying out of the hall.

Chapter 795: Hidden Wind Fate Dipper

In the air above the Hidden Beast Peak in the Divine Capital City of the Si Continent, a middle aged man with sunken eyes and a faint yellow beard stood in the air with his hands clasped behind his back. He stared at the mountain range before him as though he was waiting for someone. A gentle breeze blew through the lands, but it started to pick up as a strange whistling sound filled the skies as a gale eventually swept across the mountaintops and valleys. The expert standing above the Hidden Beast Peak listened to it with interest.

Several birds soared into the air and danced in the wind as they released loud and clear cries. It was as though they were too afraid to land due to the strong whistling sounds.

The cultivator stared at the birds that flew to the same height as him and felt the heaven and earth qi surrounding them before muttering to himself, "Spiritual birds? I haven't been out of the Divine Capital City for a long time... Did spiritual beasts and spiritual birds start to appear in the northern region? Looks like after the fusion of the worlds, the heaven and earth qi in the Azure Ascension World increased greatly..."

The next moment, the gale that was flying across the mountain tops below formed a massive tornado. It swept through the vegetation and left nothing in its wake.

Birds circling in the air were terrified and started to fly as far away as possible, but there were a few unlucky creatures who failed to run away in time. They were a thousand or so feet from the tornado, but their feathers were torn from their bodies and they were sucked in and turned into a bloody mess.

A light flashed in the eyes of the middle aged man and he growled, "You're overdoing it a little!"

As soon as the words left his lips, the tornado seemed to have heard him and he immediately scattered. Rocks, leaves, and pieces of tree trunks started to fall like rain.

"I wonder what brought Ninth Palace Elder to my Hidden Beast Peak today?" A strange voice that was created from the howling of winds rang through the air. After the tornado disappeared earlier, all sorts of winds on the mountain peak died down.

Ninth Palace Elder frowned slightly and he muttered with a little displeasure, "When did the Hidden Beast Peak turn into your territory, Feng Yezi?"

"Ah... Haha! I was just kidding! Palace Elder, there's no need to mind me..." The voice created from the wind rang in his ears, but no one could hear his actual intentions through his words alone.

Ninth Palace Elder's expression sank all of a sudden and he muttered, "Feng Yezi, do you think it's appropriate to treat me like this when I came all the way here personally?"

A ball of wind emerged 1000 or so feet away from Ninth Palace Elder and a figure started to take shape inside it. When the wind scattered, a figure was revealed. He wore a robe that had faded to the point where no one could tell what color it was supposed to be, and he had a head full of disheveled gray hair. He was none other than Feng Yezi, the Martial Dipper Realm expert who ran away from the Bing Continent!

He casually cupped his fist at the person before him and muttered, "My place is too messy and I won't embarrass myself by inviting Ninth Palace Elder in for a chat. Feel free to let me know what instructions you, or the Divine Capital Sect might have."

A trace of displeasure flashed through Ninth Palace Elder's eyes, but the smile on his face remained. "There has been news from the You Continent. Kou Chongxue went missing."

Feng Yezi didn't seem too interested initially, but when Kou Chongxue's name was mentioned, his nerves tensed up immediately. However, he quickly heard that the man had gone missing.

Finally relaxing a little, he asked, "What has that got to do with me?"

Ninth Palace Elder ignored him and he continued talking, "Yuwen Changqing can't hold on any longer in the Bing Continent. He sent a request for you to assist him as soon as possible."

Like a cat whose tail had been stepped on, Feng Yezi flinched and he rejected without even thinking, "I'm not helping him! Nope! I'm definitely not going back there!"

He was so serious that he rejected it 3 times in a single sentence.

Ninth Palace Elder expected as much, but he didn't think that Feng Yezi would be so adamant about not going back. In fact, the man didn't even conceal the anger in his voice when he voiced his rejection. Ninth Palace Elder was so surprised he didn't know how to respond.

After a period of silence, Ninth Palace Elder's tone changed slightly and he asked, "Kou Chongxue went missing... What are you afraid of?"

"Missing? Who knows if he is really missing?!" Feng Yezi didn't hide the fact that he was afraid of Kou Chongxue. In fact, his emotions seemed stirred up as he asked, "Weren't you guys guessing if he had fallen in his seclusion because he refined too many fate dippers in a short period of time? Why do you guys think he's missing now? Who knows if that fellow is hiding in some strange corner watching things play out? He might just be waiting for you to walk straight into his trap again!"

Ninth Palace Elder took a deep breath and suppressed the jittery feeling building inside him as he calmly explained, "Him falling in seclusion is what we thought back then and we spread rumors in order to confirm some stuff. Everything progressed as expected and we managed to stir the emotions of the cultivators of the You Continent. If Kou Chongxue had nothing to hide, he would have just shown his face somewhere. Even if he was at a critical juncture of his cultivation, he could have sent a clone and be done with it. However... He didn't appear no matter how bad the rumors got!" Ninth Palace Elder stared at Feng Yezi and continued, "Instead, the deputy patriarchs stood out and tried to reassure the You Continent about how the patriarch was trying to break through... Do you think it's believable?"

Feng Yezi pressed his lips together and muttered, "Indeed... That doesn't really make sense. Whatever it is, Kou Chongxue is truly one of a kind. Ever since he established the Tongyou Institution, he's definitely the most active expert of my generation. He has never entered seclusion for such a long time before. Now that the Tongyou Institution has 3 other Martial Dipper Realm experts, they can take care of the You Continent easily. He might be taking this chance to cultivate seriously..."

"But the information we received stated that Kou Chongxue left for the sea of stars in order to look for an opportunity to break through!" Ninth Palace Elder said.

Shaking his head, Feng Yezi mumbled, "Come on, that's not reliable news at all. Don't tell me you would believe a lie like that."

"The news is definitely reliable... We received it from someone in the Tongyou Institution." Ninth Palace Elder lowered his voice and growled.

"Did he really leave?" Feng Yezi still seemed doubtful, and he continued, "If that's the case, would you guys still dare to deal with the Tongyou Institution? Aren't you afraid that he will find an opportunity to enter the Sixth Order and kill his way back?"

After he spoke, the feeling of unease started to swell up inside him again. Feng Yezi snapped, "I'm not going. I'm not going no matter what. Even if the heavens fall, I won't go back there."

Ninth Palace Elder finally had enough. His expression sank and he snorted coldly, "Feng Yezi, you best not forget how you entered the Martial Dipper Realm back then. You know how much assistance you received from us..."

"Oh? Did I not help you deal with a lot of your problems these years?" Feng Yezi snapped back in response.

Ninth Palace Elder shot Feng Yezi a deep stare and finally laid on the threats. "To be able to escape from the Bing Continent... If we didn't provide you even more assistance and allow you to reside here on the Hidden Beast Peak, do you really think you would be able to avoid Kou Chongxue's wrath?"

"At worst, I'll go back to hiding in the Jiao Continent!" Feng Yezi growled. However, he seemed to think of something else the next moment. "If push comes to shove, I'll just follow in the footsteps of those from the Spirit Abundance World and hide in space outside the Beyond Heavens Pavilion! As long as I make up my mind to run, how many people in the Azure Ascension World can actually catch up to me?"

A sneer left Ninth Palace Elder's lips. "The Yuanchen Sect borrowed the Jiao Continent's spirituality to become an Elysium. Right now, half the Jiao Continent can be considered their backyard. Do you really think someone like you can run around as you please in there? Hehe, going into space is even worse. You're all alone. With no one to deliver you cultivation resources, how long do you think you'll last out there?"

"It's not like you're forming a new grudge with them now. With everything you have done, you can't run away forever!" Ninth Palace Elder seemed to have reached his tipping point when he realized that Feng Yezi was no longer speaking.

Reaching out to swipe at the space before him, a stream of wind that seemed strangely formless danced about in his palm.

Feng Yezi was immediately attracted by it and his expression changed. He stared at the formless item in Ninth Palace Elder's palm and excitement bubbled in his heart. He couldn't help but yell, "Hidden Wind Fate Dipper! That's the Hidden Wind Fate Dipper! I knew it! You guys had it all along!"

Feng Yezi was able to enter the Martial Dipper Realm back then because of the help he received from Ninth Palace Elder. However, he exhausted a great amount of potential after entering the

Martial Dipper Realm and it was difficult to make any improvements. However, it wasn't as though he was completely hopeless.

The Hidden Wind Fate Dipper was his only hope of advancing further. It was probably the only Origin Dipper he could refine as his second fate dipper. However, the Hidden Wind Fate Dipper was formless and it wasn't just difficult to catch it. Even sensing it was going to be difficult. Coupled with the fact that it was extremely rare, Feng Yezi never obtained any clues as to where he would be able to find one.

It wasn't as though he didn't try to ask the Divine Capital Sect for it. However, Ninth Palace Elder, Jiu Qi, said several times in the past that they didn't have the Hidden Wind Fate Dipper.

After so many years, Feng Yezi seemed to have given up on finding the Hidden Wind Fate Dipper. He severed any hopes he had of growing stronger but now, Jiu Qi brought out a complete Hidden Wind Fate Dipper,

Feng Yezi gradually got over his excitement and his expression sank. He became extremely gloomy. To that, Jiu Qi could only sigh and try to explain, "You shouldn't misunderstand. The Hidden Wind Fate Dipper is something we don't have. I only managed to obtain this after killing someone from the Spirit Abundance World."

Feng Yezi didn't question Jiu Qi's explanation. The origin of the Hidden Wind Fate Dipper didn't matter. He stared at the item in Jiu Qi's palm before asking in a low voice, "What do you want me to do in the Bing Continent?"

Realizing that he succeeded, he simply pushed his palm forward to send the formless mass towards Feng Yezi. He saw how Feng Yezi took out a pouch to store the Hidden Wind Fate Dipper, but that wasn't all. He only seemed to relax after tying a strange rope around the opening of the pouch several times. Only then did he keep the pouch.

Finally, Jiu Qi spoke again, "There are 2 things I need Brother Feng to take care of in the Bing Continent. The first is to quickly refine this Hidden Wind Fate Dipper and enter the second element of the Martial Dipper Realm. You will then infiltrate the You Continent. It would be best if you can get into the Tongyou City..."

Jiu Qi paused intentionally and glanced at Feng Yezi. This time, he was met with an expressionless face. Feng Yezi didn't even seem to be troubled by the request this time.

The Hidden Wind Fate Dipper was truly the only way Feng Yezi could improve. Moreover, it was extremely compatible with his first fate dipper. His actual combat strength wouldn't increase by much even if he refined it, but that wasn't the true use of the Hidden Wind Fate Dipper. Instead, it could allow him to gain the ability to conceal himself extremely well!

Once Feng Yezi refined the Hidden Wind Fate Dipper, along with his terrifying speed due to his first fate dipper, he would gain an ability that could threaten anyone of the same cultivation level! He would be perfect to carry out assassinations!

That was also why Jiu Qi sent him over to the Tongyou City, and understanding his ability, Feng Yezi showed no sign of rejecting the request.

He knew what he would need to do in the Tongyou City even if Jiu Qi didn't specifically state it.

"As for the second matter..." Jiu Qi continued, "I heard that Yuwen Changqing is trying to get close to the Desert Gate. Keep an eye on him!"

A light flashed in Feng Yezi's eye and a mocking smile appeared on his lips. "So that's it... Is that the true reason you're getting me to return to the Bing Continent?"

Jiu Qi ignored the sarcastic tone Feng Yezi was using and he muttered, "Alright. I've told you what I needed to. Brother Feng, you know what to do."

After he spoke, he turned to leave.

Feng Yezi's voice came from behind him, "Back then, you were also part of the group that surrounded Kou Chongxue outside the celestial remains, right? Is that why you're so adamant about dealing with him and the Tongyou Institution?"

Jiu Qi's figure trembled slightly, but he flew through the air and left. Only his icy-cold voice was left and it rang coldly in Feng Yezi's mind. "There have been some abnormalities among the beasts on the mountain. If you need to, kill them all."

Feng Yezi stared at the void that was rippling and he muttered to himself with a strange light flashing in his eyes, "Did the beasts start their transformation already? There have been several strange birds coming from the Thousand Leaf Mountain Range though... hehe... Looks like this fellow has been staying in the city for too long!"

Chapter 796: Chu Jia's Aspirations

"BLEGGHHH" Chu Jia held her waist as she retched violently. She was standing on one of the mountain peaks not too far away from the east of the You Continent.

Not too far away, Shang Xia stared at her pale face with a helpless look. "Come on... You're a fourth layer Martial Extermination Realm expert. All you experienced was a short spatial jump through the void. Why are you so weak?"

"SHORT?!" Chu Jia struggled to raise her pale, but pretty face and she wanted to straighten her back to yell at Shang Xia. The moment she tried, her brain started to spin and stars appeared in her vision. She bent down again and roared, "It's thousands of miles between the Tongyou City and the eastern shore! It wouldn't matter if you made a single spatial tunnel over here. Why the hell did you make 3 different... BELGHHH... It's all your fault!"

Chu Jia felt her stomach churning before she could finish speaking.

As the mighty Formation Grandmaster of the Tongyou Institution, she was never in such a sorry state. The last time she felt that way might be before she even entered the path of cultivation!

Shang Xia stared at the people on the shore who were pointing at them while making strange remarks and he couldn't help but sigh, "I wanted to let you experience the possibility of teleportation using the Five Element Formation! I didn't expect the consumption to be so huge just because I brought an extra person... Well, it's alright. At least, you managed to experience it thrice! I believe you gained a much deeper understanding of how the Five Element Teleportation works now."

"You fuc... BLEGHHH..." Chu Jia tried cursing, but the feeling overwhelmed her again.

Shang Xia wanted to pat her back to make her feel better, but he retracted his hand as quickly as he stretched it out. He grumbled helplessly, "Hey! If you keep this up, other people are going to form some misunderstandings..."

Actually, the misunderstandings have already formed.

Chu Jia circulated her inner qi and used her extermination qi to suppress the discomfort she was feeling before finally getting to her feet. Her face was still pale, but there seemed to be a blush forming on her cheeks. There was a hidden bitterness in her eyes as she glared at Shang Xia. She seemed to be blaming him for laughing at her earlier without showing the slightest sign of helping.

Coughing awkwardly, Shang Xia pointed at one of the ships docked by the shore and muttered, "Don't tell me that's the ship you prepared for modification..."

"How do you know?" Chu Jia turned to stare at him with a raised brow.

"I can feel traces of the Five Element Formation on it..." Shang Xia mumbled.

Unwilling to back down, Chu Jia snorted, "Heh, are you showing off how sensitive you are to the five elements right now?"

Shang Xia chuckled and he ignored her question. He walked up and grabbed her by the arm and muttered, "Let's go!"

Still in a state of shock, Chu Jia felt the world spinning around her. Her legs sank slightly and she appeared on the boat the next instant.

"You..." A familiar wave of nausea hit her, and the feeling she suppressed earlier came back in full force. She ran for the side of the ship and poked her head over. "BLEGGHHH!"

Their actions quickly attracted the attention of everyone on the ship. Fortunately, those were members of the Formation Hall and Talisman Hall. They knew who Shang Xia and Chu Jia were, and they turned away the moment they appeared. "Oh… Well, there's nothing to see here. Everyone, get back inside! Don't look at that!"

"Did you guys already finish what you were supposed to? Get back inside and do your work or I'm going to deduct your essence crystals!"

"Hehe... There's nothing to see here... I'm out!"

"…"

They raced back into the ship even faster than they emerged. However, they didn't forget to gossip along the way as their hushed whispers filled the air.

"Is she really pregnant?"

"Hehe... Of course she is! She's experiencing something called 'morning sickness'! All 3 of my women experienced the same thing..." "Ohh... Amazing!"

"Dumbass... You don't even know something like that..."

"Then again, not anyone can handle the head of your Formation Hall... I guess only Hall Master Shang has the ability to do something like that, right?"

"Didn't they say that the 2 of them were incompatible with each other?"

"You don't know shit! Come here and let me teach you something. Do you know how opposites attract? Don't you know how they express their love through their quarrels and they sometimes show their affection through their actions?"

Chu Jia wasn't feeling great and she obviously couldn't be bothered with what nonsense they were spouting. However, Shang Xia's divine will had already covered the entire ship the moment he arrived. He could hear their conversation loud and clear.

With a strange look on his face, he stared at Chu Jia who was finally getting used to the feeling and the look on his face quickly returned to normal as he acted as though he didn't hear anything.

Shang Xia's way of transporting her might have something to do with it, but Chu Jia refused to say a single word about the Five Element Teleportation Formation no matter how much he wanted her to.

At least he got the hint. He could only wait for her to recover to work on the Five Element Origin Formation she created on the ship. The Five Element Teleportation Formation was shelved for the time being.

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Finally, Chu Jia called Shang Xia over. Other than several key areas on the ship they would need him to personally craft some talismans to prevent anything from going wrong, all she made him do was to stand by in case something went wrong. Every time she activated the formation to test it, he had to be ready to prevent any mishaps. She activated the formation over and over as she completed the modifications to reduce the amount of energy it drew from the elemental essence crystals.

In Shang Xia's eyes, the Five Element Origin Formation was much better than the one on the floating island 3 years ago. In fact, it was much more exquisite.

Currently, Chu Jia was stacking more formations on top of the original Five Element Origin Formation. From the looks of it, she wanted to increase the power it contained while reducing the consumption of elemental essence crystals.

That was all Shang Xia could see at the moment, but he felt that Chu Jia still had other plans.

Eventually, his life as the formation's lifeguard came to an end. Fortunately for him, he was a Martial Dipper Realm expert and had a lot of endurance. If it was anyone else, they would probably be completely sucked dry by Chu Jia.

"Is there a need to lay down such a powerful Five Element Origin Formation on a mere ship?" Shang Xia asked while drinking tea with Chu Jia in one of the halls of the ship. They were seated beside each other in the middle of the hall, while everyone else tried to find a seat at the extreme corners. They wanted to stay as far away from the 2 as possible.

Shang Xia didn't really care, and Chu Jia was oblivious anyway. She didn't seem to notice their actions.

Her thoughts were interrupted by the sudden question and she immediately rolled her eyes in annoyance. "This isn't the only ship we're working on... Once we are sure this formation works, we can copy it and lay down the same formation on their ships!"

Shang Xia took a sip of the tea in his cup and asked, "Even so, there isn't a need for you to be so engrossed with the modifications on this ship, right? Look at yourself. As a rank four Formation Grandmaster of the Formation Hall, you worked yourself so much you're exhausted. Shouldn't your subordinates be helping you and sharing some of this burden?"

It was fine if he didn't mention it, but now that he did, Chu Jia's eyebrows shot up and she snapped, "Oh? Are you really in a position to say something like this?! Oh, mighty Grandmaster Shang is like an elusive dragon in our institution. Do you think it's easy to grab a hold of you whenever we need to work on the formation? Oh yeah, before I forget, you're already a powerful Martial Dipper Realm Ancestor now! Your lofty status puts you high above all of us! Why would a poor young lass like me dare to interrupt you whenever I feel like..."

"Stop, stop, stop!" Shang Xia shut her down hastily and muttered, "Can you keep it down? You're embarrassing us!"

Chu Jia finally realized how worked up she had been and the volume she was speaking at. She also discovered that there were other people in the hall and she glanced at them.

Well... It was fine if she forgot about their existence earlier, but now that she saw them...

Another type of flame was lit in her heart as she slammed her hand on the table and roared, "What the hell are you guys hiding so far away?! Are you guys afraid I'll eat you or something?!"

Shang Xia quickly tried to persuade her to calm down, and everyone in the hall took the chance to escape.

Finally placating Chu Jia and getting her to sit down, he could tell that the anger in her heart hadn't fully dissipated. He quickly changed the topic and started speaking about formations again. "Oh right. From what you were saying earlier, there will be larger ships in the future... Why do we need such large ships?"

Now that they were talking about serious matters again, Chu Jia turned serious again. "You were in the sea of stars for 3 years and you didn't know what happened. As the situation in our Azure Ascension World stabilized, more and more sea creatures started to transform. We humans dominate the land regions in the world and the change isn't too obvious. Back when the worlds collided tens of years ago, the spiritual beasts in our Azure Origin World escaped to the south. We didn't manage to see much of them, but the number of fishes and sea beasts in the sea grew to a frightening number. Now that the Azure Ascension World is stable, they're experiencing some sort of transformation, several high-level sea creatures... Or let's just say the giant beasts in the sea would get worked up from time to time. They would cause massive waves that had the ability to topple hills. Tsunamis became more frequent and under such circumstances, we can only create massive

ships in order to keep ourselves safe if we don't have enough high-level cultivators to protect our members.

"So that's the case..." Shang Xia nodded. However, he continued to ask, "From what I can see, the Five Element Origin Formation is a lot more complicated than it needs to be. Is it really just to prepare to modify the larger ships we have?"

Falling silent for a second, Chu Jia suddenly raised her head to stare into Shang Xia's eyes. She said seriously, "I want to create a flying ship like the Northern Sea Mystic Sect that can travel through space!"

Chapter 797: Begin!

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After Jiu Qi left the Hidden Beast Peak, Feng Yezi transformed into a giant hurricane that roared back to the bamboo residence he built.

The bamboo residence was in an extremely secluded location on the Hidden Beast Peak, and the surroundings were beautiful. The chirping of birds filled the air as swallows jumped from branch to branch. It filled the quiet region with a strong sense of vitality.

"Did he leave?" As Feng Yezi returned, the person sitting on the floor placed the bamboo cup in his hand down as he raised his head to ask.

Feng Yezi glanced at the person's face which had a terrifying scar stretching horizontally across and he sighed silently. "Brother Zhong, aren't you afraid that Jiu Qi would discover your existence?"

Even though the person had a scary appearance due to the scar on his face, he had a trace of elegance as he raised his hand. "I was able to live after escaping from the pursuit back then because I faked my death. Of course I'm not afraid of Jiu Qi finding me. Moreover, powerful Martial Dipper Realm experts like yourself wouldn't care about a mere Martial Extermination Realm cultivator."

Feng Yezi eventually arrived opposite the man and he sat down with his legs crossed together. He asked seriously, "Brother Zhong, are you really confident you can restore your cultivation to the Martial Dipper Realm?"

A frosty light flashed through Brother Zhong's eyes and he glanced at Feng Yezi. "What's the matter? Do you not believe me?"

"That's not it. It's just... I never heard of anyone restoring their cultivation after falling back to the Martial Extermination Realm from the Marital Dipper Realm." Feng Yezi said seriously.

Brother Zhong shorted coldly, "Oh? Have you heard of anyone being able to retain their cultivation at the Martial Extermination Realm after crippling and shattering their fate dipper? I'm living proof that it's possible!"

Feng Yezi fell silent. The old friend he made back in the Jiao Continent was truly a strange man.

Brother Zhong decided to change the topic and he asked, "Why is Jiu Qi looking for you anyway?"

"Oh?" Feng Yezi grunted once before recounting what happened earlier. In the end, he asked, "Brother Zhong, what do you think about my return to the Bing Continent?"

The person before him didn't seem to be listening, and Feng Yezi noticed the strange expression on Brother Zhong's face. However, he was unable to see the expression clearly because of the scar.

"Brother Zhong?" Feng Yezi asked.

Only then did Brother Zhong snap out of it. He rolled his eyes and muttered, "You already accepted the Hidden Wind Fate Dipper. What else can you do?"

He paused slightly before adding, "Whatever it is, I have to advise you to act cautiously. It would be for the best if you refine the Hidden Wind Fate Dipper before doing anything else in the Bing Continent. No. Actually, it would be for the best if you refined the Hidden Wind Fate Dipper here before returning."

A bitter smile appeared on Feng Yezi's face and he mumbled, "Brother Zhong, you know the situation I'm in. Even if the Hidden Wind Fate Dipper is the only way I can improve, I will need some time. It will probably take a year or more for me to complete the initial refinement of the Hidden Wind Fate Dipper. It wouldn't matter if I do it in the Bing Continent as Jiu Qi wouldn't make things difficult for me there. However, if I stay here..."

Brother Zhong also fell quiet for a moment. Only after some time did he speak again, "When you head back to the Bing Continent, why don't you tell Yuwen Changqing your intentions directly? Enter seclusion immediately. Yuwen Changqing is a smart guy. He will know what to do."

"Can I actually do that..." Feng Yezi hesitated slightly.

Brother Zhong chuckled under his breath, "Yuwen Changqing might be trying to make a deal with the Desert Gate, but from what I can see, he doesn't seem to have any other option. He's merely using it to force the Divine Capital Sect to interfere. Once you return to the Bing Continent, he will have achieved his goal."

A sly look flashed through Brother Zhong's eyes the next moment and he muttered, "Didn't you say you were never going back to the Bing Continent when you left the previous time?"

Ignoring Brother Zhong's mockery, Feng Yezi asked, "Brother Zhong, will you follow me back to the Bing Continent?"

With his eyes dimming slightly, Brother Zhong muttered, "I don't think so. Even if I return, I will just be a burden. You need to take care of yourself. Don't try to step into the Tongyou City unless you are confident..."

Feng Yezi laughed, "Before refining the Hidden Wind Fate Dipper, I won't go about risking my life. If I am really able to enter the second element of the Martial Dipper Realm, even Kou Chongxue wouldn't be able to detect my presence!"

Opening his mouth slightly, Brother Zhong wanted to say something but he changed his words at the very last second. "It would be for the best if you don't act carelessly. When you arrive at the Bing Continent, it's not like the Divine Capital Sect can force you to enter the Tongyou City if you choose to ignore them..."

Feng Yezi nodded slightly and chuckled, "Then again, the Tongyou institution is nothing without Kou Chongxue. He's the only one propping it up. The others might be in the Martial Dipper Realm, but without Kou Chongxue, none of them will be able to do a thing to me."

Brother Zhong seemed content with what Feng Yezi had said and when he thought about his old friend's unparalleled ability to escape, coupled with the abilities he would gain if he refined the Hidden Wind Fate Dipper, he understood where Feng Yezi was getting his confidence from. He then asked something else that had been on his mind for some time. "Brother Feng, you said that Jiu Qi mentioned something about how the Yuanchen Sect only managed to evolve to an Elysium after using the Jiao Continent's spiritual root?"

Feng Yezi grunted once in response. "Jiu Qi brought it up casually. He didn't go into it much."

Brother Zhong's gaze turned frosty instantly and he growled, "Brother Feng, I might have guessed why my sect was destroyed..."

"Didn't Gong Xinlan... Wait a second. Do you think the Yuanchen sect supported her during the destruction of the Guiyi Peak?!"

Brother Zhong didn't respond, but the chilly look in his eyes gave Feng Yezi the answer he was thinking about.

Feng Yezi was greatly taken aback by the revelation and he couldn't speak for a long time. Only after a wave of chirps came from the valley outside the bamboo residence he built destroyed the silence did Brother Zhong snap back to reality.

"Brother Feng, before you leave the Hidden Beast Peak, can you clean out those birds? Their cries are irritating me!"

Brother Zhong seemed completely fed up with the nose and Feng Yezi smiled helplessly, "Brother Zhong, how can I wipe out the birds completely? Can there be a mountain peak without birds? After the fusion of the words, heaven and earth qi grew more abundant and spiritual birds aren't the only type of beasts that are growing in number. They are also transforming at a quicker pace..."

Brother Zhong interrupted him by snapping, "Why the hell are those birds flying around here anyway? Look at them! They're staring right at us. They seem to be keeping a close watch on all of us!"

"Brother Zhong!" Feng Yezi had to interrupt him as he exclaimed, "You're being too sensitive. Ever since you were betrayed by your disciple and the Guiyi Peak fell, you have been too suspicious of everything. How will you restore your cultivation if you're so jittery about everything?"

Feng Yezi said something similar to that countless times, but it seemed as though Brother Zhong wasn't taking it to heart.

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Once again, Shang Xia was turned into a tool used to prevent any accidents from happening around the ship.

Ever since Chu Jia told him about her dream of creating a flying ship that could rival that of the Northern Sea Mystic Sect, she paid even more attention to the modifications and improvements of the Five Element Origin Formation.

There was also the matter of the Five Element Qi Gathering Formation that Shang Xia thought of in the past. After telling Chu Jia about the initial design, her interest was piqued due to the similarities it had with the Five Element Origin Formation.

The grand formation on the ship that she 'completed' earlier was immediately revamped. She made tons of modifications to it. She included the qi gathering aspect of it into the grand formation.

Members of the Talisman Hall and Formation Hall were pushed to the point of exhaustion and they were cursing her in countless ways in their hearts. However, with the presence of the Martial Dipper Realm Ancestor, none of them dared to say a word.

Shang Xia would always take some time off during dawn and when the sun was setting to relax on the deck of the ship. He stared at the amazing view while staring at the birds circling the ship.

That was what he did every day, and one fine day, a bird that was nearly double the size of an ordinary Rain Swallow came from the direction of the You Continent. It landed on the mast of the ship and remained completely still.

When Shang Xia arrived for his evening relaxation time, the Rain Swallow released a loud cry. It immediately alerted both Shang Xia and Chu Jia who was following closely behind.

Glancing at the bird on the mast, Chu Jia quickly turned to look at Shang Xia. She realized what had happened and she asked, "Did it fly all the way here to look for you? Is Yu Duhe from the Outreach Division able to command them already?"

Shang Xia chuckled in response, "Of course they won't listen to him. However, he's definitely the person in charge of looking over them..."

Chu Jia naturally knew about matters regarding the Mutated Rain Swallows.

After all, the Tongyou Institution's spatial pouches were pretty famous throughout the Azure Ascension World.

When Shang Xia tamed the Mutated Rain Swallow flock back in the battlefield between the two worlds, there were barely 200 of them. Even though Mutated Rain Swallows didn't reproduce and grow as quickly as ordinary birds, they still managed to reach a sizable number. With the Tongyou Institution's intentional care, there were close to a thousand of them. Every year, they would be able to produce a set amount of swallow fur that would be turned into spatial pouches.

Chu Jia whispered softly, "Do you need to leave right now?"

"Mmm..." Shang Xia muttered, "There's something I need to do."

"Is it going to be dangerous?" Chu Jia asked.

"I'm confident that I can deal with it."

Breaking out into laughter, Chu Jia mumbled, "Alright then. I'm pretty much done with the formation on the ship. Looks like it's going to be difficult to catch a hold of you for some time..."

"It's great I didn't affect the progress of the formation. Alright. I'll be off now." Shang Xia chuckled.

Watching Shang Xia turn around, Chu Jia seemed to have thought of something and she exclaimed, "Oh right. The Five Element Teleportation Formation you told me might not be impossible to deploy. However, it's going to be extremely difficult to make it happen. It's going to be countless times harder than to deploy the Five Element Qi Gathering Formation."

Shang Xia turned around with a wide smile on his face. "I know. Even if we create it, it's probably going to be a rank five formation. You will become a rank five Formation Grandmaster once it's complete. In order to lay down the formation, we might need to shift the resource allocation of the institution... Well, let's not rush things!"

Chu Jia nodded with a soft smile on her face after hearing his explanation.

Opening a spatial tunnel with the Five Element Ring, Shang Xia took a single step and disappeared.

After he left, the spatial gate didn't disappear. The remnant Five Element Dipper Qi he used solidified the area around the spatial gate and it didn't allow the slightest bit of spatial fluctuation to spread around. Chu Jia, who was standing nearby, wasn't affected at all.

Chapter 798: You're Too Polite

In the depths of the Thousand Leaf Mountain Range, a lanky cultivator with a sharp face, and peculiar facial features stood beneath a lush tree. Different birds rested on different parts of his body. He glanced at a distant hill with a look of envy flashing in his eyes from time to time.

All of a sudden, the birds on his body seemed to feel a sense of danger approaching as they scattered. They rose into the air with a loud rustle and were gone in the blink of an eye.

The strange-looking cultivator glanced at his surroundings with suspicion, and his gaze eventually landed in the void before a dense forest a thousand or so feet away.

A five colored light appeared and started to glow with resplendence. It eventually turned into a giant ring that expanded vertically. A formless spatial gate was created.

Shang Xia stepped out from it and he immediately noticed the strange-looking cultivator.

The strange-looking cultivator's body trembled once, and he hastily cupped his hands in greeting. "Yu Duhe from the Outreach Division greets Hall Master Shang!"

Shang Xia cupped his hands to return the greeting. "Chief Yu, it's been long!"

It didn't matter if they were comparing cultivation, strength, status, or position in the Tongyou Institution. Shang Xia was miles ahead. However, if they had to take age and experience into account, Shang Xia was a mere junior of the institution. Shang Xia treated his seniors of the institution the same way. No matter who they were, he would greet them respectfully. He never showed arrogance because of his status as a 'Martial Dipper Realm Ancestor' or a rank five Talisman Grandmaster. He gained widespread recognition in the institution because of that.

Even though Shang Xia said that it had been long since they met, the 2 of them hadn't really interacted much. After realizing Shang Xia was truly as easy to interact with as the rumors said, his pounding heart finally calmed down.

"Please, I mean no disrespect." Yu Duhe muttered and started to walk towards Shang Xia. "According to Sister Yun, we discovered Feng Yezi's whereabouts. The moment we found him, I had to make a report to your esteemed self."

Shang Xia chuckled in response. "Chief Yu, there's no need to speak so politely. No matter what, you taught me back in the institution and I should be calling you 'Teacher Yu'. Let's just drop all of that and you can call me Little Shang like how you did before."

There was no way Yu Duhe would take his word for it and call him Little Shang like before. He laughed in response. "Since that's the case, I'll call you Young Talisman Master Shang. We received several messages from some birds that went to the Divine Capital City in the Si Continent that Ninth Palace Elder, Jiu Qi, met with Feng Yezi in the Hidden Beast Peak 1000 miles north of the city."

Shang Xia gasped softly, "As it turns out, the Divine Capital Sect acted to hide him! It's no wonder no one had news of him for such a long time... I even thought that he buried himself in some nasty mountain or valley in the Jiao Continent..."

"From the news we received, Feng Yezi left the Hidden Beast Peak and is currently moving towards the Bing Continent." Yu Duhe continued.

"Huh?" Shang Xia frowned. "He actually chose to return to the Bing Continent..."

A sneer left his lips the next moment. "We searched high and low for him, but as it turns out, he came right back! Chief Yu, do you know where he is right now?"

Yu Duhe forced a chuckle. "Apologies... Feng Yezi is a Martial Dipper Realm Ancestor and his speed rivals the wind. The birds I command are unable to track him down. However..."

Yu Duhe's gaze landed on the solitary peak not too far away.

Shang Xia followed his gaze and he broke out in laughter. "Chief Yu, have you set your sights on the Mutated Rain Swallows again?"

"All my life, I have loved living among birds... Young Talisman Master Shang, you managed to tame the entire flock of them! All I dream of is for one of them to be my companion..." Yu Duhe smiled in embarrassment.

Shang Xia waved his hands helplessly and muttered, "I only managed to tame them by luck. Even if I wanted to help you, I might not be able to do it... Chief Yu, you will have to rely on yourself if you wish for them to acknowledge you."

Yu Duhe knew that Shang Xia wasn't lying, but he couldn't help but release a soft sigh. There was an unmistakable look of disappointment on his face.

Fortunately, he didn't forget his job and he quickly regained his composure. "If we think about how fast a Martial Dipper Realm expert can fly, only the flock of Mutated Rain Swallows will be able to track him down; Of course, that is only if Feng Yezi doesn't discover them. As long as they don't follow him too closely, and they swap out every part of the journey, he shouldn't be able to feel anything off. He wouldn't think that he would be tracked by birds..."

Shang Xia thought about it for a moment and waved his hand in the direction of the solitary peak. Only after that did he speak to Yu Duhe again. "Chief Yu, you're the best at this. You can make the decisions. All I need to do is to intercept him the moment he enters the Bing Continent."

The words barely left Shang Xia's lips when a loud cry came from the distance. Soon after, a low rumbling of thunder filled the air.

By the time Yu Duhe reacted, a silvery light brushed by him. When he snapped back to attention, he discovered a handsome-looking silver bird standing on Shang Xia's shoulder.

Yu Duhe immediately understood that the silver bird was probably the Lightning Bird in charge of the entire flock. A chill ran down his heart. From the cry of the bird to the way it moved, the Lightning Bird was clearly a rank four spiritual beast!

He imagined what would happen if the Lightning Bird attacked him instead of flying to Shang Xia earlier. His body trembled slightly as he realized he wouldn't be able to fight back in the slightest!

One had to know that when the Lightning Bird appeared, it was alone. There was still an entire flock of Mutated Rain Swallows behind it. There were tens of rank three Mutated Rain Swallows among them and hundreds of rank two birds...

They possessed strength comparable to a giant race!

Yu Duhe couldn't help but thank their lucky stars that the flock of Mutated Rain Swallows was commanded by someone on their side.

Loud cries like thunder interrupted his train of thought and when he turned his head to look at Shang Xia, he discovered a five color light around him. Yellowish-gold, greenish-gold, blueish-gold, reddish-gold, and even orange-gold lightning appeared from it before raining down on the Lightning Bird.

The shrill cries forced Yu Duhe to take several steps back before running away in retreat.

He was completely flabbergasted. He even wondered if he was seeing an illusion. He even wondered if the bird that appeared earlier was a random bird that tried to attack Shang Xia and was getting punished for it.

However, Yu Duhe eventually realized that the bird seemed to be enjoying itself under the shower of lightning as it gave off loud cries from time to time.

This...

The third round of five colored lightning rained down on the bird and it finally showed signs of not being able to hold on any longer. However, it didn't seem to want to give up an opportunity like that.

Shang Xia's voice rang through the air the next moment. "Alright. That's about enough. You're going to injure yourself if you keep this up. It's not very beneficial for your breakthrough to the fifth rank..."

The lightning stopped after he stopped talking. The five colored light ring around him shrank and it eventually returned to his hand.

For it to be able to expand and shrink when one used their inner qi... Yu Duhe obviously knew what it meant! The light ring was a divine weapon!

"This..." Yu Duhe hesitated slightly and wanted to ask but was interrupted by Shang Xia with a smile.

"That's the Lightning Bird and it's the leader of the flock. If you wish to use them to track Feng Yezi down, I'm afraid you will need to get its consent."

"So..." A look of excitement flashed in Yu Duhe's eyes and there was a trace of anticipation within. However, there was also a slight look of fear and complication within.

Shang Xia raised his chin slightly and stared at the bird on his shoulder. "Hey, you have to help this time."

The Lightning Bird immediately released a high-pitched cry.

"Alright, it agreed." Shang Xia turned to Yu Duhe and laughed.

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After leaving the Hidden Beast Peak, Feng Yezi started to travel north without changing his direction. He moved really quickly.

The reason he didn't use any methods to travel through space was because the void above the surface world was much stronger than that in the sea of stars. The space in the vast sea of stars was a lot weaker and he could easily create a spatial tunnel. In the Azure Ascension World, creating a long-range spatial tunnel would consume a lot of energy. He would also mess up the location where he would appear most of the time, and he might run into some dangerous situations if he tried. The losses wouldn't make up for the time he saved.

Perhaps it was because the world was revitalizing, the birds in the south were traveling to the north. Feng Yezi noticed flocks of birds along his way, and there were times when he would discover some of them undergoing transformation. Of course, most of the birds he saw were ordinary ones.

Those who already mutated could fly at high speeds, and he noticed that some of them could maintain the same speed as him in short bursts.

Whatever it was, Feng Yezi didn't conceal his aura too well as he flew. As such, he would be noticed by many of those birds that underwent transformation. There were several birds that seemed a little more courageous and they would try to close in on him. They would probe him out and see if he would threaten their existence.

Feng Yezi couldn't help but sigh. Along with the strengthening heaven and earth qi in the Azure Ascension World, those beasts who had escaped during the collision of the worlds were finally returning.

He didn't chase the birds away as he flew. The reason was because even the strongest mutated birds were second rank spiritual beasts and they couldn't threaten him at all. Also, he felt a little lonely as he made his way north. Those birds seemed to be his only source of entertainment as he flew through the air.

After flying for some time, he closed in on the Bing Continent.

It was also then that a sudden surge of unease filled his heart. As he got closer to the Bing Continent, the feeling got stronger. He was even starting to feel slightly restless.

He promised himself something as he continued on his way. After refining the Hidden Wind Fate Dipper, and returning the favor, he would never step into the Bing Continent ever again. No matter what methods they tried to entice him with, he wouldn't give in!

Well... That was pretty much what he said to Yuwen Changqing when he left the Bing Continent back then, excluding the part about refining the Hidden Wind Fate Dipper.

When he was still feeling extreme unease, he crossed the border and entered the Bing Continent.

It was then that the palpitations in his heart increased and he instinctively released his protection barrier.

Several miles away from him, a five colored light poured out of the void that very instant and turned into a spatial gate.

A figure emerged and stared directly at Feng Yezi.

A giant smile appeared on the face of the person who just appeared. "Senior Feng Yezi! Many greetings! I am Shang Xia of the You Continent!"

Chapter 799: Killing Feng Yezi

"Senior Feng Yezi! Many greetings! I am Shang Xia of the You Continent!"

The moment Feng Yezi saw the young cultivation in front of him, his expression turned serious. In fact, he turned around to escape immediately.

He didn't even hesitate.

One couldn't help but admire his decisiveness and correctness in his decision to run.

Feng Yezi chose when to head up to the Bing Continent and the route to use. Even under such circumstances, he was intercepted the moment he entered the Bing Continent.

How could there be such coincidence in the world?

The instant Shang Xia showed his face, Feng Yezi felt as though he stepped into a trap and turned into someone's prey.

Even though the person standing before him was the youngest Martial Dipper Realm cultivator of the Tongyou Institution who only broke through several years ago, he didn't hesitate to run!

He was a wandering cultivator, but he managed to climb step by step to his current level as a Martial Dipper Realm expert to stand at the peak of the Azure Ascension World. He didn't rely solely on his talent. His decisiveness and caution were the main reason behind it! It was even more important than his amazing ability to escape!

Even Shang Xia, who pretty much predicted Feng Yezi's actions, was slightly taken aback when he saw how quickly the man reacted.

Well, too bad. Shang Xia used a huge portion of the Outreach Division's power and wasted several months of time. He even activated the entire Mutated Rain Swallow flock to track Feng Yezi's whereabouts. He wouldn't allow the old man to run away so easily.

"Interesting..." Shang Xia stared in the direction where Feng Yezi was making his escape and chortled. He activated the talisman in his hand and felt a power rushing into his body.

It was the rank five Abyssal Emptiness Talisman, and it wasn't just used to escape! It allowed the user to travel through the void much more quickly.

More importantly, the user could ignore the spatial fluctuations and could even tear open space to leap a short distance.

With the assistance of the talisman, he managed to play a game of cat and mouse above the Bing Continent. Shang Xia didn't exhaust much of his Five Element Dipper Qi when racing after Feng Yezi, and the distance between them even started to shorten despite his lack of use of inner qi.

Feng Yezi continued to run, but he could feel the aura behind him getting closer and closer.

Even though he was surprised, he didn't panic too much. After all, he was extremely used to escaping. He grabbed the pouch strapped to his waist and he shook it slightly while opening it a little.

A horrifying storm appeared behind him as it swept towards Shang Xia.

Feng Yezi sneered coldly. A wave of inner qi surrounded him and turned into a formless barrier around him. His figure was completely concealed the next moment, and it looked as though he disappeared. The speed at which he could fly increased by a frightening 30 percent! His wind dipper wrapped around him and they turned into a wind awl that flew through the air.

Who would have thought that a five colored light would tear through the storm he created earlier to form a spatial tunnel? Shang Xia crossed the entire region affected by the storm unscathed. He wasn't delayed in the slightest.

The next second, the five colored light ring shrank and flew into his hand.

Looking at the howling winds all around, Shang Xia didn't discover any trace of Feng Yezi. A frown appeared on his face, and he released his powerful divine will. He didn't immediately discover where Feng Yezi was, but he discovered the source of the storm not too far away.

He also noticed a wind awl that split into 3 as it tried to run in 3 different directions.

With a cold snort, Shang Xia locked onto their positions before splitting his consciousness into 3 parts. A reddish-gold lightning bolt flew towards the awl flying in the southwestern direction, and a seven colored sword intent slashed at the awl flying southeast. Another horrifying spear light that eclipsed the radiance of the sun tore through the void and flew south!

The attacks landed at almost the same time and a huge hurricane ensued. Even Shang Xia's divine will was slightly affected as he failed to learn about what happened when his attacks hit.

No matter what, Feng Yezi was a senior in the Martial Dipper Realm. His cultivation might be stagnant in the first element of the Martial Dipper Realm for a long time, but he had a lot of methods to confuse his opponents!

Unfortunately, his special arts were mere gimmicks at the end of the day. One's cultivation was the only thing that mattered at the end of the day. When one side held the absolute upper hand in terms of strength, cheap tricks didn't matter!

Shang Xia tossed the Five Element Ring at his feet and a massive light ring emerged. The newly emerged light ring spun in the opposite direction to his Five Element Ring.

Heavily tapping the light ring that appeared, his Five Element Dipper Qi emerged and turned into a five colored blade light that was hundreds of feet tall. It shot straight at the source of the hurricane that was messing up the space before him at the moment.

A loud rip could be heard in the void as the massive hurricane resembled a rock that was cut in half.

That was Shang Xia's martial intent he comprehended in the Four Constellation Realm, after it was modified by his Five Element Dipper Qi. He called it the Temporal Blade and the moment it sliced the hurricane open, it split off into 4 smaller blade lights. The Spring Blade slashed in the eastern direction, the Summer Blade cleaved down south. The Autumn Blade sundered everything in the west while the Winter Blade fell in the northern direction.

4 terrifying blade light ripped space apart and the hurricane that had split apart earlier weakened even more.

Shang Xia naturally wouldn't stop there. The 4 Season Blades split again, transforming into 24 separate blade qi that slashed away everything in range of his divine will. The skies seemed to be split into many different pieces by the blade qi and every portion was shattered beyond belief.

The hurricane was completely destroyed, and a giant pouch in the air started to shrink before landing on a small awl that was flying away in panic.

When Feng Yezi ran away the moment he saw Shang Xia, one might think that he was acting cautiously. Not many people would think that he would try to counterattack when he was making his escape while pretending to be weak.

If anyone were to underestimate Feng Yezi, who was well known for escaping, they might lose their lives the next moment!

There was no way anyone could underestimate an expert in the Martial Dipper Realm!

There was no Martial Dipper Realm expert who reached their level of cultivation with luck alone.

Shang Xia realized that point when he noticed how Feng Yezi tried to turn around to attack him earlier, but that didn't stop him from continuing the hunt.

Chapter 800: Killing Feng Yezi Pt.2

Neither Shang Xia nor Feng Yezi hide the horrifying clash of dipper qi in the air above the border region of the Bing Continent. The second it happened, the Martial Dipper Realm Ancestors in the region and those stationed in continents nearby were all alerted.

Almost instantaneously, multiple auras tore through the air as powerful divine will extended through the void. Even though they were unable to notice what was going on exactly, they could learn quite a bit from the spatial ripples that were spreading around.

"Isn't that close to the Si Continent?"

"Both their cultivations are at the first element of the Martial Dipper Realm... Interesting!"

"One of them is running away while the other is hunting him down! Hahaha, the person running seems to be heading southwest, towards the borders of the Bing, Si, and Ji continents!"

"Hey, the person running away is really fast... Could that be Feng Yezi?"

"That's strange. The person chasing Feng Yezi is at the same cultivation level. Why the hell is he running away?! Heh, the older he gets, the worse he becomes..."

"He's a disgrace to all Martial Dipper Realm experts..."

"Who's chasing him?"

A powerful divine will reached over from the Liang Continent, covering the Bing, You, Si, and Ji Continents directly.

Everyone present felt a feeling of unease as streaks of light tore through space and raced towards the location of battle.

A single continent in the Azure Ascension World was 10000 to 20000 miles wide. That wasn't a significant distance to experts in the Martial Dipper Realm, and it wouldn't take long for the person to arrive.

To Shang Xia, the key to the entire situation was for him to achieve his goal before Feng Yezi's backup arrived.

After being defeated in the exchange against Shang Xia, Feng Yezi strengthened his resolve to run. His speed increased by another 30 percent as he tried to escape.

Seeing how the distance between them started to grow larger again, Shang Xia reached out and gestured towards the Five Element Ring beneath his feet. The Reversal Five Element Ring emerged and formed a spatial gate before him.

Even though Feng Yezi was disrupting the space around him as he ran, Shang Xia still had the guts to open a spatial tunnel.

The moment he stepped into the gate, Feng Yezi immediately discovered his actions. He snorted under his breath, "Heh, reckless idiot..."

Turning around, he summoned a massive hurricane that caused hundreds of miles of void around him to tremble. The heart of the tornado became a spatial vortex.

Under such powerful spatial disturbances, a region of twisted space started to shatter and a ball of five colored dipper qi fell out from the void. The next moment, a faint figure that resembled a paper figure tumbled and was shredded in an instant.

That was a rank four clone talisman, and it could hide a portion of an expert's aura and qi in it to confuse their target.

They were hundreds of miles away, and with the spatial disturbances, even Feng Yezi wasn't able to discern if the figure who stepped into the spatial gate earlier was Shang Xia's true body or a decoy he made with the Clone Talisman.

Only after the clone was shredded to pieces did he realize he was tricked. Even so, he didn't turn to escape immediately, Instead, he shattered the tornado that stretched from the heavens to the earth below. The spatial vortex broke apart, and spatial ripples spread in all directions. It covered the entire region and when several stray waves propagated to the ground below, dozens of mountain peaks were flattened. Horrifying winds were kicked up, leveling several villages and shattering a wall of a small city nearby. Countless people were killed and injured.

Regardless of the Azure Origin World, Azure Spiritual World, or the current Azure Ascension World, the Martial Dipper Realm experts had an unspoken rule to solve their personal grudges outside the Beyond Heavens Pavilion.

If they had no choice but to come to blows above the surface of the world, they were supposed to suppress the impact and shockwaves produced to ensure the damage done to their surroundings was minimal.

That was because the destructive force caused by their exchange would be too large. If they didn't intentionally restrain the destruction, the continent beneath them would turn into a wasteland.

That would cause too much world origin to leak from the continent below and weaken the world's foundations. It might even enrage the World's Will and cause a massive backlash to the powers backing them.

If Martial Dipper Realm experts act without restraint and destroy everything they like, they would basically be paying for it in the long term.

It was also why Shang Xia and Feng Yezi chose to fight at high altitudes when they first met.

Because he was caught off guard, he chose to descend while lowering his speed greatly. He was sure Shang Xia would appear close to him the next moment to try to deal a deadly blow, and he couldn't be bothered with their unspoken rules or whatever it was at the moment. Even if the shockwaves would affect the land below, he could only think about the consequences after blocking Shang XIa.

After shattering the tornado earlier, Feng Yezi's instinct told him to turn and run. The second he twisted his body, the space beneath him started to tremble as a five colored light emerged.

Shang Xia's expression was solemn as he appeared in mid air. He yanked the Five Element Ring beneath his feet and the divine weapon wrapped around his waist.

The light ring that appeared along with him earlier started to expand further due to his actions and it spread at a terrifying pace. In an instant, the light ring surrounded an area 1000 miles wide.

Every single spatial ripple was squashed within the area contained in the light ring.

The fluctuations that spread to the ground below calmed down in an instant.

"Feng Yezi, you deserve death!" Shang Xia growled as he took a single step to cross the distance between them. He stuck closely behind the old expert as he got ready to deal with his enemy. "Shang Xia, if you dare to continue chasing me, the destruction caused by the shockwaves of our battle will definitely grow in intensity! In times of danger, I won't care about the retaliation from the world!" Feng Yezi didn't seem to care any longer as he roared with rage. The Wind Fate Dipper around him started to fuse with the clouds around him. As he made his escape, clouds appeared to fill the skies and it seemed as though they would block out the skies.

Shang Xia knew that Feng Yezi still had the ability to fight back, but he couldn't back down with things at that point. No matter what, he had to kill Feng Yezi! He couldn't allow a hidden cancer like that to fester.

When the distance between them was barely hundreds of miles apart, Shang Xia wasn't willing to drag things out any longer. He circulated the Five Element Art to its limit and Five Element Dipper Qi poured out from his dantian without end. It went straight into the Five Element Ring, and multiple rings of light emerged and filled the space around him. 30 feet... 100 feet... 3 miles... 10 miles... 300 miles...

The further the light rings were, the dimmer they were. Even so, with Shang Xia's endless support, they continued to extend outwards. It reached a terrifying range of 700 miles, which went past where Feng Yezi was.

That seemed to be the limit of the Five Element Ring after Shang Xia pushed himself to his limit.

When the light rings brushed past his body, Feng Yezi felt himself sinking towards the earth below. He also felt like he was thrown into a quagmire as he wasn't able to fly as quickly.

As panic started to take over, the light ring that extended slightly more than 10 miles away from him started to spin. A five colored light burst with brilliance and the light ring started to turn a lot more corporeal.

Realizing something was amiss, Feng Yezi's countless years of experience running away told him that he had to shatter the five colored light ring immediately and break out from its encirclement.

It was merely ten or so miles away...

"Trap!" Shang Xia's voice rang through the air the next second.

Feng Yezi felt the pressure on him receding and he instinctively pushed himself to the limit as he tried to break out from the light ring.

It was merely ten or so miles. Feng Yezi pushed his fate dipper to the limit, but the distance between himself and the light ring didn't seem to be reducing...

There was something wrong with the space he was in...

Feng Yezi realized what happened the next second and his gaze turned to the ground beneath him. Indeed... The earth below looked like it was glazed over.

The region of space he was in was completely separated from where he originally was!

Turning abruptly, he saw Shang Xia standing in the void hundreds of miles away. The five colored light ring that was 700 miles wide earlier shrank to merely 200 miles or less.

"You..." Feng Yezi barely got the word out of his mouth when he saw Shang Xia forming a seal with his hands.

## "Suppress!"

The next moment, Feng Yezi felt the pressure from before returning with a vengeance. He felt as though a mountain had descended on him and because he was forced towards the ground. He had to circulate his inner qi to its limit to hold out.

Whatever the case, Feng Yezi wasn't someone who would accept his defeat quietly. Even with the weight of a mountain pressing down on him, he still had some strength left over to resist.

Retrieving the Wind Pouch from his waist, huge clouds emerged from within. The Wind Fate Dipper that surrounded him fused into the cloud as it quickly filled up the sealed space within Shang Xia's light ring. It started to rotate in an anticlockwise direction, but Shang Xia didn't seem to care. He continued to push his Five Element Dipper Qi into the Five Element Ring and he formed another hand seal. "Bind!"

The cloud that Feng Yezi summoned earlier seemed to break off into parts as several portions formed strange illusory-like ropes that wrapped around different parts of his body and prevented him from moving as he pleased.

Before they could completely seal off his movements, his Wind Fate Dipper snapped them apart.

Unfortunately, the ropes continued to form. No matter how hard Feng Yezi tried to chop away at them, he couldn't get them all.

While he was getting rid of the restraints on him, the cloud that he summoned earlier picked up speed and a terrifying gale started to form.

Shang Xia didn't care though. He continued to explore the properties of his Five Element Dipper Qi and he wanted to use the most natural way to carry out the biggest eruption he could cause. Eventually, he formed another intricate hand seal and muttered, "Incinerate!"

Heat waves were created in the region of separate space as they rushed at Feng Yezi from different directions.

The effect seemed a little less impressive this time. The cloud greatly diminished the heat waves before it could hit, and they barely caused Feng Yezi to use any energy to deal with them.

Not discouraged, Shang Xia stood calmly in his spot as he quietly comprehended the intricacies of his Five Element Dipper Qi. After some time, he created another hand seal. "Absorb!"

A strange power appeared within the area contained in the light ring and it seemed to suck away at Feng Yezi's energy.

Lethargy, depression, and a feeling of aging filled Feng Yezi's body. His skin started to dry up as his hair turned snowy white. His face became sunken and the look in his eyes became turbid. Even his back started to hunch...

Vitality... He was losing vitality at a shocking rate! In the region of separate space, Shang Xia was actually sucking away Feng Yezi's vitality!

Finally, a trace of fear filled Feng Yezi's heart. He circulated his inner qi to his limit as the protection barrier around him became even more solid. Only then would he be able to reduce the amount of vitality he was losing!

While fighting against the suction force that was drawing the life force from him, he had to resist the strange pressure. He also had to deal with the ropes that were trying to tie him up while splitting off a part of his consciousness to nullify the heat waves from earlier.

Feng Yezi realized that he couldn't hold on for too long. He was about to be sapped completely dry before he could do anything!

Forcing his organs to tremble, Shang Xia spat a mouthful of his essence blood onto the Wind Pouch.

A blood mist burst forth as his essence blood touched the pouch. It dyed it a faint shade of crimson, but the cloud and wind around him started to spin even faster. The only part of the separate space that wasn't filled with the white clouds was where Shang Xia was standing!

Shang Xia didn't notice the changes in the clouds around him. As the person who created the region of separate space, he was able to observe everything that was happening inside. When the area around him was cleared out, a name he hadn't thought of in a long time appeared in his mind. *Eye of the storm!* 

Even so, Shang Xia was indifferent. He carried out his plan according to what he came up with earlier.

A Martial Dipper Realm Ancestor was hard to kill. Especially in a one-on-one battle. Cultivators of the same level would be competing to see who exhausted their energy first!

That was the situation they were both in. Shang Xia was trying his best to shave away at Feng Yezi's final bit of energy. Otherwise, Feng Yezi would be able to shatter the confinement he was in and escape!

Quietly feeling the inner qi in his body, he wanted to attempt to release another seal of the Metal Element.

However, a loud blast rang through the air and the region of separate space started to tremble.

Feng Yezi's backup had arrived!