

The Heavens 91

Chapter 91: Descent of the Divine Weapon!

The speed of a Martial Extermination Realm cultivator couldn't be compared to those under them.

As the two groups fought, they soon approached the Four Spiritual Peak.

Under Shang Bo's constant suppression, Lang Jingyun spat out too many mouthfuls of blood to count.

However, his tenacity was astounding. He held on all the way.

Both sides could see that he was forcefully holding on in order to make his way back.

The Four Spiritual Peak wasn't too far away, and all he needed to do was to retreat in one piece.

The moment he did, the protection formation around the Four Spiritual Peak would assist him and he wouldn't lose to Shang Bo!

Ji Wenlong and the others naturally saw through their intentions and knew that it was impossible for them to stop the other party's retreat! However, they could whittle away at the other party's strength before they returned. They could cause the strongest combatants of the Four Spiritual Peak to suffer from hidden injuries, and in the best case scenario, they might even be able to kill one!

Lang Jingyun turned into the easiest target!

Now that there were only four Martial Extermination Realm cultivators of the Four Spiritual Peak, the weakest of them all was Lu Zhanyi. However, he was the hardest to kill due to his wings. He could move nimbly through the air while avoiding their attacks.

Lang Jingyun came next, and he might be at the second layer of the Martial Extermination Realm, but he was young and inexperienced! His age was a weakness now, but that proved that he possessed extreme potential. If they allowed him to mature and grow, who knew what would happen in the future? As such, he became their target.

Lang Xiaoyun noticed the point too, and he ignored Ji Wenlong's presence to assist the others' escape.

If not for Lu Zhanyi's help to distract the enemies, Lang Jingyun wouldn't have lasted so long.

When Lu Zhenyi tried to help Lang Jingyun again, Shang Bo saw an opportunity and chopped off one of his wings!

Lu Zhanyi, who was relying solely on his wings to outrun the enemy, fell into a terrible state. The pressure on Lang Jingyun also increased exponentially.

The weaker Lang Jingyun became, the stronger Shang Bo's killing intent!

The most terrifying part about that was that Shang Bo was using the opportunity to improve himself!

After he revealed his cultivation and severely injured Yuwen Shengjie, everyone knew that he was close to entering the fourth layer of the Martial Extermination Realm.

With Lang Jingyun as his whetting stone, he was able to improve himself through battle and reach a whole new level!

When that happened, his cultivation would reach the same level as Ji Wenlong and he would stand at the edge of the Fifth Order of the Primary Realm!

Lang Jingyun was evidently too weak to put up any more resistance, but the Four Spiritual Peak was just up ahead!

A massive Rain Swallow appeared in the distance and Yan Su'er's weary voice rang through the skies, "Why do you have to behave so overbearingly and force us to the point of no return? ... Cough, cough..."

She didn't forget to cough a few times at the end to show that her injuries were still serious.

Even though she spoke slowly, the phantom of the rain swallow that appeared moved at a terrifying speed.

A blur could be seen in the air and the sound of whistling tore through the skies. Just that point alone proved how much stronger she was than Yan Que.

Shang Bo turned serious, but not a trace of fear could be seen on his face. There wasn't any intention of backing down either. The Nine Firefly Lance in his hand started to shine and the glow would increase with every breath he took.

Stabbing it forward, it clashed with the phantom of the rain swallow. With a loud cry, the bird exploded.

The enormous shockwave also pushed Shang Bo back slightly.

Lang Jingyun took the chance to retreat.

Even so, Shang Bo didn't let up. "I heard that Grandma Yan is injured, but from the looks of it, you're completely alright! Since you chose to join the battle, why don't you go all out and let me work my muscles a bit? Don't tell me you're intentionally avoiding the battle by pretending to be hurt?"

"Cough, cough... I might be injured by that old freak's sneak attack, but now that you brought the battle over to my Four Spiritual Peak, I'll stop you even if it costs me my life!" Yan Su'er growled. She didn't stop there. "Brat from the Lang clan, hurry up and retreat! What are you waiting for?"

Lang Jingyun no longer hesitated and he increased his speed. "Many thanks for Elder Yan's help!"

"I won't be able to hold on for long..." Yan Su'er gasped for air, as she looked at Shang Bo.

Even though he was stopped for a mere second, it was more than enough for Lang Jingyun to run far away. Just a little more and he would enter the range of the protection formation.

In his final desperate attempt, Shang Bo raised his NINE Firefly Lance and stabbed it towards the fleeing Lang Jingyun.

His fourth strand of extermination origin that was flickering before finally turned solid and fused with the other three.

At the critical moment, Shang Bo finally managed to refine his fourth extermination origin and enter the peak of the Martial Extermination Realm.

Even so, his lance came a little too late as Lang Jingyun ran into the area covered with the protection formation.

Unlike the Tongyou Peak's protection formation, the moment Shang Bo's attack landed on it, an explosion of lights could be seen.

Even with the protection of the barrier, a portion of the energy seeped through and slammed heavily into Lang Jingyun's back.

"Ah!" Lang Jingyun yelled before spitting out a mouthful of blood. His face turned ashen gray and an expression of defeat hung on his face.

After Lang Jingyun escaped, Lang Xiaoyun, Ran Biluo, and Lu Zhanyi forced their opponents away before rushing back into the Four Spiritual Peak.

To not reciprocate in kind wasn't something Ji Wenlong and the others would do.

Even though they knew that the chance to kill the opponent's Martial Extermination Realm cultivator had slipped through their fingers, Ji Wenlong and the others wanted to vent their anger on the Four Extermination Peak.

Of course, breaking through with them alone would be a tall order. Even so, messing with them was something Ji Wenlong and the others were more than capable of. They bombarded the protection formation with everything they got, causing huge explosions of light. It was a rare sight to behold as not many great wars would take place.

As they vented their anger on the protection barrier, the Four Spiritual Peak trembled violently.

The only person capable of holding the formation steady was the 'injured' Yan Su'er as the cultivators who just returned were completely worn out.

After Lang Xiaoyun and the others returned, they felt that there was no way the protection formation would fall from their attacks and they chose to return to their cultivation caves to recover.

They conveniently forgot that they were the ones who started the war. When they killed their way over to the Tongyou Peak, there was no such thing as going too far and forcing the other party into a corner. Now, they finally managed to return to safety. Since there was no threat of destruction, they knew that Ji Wenlong and the others would leave eventually after getting rid of their frustrations.

As for the disciples of the Four Spiritual Peak, none of them dared to return when they witnessed the scene around the mountains. That was to say that the Four Spiritual Peak was an empty shell at that moment!

Now that they were lacking in manpower, Yan Su'er had to power all four protection formations on the four peaks on her own! It was definitely beyond her ability to do so!

Originally, Ji Wenlong and the others thought that they wouldn't be able to achieve much. Who would have thought that the protection formation of the Four Spiritual Peak was about to crumble after several rounds of bombardment?!

The four of them who were planning to retreat changed their minds. Ji Wenlong and Shang Bo stared at each other and circulated their inner qi. It seemed as though they wouldn't stop till they destroyed the barrier!

All of a sudden, a loud whistle came from the distance. The sound filled the entire battlefield between the two worlds.

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The whistling caused the heaven and earth qi to fluctuate wildly. It was as though they were cheering and paying respect to something.

The protection formation around the Four Spiritual Peak became stable all of a sudden.

Ji Wenlong and the others felt their inner qi trembling uncontrollably and there were signs that it was going out of control.

Stabilizing their inner qi, Ji Wenlong frowned, "Is the Azure Spiritual World going to allow the divine weapon to descend?!"

The words barely left Ji Wenlong's lips when the whistling sound stopped abruptly. It sounded a little offended, but it soon became even sharper.

Ji Wenlong and the others felt a trace of pain shooting through their bodies.

A second whistling sound came from behind Ji Wenlong and the others all of a sudden, soothing the pain they felt.

"Is the Azure Origin World also going to allow the divine weapon to descend?" Yan Su'er's voice rang from deep within the mountains.

Ji Wenlong looked at Shang Bo and they nodded in unison. They chose to retreat back to the Tongyou Peak.

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In one of the hidden valleys, a cultivator of the Four Spiritual Peak escaped frantically as he didn't know how his movements were revealed. A squad from the Tongyou Peak arrived to cut off his escape.

With nowhere to run, the cultivator of the Four Spiritual Peak could only give up his life.

"This should be the third Martial Intent Realm cultivator we killed..." Yun Yifei looked at Shang Xia who was happily looting the body and continued, "Little Xia, don't you think it's weird? Most of the cultivators we killed were from the Wind Swallow Race. The three Martial Intent Realm cultivators who died in our hands were also from the Wind Swallow Race!"

Chapter 92: Huge Gains

When Shang Xia called for the Lightning Bird, he used the flock of Mutated Rain Swallows to look for traces of the cultivators of the Four Spiritual Peak who were completely disoriented from their escape.

He found something weird too. Many of the cultivators from the Four Spiritual Peak didn't choose to head back to their territory. Instead, they started to scatter all over the place.

Even though he had no idea what was going on, it was great news for Shang Xia and the others.

With the Mutated Rain Swallows guiding them, they were able to accurately pick off those who were out of place. They could also accurately estimate the strength of those who were running off in groups to decide whether or not to make a move on them.

As such, their efficiency was great! The number of cultivators at the Martial Extremity Realm who died in their hands numbered close to ten. They even managed to kill three cultivators at the Martial Intent Realm!

One had to know that even during the battle, the number of Martial Intent Realm cultivators on the Tongyou Peak who died numbered less than ten!

The casualties of Martial Intent Realm cultivators on the side of the Four Spiritual Peak were a little more than theirs, but they wouldn't go so far as to say that twenty of them died.

No matter which side it was, the Martial Intent Realm cultivators were the true backbone of their fighting strength. Every one of them that died would drastically reduce the fighting strength of their faction.

The only weird thing that Shang Xia and gang experienced was that those who they killed along the way were cultivators of the Wind Swallow Race.

After Yun Yifei noticed it, Shang Xi did too. "Yeah... All of them are cultivators of the Wind Swallow Race with the Sparrow Bloodline!"

Yun Zhidai thought for a second and continued, "No wonder they're so easy to kill. I heard that cultivators with the Swallow Bloodline are comparable to those who had comprehended a martial intent. At the same cultivation level, they would be able to suppress us in a one-on-one fight!"

Sun Haiwei raised an eyebrow in surprise. "That might not be the case. Maybe we managed to kill more of them because they sent more members to the battlefield?"

Thinking about it, it was indeed easier for cultivators in the Azure Spiritual World to cultivate compared to those in the Azure Origin World.

Yun Yifei turned to Shang Xia and a smirk formed on her face. "Alright, alright, let's hear it from the kid himself. Little Xia, explain what's going on."

Sun Haiwei and Yun Zhidai turned to look at him.

The two of them were seriously shocked when they saw how the Lightning Bird landed on his arm before they set off.

After learning that the Lightning Bird controlled a giant flock of Mutated Rain Swallows and that Shang Xia could communicate with them, envy filled their hearts.

Shang Xia thought for a second and shook his head. “I don’t know what’s going on either. I can only make a guess.”

“Maybe, the bloodlines of those in the Wind Swallow Race resonate with the Mutated Rain Swallows and they’re easier to find! Of course, it’s also possible that they’re taking revenge on those of the Wind Swallow Race!” Shang Xia explained.

Soon, Shang Xia told them about the fact that the members of the Wind Swallow Race raided the nest of the Mutated Rain Swallows.

Yun Yifei chuckled in amusement, “I heard that the conflict between those with the Swallow Bloodline and the Sparrow Bloodline became extremely intense right before the battle. The number of cultivators who had the Swallow Bloodline and joined in the battle was few and far between. A Martial Extermination Realm expert with the Sparrow Bloodline was killed. Now, we killed another three of them at the Martial Intent Realm. Adding on those killed by other people, those with the Sparrow Bloodline would decline greatly! Wouldn’t this mean that we’re helping those with the Swallow Bloodline?”

Shang Xi snorted, “Perhaps those with the Swallow Bloodline have been using us to plot against the rest.”

Since Shang Xia was completely responsible for what was going on in the Wind Swallow Race, he knew better than any one of them.

Of course, he couldn’t say a thing about it. He laughed it off, “Whatever the case, those who died are from the Four Spiritual Peak. Our opponent will become weaker no matter what.”

Yun Yifei added, “Yeah! They are experts in the Martial Intent Realm anyway. We get to keep their treasures after killing them. We can also gain some merits in the institution. Why shouldn’t we kill them?”

Realizing that Sun Haiwei and Yun Zhidai were starting to believe his nonsense, he chuckled, “Shall we continue?”

The group continued on their way, but suddenly, a loud whistle tore through the battlefield between two worlds.

The moment they heard it, Shang Xia felt the inner qi in his body going out of control. His consciousness turned fuzzy.

Instinctively, Shang Xia rotated the Yin Yang Diagram in his dantian. The inner qi that was rampaging around his body started to calm down.

At the same time, he heard a yell from Yun Yifei. “It’s a divine weapon! Quick, focus your attention on your inner qi and control it properly!”

Shang Xia looked at the others, including Shang Xi, who had closed her eyes to focus on circulating her inner qi.

After thinking about it for a second, he closed his eyes too and pretended to circulate his inner qi with much difficulty.

It didn't take long for another screeching to pierce through the air. It countered the whistling that came earlier.

Shang Xia could feel a wave of comfort washing through his body when the second sound came. He seemed to become much more alert too.

Opening his eyes slowly he saw Yun Yifei and Shang Xi heaving a sigh of relief.

“Luckily, our Tongyou Institution also has the protection of the divine weapons!”

Shang Xi got to her feet, and Yun Yifei did the same. By that time, Sun Haiwei and Yun Zhidai also managed to suppress their inner qi.

Shang Xi muttered, “If Patriarch Kou is recovering from his injuries, Deputy Patriarch Yun should be the one who used the Hidden Snow Sword to threaten the passage between the battlefield...”

Yun Yifei shook her head and sighed, “This isn't something we're qualified to know about.”

Weapons were split into two different tiers. Graded weapons were of the lower tier and they were split into high, mid, and low grades. Divine weapons were shrouded in mystery. Shang Xia didn't know too much about it, and all he knew was that they were split up into four different levels. They were the Heaven, Earth, Xuan, and Yellow grades respectively. Of course, there were some differences at each level. That was about all he knew.

Shang Xia believed that even Yun Yifei and Shang Xi wouldn't know much about them.

Thinking of something, Shang Xi added, “That's probably the reason why they didn't return to the Four Spiritual Peak!”

Shang Xi continued, “The Four Spiritual Peak probably brought out their divine weapon in order to scare Deputy Patriarch Ji and the others away! The cultivators of the Four Spiritual Peak who were retreating should be afraid that they would be killed by the backlash of the exchange between the Martial Extermination Realm cultivators.”

One had to admit that she was extremely sharp. She managed to understand what was going on immediately.

Yun Yifei nodded in acknowledgment. “That has to be it. The Four Spiritual Peaks wouldn't bring out their divine weapon otherwise. Despite our institution reacting quickly, the exchange between the Martial Extermination Realm cultivators won't last for long...”

Yun Zhidai added, “Wouldn't that mean that the cultivators of the Four Spiritual Peak would be returning soon?”

Sun Haiwei jumped to her feet, “What are we waiting for? We'll take advantage of this and kill them before they return!”

The four ladies turned to look at Shang Xia, but all they heard was a loud screech coming from above.

The four of them looked up, only to see a silver light falling straight towards Shang Xia's shoulders. The Lightning Bird started to chirp urgently.

No one knew why, but they seemed to hear a sense of urgency in its chirps.

Shang Xia rubbed its ears slowly to calm it down, but his expression started to turn serious. “Danger? There’s danger everywhere?! Even you guys were affected?”

Shang Xia tried to understand what it was saying exactly, but due to the difference in breed, it was hard for them to communicate.

Now, the Lightning Bird seemed to have lost control of itself. The killing intent that was ingrained deep in its bones started to show itself once more.

Shang Xia could tell the general message the Lightning Bird was trying to tell him. The sense of danger seemed to have taken over the entire flock of Mutated Rain Swallows.

Turning to Yun Yifei and Shang Xi, Shang Xia muttered, “Something seems to be wrong. We gained quite a lot this time and I suggest that we play safe and return to the Tongyou Peak.”

Yun Zhidai hesitated for a second. “Are you sure? Is it possible that the news isn’t accurate?”

Shang Xia ruffled the feathers of the Lightning Bird and said seriously, “I trust the little creature!”

Even though he said that, Shang Xia sighed softly in his heart. If only he brought Yan Ni’er with him. He would be able to understand it a lot better than the Lightning Bird!

However, the bird seemed to be wholly focused on its egg. No one knew if any one of the eggs would hatch into a little Yan Ni’er.

Shang Xi and Yun Yifei exchanged glances and Yun Yifei eventually broke the silence, “Little Xia is right. However, we don’t need to return immediately. We can take the other route back. We might run into several cultivators of the Four Spiritual Peak that way!”

Thinking that it was a good idea, Shang Xia was about to agree. However, dozens of Mutated Rain Swallows rushed out of the forestry and chirped violently.

Shang Xia was stunned for a second and he yelled, “There’s a lot of dangerous creatures running over in our direction right now!”

Yun Yifei was stunned for a second, but Shang Xi seemed to have thought of something.

“Beast tide?”

The blood drained from Yun Yifei’s face and her voice trembled weakly, “Quick! Report this to Deputy Patriarch Ji and the others! We have to warn the Tongyou Peak immediately!”

Chapter 93: One Step Ahead

Yun Yifei tore a talisman in her hand and a streak of light tore through the space and shot in the direction of the Tongyou Peak.

At almost the same time, a talisman in Shang Xi’s hand was torn apart and it turned into a little golden spear that flew in the direction of the Four Spiritual Peak.

“We notified both Deputy Patriarch Ji and Deputy Patriarch Shang! I also sent a report to the Tongyou Peak! We should find a way to notify the others!” Yun Yifei patted the head of her horse and signaled to Shang Xia.

Shang Xi sighed, “We did what we could. We shall leave the rest up to fate! Xia’er, lead us back to the Tongyou Peak!”

In order to arrive back at the quickest speed possible, they needed the Lightning Bird’s help to avoid all the dangers they could. As such, Shang Xia had to take the lead again.

“No... This might be a good chance for us!”

Shang Xia raced forward and killed a creature that looked like a cat that pounced towards him.

“If the cultivators of our Tongyou Peak manage to retreat with as few casualties as possible, won’t the cultivators of the Four Spiritual Peak be in deep trouble?”

“Hey, that’s a Spiritual Roosting Cat! Its fur is a rank one ingredient! Don’t waste it!” Shang Xi yelled and she twisted her body to throw the body of the cat into the pouch on the Scarlet Cloud Horse.

By the time the beast tide came, their pouches were bulging, showing how much they gained from their journey.

Yun Yifei’s expression became a little solemn and she muttered, “A Spiritual Roosting Cat is extremely sensitive to its surroundings. Even though it’s not that strong, Martial Intent Realm cultivators won’t be able to capture it easily. Now, it attacked us on its own accord! Looks like the beast tide is real...”

Yun Zhidai yelled from the back, “Shang Xia, will your birds be affected by the beast tide?”

Her words stabbed right into the fears of those present. That was exactly what Shang Xi and Yun Yifei were afraid of too.

If the little birds were affected by the beast tide and went crazy, it wouldn’t matter much if they were to attack the squad. If they led the squad into an encirclement of other beasts, they would really be in trouble!

“Nope!” Shang Xia declared confidently without even turning around.

As soon as he spoke, a Mutated Rain Swallow flew over and perched on his shoulders.

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Shang Xia ruffled its feathers to check for any injuries, and he was met with a happy cry from the little bird. It didn’t take long before they returned to the air.

“What are you doing? So many birds came over to you since the beast tide started. Are you really able to talk to them?” Sun Haiwei asked.

“Hehe, that’s because they really like me.” Shang Xia dismissed their questions with some random reason.

In fact, Shang Xia found it weird when it just happened. Everything started from the time the Lightning Bird landed on him.

When the Lightning Bird discovered the abnormalities in its body and ran over to Shang Xia, it was extremely flustered and terrified. It seemed to be losing control of its body entirely!

Shang Xia tried to calm it down by petting it, but the Lightning Bird wasn't having any of it at first. He thought of using his inner qi to suppress the rampaging inner qi in the little creature's body, and the moment he did, the Lightning Bird started to calm down.

It didn't just calm the fluctuating inner qi in the Lightning Bird's body. The killing intent and fear it felt dissipated slowly.

Shang Xia even started to understand the bird better!

Soon after, the Lightning Bird pointed out the way to safety and the Mutated Rain Swallows in the air started to land on Shang Xia.

Every time they did, he used his inner qi to calm them down. Luckily for him, he possessed extremely dense inner qi. Otherwise, he would have exhausted himself trying to calm down more than two hundred Mutated Rain Swallows!

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Shang Bo received a tiny golden spear and he showed the report to the other three.

Liu Qinglan was the most anxious of the group, and Shang Bo had already expected her to lose her composure. His extermination origins flashed and he formed a barrier around the four of them.

"We need to return right now!" She yelled.

Shang Lubing hesitated for a second before asking, "Beast tide? Is the news reliable? How did they discover the appearance of a beast tide?"

It wasn't that he didn't believe the report. However, it was true that things were a little suspicious. They were merely a ragtag group of Martial Intent Realm cultivators. How could they accurately report on a beast tide?

Ji Wenlong growled in response, "Old Shang, let's return and talk about the matter of your true identity!" Turning to Shang Bo, he continued, "Did the report state that Shang Xia discovered the beast tide? If it's him, I'll believe it."

Liu Qinglan and Shang Lubing stared at him in shock. Shang Bo was equally surprised by Ji Wenlong's trust in his grandson.

Everyone there knew that the relationship between the Ji Family and the Shang Family wasn't great.

Strictly speaking, it was because of Ji Wenlong's disdain for Shang Bo.

That was something everyone in the upper echelon of the institution knew.

Shang Bo's expression turned gloomy and he muttered, "So... This beast tide is real then?"

Liu Qinglan continued, "Since that's the case, we should return! It's not like we can break the protection formation around the Four Spiritual Peaks now."

Shang Bo glanced at Ji Wenlong and muttered, "Yeah, we have to return, but..."

"Go back to the Tongyou Peak. Instructor Liu, sound the Tongyou Bell when you return and gather all the disciples who are out." Ji Wenlong sighed.

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A giant flame beacon was lit on the Tongyou Peak, and it was a signal for the disciples to return as quickly as they could.

Slightly more than a hundred miles away, Shang Xia gathered more than 20 cultivators of the Tongyou Peak as they rushed back.

Most of them were on the way back, and when they ran into Shang Xia, they joined his group.

There were also some who refused to believe the news of the beast tide and chose not to return with Shang Xia. They continued to hunt down the experts of the Azure Spiritual World.

Shang Xia couldn't help everybody, and he could only bring those who wanted to return.

With the Lightning Bird leading the way, they managed to avoid a lot of dangers on their way back. That served to boost the confidence of the cultivators on his side and the group became larger and larger.

Of course, the larger their group grew, the more they stood out. Their movement attracted a lot of attention and trouble came knocking.

Luckily for them, the beasts that approached weren't in packs. They ran into individual beasts and Shang Xia managed to warn the rest before the beast attacked!

When they ran into a horde of mice, one of the cultivators who was bitten on the leg growled, "How dare these freaks attack us? They would avoid us normally and prey on weaker creatures! Looks like they're going crazy from the upcoming beast tide..."

Because of that, those who held doubts about the authenticity of Shang Xia's report placed down their suspicion.

Shang Xi stared at Yun Yifei and the two of them leaped off their horses in unison. "Those who are injured, get on the horse! Do not affect our speed when returning! If we fail to return to the Tongyou Peak before the beast tide comes, we'll be in a lot of trouble!"

There were other riders who handed over their horses as well.

No one knew when, but Wu Tinghai appeared beside Shang Xi and Yun Yifei. "It's a pity there are no Martial Extermination Realm cultivators at the Tongyou Peak now to ring the Tongyou Bell! Otherwise, we'll be able to warn the others!"

Shang Xi and Yun Yifei retreated to Shang Xia's side without another word and protected him from the beasts.

Shang Xi didn't turn her head when she heard Wu Tinghai's concern. "We can't do anything about it. We sent out the reports of what had happened. They should have received the report. Even though the Tongyou Bell hasn't rung, the beacon has been lit. Those within a ten-mile radius should be able to receive the warning."

"Looks like we can only leave it up to fate." Yun Yifei sighed.

Wu Tinghai sucked in a cold breath, but his gaze was soon attracted to the Mutated Rain Swallows that landed on Shang Xia's shoulders ever so often. "Looks like our leader of the outer divisions will be gaining huge credit this time!"

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Outside the Four Spiritual Peak...

The experts of the Tongyou Peak took their leave, and calm returned to their territory.

No one knew how long it had been but Yan Su'er's figure appeared outside the barrier to check if Ji Wenlong and the others had really returned.

She barely left ten feet from the barrier when her expression changed. The staff in her hand swung outwards as she flew back into the barrier with the quickest speed she could muster.

The moment she did, a four-colored blade light appeared from the clouds hundreds of feet away. That wasn't all. A long lance fell from the skies and shot towards Yan Su'er's skull.

She might have entered the barrier, but facing two attacks from fourth layer Martial Extermination Realm cultivators, the barrier was far from enough!

At the critical moment, she could no longer care that she was pretending to be injured! With a weird cry, a giant Rain Swallow made from heaven and earth qi appeared behind her. She seemed to have turned into a weird creature with the body of a bird and a human's head!

"Rip!"

The protection screen around the Four Spiritual Peak seemed to be ripped apart by the blade light. Even though it restored itself as quickly as it could, the lance went through.

"Boom!"

The Rain Swallow phantom behind her shattered completely and she spat out a mouthful of blood. She nearly fell to the ground.

The protection formation seemed to have sensed the threat all of a sudden and it started operating at full power! The shockwaves were completely suppressed.

"Lang Xiaoyun, Ran Biluo, the two of you allowed me to be hit on purpose!" Yan Su'er's voice rang through the Four Spiritual Peak.

Chapter 94: Ji Wenlong's Concerns

"Yan Su'er was hiding her strength!" Shang Bo roared after his attack connected.

"Oh?" Ji Wenlong frowned. "Don't tell me she reached the fourth layer..."

Shang Bo thought about it for a second before shaking his head. "Not yet. She should be like me. She condensed her fourth extermination origin, but she hasn't refined it completely."

Ji Wenlong snorted in contempt, "That old fox... if not for the fact that we worked together, we might be the ones suffering from her plot! Who would have thought that she hid her true strength previously?" He thought for a moment before continuing, "So... Her injuries aren't as heavy as it seems, right?"

Shang Bo thought about it again and explained, "We were only planning to scare them so that they won't leave the mountain for some time. We can delay their response to the beast tide. We managed to accomplish our goal either way. It doesn't matter if her injuries are serious or not."

Ji Wenlong nodded slowly. However, he sighed regretfully the next moment, "Too bad the one to come out was her. If it was anyone else, we would have been able to deal them a heavy blow! Even Lang Xiaoyun wouldn't be able to avoid being seriously injured! With the arrival of the beast tide, their defenses might be torn right open! What a pity!"

Another sigh left his lips.

Shang Bo chuckled in response, "The effects of the beast tide won't be too excessive. After all, we'll be affected by it too. Don't forget, Old Liu is stuck at the Coral Forest thanks to the Rose Party. Unless we choose not to do anything about it, the Four Spiritual Peak would be able to catch their breath."

Ji Wenlong snorted angrily, "He's only capable of messing things up for us!"

Shang Bo naturally wouldn't take his words seriously. Ji Wenlong and Liu Jitang could be said to be true brothers in arms. Their friendship was real. Otherwise, he wouldn't rush over to the Tongyou Peak the moment Liu Jitang went missing.

"However..." Shang Bo hesitated slightly.

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Clearing his throat, Shang Bo continued, "Chief Ji, have you thought that Yan Su'er's reaction was too exaggerated? She revealed her strength to us the moment my attack connected. I definitely know how strong she is. There was no need for her to act like her injury was so serious..."

A light flashed in Ji Wenlong's eyes. "Do you mean... She was putting on a show for Lang Xiaoyun and the rest?"

"Haha, if I'm not wrong, the conflict in the Four Spiritual Peak is much more serious than we thought. Yan Su'er can't fool us now. Instead, she used us to put on a show for the other members of the Four Spiritual Peak. We can sit back and watch the show unfold!" Shang Bo grinned.

Ji Wenlong muttered softly, "Now that we know her true strength and the other Martial Extermination Realm cultivator of her race is dead, she should have consolidated all her power. I'm afraid only the three other races will be able to..."

Ji Wenlong sighed once again and he turned to Shang Bo. He turned serious all of a sudden, "Little Shang, Oh, I'll call you fourth brother from now on. Our four clans will finally be united from now on."

Shang Bo chuckled softly and remained silent. He could guess what Ji Wenlong wanted to say, and it wasn't the first time he had heard it.

He was slightly taken aback when he heard the words that came out of Ji Wenlong's mouth next. "Shang Bing is actually Shang Lubing of the triple frost of our You Continent. What do you think of that?"

Shang Bo laughed casually. "Isn't it great that we managed to get another Martial Extermination Realm cultivator?"

“You know that’s not what I’m talking about!” Ji Wenlong interrupted him rudely. “As that guy’s sworn brother, he definitely has some motive for hiding in the institution! Why would he arrange for his sworn brother to hide in the institution for twenty years?! What is he planning to do?! Who is he plotting against?! Don’t tell me you can’t see his plot!”

Shang Bo pressed his lips together and increased his speed as he returned to the Tongyou Peak.

“At the end of the day, he doesn’t trust us at all! When he gathered the power of the clans in the continent to create the institution, his grand scheme started! He plans to use this chance to weaken all our clans! In the past twenty years, other than our so-called ‘great clans’, there are not many great families left! Those bloodline cultivators in our You Continent are barely surviving, and the inheritances of the other smaller families have all been integrated into the Scripture Depository!”

Ji Wenlong wasn’t done. “Speaking of the Scripture Depository, there’s Dong Qianzui too! Who would have thought that the undying monster had a way of forcefully increasing his strength to the fourth order at the very last moment?! He probably held on all the way till this day!”

Hearing everything, Shang Bo knew that he couldn’t remain silent anymore.

Coughing slightly, he started, “Chief Ji, since that’s the case, why did you agree to help him create the institution?”

“In the past, we were weak. We had to create the institution.” Ji Wenlong grunted.

“All of it was because of the threat the Azure Spiritual World posed. Those of us who survived had to huddle together to survive.” Shang Bo continued.

Ji Wenlong glowered silently.

“Today, we might have managed to force them back after revealing all our cards, but the threat of the Azure Spiritual World remains. If our four great clans start to tear the institution apart, won’t we be doing the same thing as the Four Spiritual Peak?” Shang Bo explained.

Ji Wenlong sighed, “I’m afraid that in a few years, our four great clans would be wiped out from the Tongyou City. The only power that would be left would be the Tongyou Institution!”

“That might not be the case. Our clans have been growing stronger with the institution in the past 20 years...” Shang Bo muttered.

“Look at the other clans! How many of them are left? Look at the number of broken inheritances! Look at the number of powers that have disappeared forever! The only reason our four great clans remain is because the institution requires us to prop them up! What if one day, the institution grows so strong that it no longer requires

us? When the day comes for us old men to leave the world, our clans will no longer have a say in the institution..." Ji Wenlong frowned.

His arguments silenced Shang Bo.

After a short moment of contemplation, Ji Wenlong changed his tone. "I understand the importance the Tongyou Institution has on the city and our You Continent! We don't have to fight among ourselves and pit the four clans against Kou Chongxue. As long as my Ji Family receives what we deserve for our contribution all these years, it's not impossible for us to live on as an equal existence with the institution."

Shang Bo stared at Ji Wenlong in shock. Ever since the Tongyou Institution established its foundations in the battlefield between the two worlds, it was the first time he heard Ji Wenlong changing his tone. Even though it was only a slight change, it was a good start!

However, Shang Bo shook his head eventually. "Chief Ji, now is not the time..."

A cold snort interrupted him. "I know that you're thankful for Kou Chongxue's favor for promoting you that year. However, this old man needs to remind you that you're part of the four great clans! Even though your Shang Clan wasn't part of the five great families of the past, you guys were close. Don't you want to rebuild the glory of your Shang Clan? Are you unwilling to grow even stronger?!"

Ji Wenlong sighed and no longer spoke on their way back to the institution.

Shang Bo looked at Ji Wenlong's figure who flew slightly faster than him and fell deep into his thoughts. However, he snapped back to reality soon enough and he chuckled in amusement before increasing his speed even more.

...

When Ji Wenlong and Shang Bo were discussing the matters of the great clans, Shang Xia and the rest arrived in the ten mile radius around the Tongyou Peak. They could see the dense smoke that filled the skies from the beacon lit on the Tongyou Peak.

Their squad had increased to a small army of 50, much larger than their original gang!

The signs of the beast tide were growing ever more obvious, and they ran into countless attacks on their way back.

Luckily for them, they didn't run into huge packs of beasts! The group was more than capable of taking on the enemies.

Even so, there were still several unfortunate cultivators who lost their lives during the battles that took place.

When they were close to ten miles away from the Tongyou Peak, they ran into another attack! This time was different from the rest! The ones who ran into trouble weren't the disciples of the Tongyou Peak! Instead, it was the flock of Mutated Rain Swallows that had been protecting them all this while!

A group of Wolf Eagles appeared from nowhere and started to massacre the Rain Swallows!

Chapter 95: Rain Swallow on his Back

The speed of the Mutated Rain Sparrows was fast, but the Wolf Eagles weren't that slow.

The eagles were large and they knew how to work together to hunt down rain swallows that had split from the group.

From what Shang Xia could see, the Wolf Eagles seemed like the Mutated Rain Swallows' mortal enemy!

Leaping off his horse, the Delicate Jade River Sword slashed upwards and killed a Wolf Eagle that was flying low in the air.

Shang Xi and the cultivators following behind Shang Xia acted in unison and started to take out the threat that was the Wolf Eagles. Soon, the wretched cries of the eagles could be heard as the stench of blood filled the air.

Even though Shang Xia and the others reacted quickly, more than a dozen Mutated Rain Swallows had been killed since the appearance of the Wolf Eagles. The feathers of the swallows filled the skies.

When they saw that more than a dozen Mutated Rain Swallows were killed, Shang Xi was so angry that her eyes turned bloodshot!

The Mutated Rain Swallow had the ability to purify the bloodline of those from the Wind Swallow Race! Of course, they really couldn't care about that. Instead, they cared about the fact that the fur of those little critters could be used to make Embroidered Cloud Cases! It was also a key ingredient if they ever planned to create a spatial pouch!

Every single Mutated Rain Swallow was a precious resource!

Cultivating and raising a single Mutated Rain Swallow was a tough process. No one knew how long it would take to gather enough fur from the Mutated Rain Swallows for them to create a single spatial pouch, but now, there were more than a dozen of them who died!

The cultivators who were trying to stop the eagles from hurting the swallows couldn't be too weak either! The weaker ones who weren't at the Martial Extremity Realm could only try their luck when hitting the Wolf Eagles, and even if they were to try, they might hit a Mutated Rain Swallow by accident.

Those who could actually threaten the Wolf Eagles were experts at the Martial Extremity Realm or higher.

There were six Martial Intent Realm experts in the group, but it wasn't possible for them to kill all the Wolf Eagles threatening the swallows.

Luckily, the Lightning Bird didn't remain idle. Every time an enraged chirp left its lips, a streak of silver would tear through the air and slice one to two Wolf Eagles into two. The eagles couldn't even cry out in pain before they were killed.

The Lightning Bird who went through its second transformation was obviously much stronger than before! Its speed experienced a massive boost too.

According to the ranking of creatures by the Tongyou Peak, the Lightning Bird could be considered a rank three spiritual beast!

Too bad it couldn't change the situation alone!

“Snake! There are snakes behind us!” Someone in the group yelled suddenly.

“Don’t panic! Ten of you, come with me! We’ll deal with the situation at the back!” Wu Tinghai suppressed the commotion that was breaking out in the team.

As several cultivators met up with him, they ran towards the back of the group.

All of a sudden, someone in the middle of the party cried, “Hold up! The eagles in the skies should be here for the snakes! Why are they working together now? Why did the eagles go for the Rain Swallows?”

“Fuck! The eagles in the skies are there for the swallows. They didn’t target us! Why should we give a shit about them? Are our lives more important or are the lives of those little birds?”

“We’re going to reach the Tongyou Peak soon! We have to return at all costs!”

The quarrels caused several dozen cultivators to break away from the group and charge towards the Tongyou Peak, leaving Shang Xia and the flock of Mutated Rain Swallows behind.

“Hey! You stupid fools! Without the Mutated Rain Swallows leading the way, do you think you would arrive here safely? Hurry up and come back!” Yun Zhidai screamed at those who left.

“Enough! There’s no need to yell anymore! They have already escaped!” Shang Xi’s expression was nasty and a chilly light flashed in her eyes when she looked at those who ran.

“Swish, swish!” Two soft whistles tore through the air and two Wolf Eagles that were soaring above were shot dead.

Shang Xi turned to look at the person who shot the arrows and was met with a soft chuckle, “Those bastards are most likely scattered cultivators from the Azure Origin World. They have no alliance to our Tongyou Institution. All the disciples of the institution are here.”

Shang Xia nodded at the side and thanked, “Many thanks, Brother Deng!”

Shooting out another arrow, it pierced accurately into a Wolf Eagle in the air. As it released a loud cry, it faltered in the air. However, it managed to maintain its flight.

“They are too damn fast! Moreover, their bodies are massive and they have an impressive life force! I might not be able to kill them unless I hit a vital spot!” Senior Brother Deng wanted to shoot it down, but two other eagles assisted their wounded comrade and brought it to the side.

“Shit! They’re too damn smart!” Senior Brother Deng cursed before turning to Shang Xi, “Junior Sister Shang, can you get the kid to call the Mutated Rain Swallows down? The Wolf Eagles are killing them left and right in the air! However, they won’t dare to do a thing if the swallows perch on us!”

Shang Xi didn't need to pass on the message as Shang Xia heard what he said. A light flashed in his eyes and he whistled loudly to call for the Lightning Bird.

The Lightning Bird had already lost its mind in slaughter. Instead of responding to Shang Xia, it tried calling out to the Wolf Eagles.

However, they couldn't be bothered with it. It couldn't save the entire flock alone anyway.

Only after Shang Xia whistled three times did it finally fly down to sit on his shoulders.

Shang Xia tried to calm down its rampaging emotions while trying to communicate with the Lightning Bird. He wanted to tell the Lightning Bird his idea, but he wasn't confident it could understand him.

The Lightning Bird cried out in fright. If it agreed to Shang Xia's idea, wouldn't it be leaving the lives of the Mutated Rain Swallows in the hands of those from the Tongyou Peak?!

The Lightning Bird started flapping its wings furiously on Shang Xia's shoulders.

Releasing a piercing cry, it turned into a silver streak and shot back up into the skies.

Shang Xia sighed and he thought that their friendship had ended when he saw two Mutated Rain Swallows diving towards him!

"Wow! It understood what you said!"

Yun Yifei gasped at the side. She was a little skeptical about Shang Xia's ability to communicate with the Rain Swallows, especially the rank three Lightning Bird, but she was finally convinced.

The Wolf Eagles noticed the two Mutated Rain Swallows flying towards Shang Xia, and they noticed the injuries on the two little birds too. Without hesitation, the Wolf Eagles started to soar towards the two injured birds.

Shang Xia hadn't made his move when Deng Gua, the senior disciple with the bow, shot one of them dead.

Yun Yifei leaped into the air and strands of threads wrapped around the Wolf Eagle.

It seemed as though she wanted to capture it alive!

Whatever the case, the two injured Mutated Rain Swallows reached their limits. They desperately changed positions in the air and fell into Shang Xia's waiting arms.

The moment they did, another two started to dive towards his position.

Shang Xi, Yun Yifei, Deng Gua, and the rest started to form a protective layer around him.

He quickly discovered that the Mutated Rain Swallows would only rush towards him. It was clear as day they didn't trust the other disciples of the Tongyou Peak.

Of course, he was soon placed in an awkward situation. There was a limited amount of space on his shoulders! After eight of them came down, there was no longer space for them to perch!

Shang Xia decisively jumped off his horse. He wanted to place the birds on the back of the horse, but he was met with fierce resistance from the Mutated Rain Swallows. He eventually convinced them to get on the back of the horse, and he heaved a sigh of relief when they did. A Scarlet Cloud Horse could support a lot more Mutated Rain Swallows than Shang Xia!

It didn't take long for the back of his horse to be filled.

Sun Haiwei leaped off her horse and sent it over to Shang Xia to assist his efforts.

Soon, the second horse's back was filled with Mutated Rain Swallows. There were a total of twenty standing on a single horse.

Shang Xia wanted to look for another horse, but he noticed that they were carrying wounded members of the Tongyou Peak. He couldn't exactly force them to get off...

However, there weren't any other Mutated Rain Swallows who came after. The battle in the air continued.

“The Mutated Rain Swallows are extremely proud! They wouldn't allow themselves to be captured alive. It's amazing that you managed to gain their trust for them to hand over the injured to you. However, it's clear they don't wish to rely completely on us. They plan to fight the Wolf Eagles with everything they have!”

Shang Xi explained at the side.

Deng Gua shot down another Wolf Eagle and sighed, “We should speed up. We're close to the Tongyou Peak. The moment we return, the eagles will retreat. Brother Wu sent a report about the snakes behind us and they're getting stronger and stronger. There are Martial Intent Realm beasts starting to appear!”

The hearts of everyone who heard him turned a little colder. Shang Xia released a long whistle to try to communicate with the Lightning Bird before speeding up once more.

The sky was filled with angry and miserable chirps as birds fell one by one.

Even though the Mutated Rain Swallows weren't an opponent for the Wolf Eagles, they managed to fight their enemies on even grounds with the help of the disciples of the Tongyou Peak.

Every time a Mutated Rain Swallow fell, Shang Xia would feel as though a knife was stabbed deep into his heart.

They closed in on the Tongyou Peak when they heard a loud cry from behind. “Be careful! A rank four snake appeared!”

Everyone turned to stare in the direction of his voice and they noticed a massive snake with a head the size of a house. It was several hundred feet tall, and it stretched its head up into the skies before anyone could react.

Opening its mouth, it took a deep breath and sucked all the creatures flying in the air towards it.

In one move, more than a third of the flying creatures were sucked into its belly!

Violent cries filled the skies and the two species of birds started to disperse immediately.

Obviously, the giant snake wasn't content with such a small meal as it turned to look at the cultivators desperately running away. When they felt the snake's gaze on them, they felt goosebumps growing all over their bodies.

The giant snake hissed as it rushed towards them. Swallowing its saliva greedily, it got ready for a great meal!

Chapter 96: Shang Xi's Thoughts

Shang Xia circulated his inner qi and he cleared his mind from the threat that was the rank four snake.

“Stop being distracted! Hurry up and run!” Shang Xia pushed his inner qi into his throat and yelled.

He felt a sickly sweet feeling in his mouth as his larynx nearly tore apart.

However, his yell was extremely effective. The cultivators who were stuck in a trance due to the aura of the rank four giant snake snapped back to reality.

All of them continued to run for the Tongyou Peak.

The giant snake gathered a phantom made from the heaven and earth qi and pushed it high into the skies. Even though it looked close, its true body was pretty far away.

It was possible for the phantom of the giant snake to attack, but it just swallowed several Mutated Rain Swallows and Wolf Eagles. It wouldn't be able to attack any time soon.

Shang Xia snapping them out of their daze earned them precious time to escape from the threat!

Along the way, Shang Xi and Yun Yifei had already left Shang Xia's side.

By the time he noticed, he saw that the two of them joined Deng Gua and went to the back of the group! They met up with Wu Tinghai and another Martial Intent Realm cultivator and firmly held the rear.

They were ready to sacrifice themselves to buy a little more time for the others to escape!

Shang Xia wasn't the only one who noticed their actions. However, no one called out to stop them, and words of thanks couldn't be heard.

There was an unwritten rule set by Kou Chongxue when he established the Tongyou Institution. Whenever danger arrived, the strongest cultivators would step out to buy more time for the rest to escape!

Those who were running only had one job, and that was the escape to the best of their abilities! They couldn't allow the sacrifices of the other disciples to go wasted!

Shang Xia turned back from time to time and saw the five of them getting into position.

As their inner qi slowly linked up according to the five man formation taught by the Tongyou Institution, they brought out their weapons...

The phantom of the giant snake released a heaven-shaking roar and it opened its mouth yet again. It rushed towards the group of escaping disciples.

The five Martial Intent Realm cultivators moved at once! A giant fist made from their inner qi emerged. The palm was formed from thin silk, and the thumb was made up of a short hammer. Its index and middle fingers came from Shang Xi's twin blades, and a bronze staff made up its fourth finger. A bow made from bone created the pinkie of the fist.

Boom!

A massive blast was heard and the fist smashed heavily into the phantom snake that was crashing down on them.

Upon impact, the phantom snake raised its head in pain and recoiled in pain.

Three figures appeared around the five Martial Intent Realm cultivators who had fallen to the ground from the impact. They dragged the five in the direction of those from the Tongyou Institution.

Two of the three who appeared were Martial Intent Realm cultivators. Because the formation only required five experts, two of them didn't join Shang Xi and the rest. Instead, they stood nearby in order to provide support if needed.

Of course, it wasn't feasible for the two of them to evacuate five cultivators.

They didn't expect another cultivator to rush over with them. Even though his speed was slightly slower, it wasn't by too much!

Staring at the third figure who appeared, one of the cultivators roared with rage, "Why are you here?! Stop messing about!"

The third person who came was none other than Shang Xia, and he didn't plan on arguing with them with a rank four giant snake on their tails. Grabbing Shang Xi, he started to run.

After learning the Irregular Steps, his speed received a massive boost. Adding on his martial intent, his burst speed was comparable to Martial Intent Realm cultivators!

Of course, he could only keep up for a short period of time. His endurance was nowhere near a cultivator in the Martial Intent Realm.

The two other cultivators were in no position to blame him and they grabbed the other four before making a beeline for the Tongyou Peak.

When that happened, the group was closing in on the Tongyou Peak. They cheered happily when they saw what happened.

All of a sudden, the phantom snake in the air rose once again.

A frosty light flashed in its eyes and it hissed violently. It was clearly enraged by their earlier actions. Now, there was no one to stop it!

"Quick! Run! It won't be able to eat all of us at once! The protection formation will be able to cover us when we enter a five mile radius from the Tongyou Peak!" One of the Martial Intent Realm cultivators who was carrying Wu Tinghai yelled.

As the snake charged towards them, they could only leave their lives up to fate.

Even though Shang Xia was only carrying Shang Xi on his back, the two other Martial Intent Realm cultivators overtook him with two bodies slung over their backs. Shang Xia might have moved as quickly as them when he saved Shang Xi earlier, but it seemed as though his stamina was lacking.

Shang Xi, whose inner qi was completely exhausted, was still extremely alert. She couldn't help but chuckle softly when they passed. "Brat, I didn't expect you to do such a stupid thing. I bet you're regretting your actions now... The two of us will turn into snake food today!"

As the phantom snake drew closer, the pressure pushing down on Shang Xia grew stronger.

However, he didn't say a word as he continued to rush towards the Tongyou Peak.

At the final moment, a ray of sword light tore through the air and stabbed straight into the back of the phantom snake.

The phantom snake opened its mouth, but no sound came out.

A crisp cry rang in the ears of everyone present. "What a huge snake! I'll use its tendons to turn my Seven Segmented Whip into an Eight Segmented Whip!"

"Instructor Liu!"

"Instructor Liu and the rest have returned! We're saved!"

The cultivators who were running for their lives felt a huge weight lifted off their shoulders. Many of them even stopped to look behind them.

"Look! There's an ice sword in the snake's back!"

"That's Master Shang Bing's attack! He used it against the cultivators of the Four Spiritual Peak previously!"

"He seems to have another identity..."

"Who cares about that! It's not something for us to worry about!"

Shang Xia turned back and saw the phantom snake dissipating into thin air.

Not too far away, Liu Qinglan waved her whip and Shang Lubing wielded his sword. The heaven and earth qi was swept up once again. A heaven-shaking roar rang through the air and the two seemed to be locked into a tough battle. The phantom of the giant snake started to condense in mid air once again as it confronted the two Martial Extermination Realm experts.

"What are you looking at?! Hurry up and return to the Tongyou Peak!" Liu Qinglan's voice boomed in the minds of the experts who had stopped. Snapping awake, they started to run for the Tongyou Peak. This time, they were much more relaxed.

After they entered the area protected by the protection formation, many of them fell to the ground and gasped for breath.

They had been running all the way since the beast tide started, and their lives were almost threatened at every turn. A huge portion of them had reached their limits and was barely holding on.

Now that the threat was gone, they fell to the ground, powerless.

Shang Xia entered the range of the protection formation and placed Shang Xi down. After taking a short break, Shang Xi might not have gathered much of her inner qi, but she regained the ability to walk.

"Don't bother about me. Hurry up and look for the horses with the Rain Swallows! They're extremely important! Let's see if we can bring them to Tongyou Peak this

time." Shang Xi couldn't be bothered with her weak body. The most important thing they needed to do was to locate the Mutated Rain Swallows!

Shang Xia chuckled at the side, "Aunt, relax... The Lightning Bird came back to me when the snake appeared!"

"You must think of a way to make them nest in our Tongyou Peak! No! Make them nest on the Pinxin Peak!" Shang Xi declared triumphantly.

However, the words barely left her lips when the skies lit up behind her. Colorful lights lit up the air and the giant phantom snake was sliced in two.

Chapter 97: Chat on the Pinxin Peak

On the Pinxin Peak...

In the days that passed, the Pinxin Peak turned into the focal point. The nesting of the Mutated Rain Swallows even overshadowed the commotion brought on by the beast tide!

"They made a nest! They actually made a nest on the Pinxin Peak!" Shang Quan stood on the peak of the Pinxin Peak and stared at the cliff below where the Mutated Rain Swallows were making their nest. The grin on his face hadn't faded in a long time.

Shang Xia rubbed one of the Rain Swallows in his hand and sent a strand of his inner qi into its body before chuckling, "Uncle Quan, you came here almost every day... They started building their nest a few days ago! Why are you acting so surprised?"

"No! For the past few days, they've been flying around aimlessly around the peak! I can't relax till they actually settle down!" Shang Quan snorted.

The next moment, he saw Shang Xia raising his hand slightly and the Mutated Rain Swallow that was on his arm chirped happily before flying down to the nest on the cliff face. He continued, "Don't you know that the other peaks have been trying their best to lure the birds over? Even the main peak pulled out all the stops. They brought out all sorts of spiritual herbs, and all sorts of worm-like creatures they caught outside. There was so much good stuff that I wasn't confident that we would be able to keep the rain swallows! Hah! All of them are shameless bastards!"

Shang Xia smiled and waved his hand once as another Mutated Rain Swallow came down to perch on his forearms. "Of course they would. The fur of the Mutated Rain Swallows is used to make Embroidered Cloud Cases and Spatial Pouches. Everyone would wish that the birds would nest at their stronghold."

"That wasn't all! The usefulness of the flock displayed itself when they discovered the beast tide! They managed to lead so many disciples back to the Tongyou Peak and allowed us to preserve most of our fighting power to deal with the incoming attack." Shang Quan added.

Sending a strand of his inner qi into the bird in his hand, Shang Xia sighed, "There are many species of birds in the battlefield between the two worlds... Many of them are even stronger than the Mutated Rain Swallows! Why don't they head out and catch some themselves?"

“Heh... Capturing the birds alive is another matter altogether. Do you think they’ve been wasting their lives away for the past twenty years? If it’s so easy to capture those creatures, why do you think the Wind Swallow Race is experiencing such troubles now?” Shang Quan snorted.

“It’s too bad the Mutated Rain Swallows were hunted down by the Wolf Eagles and eaten by the giant snake... Many of them died... Even after so long, the Lightning Bird only gathered close to 120 of them. Looks like that’s all the survivors out there...” Shang Xia sighed when he thought about what happened.

“Yeah... It’s a pity! It’s difficult to gather the swallow fur even with 200 of them... Now, it’s only going to get slower...” Shang Quan shook his head slightly.

Shang Xia didn’t know what to say in response, but he suddenly thought about the Wolf Eagle Yun Yifei caught during their escape. “Didn’t Senior Yun capture one of the Wolf Eagles when we were on our way back?”

“It’s dead.” Shang Quan chuckled with a hint of mockery in his tone. “Their intentions were clear as day. Too bad the Wolf Eagle refused to eat anything and died of hunger yesterday.”

A frown formed on Shang Xia’s face. “What a pity.”

All of a sudden, he thought of something. “Uncle Quan, there should be many people who came over to our Pinxin Peak, right?”

Shang Quan snorted slightly. “Yeah! Did you already hear about it?”

Tapping the back of the Mutated Rain Swallow on his arm and indicating for it to leave, Shang Xia raised an eyebrow slightly. “I might have been taking care of the swallows and assisting the Lightning Bird in his search for the rest of the Mutated Rain Swallows, but I’m not stupid. They’re being too obvious with their actions.”

“Well, they can’t be considered spies, All they’re doing is looking at you from afar! They don’t dare to interrupt you from bringing more Mutated Rain Swallow back to the Pinxin Peak.” Shang Quan explained. “After the matter of the Swallow Fur got out, almost all the craftsmen on the Tongyou Peak went crazy. All of them wanted to look at the rain swallows that have nested here. Of course, the appearance of the Lightning Bird is equally noteworthy. There are some who came here to obtain a feather of the Lightning Bird! Don’t forget, you were the one who provided the cultivation method of the Chaos Essence Lightning Palm to the institution...”

Shang Xia sneered in contempt. “Are they really so bored? Don’t they have anything else to do? It’s not like the beast tide is over. Why aren’t they going out to deal with the invading beasts?”

“Relax... Our clan will definitely do something about it. They won’t be able to bother you.”

Even so, Shang Xia continued, “Heh, they’re probably still trying to find out how I managed to tame the Mutated Rain Swallows!”

Shang Quan sighed silently in his heart.

In the past few days, the Shang Clan received quite a lot of pressure regarding the Mutated Rain Swallows.

If Shang Xia only brought back Yan Ni’er, they could explain that it was a coincidence.

However, he could communicate with the Lightning Bird and control the flock of Mutated Rain Swallows! It wasn’t as simple as taming a single Mutated Rain Swallow anymore!

The most important part of it was the fact that the flock remained calm and followed Shang Xia obediently during the beast tide! It was known to the world that whenever a beast tide happened, every single creature would go into a frenzy and attack anything in its way!

No... To put it more accurately, everyone realized that Shang Xia managed to calm them down to avoid the effects of the beast tide!

That was too unusual!

After they returned, Shang Xia retreated to the Pinxin Peak and refused to speak about the matter regarding the beast tide.

From their observations, the other members of the Tongyou Peak could tell that he was using his inner qi to reduce the impact of the beast tide on the little birds.

Wouldn’t that mean that there was something special about his inner qi? How was it able to produce such miraculous effects?

Was his inner qi only effective in calming down the Mutated Rain Swallows or could it affect the killing intent of other beasts?!

Was he able to subdue the entire flock of Mutated Rain Swallows because of his special inner qi? Could he do the same to other species?

Was there a way to extend the use of his inner qi?

One had to know that the beasts in the battlefield between the two worlds posed just as much of a threat as the cultivators from the Four Spiritual Peak!

If Shang Xia’s inner qi was effective in reducing the threat, even just by a little bit, the cultivators of the Tongyou Peak would be able to avoid a lot more unnecessary deaths!

In the past 20 years, the creatures that roamed the battlefield between two worlds would attack any cultivators regardless of the world they came from! The Outreach Division managed to get their hands on a mixed-blooded pigeon in the battlefield between the two worlds and that enabled them to transmit information from the Tongyou Peak to the Tongyou Institution!

As such, many people became extremely curious about Shang Xia’s ability!

If not for the fact that the higher ups of the Tongyou Institution were adamant about protecting him and his contributions to the great war that passed, the pressure on the Pinxin Peak would be much stronger than it was!

Other people were wondering what Shang Xia's special ability was, but he was also extremely curious!

Initially, he thought that it was because of his cultivation method, the Triple Mystery Polarity Art! But now, it doesn't seem so!

The technique might be hard to learn, but there were some cultivators in the institution who had succeeded learning it in the past! At the very least, Shang Xia knew that Jia Yuntian who turned out to be a spy for the Rose Party had successfully cultivated it!

There was another possibility that his ability to tame the creature was due to the Yin Yang Diagram in his dantian. However, there was no way to verify it!

It was also probable that it had something to do with the way he advanced! How many people could advance in the face of an Origin Tide? During the process, his inner qi might have transformed to gain additional properties.

Even if those reasons were true, other cultivators wouldn't be able to replicate it!

"Even if you bring these reasons out, they might not believe it!" Shang Quan shook his head in response. However, he quickly broke out into laughter. "It's alright... Everyone has their own secrets. No one will try to force you to reveal all your cards. At least, they won't do so on the surface."

Shang Xia understood the meaning behind his uncle's words. He had to defend himself against the hidden threats that were about to come his way!

"Enough of this! All this talk is getting annoying..." Shang Xia switched the topic all of a sudden. "Uncle Quan, I brought back the entire flock of Mutated Rain Swallows... Shouldn't the clan be rewarding me?"

"I knew it!" Shang Quan chided before revealing a jade talisman in his hand. He tossed it over to Shang Xia.

Catching it, Shang Xia felt the energy contained within and whistled, "Another rank three talisman?!"

"What do you mean 'again'?! Do you think rank three talismans grow on trees?! This is a rank three talisman called the 'Suspended Spear'! Your Grandpa Ke left a trace of his divine sense inside and it contained the full-powered strike of a Martial Intent Realm cultivator at the peak of the cultivation level. It's a useful life saving tool!"

Shang Xia knew the power of a rank three talisman. After all, his aunt gave him one previously, allowing him to escape Sang Youqi's repeated attacks.

One had to know that Shang Xi's cultivation was far from Shang Ke! Shang Ke reached the third layer of the Martial Intent Realm, and Shang Xi was barely at the first layer!

In fact, Shang Ke had half a foot in the Martial Extermination Realm!

Shang Xia kept the talisman and a grin formed on his face. "I heard that grandpa killed the giant snake the other day and brought its body back. I heard that by refining the extermination origin, one

would be able to create another Martial Extermination Realm cultivator! Do you think Fifth Grandpa will get the chance to...”

Shang Quan shook his head helplessly. “Do you think it’s possible? No one will allow a second Martial Extermination Realm cultivator to appear in our Shang Clan so quickly! Moreover, the extermination origin from the snake contains deadly poison! Your Grandpa Ke wouldn’t want to risk his life on something like that!”

Chapter 98: Large Completion Stage of the Formless Sword Manual

Shang Xia’s idea of the beast tide was obviously wrong. He thought that the Tongyou Peak was about to start another bloody battle after the one they just experienced with the Four Spiritual Peak. He didn’t think that the beast tide wouldn’t affect the Tongyou Peak much. It was such a ‘peaceful’ scene.

The beast tide didn’t rush towards the Tongyou Peak entirely. Also, the members of the Tongyou Peak were exhausted from the previous war and didn’t choose to mess with the beast tide.

“Why is the beast tide rushing towards us anyway?” Shang Xia asked.

Shang Xi, who hadn’t recovered fully, laid casually on a mat in her courtyard and replied with an eyebrow raised. “Even if the beasts all go crazy, they won’t rush up the Tongyou Peak for fun. In their eyes, the Tongyou Peak is just a massive mountain. Are they going to smash their heads into a mountain for fun? If they really attacked the Tongyou Peak, things would be different. They would have to be controlled by a certain power or super creature for that to happen.”

“Why are they gathering around our Tongyou Peak without any signs of leaving then?” Shang Xia asked.

Yawning softly, Shang Xi explained, “That’s because of the heaven and earth qi in the air. Due to the operation of our protection formation, we drew in a huge amount of heaven and earth qi! The only place with an equally dense amount of heaven and earth qi would be the Four Spiritual Peak. The beasts might have lost their mind, but their instincts would lead them to the place with the most amount of heaven and earth qi...”

Shang Xia could tell that his aunt was growing tired, but he still wanted to get to the bottom of things. “How... How does a beast tide start?”

Shang Xi pressed her lips together and explained helplessly, “It’s probably because of the appearance of the divine weapons... No one really knows...”

“One last question!” Shang Xia quipped. “Are we planning to do nothing and wait for the beasts to leave on their own?”

.

He could tell that Shang Xi was too tired to entertain his questions, but he was truly curious.

Shang Xi rolled her eyes and snapped, “How do you know we’re not doing anything?”

“What...”

“Alright, alright, enough of this. I’m going back to sleep. You’re really annoying! You could have asked anyone else, but you came over to annoy me...” Shang Xi chased him out before he could continue.

When he emerged from her courtyard, he ran into Yan Qi.

“Young... Young master, actually, the Tongyou Peak would open a tiny hole in the protection formation to allow some beasts to charge into our territory. They would take the chance to hunt down all the beasts to obtain precious ingredients and treasures...” Yan Qi explained.

A frown formed on Shang Xia’s face. “Why didn’t I hear of it?”

“That’s because the bridges connecting the Qiling, Kaiyuan, Luohui, Minxiu, and Pinxin peaks have been weakened. To prevent anything unexpected from happening, the gap is opened between the Yuxi and Qiling Peaks. Every time it’s open, two Martial Extermination Realm experts would be paying attention to the region to prevent anything from going wrong.”

“So that’s the case...” Shang Xia gasped. Due to the interference of the Rose Party and Ran Biluo’s attacks, the chains between the few peaks were damaged or cut!

Liu Qinglan wasn’t able to completely prevent Ran Biluo from affecting the protection formation, and if Shang Bo came a little later, things would get ugly. The damage to the protection formation would likely be greater than it already is!

As Shang Xia was taking care of matters on the Kaiyuan Peak when the war went on, he didn’t know what happened to the other regions.

Returning to his room in the Shang Pavilion, Shang Xia saw Yan Ni’er resting comfortably in the nest she made. Seeing as nothing was wrong, he left for the training field.

Picking a random steel sword on the weapon rack, Shang Xia circulated his inner qi. He transformed them into qi that possessed the attribute of softness and strength and started to practice his sword art.

He moved gracefully as he practiced every individual move in the Formless Sword Art.

Before the war started, Shang Xia managed to complete the third stroke of the Formless Sword Art. Due to the battles he had been through both in the war and when escaping from the beast tide, Shang Xia’s comprehension of the Formless Sword Art reached a whole new level.

In just several short days, he comprehended up to the seventh move!

The day before, when he was treating the injured Mutated Rain Swallows on the Pinxin Peak, he gained a sudden inspiration on the eighth move of the Formless Sword Art! That was the reason he ran all the way back to the Shang Pavilion to train himself!

Strictly speaking, the Formless Sword Manual was more like a theory-based sword technique. The only principle behind it was that the moves flowed with the current. One would wield the sword as they pleased and avoid being restricted by the traditional ways of using a sword.

To put it simply, the theory behind it was to focus more on the pair of qi that made up the sword art than the sword itself!

After comprehending it, Shang Xia's movements didn't stop when he completed the seventh stroke. In one smooth motion, he completed the eighth move! When he did, he realized that the power he wielded increased, instead of being diminished by the execution of the eighth move!

Shang Xia reached a new understanding. The Formless Sword Manual flashed through his mind, and he felt like he finally understood the meaning behind it! The first eight moves were all for the sake of gathering energy. On the ninth move, all the energy he built up would be released in the form of a formless sword qi! Hence the name, Formless Sword Art!

He thought about the Vigorous Sword Art he completed earlier and recalled the sword qi it produced at the end. It destroyed the entire weapon rack beside the training ground! In order not to cause the scene to replay itself, he sealed off the strand of sword qi he was supposed to send out in the ninth move of the Formless Sword Art! He sealed it off in the sword he was using, but he clearly underestimated its power. Cracks started to appear on the surface of the blade, and it eventually shattered into countless pieces.

Hearing the sound of the shards clattering to the ground, Shang Xia's expression changed. The blood-red tablet sealed in his sea of consciousness suddenly reappeared and a red glow appeared on its surface. Faint words were starting to form on the surface of the tablet, but they faded away like nothing happened in the first place. Eventually, the blood-red tablet sank into the depths of his sea of consciousness.

"Young master, congratulations on reaching the large completion stage of your sword technique!" Yan Qi's voice caused Shang Xia to awaken from his daze.

"Oh? Seventh Uncle, when did you come?" Shang Xia tossed the hilt of the sword away and chuckled softly, "I'll destroy a weapon every time I complete my training in a sword manual... The cost of training is pretty high indeed!"

Yan Qi grinned at the side, "I just arrived! I arranged something for the young lady earlier before heading over to the Mingxiu Peak. Before I returned, I saw someone you might be interested in!"

"Who?" Shang Xia dried his perspiration with the towel Yan Qi handed him and asked.

"Young master, do you remember Dou Zhong?" A mischievous look could be seen in Yan Qi's eyes.

Chapter 99: Exposed?

"Dou Zhong?" Shang Xia raised an eyebrow in surprise. The face of a stubborn youngster flashed across his mind. Together with it came an unpleasant memory.

"I remember telling you to take note of him... What's wrong? Did you discover something wrong with him?" Shang Xia tossed the towel to the pool beside the practice ground before walking towards the Shang Pavilion.

Yan Qi followed closely behind and muttered, “The brat has already advanced to the large completion stage of the Martial Realm!”

Raising his voice slightly, Shang Xia gasped, “That quickly?!”

Yan Qi’s expression turned serious and he nodded slowly. “From what I learned, the little brat managed to gain the favor of Chief Shang Bing after coming to the Tongyou Peak for the first time. He probably impressed Chief Shang Bing with his speech on loyalty... After that, he mysteriously broke through to the Martial Realm.”

“What about him now? He probably hasn’t been here for more than two months, right?” Shang Xia asked.

Pressing his lips together, Yan Qi continued, “Young master, you might not know, but the kid went out with a squad to hunt down the cultivators of the Four Spiritual Peak. His squad was separated by the beast tide and he went to hide in a mountain cave he could. There, he found a piece of essence jade... When Chief Shang Bing brought him back, he had already entered his current stage of cultivation!”

“Essence jade? Chief Shang Bing? Do you mean Shang Lubing of the Contribution Division?” The corner of Shang Xia’s lips trembled.

“This brat is too damn lucky... He managed to find a treasure like the Essence Jade when hiding from the beast tide! Moreover, Shang Lubing picked him up on the way back to the Tongyou Peak. A Martial Extermination Realm cultivator actually took a liking to him!” Yan Qi sighed as a trace of irritation filled Shang Xia’s heart.

“Heh, is the world really going to come up with some bullshit and make him into a main character-like existence! Too bad... This young master here isn’t someone he can step on however he likes!” Shang Xia snorted in his heart.

He was planning to return to his room to check out the blood-red tablet in his sea of consciousness. After all, that was the only thing he couldn’t wrap his head around! However, he noticed that Yan Qi was still following behind him and he couldn’t help but ask, “Seventh Uncle, is there something you need?”

“Hehe, Your Fifth Grandpa passed down the order for you to head over to the main hall on the main peak.” Yan Qi reported.

“Me? Main hall?!” Shang Xia was slightly taken aback. “Did he set his eyes on the flock of Mutated Rain Swallows or something?”

Yan Qi’s expression turned a little weird when he heard the words ‘Mutated Rain Swallow’.

Raising an eyebrow in surprise, Shang Xia asked, “What’s wrong?”

“The birds seem to hate me...” Yan Qi sighed.

A look of surprise appeared on Shang Xia’s face, but he soon understood what was happening. “Is it because of your bloodline?”

“It’s possible... The Swallow Bloodline should be the reason behind their hostility.” Yan Qi explained.

“Is it due to the Bloodline Crystal?”

Yan Qi nodded slowly. “That should be it. When I first stepped onto the Pinxin Peak, the birds stopped building their nest and started chirping angrily. The Lightning Bird landed not too far away from me, and I could feel the hostility in its eyes...”

“Did they attack you?” Shang Xia frowned.

“Nope. I could feel their anger and hostility, but they didn’t show any signs of attacking me.” Yan Qi explained.

Shang Xia fell deep into contemplation and felt like the interaction between the Lightning Bird and Yan Qi was pretty interesting. Soon, he laughed, “Seventh Uncle, didn’t you enter the Martial Intent Realm? I wonder why you were acting like a messenger the past few days... As it turns out, you were feeling unwelcome on the Pinxin Peak by a bunch of birds.”

A bitter smile appeared on Yan Qi’s face. “That’s not it... Every time I went back, the birds would stop everything and start chirping violently. The peace of the Pinxin Peak would be broken! I could only choose to leave...”

“Well, did anyone else start talking nonsense?” Shang Xia asked.

Yan Qi knew that he was referring to the fact that he was of the Swallow Bloodline and he muttered helplessly, “It’s alright. There are even some who congratulated me on entering the Martial Intent Realm. As for the rest... It’s alright! I’m used to it anyway.”

Shang Xia nodded and sighed. “I’m afraid that some dumbasses would attack you regardless of your identity...”

“Young master, you’re underestimating the influence of the Shang Clan on the Tongyou Peak! Especially after Old Master Shang Bo showed off his strength! With his cultivation at the fourth layer of the Martial Extermination Realm, the position of the Shang Clan took a huge step forward! There are even some who think that the positions of the four great clans would change now that Old Master Shang Bo reached his current level! Our position would only be lower than the Ji Clan!”

...

The main hall of the Tongyou Peak was located on the main peak, and it was where the upper echelons of the institution met.

When Shang Xia entered the main hall, he noticed that all four Martial Extermination Realm cultivators were already waiting for him. Other than the four, no one else was present.

“I greet the deputy patriarchs, Chief Shang, and Instructor Liu!” Shang Xia didn’t show any sign of disrespect. Even with Shang Bo present, he knew that he had to act appropriately.

“Hehe, leader of the outer division... I haven’t stopped hearing about your deeds!” Liu Qinglan laughed.

Shang Xia turned to look at the middle-aged instructor of the upper division and he saw the subtle smile in her eyes. It was as though she was looking at a member of her own clan.

“Instructor Liu is exaggerating! I’m merely mucking my way about... Please give me more pointers in the future!”

Shang Xia didn’t know why they called him over, but from the looks of it, there wasn’t anything for him to be afraid of!

“Alright, alright, time to talk about the serious stuff!”

Liu Qinglan chuckled and continued, “Kid, all of us heard about what you did. Your achievements were pretty extraordinary. With Chief Shang’s recommendation, we plan to open the Polarity Essence Gathering Pool for you.”

“Polarity Essence Gathering Pool? Is there one on the Tongyou Peak too?” Shang Xia looked at the four Martial Extermination Realm cultivators in shock.

“Preposterous!” Shang Bo’s expression sank. He was clearly unamused with Shang Xia’s actions of doubting them.

Shang Xia lowered his head hastily, as though he was terrified of his grandfather’s roar.

“Alright, there’s no need to scare the kid.” Liu Qinglan dispersed Shang Bo’s scary aura with a single sentence. “Even though the Polarity Essence Gathering Pool in the Tongyou Peak is newly built, the essence qi there is dense. We’ll give you the opportunity to be the first to enter. Everything you gain from there depends on yourself. Go make your preparations. Look for Sun Haiwei and she will take you there when you’re ready.”

“Now?” Shang Xia gasped in shock.

“What? Do you have a lot of things to do? What do you need to prepare? You’re going there right now!” Shang Bo snorted at the side.

No matter how mischievous Shang Xia was, he wouldn’t dare to joke around when his grandfather seemed to be in such a bad mood. He ran out of the main hall as quickly as he could.

After he left, Liu Qinglan looked at the three of them and asked, “So... What do you think?”

Shang Bo remained silent and Ji Wenlong chuckled softly.

Shang Lubing analyzed, “The little brat’s inner qi is extremely active. It doesn’t seem like it’s going out of control either. It even seems to have its own intelligence! It’s like...”

Shang Lubing thought of an appropriate comparison but failed to think of one.

“Intelligence? That is something that should only happen when one fully condenses their martial intent! When he steps into the Martial Intent Realm, he would be able to fully control his inner qi, allowing it to act like it possesses intelligence! However, how can outsiders tell?” Liu Qinglan frowned.

“Yeah... Those at the Martial Intent Realm can control it perfectly, but the kid is at the Martial Extremity Realm...” Shang Lubing continued, “Unless... That’s the reason behind the kid’s ability to tame the Mutated Rain Swallows?”

Ji Wenlong grunted at the side, “That’s not likely. In the years that passed, many people tried to tame the creatures in the battlefield between two worlds. Not even Martial Intent Realm cultivators succeeded.”

In that case, things are getting interesting. His inner qi is definitely different from the rest...”

A look of astonishment appeared on Liu Qinglan’s face. “Doesn’t it mean that others won’t be able to replicate what he did?”

Shang Lubing shook his head wistfully. “Well, he cultivated the Chaos Essence Manual and the Triple Mystery Polarity Art. His path of cultivation is no mystery to us.”

Shang Bo, who had remained silent all this while, finally spoke, “The brat is really daring... He’s cultivating both types of qi at once.”

Liu Qinglan and Shang Lubing gasped in fright. The only person who didn’t react was Ji Wenlong as he had long since noticed the abnormality with Shang Xia.

A look of worry could be seen on Liu Qinglan’s face. “But... That’s really dangerous!”

Shang Bo grunted softly as the sides of his lips curled upwards.

“Nevermind... I’ll personally head over to the pool to ensure nothing goes wrong!” Liu Qinglan declared all of a sudden.

...

Shang Xia didn’t know about the conversation that happened inside the hall after he left and met up with Sun Haiwei outside the hall.

The envious look on her face couldn’t be hidden at all.

“Teacher Sun, did you already hear about it?” Shang Xia grinned.

“You’re going to enter the inner division soon! With the identity of an inner disciple of the Tongyou Institution, you can walk unhindered in the world! There’s no need to call me your teacher anymore!” Sun Haiwei smiled. “Do you know how much merit you have to gain in order to enter the Polarity Essence Gathering Pool? Even if people manage to exchange for the chance to enter, they would have to gather several other disciples to split the cost! Now, the institution opened the Polarity Essence Gathering Pool for you alone! From what I know, it’s the first time in history that this has happened!”

Shang Xia had long since heard about the famed Polarity Essence Gathering Pool, but it was the first time he heard about the requirements to enter. He was slightly flustered. “Is that so?! They’re really taking good care of me then...”

Sun Haiwei giggled uncontrollably when she saw the shit-eating grin on his face. “Just keep gloating... The energy there belongs to you! No one will fight you for it, unlike...”

Shang Xia raised an eyebrow in surprise. “Teacher... Senior Sister Sun, have you been to the Polarity Essence Gathering Pool?”

Sun Haiwei glanced at him from the corner of her eye and snorted, “Of course! I went there with Senior Brother Tian and Senior... Jin Guanchao... The three of us only managed to exchange for a chance to open the Polarity Essence Gathering Pool after gathering all our contributions!”

Her expression visibly darkened after she spoke.

Shang Xia nodded and remained silent.

Quickly gathering her feelings. Sun Haiwei instructed, “The Polarity Essence Gathering Pool will only be effective for one day and one night. Even though no one will fight with you for the energy contained within, you need to make full use of your time to increase your cultivation! It’s the best chance for a cultivator at the Martial Extremity Realm to cultivate both types of qi in their bodies!”

Best chance?

Shang Xia laughed silently in his heart. Sun Haiwei had no idea that he had been doing so the whole time!

Chapter 100: Polarity Essence Gathering Pool

It was extremely difficult for cultivators to cultivate both types of qi at once.

It was a giant obstruction to their cultivation, and it posed a significant risk!

However, that didn’t mean that it was impossible. It just meant that the price one had to pay to cultivate both types of qi at once was great!

Everyone knew how beneficial it was to increase both types of qi while maintaining a balance.

The Polarity Essence Gathering Pool was one great way to do it!

What made it even more special was that the Polarity Essence Gathering Pool could assist cultivators who had only cultivated one type of qi to improve the other such that they achieved a ? miraculous balance.

“The Polarity Essence Gathering Pool can allow cultivators to raise their strength in the shortest amount of time possible!” Sun Haiwei explained as they made their way over. “Of course, the prerequisite is that you need to have a high level of control over both types of qi in your body. The better the control, the more essence qi you can absorb from the pool. That would mean that you would improve even quicker! The opposite is true. Make sure to know your limits. If you absorb more essence qi than you can handle, it’s easy to lose control. When that happens, your body will explode and you will die.”

It didn't take long before the two of them arrived at a structure located behind the main hall of the Tongyou Peak.

There, Shang Xia met Liu Qinglan again. It seemed as though she had been waiting for some time now.

"This disciple apologizes for making instructor wait." Shang Xia might not know why she had come, but there wasn't a need to think so much. She was a Martial Extermination Realm cultivator, and she seemed a little more authority than the other three in the hall previously. She could go wherever she wanted.

...

There was a rule in the Tongyou Institution that Shang Xia heard from his aunt. It was something that was established when she was still a disciple of the Tongyou Institution!

When the rule was put in place, everyone felt that it was unbelievable. When Shang Xia heard it from his aunt, he even thought that she was playing a prank on him. However, that was precisely what happened in the hall earlier.

Just several moments ago, Liu Qinglan had been speaking on behalf of all four Martial Extermination Realm cultivators in the hall. Regardless of cultivation or seniority, Ji Wenlong, Shang Bo, and Shang Lubing were much higher than her! Even so, she was the one who spoke for all of them. She rose through the ranks in the institution, and the three other experts could even be said to be her teachers! Even so, none of them spoke against her in the hall earlier.

The rule was set by Patriarch Kou Chongxue in the past. Whenever there was more than a single figure of authority present, those of the four great clans would have to give up their speaking rights and stand on the sidelines. The rule was laid down after the four great clans gave their consent!

That was what Shang Xia learned from Shang Xi. The reason was to ensure that none of the four great clans interfered with the institution's authority when making decisions!

According to the rule, Shang Lubing should have been doing the talking earlier. However, Liu Qinglan seemed to be the one in control of the situation. Of course, the matter had something to do with Shang Lubing's identity as Kou Chongxue's sworn brother. If he stepped out now, he might just infuriate Ji Wenlong even further!

...

Liu Qinglan gently tapped the structure beside her and her fingers danced about its surface. Shang Xia couldn't even see what she did, and he was naturally unable to memorize the pattern of her fingers.

The structure started to open up and a stairwell leading downwards revealed itself.

"Follow me." Liu Qinglan said and she took the lead.

Shang Xia wanted to follow behind, but she paused for a second and turned to Sun Haiwei.

"You should come and take a look too..." Liu Qinglan's voice drifted into her ears.

A look of joy appeared on Sun Haiwei's face, and she hurried behind Shang Xia.

After descending several tens of feet, the passage started to open up and a stone hall appeared in their sight.

Fluorescent stones lined the walls and emitted a soft glow that illuminated the area.

Shang Xia's gaze was locked on to the middle of the hall where a giant crater stood. It resembled a dried up pool.

There were rings around the crater, and every single ring was crafted with some sort of transparent jade-like stone. They were essence qi stones, and Shang Xia gasped in shock, "Is this the Polarity Essence Gathering Pool?! There seems to be more than a hundred essence qi stones here!"

Essence qi stones might not be comparable to essence jade, but they were still precious treasures that contained extremely dense energy in them.

An essence qi stone contained much lesser heaven and earth qi in it than essence jade, but it was a common treasure used to lay down formations. The heaven and earth qi contained within would also be amplified when that happened.

Of course, laying down a formation with a single essence qi stone wasn't useful at all! The cost of the other materials would make it absolutely outrageous.

The Polarity Essence Gathering Pool contained a ton of essence qi stones, and it was much more effective that way.

"There's a total of 285 essence qi stones!" Sun Haiwei gasped at the side.

"Go on down. Cultivate at the bottom of the pool. I will activate the formation once you arrive and how much you gain from this will depend on the effort you put in." Liu Qinglan explained.

Shang Xia nodded and walked over to the side of the Polarity Essence Gathering Pool. He slid down the side of the crater.

The lower he got, the narrower it became. It was nine feet deep and every foot formed a new layer. Essence qi stones filled each layer.

At the lowest layer, there was only enough space for a single person.

Standing at the bottom, he raised his head and asked Sun Haiwei, "Senior Sister Sun, didn't you say that the three of you came together?"

Sun Haiwei poked her head over the side of the crater and yelled, "Yeah! When the Polarity Essence Gathering Pool opens, the type of essence qi can change at will! The three of us took turns to cultivate within!"

Shang Xia nodded. Sitting down, he started to circulate his Triple Mystery Polarity Art.

A smile could be seen on Liu Qinglan's face as she asked, "Since you learned the Triple Mystery Polarity Art, what type of qi are you the most familiar with?"

Shang Xia stared at her with a raised eyebrow.

Once again, Sun Haiwei's head popped out from the side of the crater again. "You actually cultivated the Triple Mystery Polarity Art?! I know a little about it! It's extremely difficult to learn,

and although you can switch between the different types of qi, it's not easy to do so. Those who cultivate the Triple Mystery Polarity Art would excel in one of the three pairs of qi! Which are you the most proficient in using? This concerns the benefits you will gain in the Polarity Essence Gathering Pool”

Extremely difficult to learn? Which was he the most proficient at?

Shang Xia had to carefully consider his reply. He had been too outstanding recently, and he wouldn't allow himself to reveal all his cards in a moment of happiness.

Ever since he infused the Triple Mystery Polarity Art into his Yin Yang Diagram, he created a new way of cultivation!

He could absorb all types of qi, not just those listed in the Triple Mystery Polarity Art!

“This... It's probably the fire and ice qi!” Shang Xia casually spoke.

Sun Haiwei's voice came from above. “That's great! The two types of qi are the most common out there. It's extremely abundant on our Tongyou Peak. The effects of the Polarity Essence Gathering Pool will be maximized if you absorb fire and ice qi!”

“Alright, enough talking. I'm going to activate the formation soon. Dense heaven and earth qi will gather in the Polarity Essence Gathering Pool soon. Shang Xia, don't be in a rush to absorb all you can. Wait till the two types of qi reach an equilibrium before starting anything!” Liu Qinglan's voice rang in his mind.

“I am ready!” Shang Xia yelled from the foot of the crater.

As soon as the words left his lips, he felt the ground below him trembling slightly.

Soon after, the essence qi stones around the Polarity Essence Gathering Pool started to light up. The heaven and earth qi in the room they were in started to move.

It didn't take long for the final layer of essence qi stones where Shang Xia was to light up.

A total of 285 essence qi stones gathered the heaven and earth qi in the surrounding. Due to the formations around the Polarity Essence Gathering Pool, the gathered qi was unable to escape. They started to pool together where Shang Xia was, and it became extremely dense!

Those standing at the side of the crater could see that the heaven and earth qi became so dense that it had a liquid-like consistency!

Shang Xia was swallowed by the curtain of dense qi.

Liu Qinglan walked across the hall all of a sudden and brought out two artifacts. She had a red bowl in one hand and a gourd caked in a layer of frost in the other.

Pouring the liquid held in both vessels into the crater, a stream of fiery red liquid and a waterfall of frosty mist entered the Polarity Essence Gathering Pool.