

Tribulation of Myriad Races #Chapter 11: Fourth-Stage Source Opening - Read Tribulation of Myriad Races

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Pain!

Su Yu was in great pain. His nose and mouth were still doing fine as he had already refined the acupoints there. However, that wasn't the case for his other acupoints. With source qi coursing through his unopened acupoints, he was tortured by intense pain. Rumbling sounds echoed in his ears while tears flowed down his eyes. The source qi was refining and opening his shut acupoints.

"An hour...is too long."

He had still been complaining about the short duration a moment ago, but now, he unhesitatingly changed his mind. An hour was too long. Would his body burst apart after the hour was over?

This was probably the first time a Source Opening cultivator had ever actively taken in source qi. The Source Swallowing Technique was the cultivation method of the iron-winged bird. Without proper modifications, it was in truth unsuitable for human use. Su Yu could feel that there were a lot more open pores on his back than the rest of his body, causing a much higher level of absorption on his back.

"Shit! These pores are meant to refine my wings. I won't grow a pair of wings after this, right?"

Su Yu was speechless. The iron-winged bird was a flying race with their wings being one of their trump cards. It was only natural that their cultivation method would focus on the wings as well. Alas, Su Yu was no bird. Even with the book's help in adapting the Source Swallowing Technique to his body, it was still an unsuitable technique.

Boom!

Suddenly, Su Yu heard a loud rumble in his left ear. He blanked out slightly before erupting in joy. Was that...his fourth acupoint being opened? It wasn't

too hard for a human to open the initial three acupoints. The fourth and fifth acupoints at their ears would be slightly harder to open.

Beyond that, the sixth and seventh acupoints at the eyes were even harder to open. As for the final two acupoints, the Spirit Palace and the One Hundred Openings, these two would stump the vast majority of people. Most of the people unable to enter the ranks of proper cultivators were stuck at these two.

"The left ear acupoint is opening!"

Su Yu was overjoyed. The rumbling in his left ear was like music to him. Based on his previous estimation, he would require at least six months to reach the fourth-stage. However, a single activation of the Source Swallowing Technique had accomplished that feat for him.

Of course, the speed only seemed impressive due to his weak cultivation level. The main difficulty of acupoint opening was a Source Opening cultivator's lack of ability to actively absorb source qi. The moment one gained the ability to do so, it would no longer be difficult to open the nine acupoints.

Source Opening cultivators would not actually gain significant strength from the growth of their cultivation. At most, they would gain an increase in health and sharper senses such as smell, taste, hearing, and eyesight. Even so, that was good enough for Source Opening cultivators.

After opening the Spirit Palace acupoint to reach the eighth-stage, Source Opening cultivators would then be able to practice some simple martial techniques for self defense, preparing themselves for their eventual ascension into the ranks of true cultivators.

Boom!

Rumbling sounds kept erupting in Su Yu's left ear. He could feel his ear shrinking and swelling repeatedly while his eardrum shook violently. All the while, his left ear was surrounded by source qi. The process was about to reach completion.

The ambient source qi started gushing into his left ear. Su Yu, who had not been able to see source qi before, could actually see a smoke-like clump gushing into his ear. He was looking at source qi. He had never sensed source qi so clearly before.

"I...can't hang on anymore!"

Rumblings sounds echoed in his head. It wasn't that his acupoint couldn't withstand the burden of the surging source qi. Rather, his body was too weak to withstand his first ever active qi absorption.

Boom!

Suddenly, a particularly loud rumble erupted in his left ear. Su Yu's heart sank as he hurriedly stopped the cultivation method. He could no longer keep this going.

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Su Yu only recovered after half an hour. He felt regretful as he had cultivated for less than half an hour in total, wasting the remaining active duration. What a pity that the remaining duration would not be saved until the next time he needed it.

"However, the result is still excellent. I actually broke through into the fourth-stage!"

Su Yu was pleased. In truth, he hadn't had much hope for the book. Surprisingly, it had actually pushed him to the fourth-stage before the entrance examination. In the entire Nanyuan Secondary School, only slightly over ten students had reached the fourth-stage.

His previous cultivation was nothing, what with over a hundred students at the same cultivation level. Being a fourth-stage Source Opening cultivator changed everything. In fact, based on the city's standards, he could be considered an all-rounder good in both martial cultivation and intellect. In short, he was a genius student!

"So is this how the book works? It's incredible. However..."

Su Yu frowned. It worked well when he was in the Source Opening Realm. But anyone at the Great Strength Realm would be able to cultivate actively. The Source Swallowing Technique was no human cultivation method. At that level, he would be better off using a proper human cultivation method.

"Forget it. I can't get too greedy. Also, if I can get my hands on the cultivation methods of the divines and devils..."

Su Yu's eyes flickered in excitement. If he could one day activate the pages of the divines and the devils, what would happen? Human cultivation methods were great, but divine and devil cultivation methods were even greater.

Humanity had pillaged a large number of cultivation methods of the other races over the years of war, but very few of them were the cultivation methods of the divines and the devils. Most of the cultivation methods came from the weaker races. Cultivation methods of the more powerful races were rarely found. After all, killing an opponent was very different from killing an opponent and also snatching the opponent's cultivation method.

"Have the divines and devils appeared in my dreams before?"

Su Yu couldn't remember his earlier dreams well as he was still too young back then. He wasn't sure if he had encountered them in his dreams before. If he had, would he be able to use their cultivation methods?

"It's too early to think about all that. The Source Swallowing Technique is good enough for now. It can help me quickly advance my Source Opening cultivation."

Su Yu forced himself to calm down. He was still in great excitement over his progress.

Fourth-stage Source Opening!

Not much had changed with his body, but the refinement by source qi had still strengthened his body slightly. More importantly, his hearing had improved tremendously. As his left ear moved, he started hearing the sounds in the apartment unit above. It still wasn't very clear, but he could hear much more than before.

Due to the excellent soundproofing of the apartment, he could hardly hear a sound from his neighbors in the past, especially when they weren't intentionally being loud. Now, his hearing was much more formidable. It was a basic requirement for a cultivator to have clear eyesight and good hearing. Those were the qualities one would not gain without completing the Source Opening Realm.

"This is great!"

Although he had used a drop of blood essence for the advancement, it was totally worth it if every merit point used could advance him by a stage.

"I still have two drops. Should I...try the abilities out?"

Su Yu's eyes flickered in anticipation. He wanted to test out the might of the abilities, also figuring out their duration and effects on his body. It would be too irresponsible to use these abilities before actually testing them out.

Two iron-winged bird abilities were available for him. Rip and Ironwing Slash. Rip was labeled a tier-1 ability. In short, different iron-winged birds would be able to provide abilities of different tiers. That was understandable. Su Yu could forget about Ironwing Slash due to his obvious lack of wings. However, it wouldn't hurt to give Rip a try.

"Fine, let's give it a try."

However, his house was too small and there were too many people in the neighborhood. With Great Strength cultivators as neighbors, his house wasn't a suitable place to test the ability. After thinking about it, Su Yu left with his blood essence. magic

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About ten minutes later, at a training center.

After paying a fee of hundred anyuan dollars, Su Yu rented a training room for an hour. There were plenty of such training centers in Nanyuan. After all, there were a lot of Great Strength cultivators living in the city.

"Start!"

The moment Su Yu swallowed the drop of blood essence, countless scenes of an iron-winged bird ripping its prey apart with its claws appeared in his mind. Both his hands started swelling. Source qi gathered in both his hands, filling them with power while also torturing him with pain.

"This...is Rip?"

Su Yu was shocked. This was the first time he had ever felt so strong. He couldn't even accurately judge how strong he was at the moment as he was only a fourth-stage Source Opening cultivator. As the pain in his hands

intensified, he did not dare to delay and hurriedly attacked the training dummy before him.

Boom!

His hand shot out and clawed at the dummy's throat with his fingers that had turned as sharp as eagle claws. A loud boom resounded from the dummy that was made from sturdy materials capable of withstanding the attack of cultivators.

Su Yu then pulled his hand back and attacked with his other hand. He attacked again and again, each attack powered by some sort of tearing effect. Slowly, a tiny crack appeared on the dummy's throat. And after about five minutes, Su Yu finally felt the power leaving his hands.

Boom!

"Hiss!"

Su Yu inhaled in pain as he landed one final attack after the power left him, nearly breaking his own fingers and putting himself in great pain.

"Fuck!"

Su Yu cursed the ability for leaving so abruptly. It was understandable that he would hurt himself attacking a training dummy with his cultivation of Source Opening Realm. After checking his communicator, he reached a conclusion.

"An active duration of five minutes for a drop of blood essence. It is not a singular attack. Rather, it infuses my attacks with a tearing effect. That is probably the racial ability of the bird instead of a regular qi-powered technique."

Su Yu looked at the tiny crack on the dummy's neck. It was slowly closing back up. These training dummies were popular among the various training centers due to their ability to self-repair.

"Dad is also able to do this to the dummy as a ninth-stage Great Strength cultivator. In fact, he can do even more damage to it. With one full-powered punch, he can blast a hole through the dummy. Meanwhile, my repeated attacks have only left a small crack on it. Seems like my attack is around the level of a sixth or seventh-stage Great Strength cultivator. Probably seventh

as the sixth stage is unlikely to have enough strength to damage these dummies.

"In that case, these activated abilities will have the strength of the blood essence used. After all, the book indicated that the blood used belonged to a seventh-stage Great Strength iron-winged bird. One drop of blood essence for the offensive strength of a seventh-stage Great Strength cultivator for a duration of five minutes..."

In other words, he now had access to the offensive prowess of a seventh-stage Great Strength cultivator. Of course, offensive prowess did not equal strength. A true Great Strength cultivator would have a stronger body, a faster speed, and more experience in combat. They would be better than him in all aspects.

He could only contend against Great Strength cultivators when attacking stationary targets. But against proper Great Strength cultivators that were ready for combat, they would be able to instantly kill him. After all, his ability would only strengthen his hands while his body would remain weak.

"In fact, I won't stand a chance against even a third-stage Great Strength cultivator so long as the opponent is ready for me and fights from range. I won't even have the chance to approach such an opponent to use my ability."

Su Yu shook his head, pulling himself out of the illusion of strength. The strength this ability gave him was not as impressive as it looked. It could only be used as a trump card. If it was exposed, it wouldn't be able to harm even third-stage or weaker Great Strength cultivators. After all, those opponents could always avoid him until his ability ran out before turning around to deal with him.

"However, this ability isn't completely worthless either. In fact, it can be very useful."

Su Yu smiled. He shouldn't be too greedy. This ability was good enough for him. To be frank, a Source Opening cultivator like him was not much different from a regular person. The ability to gain the offensive strength of a seventh-stage Great Strength cultivator for five minutes was more than enough for him.

"But the side effects are a tad bit serious..." Su Yu complained. Both his hands were still swelling. As for the pain, it had tortured him so much that he was already numb to it.

"Rip...this ability is too rough. The abilities of the iron-winged birds are really not suitable for humans. Our own martial techniques will be much better. However, the abilities of some of the more powerful races can still be very useful."

Su Yu's eyes lit up in excitement. Humanity had performed a thorough research on the iron-winged birds, making them a poor target to study. But what about other races? What if he could decipher the abilities of other races?

"The cultural research academies will reward me for researching these subjects, right? If I'm lucky enough to get the cultivation methods, techniques, or even racial abilities of the divines and devils, won't that earn me a lot of merit points?"

Su Yu swallowed before smiling, "I think the cultural research academies are basically tailor-made for me! I can totally become a technique dealer at the cultural research academies."

Of course, Su Yu was only half-joking to himself. He was a nobody. If he suddenly started releasing the racial abilities and techniques of the divines and the devils after joining an academy, he wouldn't be considered a genius. Rather, he would be considered a freak.

Had he encountered a divine or a devil before?

Had he fought them before?

Had he trained in their techniques before?

If the answer to all these questions was no, nobody would believe that he was actually able to decipher the techniques and racial abilities of those races.

Su Yu could only entertain himself with those thoughts. With a smile, he started moving again. Although he couldn't activate the iron-winged bird's ability anymore, he still shouldn't waste the training room he had paid for. It wouldn't hurt to use his remaining time in the room to train.

Human cultivators would only start learning martial arts after reaching the eighth-stage Source Opening Realm. They wouldn't be able to properly utilize the practiced martial arts before then. Nevertheless, Su Yu had still learned several martial arts in the past. He wasted no time and started practicing what he knew in the training room.

In the past, the eighth-stage felt incredibly far away for him. That was no longer the case. It would be a good idea to familiarize himself with some martial arts in advance. That way, he wouldn't be completely clueless upon reaching the eighth-stage. After all, if he reached that stage without the skill to utilize his newfound strength, he would remain as weak as before.

Chapter 12: Peaceful and Calm

Everything was peaceful and calm for the next few days. Su Yu did not tell anyone about his advancement into the fourth-stage. Instead, he focused on bitterly practicing the Source Opening Codex to stabilize his cultivation.

There were some side effects from consuming blood essence. Thankfully, most of the blood had been absorbed by the book. Su Yu's body fully recovered in only two or three days and stopped hurting all the time. He did not use the final drop of blood essence in his possession. It was still too soon.

After all, he wasn't sure if the Source Swallowing Technique would push him into the fifth-stage the next time he used it. It would be too crazy for him to make such a big leap in cultivation in such a short period of time. It was better to wait half a month or so.

Su Yu was in no rush. The entrance examination would only start after two months. If he could advance once every two weeks, he would be able to reach the ninth-stage by the time the examination arrived.

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"Yu, going to school today?"

"Of course."

"I'm so jealous that you don't need to go. Can't you get a leave of absence for me as well--"

Chen Hao said instinctively before stopping. He asked curiously, "You're going?"

This fellow had been skipping school for several days. Even on the rare days he went, he wouldn't stay long. Chen Hao was greatly envious of that. Why was this fellow suddenly going to school today?

While walking, Su Yu said, "There are still over two months before the entrance exam. I'm going to look for the instructor and ask if I can learn a few more languages."

"You're learning more?"

Chen Hao was astonished. What a crazy person.

He abruptly recalled something and grinned as he said, "Yu, in the past, I thought you're amazing for knowing eighteen languages. But I just learned that we have someone even more amazing in our school. Do you know Liu Yue from the first class? I heard that she's even crazier than you. She had just gotten her twentieth language certification yesterday. How incredible."

Su Yu raised his brow, "Liu Yue? Twentieth language?"

He naturally knew who Liu Yue was. That was someone he frequently encountered at the library. In fact, she was the one who had shown him the books related to the acceleration of Source Opening cultivation. Unfortunately, those books hadn't been helpful.

He was aware that Liu Yue had mastered a decent number of languages. After all, she was even more serious than him in her studies. In fact, he would see her in the library almost every time he went there. Even so, for her to know twenty languages...

Su Yu could claim that he didn't care that someone had surpassed him, but he still couldn't help feeling somewhat disgruntled hearing the news. There were others in the school who had also mastered a lot of languages, but even the best of them had only mastered around the same number of languages as him.

He had never heard about the actual number of languages Liu Yue had mastered before. It was surprising that she was able to master so many languages, especially when she wasn't even Liu Wenyan's student. One

ought to know that most of the top language students in the school had been taught by Liu Wenyan. In that case, who had Liu Yue learned from?

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Su Yu did not ask any questions about Liu Yue. The two continued walking toward the school. The public transport in the city wasn't expensive, but most of the students would rather walk unless they really lived too far away. After all, walking could be considered a form of training.

On the way, they could see some uniformed traffic controllers every now and then. Looking at the familiar uniform, Su Yu started missing his father. It had been five days. How was his father doing at the Allheaven Battlefield?

Apart from the traffic controllers in their green uniforms, they also encountered the black-uniformed patrols from the Windcatcher Department twice. The Windcatcher Department was mainly in charge of internal security within the Human Realm.

"Hao, has the Windcatcher Department been patrolling everywhere in the past few days?"

"Yeah." Chen Hao, who was busy looking around, replied, "Didn't they say that the Myriad Race Cult has entered Great Xia? That's why the Windcatcher Department has increased the frequency of their patrols."

"Hehe. Yu, have you watched any television during the past few days? The prefect has deployed the Martial Dragon Guards to patrol the prefecture and a lot of Myriad Race Cult bastards have been captured. There are executions every single day. Hundreds of them have been executed by now."

Su Yu was naturally aware of all that. He frowned slightly and said, "Things are odd."

"What?" Chen Hao smiled, "It's not like this is the first time executions are shown on television."

"I'm not talking about that." Su Yu frowned, "Those Myriad Race Cult bastards won't make a move for no reason. They would cause chaos each time they moved. But have you seen or heard of any chaos in Great Xia this time? The only thing that has been happening is the execution of those fellows. Are they here to throw their lives away?"

He found it odd that apart from being executed, the Myriad Race Cult had not been doing anything else. Was it because the Martial Dragon Guards were too good and were able to detect the Myriad Race Cult before they could do anything?

Sure, that might be possible. Shaking his head, Su Yu cleared his mind of those thoughts. That wasn't something he should be worried about. However, he was still glad to see the Myriad Race Cult doing badly. With the defeats they had suffered, they probably wouldn't be able to spare any effort on assassinating Instructor Liu anymore. The two talked as they walked. Before long, they arrived at Nanyuan Secondary School.

...

At the same time.

Outside the Nanyuan Secondary School.

At the top floor of a tall building nearby, a middle-aged man moved his gaze away from the school.

Turning around, he looked at a middle-aged woman who was busy cooking and spoke, "In Nanyuan Secondary School, there are 3,200 students, 210 teachers and instructors, with the students being Source Opening cultivators and the teachers being Great Strength cultivators. The principal, Chen Shi, is a second-stage Infinite Strength cultivator.

"They have fifty guards, with one ninth-stage Great Strength cultivator and six cultivators at the seventh-stage Great Strength Realm and above among them. Among the teachers, twenty-eight of them were at seventh-stage Great Strength Realm and above. In total, there are thirty-five high-ranked Great Strength cultivators.

"Additionally, the Windcatcher Department has a team of thirty providing secret protection to the school. The team leader is an Infinite Strength cultivator. The rest of them are high-ranked Great Strength cultivators. In total, they have sixty-four high-ranked Great Strength cultivators and two Infinite Strength cultivators.

"The mayor's manor is seven-thousand meters away from the school. With Mayor Wu Wenhai's strength as a second-stage Skysoar cultivator, he requires two minutes to reach the school from the manor."

The middle-aged man finished his report. In the kitchen, the woman continued cooking as she spoke, "Nanyuan Secondary School, the best secondary school in Nanyuan, also a source of talent for the various academies..."

"This time, we won't be acting alone. Our people will be moving concurrently in six cities, all aiming for the local secondary schools. Xia Longwu? Heh."

The woman's face turned cold. "Xia Longwu is too arrogant. After destroying a few of our regular hideouts, he concluded that we're completely worthless. This time, we'll let him suffer. Great Xia? Nothing special after all."

The middle-aged man did not say anything about her rambling. Instead, he continued his report, "There is also a squad of Martial Dragon Guards in Nanyuan. There are ten soldiers in the team. Nine of them have a cultivation level between fourth-stage to ninth-stage Infinite Strength Realm. The squad leader, Xia Bing, is a second-stage Skysoar Realm cultivator. We still don't know where they're stationed but we need to take precautions against them as well."

"Martial Dragon Guards!" This time, the woman was no longer sneering. Her face turned solemn as she said, "Investigate. Find them." magic

"There are too few of them. It's very hard to investigate them..."

"Create some chaos. Lure them out." The woman ordered coldly, "Have some people go outside the city and slaughter a few hamlets. That will be enough lives to force the Martial Dragon Guards to make a move."

At that, the middle-aged man hesitated, "A lot of us have died recently. The people under us are already wavering. If we continue sending them to their deaths..."

"It's not like they know they'll be facing the Martial Dragon Guards. Have the people from the Blood Fire Sect go. Those people have always been crazy. They enjoy killing the most. Let them test the water. The moment the Martial Dragon Guards are lured away, we move. Have our people on standby. We'll destroy Nanyuan Secondary School in one go before retreating immediately. This time...we'll kill all of them!"

The woman had a cold expression. "Kill all the students and teachers in all six secondary schools. Even Xia Longwu would be hurt from the loss of six

secondary schools. They think we're only here to create a little bit of trouble? Little did they know that our goal is more than a few instructors."

Protecting Liu Wenyan? He wasn't even their target! What was the point of killing a single Liu Wenyan? Even with the robust strength of Great Xia, it would still suffer from losing six secondary schools and everyone in it. The result would not be immediate, but in a few years, they would start feeling the effects of losing almost an entire generation of students from six cities.

The middle-aged man heaved a long breath and said worriedly, "We're both Skysoar cultivators. It won't be a problem for us to handle Mayor Wu Wenhai. But if Xia Bing shows up, we won't be his match."

The Martial Dragon Guards was the most elite army of Great Xia. Even a mere squad leader of that army would be extremely powerful. Even with the same cultivation level, it was unlikely that they would be his match.

"Don't worry." The woman sneered. "If the Martial Dragon Guards really show up, there will be someone else handling them."

"Have the higher ups sent someone here?"

"Don't ask something you shouldn't." berated the woman before shifting her focus back to her cooking. She had been staying here undercover for six years. After this mission, it would be time for her to leave. She wondered if she would be promoted after her return to the headquarters.

Suddenly, a little girl walked into the room and asked, "Mom, that smells good. What are we having for breakfast?"

"Dear, be patient. Breakfast will be ready soon."

The woman spoke with a gentle smile on her face. However, the look in her eyes was cold with no emotion whatsoever. As far as she was concerned, this daughter of hers was merely a tool to cover her identity here. The man also smiled warmly as he talked to the young girl. However, his eyes were as cold as the woman's. The girl did not suspect anything and happily went into the bathroom. The moment she left, the kitchen sank into silence.

After a short while, the man asked, "What about her?"

"Kill." The woman did not hesitate. "But we can't do it now. We'll do it before leaving and erase even her blood. We can't have those experts tracing us through her blood. After all, our blood still flows in her."

Yes, that was their biological daughter. They had given birth to the daughter to cover their identities. Now that they were leaving, they no longer needed this burden with them. Over the past six years, the two had disguised themselves well. Nobody in Nanyuan suspected them. Nobody would have guessed that the hardworking couple with a daughter would actually be Skysoar experts of the Myriad Race Cult.

"Contact the others tonight. Get ready for the operation. Remember, slaughter everyone and pull out in three minutes."

"Ok." The middle-aged man answered before looking outside the window. A smile formed on his face as his gaze landed on Nanyuan Secondary School. That school would stop existing in a few days.

What a pity. Those youths are quite a vigorous bunch. Some of them might even have the potential to grow into incredible individuals in the future. Alas, they would no longer have the chance to do so. Xia Longwu...not even you would have seen this coming. After all, Great Xia has enjoyed many years of peace.

The more he thought about it, the more excited the middle-aged man became. He had been here for so many years. It was finally time for him to complete his mission. Xia Longwu had thought that this would only be a minor conflict. Little did he know that the main force of the cult had already entered Great Xia.

Chapter 13: Bait (1)

Final year third class.

This was Su Yu's class. He had barely been to his classes in recent days. However, nobody thought much about it. The entrance examination was coming and everyone was nervous about it. Nobody could spare any attention on whether a classmate was skipping classes or not. In any case, Su Yu was not the only one being exempted from lessons.

There was a fourth-stage Source Opening cultivator in the class who had also been away from school for a long time. For students of that level, it was better

for them to calm themselves and prepare for the upcoming examination than to actually go to school every day.

...

Su Yu went to class and sat down on his seat. He was in no rush to go looking for Liu Wenyan. It was still too early. Instructor Liu was probably busy reading this early in the morning. After all, that was a long-time habit of his. Chen Hao sat down beside Su Yu. The two were actually deskmates. Their teachers allowed the class to sit freely, so the two had decided to sit together.

Before long, a voluptuous woman of about thirty in age entered the class with a book in hand. She scanned the class without remarking on the attendance. Stopping at the front of the class, she opened her book and said, "The entrance examination is not far away. We'll stop with the basic lessons. Today, I'll give you a simple explanation on your possible future paths after graduation instead.

"I won't talk about the four academy types. You already know that. I'll talk about those who couldn't even enter an internal affairs academy or those unwilling to enter one. What path can one such person take?"

The teacher smiled, "This is a magical era where the mundane and the extraordinary exist together. Some students are unwilling to stay mundane, hoping to step on an extraordinary path. Will there be no hope for you to be extraordinary after failing to enter a war academy? No. You still have hope."

At that point, even the students who had heard about the alternatives grew excited. It didn't matter if they had heard it somewhere else before. It was always more reliable to hear it from a teacher.

"The first path, also the more dangerous path, is to join an army."

The smile on the teacher's face vanished as she solemnly said, "I think you're all aware that the army is one of the places where a mundane person would find more chances at stepping onto an extraordinary path. By killing our enemies on the battlefield, you will earn merit points. Many of you have family members in the army. You should already be aware of this.

"That is an extremely dangerous path. We have a six-figure casualty rate yearly. However, I'm not here today to talk about the dangers of joining an

army. Even if that is the path you decide to take, there are still multiple options within that path."

The teacher paused and looked at Chen Hao who had grown excited listening to her. She smiled and said, "Chen Hao, can you name the armed forces we have in Great Xia?"

Chen Hao stood up in excitement and said, "Firstly, we have the Martial Dragon Guards, the strongest army of Great Xia. Secondly, we have the Great Xia Army, the army in charge of the defense of Great Xia. Thirdly, we have the Windcatcher Department, in charge of arresting the Myriad Race Cult and maintaining law and order. Fourthly, the city guards of the various cities, in charge of defending the various cities.

"Apart from the Windcatcher Department, the other three forces will be expected to join the battlefield when things get difficult there. They can be considered the reserve force for our front line army."

The teacher smiled. "You're right. However, your answer is not comprehensive enough." "The Martial Dragon Guards is not a reserve force. They are not staying away from the Allheaven Battlefield because they're weaker than the front line army. Rather, it is because the front line does not require them there all the time. Apart from the four you mentioned, there are two other armed forces in Great Xia."

Chen Hao grew curious. The teacher continued with her explanation, "The fifth armed force is the front line army. In truth, a part of the front line army has always remained within Great Xia itself. Of course, they're very rarely seen. They are mainly in charge of recruiting new soldiers.

"The sixth armed force is the retired veterans. As you're all aware of, we have a lot of citizens that are retired veterans from the various armed forces. That is actually a rather formidable force in itself."

At that point, the teacher hesitated slightly before saying, "In fact, there is also a seventh armed force."

Everyone was astonished. There was more?

"Yes, we have a seventh armed force. The guards of the various schools and academies. Do not look down on these guards. Just take our Nanyuan Secondary School as an example. We're only a secondary school, but the

Squad Leader Huang you all know is actually a ninth-stage Great Strength expert.

"At the capital, the school and academy guards are even stronger. There, you can find guards at the Infinite Strength Realm or even the Skysoar Realm. Including the instructors and the students of the war academies, the schools and academies can be considered a massive force that might even surpass the might of the Great Xia Army when combined. Of course, all of us combined would still be weaker than the Martial Dragon Guards."

Everyone had a look of understanding on their faces. That was a factor they had all overlooked.

"Therefore, I'm here today to tell you that even if you can't enter an academy, do not worry. There are many options leading to an extraordinary path. However, danger and opportunity exist at the same time. If you're not as good as others in your studies and cultivation, then you'll need to pay a greater price for success. You might even end up paying the ultimate price, your life."

The teacher sternly said, "Students wishing to step on an extraordinary path yet unable to enter a war academy can consider enlisting in the army. Going to the front line is the most dangerous path, but you will also have the highest chance of obtaining what you want there."

"Secondly, you can consider joining the Great Xia Army. You can forget about the Martial Dragon Guards, but the Great Xia Army will recruit new soldiers every year. It is also much safer to join this army than going to the front line."

"Apart from the Great Xia Army, the Windcatcher Department also has their own academy known as the Windcatcher Academy. However, that isn't a popular academy. Also, their teaching method is rather crude. You will probably find yourself graduated and deployed to the various cities for active duty right after entering the Great Strength Realm. You will have a much earlier access to real combat there."

"..."

So it turned out that the teacher was essentially telling them to enlist.

Toward the end, the teacher shifted her tone and said, "Actually, if you can't enter a war academy and are also worried of the stress of joining an army, you can totally consider joining the city guards. The entrance examination for

the city guards is much simpler. They also have a rather comprehensive training curriculum in place.

"Nanyuan isn't a big city, but our city guards aren't weak. Everyone is in a rush to head to the capital. However, the capital is over a thousand kilometers away from Nanyuan. You'll be very far from home. Why don't you give the city guards a try?"

"The leader of Nanyuan's city guards, 1000-Man Commander Zhang, is a ninth-stage Great Strength expert. He places great importance on the city guards and its reserve. He will frequently give personal pointers to the new recruits, and the more talented recruits will receive great care from him. The mayor himself looks highly upon the commander..."

"..."

At that point, most of the class understood what was going on. This was yet another recruiter in disguise. Of course, none of them were bothered. They were already used to this. It was that time of the year where students were about to graduate and the various forces were in need of fresh recruits. Nanyuan might be a small city, but the mayor still wished to forge an elite garrison for the city.

As the saying went, the pavilion closest to the water enjoys moonlight first. The city garrison had actually been able to recruit a decent number of talents from the city each year due to their location.

As students of Nanyuan Secondary School, there were still some third-stage Source Opening cultivators that were decently talented even if they weren't able to enter the war academies. With some training, these people would still be able to step into the Infinite Strength Realm in the future.

"Give it a thought. You don't have to rush your decision..."

At that point, the class was getting clamorous, but the teacher was unaffected. After she was done speaking, she allowed everyone to freely discuss the topic and walked up to Su Yu. Su Yu wasn't her target. Rather, it was Chen Hao.

"Chen Hao, you're a third-stage Source Opening cultivator. You still have a chance to join a war academy, but it's a rather small chance. If you can't get into one, why don't you consider the city guards? Your father is working in

Nanyuan as well, right? Even a new recruit will be allowed to return home three days per month. This is a very good opportunity..."

Meanwhile, Chen Hao looked sullen. Why was she telling him all that? He would definitely be able to enter a war academy! He did not want to join the city guards! Why wasn't Su Yu given the same talk? She was obviously looking down on him! magic

Seeing Chen Hao's expression, the teacher smiled and asked, "Look at you. Are you looking down on the garrison?"

"No, of course not. But I still want to try joining a war academy. I'll think again if I fail."

Chen Hao sounded dispirited. He would reconsider only after failing his entrance examination to the war academies.

The teacher did not mind his reply. She looked at Su Yu and said with the same smile on her face, "Su Yu, you're slated to join a cultural research academy. Instructor Liu personally made sure of that. I shouldn't be saying this, but in case you don't want to join a cultural research academy, you can consider the city guards as well.

"The mayor is placing more and more importance on the city guards. You're a talented individual. Upon joining the city guards, you won't be assigned an unimportant position. The mayor actually has some openings in the Communication Division where you can work while learning. That is actually quite a valuable opportunity."

Su Yu gave it a thought and asked, "A city guard won't have much chance to enter the Allheaven Battlefield, right?"

"Yes." The teacher hurriedly replied, thinking that Su Yu was afraid of the battlefield.

Su Yu nodded and replied with a smile, "I see. Thank you, teacher. I'll give it a thought."

That was basically a polite rejection. What a joke. Su Yu would most certainly not join the city guards. He might have considered it in the past. If his father was still home and Nanyuan City could offer him something good, he wouldn't mind staying. He was also aware of the so-called Communication Division. It

was a safe place to work with good benefits for its employees. But with his father gone, what was the point of staying in Nanyuan alone? Also, would he have access to the blood essence he needed in Nanyuan?

At that thought, Su Yu thought something and asked, "Teacher, between the war academies and the cultural research academies, which would have access to more blood essence?"

The abrupt question stunned the teacher. She answered, "Of course it's the war academies..."

"I mean in terms of variety. As a place of research, the cultural research academies should have access to more types of blood essence, right?"

"Yes...I guess?" The teacher wasn't too sure either. "In terms of variety, the cultural research academies should have more. At the very least, they will have more samples than the war academies. Most of the unused blood essence gained from the battlefield would be supplied to the cultural research academies. In terms of total quantity, the war academies would have more. For example, they will probably have a lot of blood essence capable of helping with one's cultivation."

Su Yu nodded. He had reached the same conclusion previously, but he was unsure. With a confirmation from his teacher, he was much more confident in his judgment. Quantity was good, but variety was more important for him. Without variety, how was he supposed to unlock more pages in his book? Also, without knowing the language, he wouldn't be able to read an unlocked page either. Was he supposed to ask others what those words meant after unlocking a page?

"Looks like I should focus on joining a cultural research academy after all."

As Su Yu was muttering to himself, someone shouted outside the classroom, "Su Yu, go see Instructor Liu. He's looking for you."

"Got it."

After getting permission from his teacher, Su Yu left the classroom.

Chapter 14: Bait (2)

When Su Yu reached the Instructor's Office, he saw that he wasn't the only student there. Several familiar faces could be seen in the office. He wasn't exactly close with them, but he knew their names. Some were genius cultivators at fourth-stage Source Opening Realm and some were genius students who had mastered numerous languages. Liu Yue was among them.

Instructor Liu wasn't the only school staff present either. The principal and several Great Strength instructors were there as well. These people were among the strongest individuals in Nanyuan Secondary School. After Su Yu, a few more students arrived one after another.

Several minutes later, everyone was there. The principal smiled and said, "The twenty five of you are the hope of Nanyuan Secondary School this year. All of you will be joining either a war academy or a cultural research academy. As for the scientific research academies, they never recruited heavily from our school."

The principal was a martial cultivator while Liu Wenyan was a scholar. However, the scholar unhesitatingly interrupted the principal and said, "Cut the crap. Get straight to the point. We can't afford to waste so much time."

That placed the principal in an awkward position. Couldn't the old bastard see that there were students present? Why was he being so rude in front of the kids? The principal suddenly had the urge to break one of Instructor Liu's legs. The other instructors stealthily laughed at the exchange and only stopped when the principal glared at them.

The principal continued his talk, "Recently, things haven't been too peaceful in Great Xia. The Myriad Race Cult is making a lot of moves. They haven't been able to do much, but Nanyuan is a small city. We do not have enough forces to defend against them. Therefore, we have decided to send all of you to the capital, the Great Xia City, in advance. You will be safer there. In fact, the Myriad Race Cult is already attacking the genius students of some other cities."

Su Yu remained silent. One of the students asked, "Going to the capital? How about the entrance examination?"

"You can take your examination at the capital. It might even be better for you that way as the capital has a much higher number of open slots for

recruitment. With the school's recommendation, all of you have received the permission to take your examination there. You only need to go and wait."

"How long will we be staying there?" A girl asked, "We're still two months away from the examination. Are we supposed to stay at the capital until then?"

"Not really. If the Myriad Race Cult is defeated before then, you can return."

At the mention of the cult, the principal became furious. "Those scoundrels are creating chaos everywhere. Nanyuan is too small. We don't have enough forces to protect all of you. It is better to be safe. If they set their eyes on you, there will be a lot of openings for them to make their move.

"We might not be able to protect you when you're outside, when you're home, or even when you're here at school. Rather than spreading our security forces thin, we might as well gather you up and send you away. In fact, your departure will also make it safer for your families. For the Myriad Race Cult, the regular people are not worth the risk of revealing themselves. You know what I mean."

Everyone nodded. None of them was a fool. They naturally understood what the principal meant. The Myriad Race Cult would not make a move for no reason. It was pointless to reveal themselves just to kill some regular people and put themselves at risk.

However, killing these genius students was an entirely different case. In fact, the cult had a bonus system meant for rewarding successful kills of these young geniuses. A cult member would obtain considerable benefits from making a successful kill.

Of course, these students at Nanyuan weren't exactly true geniuses when compared with those from the bigger cities. However, Nanyuan also had a weaker security, making it a rather tempting target for the cult. In fact, the cult had indeed performed assassinations against young geniuses in other small cities before.

Seeing that all the students understood him, the principal continued, "Therefore, all of you need to get ready. For those willing to leave, gather at the school in three days. The city garrison will send some people to escort you to the capital. Don't worry. The school will bear all your expenses there."

Liu Wenyan had been remaining silent. He suddenly spoke, "If possible, you really should leave. Things...haven't been peaceful lately. The Myriad Race Cult has been active during the past few days. Genius students and merchant convoys have suffered attacks from them. Some murders have also been committed outside the city. Fortunately, no murder have been committed in Nanyuan so far.

"Something feels off about all that. You're no longer children, so you should have your own judgment about the situation as well. This might be an attempt to lure our security forces away from the city.

"The Myriad Race Cult members that have been caught or exposed are all minor members, with a majority of them being those lunatics from the Blood Fire Sect. Those lunatics have all been brainwashed to the point they don't fear death. They are nothing but cannon fodder for the cult and the myriad races. The true big shots have yet to show themselves. By creating chaos, they're keeping the Martial Dragon Guards and the city guards of the various cities occupied."

Su Yu couldn't help but to ask, "Instructor, is the capital not aware of all this?"

"Of course they are." Liu Wenyan smiled, "The capital is a place filled with talented individuals. How will they be unaware of this? But even if they are aware, can the Martial Dragon Guards stay idle during disturbances? The Great Xia Army is in charge of defense, so they can't be moved from their positions easily. The Martial Dragon Guards have the most flexibility, so they have to be deployed.

"The Windcatcher Department can hardly catch a breath as they are needed everywhere. You will never know what the Myriad Race Cult's next target will be. Those hiding in the dark can act in an absolutely unrestrained manner. Even with the strength to crush them, we can't do anything since we don't know where they are. Therefore, our goal is to reduce the number of targets and send you away. We can then allocate more of our forces into hunting those fellows down."

Everyone nodded in realization.

One of the students declared furiously, "Those people are animals. Just wait until I graduate from a war academy. I'll kill every last one of them!"

The instructors merely smiled without saying anything. Every one of them had thought of the same thing before. Unfortunately, those cult members were too well hidden.

"Alright. Return and think about this. Come to the school in three days if you agree to leave. The city guards will send you away."

"Alright."

Everyone answered. It did not seem like they would have any other choice apart from leaving. By leaving, they could instead lighten the burden on Nanyuan. They understood that.

...

Everyone left, but Su Yu remained. He had been intending to learn a few more languages from Liu Wenyan anyway, including the ox-faced fish language. That was one of the races he had dreamed of before. Surprisingly, it had been a few days since Su Yu had last dreamed.

The ox-faced fish language was extremely obscure, so Su Yu had not learned it before. He wasn't even sure if Liu Wenyan knew it. As for his departure to the capital, he didn't really care much about it. He was going to be home alone anyway, so it did not matter if he had to move to a different city. The other instructors and the principal left as well. Finally, only Su Yu and Liu Wenyan were left in the office.

Hearing that Su Yu wanted to learn the ox-faced fish language, Liu Wenyan smiled and said, "The ox-faced fish is very rare on the Allheaven Battlefield. Most of them remain in the Mount Root Realm. Their language is very obscure, resulting in a lack of reading materials in their language. At the very last, that's the case when it comes to our plunder from the Allheaven Battlefield. I've yet to learn that language as well, but I'm confident there will be someone in the capital that knows the language."

Su Yu did not feel too bad about it. He was about to leave when Liu Wenyan said, "Your father has left for the Allheaven Battlefield. Are you living alone for now?"

"Yeah."

"Remember to be careful."

Su Yu turned around and looked at his instructor. Were things really this bad?

"There are security measures in place at school and on the streets. Most of our students will also have some Great Strength cultivators at home, so we're not too worried about them. But you're more vulnerable since you're living alone."

Liu Wenyan hesitated for a bit before saying, "In truth...I disagree--"

"Instructor Liu!"

A sonorous voice suddenly rang out from outside the office.

Liu Wenyan maintained the same expression and asked, "His father is a veteran of the Devil Subduing Army. Is he not trustworthy as well?"

"Anything is possible. Su Long has been retired for eighteen years."

"Then you guys should have someone protect him. I can't stop worrying otherwise."

"We don't have the manpower to spare."

Liu Wenyan said unhappily, "I don't have the right to question you people from the Martial Dragon Guards when you're carrying out your orders, but I don't think Su Yu is suspicious. Of course, if you're still unwilling, I'll have Su Yu stay with me for a few days. It will be too irresponsible to let him return alone."

"..."

The person outside sank into silence, seemingly deep in thought. As for Su Yu, he was totally confused. What was going on? Of course, he chose to keep his mouth shut. Was the person outside someone from the Martial Dragon Guards? But he hadn't noticed anyone outside at all!

"Fine."

A reply came a short while later before silence descended again.

Liu Wenyan turned to look at the silent Su Yu and smiled, "The Myriad Race Cult members are very good at disguising themselves. We suspect that they have been creating chaos recently for a specific reason. Therefore, we decided that we can't stay passive. Instead, we need to take the initiative and

make our own move as well. However, we don't know if they have any members in the school or the city garrison. We need an opportunity before we can make a move."

"Opportunity?"

Su Yu caught on to something, but he was still unsure.

"Yes. Opportunity. Nanyuan is a small place. There is nothing important here. The only thing we have of value is probably this Nanyuan Secondary School. Maybe the mayor's manor can be considered such a place, but that place is guarded by the city guards. It is a much safer place than the school. We don't know if the cult is already in Nanyuan, but as a precaution and to grab the initiative, we have decided on a baiting operation. You guys...are the bait. Of sorts." magic

Liu Wenyan sighed, "If the cult is really here at Nanyuan, and they're really planning something here, they will only be left with several choices after hearing about our plan to send you guys away."

"Firstly, they can attack in advance and kill all of you. Secondly, they can attack while you're en-route to the capital. But with the city garrison escorting you, the cult will need more manpower for their operation. Also, the Great Xia Army will also be meeting with us halfway the journey.

"Thirdly, they can wait for you guys to leave with a portion of the garrison. With the city weakened, they can make their move. Fourthly, give up on Nanyuan. With all of you gone, we can better concentrate our security measures, making things harder for the cult."

Su Yu frowned, "So you mean that if we're really their target, they might attack before our departure?"

"Yes. They will show themselves."

"And if it's not us..."

"Then you'll be out of Nanyuan. The capital is really a safer place. The Martial Dragon Guards will be able to pluck out the hidden cult members here in a month or two."

Liu Wenyan's face turned stern, "Therefore, you guys are the bait. Not many people know about this plan. We're not sure if they have any spies among us."

"Will it be dangerous for us?"

"It will be fine for most of you. You're an exception since you're staying alone."

"That's why I'm telling you all this. I don't want you to encounter an assassination attempt while completely clueless. Just stay with me for two days. If nothing happens, we'll send you all away in three days."

Su Yu thought about it and decided to not object. It was clear that the people running the city were being cautious by sending them away in advance. It would be for the best if nothing happened. And if something did happen, the city would still be able to seize the initiative with their plan in place.

As for the danger...well, things would be even more dangerous if they didn't have a plan in the first place. If the Myriad Race Cult was really targeting them, it would actually be safer following the plan.

Su Yu could understand the reason behind this, so he smiled and said, "Don't worry, teacher. I get it. But are there really that many cult members hidden among us?"

"Yes, there are." Liu Wenyan sighed, "Otherwise, why would we be calling them rats? They're too good at hiding. It would be for the best if nothing happens. But if something is really happening, we can only try our best to prepare for it. Stay at my place for now. Just use learning new languages as an excuse."

"Sure," Su Yu agreed. He did not mind where he slept.

However, he still couldn't resist asking, "Instructor, aren't you a willpower cultivator? Can't you detect the spies hidden among our ranks?"

Liu Wenyan merely smiled, looking like a mysterious expert with unfathomable thoughts.

What do you think? Sure, I can read the mind of rookies like you. But any adult would have a complicated mind. Nobody will have their thoughts exposed so easily, especially those from the Myriad Race Cult. Every single

one of them is fully focused on hiding. The brave ones among them would have died a long time ago.

Chapter 15: A Different Great Xia

Su Yu spent the day following Liu Wenyan around. He did not mind it as this wasn't the first time he had done this. When he was learning the various different languages in the past, he had frequently followed Liu Wenyan around as well.

While following Liu Wenyan, Su Yu continued doing what he wanted, such as cultivating and studying. The only thing he hadn't been doing was activating the Source Swallowing Technique with his blood essence. The Martial Dragon Guards continued protecting them in the dark.

Su Yu had not been able to detect them, and they had never shown themselves to him either. In truth, he was rather curious about them. He also slightly adored them. He had heard that the Martial Dragon Guards were extremely strong, to the point his father wasn't even qualified to join. Just how strong were they? Like Su Yu, Liu Wenyan was living his life as usual, spending his time drinking tea, reading, and teaching.

...

"You long to join the Martial Dragon Guards?" Liu Wenyan asked after noticing Su Yu looking outside several times, clearly trying to catch a glimpse of the Martial Dragon Guards protecting them.

Su Yu was somewhat embarrassed to be caught and spoke in a low voice, "I'm just curious. They're the strongest army in Great Xia, after all."

"Martial Dragon Guards..." Liu Wenyan's emotions were mixed as he said, "They have existed for many years. The current prefect was actually named after them. The Martial Dragon Guards came before the prefect while the Martial Dragon War Academy came after. This generation's Martial Dragon Guards were the strongest. They do not have a lot of members. After all, they only take in elites. In total, there are only about five thousand of them."

"That few?"

The Martial Dragon Guards' information was not available to the public. Thus, this was the first time Su Yu had ever heard of this. Only five thousand people? That was too small of an army!

One ought to know that even Nanyuan has over a thousand city guards. As for the capital, their city guards surpassed fifty thousand people in number. The Great Xia Army was an army of over one hundred thousand people. The Martial Dragon Guards, which was considered stronger than all of them, had less than ten thousand members.

"The Martial Dragon Guards are elites. They don't need too many people. For an army, quality matters more than quantity." Liu Wenyan smiled, "Officially, the Martial Dragon Guards have ten thousand soldiers, but that is not the truth. Even so, there is no denying that they are extremely strong. A squad at ten, an army at a hundred, undefeatable at a thousand."

"Undefeatable?" Su Yu muttered.

Liu Wenyan smiled and said, "That's just a slogan. Don't take it seriously. But they're really very strong. Even an ordinary soldier there is an Infinite Strength cultivator. Their squad leaders will either be ninth-stage Infinite Strength or Skysoar cultivators while their 100-man commanders will mostly be late-stage Skysoar cultivators."

Su Yu was speechless. That was really strong. With five thousand soldiers, they would have at least fifty 100-man commanders in their army. Were all of them beyond the seventh-stage Skysoar Realm?

One ought to know that even Nanyuan's mayor wasn't that strong. What about the 1000-man commanders that were above the 100-man commanders? Wouldn't they be stronger? Would they be above the Skysoar Realm? How about the deputy general? The general of the Martial Dragon Guards was Xia Longwu. Su Yu was at least aware of that.

With even the weakest soldier in the army being an Infinite Strength cultivator, that was an extremely terrifying army. On the Allheaven Battlefield, the Devil Subduing Army was considered a formidable army. But even an army like that would promote his father who was only a seventh-stage Great Strength cultivator into a squad leader back then, granting him the same rank as a squad leader in the Martial Dragon Guards.

However, one of them was a seventh-stage Great Strength cultivator while the other was a ninth-stage Infinite Strength cultivator at the weakest. It was no wonder his father had been rejected by the Martial Dragon Guards back then.

Looking at Su Yu's reaction, Liu Wenyan smiled and continued, "We have a squad of ten stationed here at Nanyuan. The fellow who had spoken to me previously was a team leader."

"Is he strong?"

"Yes. He's a ninth-stage Infinite Strength cultivator."

Su Yu was once again rendered speechless. "A team leader is already a ninth-stage Infinite Strength cultivator?"

"He might only be a team leader, but the squad stationed here is actually a stronger squad. This team leader is strong enough to become a squad leader in some of the weaker squads.

"You don't need to get too envious of his strength. The Great Strength and Infinite Strength Realms are only the foundation realms. The Skysoar Realm is where cultivation truly begins. Skysoar cultivators would not be cannon fodder even at a place like the Allheaven Battlefield. Instead, they would be the elites. You'll understand after materializing your willpower and entering the Skysoar Realm."

Su Yu said longingly, "I wonder how many years it will take..."

"..."

Liu Wenyan was speechless. Years? He had claimed that one could take three to five years to reach the Skysoar Realm before, but that was only applicable for geniuses. Su Yu might be decently talented, but he was no genius. If he was lucky, perhaps he could reach that level in a decade. If not...he would suffer the same fate as Liu Wenyan and found himself stuck at the stage before willpower materialization for his entire life.

But even if one had to take a decade for willpower materialization, that would still be a faster speed compared to regular physical cultivators. The two continued their conversation. Su Yu also took the chance to ask about the languages of the myriad races.

Eventually, he asked, "Instructor, is there really no way to accelerate Source Opening cultivation? Apart from those risky methods, are there no other methods? Why were those fourth-stage Source Opening cultivators able to rapidly reach the Great Strength Realm after entering the war academies?"

"From the fourth-stage Source Opening Realm to the first-stage Great Strength Realm, one needs to break through six stages. To reach the fifth-stage from the fourth-stage, wouldn't one need at least half a year generally?"

"Even if one can maintain the same speed and break through once per six months, one would still need three years to enter the Great Strength Realm. But I heard that many students were able to reach the Great Strength Realm a year after entering the war academies."

Su Yu had always been curious about that. In the past, the teachers and instructors had merely smiled and told them that they would find out after joining the academies. He wanted to take this chance to learn more. After all, his coming progress in cultivation would probably be rapid as well.

Perhaps it was because Su Yu was going to enter an academy soon, but Liu Wenyan did not hide anything this time. He answered, "You must have seen this term in books before: the secret grottos of academies."

"Yes."

"There you have it." Liu Wenyan took the chance to test Su Yu, "There are numerous realms in existence. Why did the experts of the myriad races insist on creating an Allheaven Battlefield outside their realms?"

"Suppression!" Su Yu answered unhesitatingly. "Each realm has a different environment. Gravity, air, qi density, and so on are all different. The divines might find themselves suppressed at the Devil Realm, limiting them to only thirty percent of their full strength. That would be the case for the devils in the Divine Realm. Because of that, no race would dare to rashly invade a different realm."

"Exactly. That was why the Allheaven Battlefield came into existence." Liu Wenyan's eyes grew cold as he asked, "Do you know the reason for humanity to get dragged into the war as well? Why was humanity the target of so many races?"

"Because humans...are weak? So they want to invade us?" ?Su Yu hesitated. That was what the books said. However, his father told a different story. According to Su Long, humans weren't weak. In fact, humans were very strong.

"Weak? No, we're not." ?Liu Wenyan said the same thing. "How can humans be weak? If we're really weak, we would have been defeated at the Allheaven Battlefield long ago. Humans might not be a top-three race among the myriad races, but we're still strong enough to be a top-ten race."

Su Yu was confused, "In that case, why do humans have so many enemies?"

"Human Realm." Liu Wenyan smiled, "You will all learn about this after entering the academies. Of course, this isn't a big secret. The Human Realm is too special. All other realms have some sort of suppression against outsiders, making it hard for the myriad races to invade each other. But that is not the case for the Human Realm."

"Huh?"

"Zero suppression." Liu Wenyan sighed. "That's why the Human Realm is an extremely attractive target for the other races. In fact, the Human Realm could actually be considered a strategic location. Think about it. How would a race feel after spending great effort to invade a different realm only to find themselves weakening after a successful invasion? The Human Realm is the only realm they can enter without suffering any suppression. Why would the Human Realm not become a target for the various races?"

"A successful conquest would grant them billions of lives to exploit, more source qi to harvest, a vast world to rule, countless new treasures to be found, and a realm to be devoured. They stand to gain too many benefits from conquering a new realm. But since other realms are difficult to conquer, the Human Realm becomes the most attractive target. We're not attacked because we're weak. The fault lays on the Human Realm, the unreliable Human Realm..."

Liu Wenyan mumbled helplessly. Every other realm had a suppression effect on outsiders. The Human Realm was the sole exception. What could they do about it?

"But why is that the case?"

This was new to Su Yu. He was having a hard time wrapping his mind around it. Why would that be the case? It was no wonder that things were becoming more and more desperate for humanity on the Allheaven Battlefield.

It was no wonder that so many races were hostile toward humans. He had always thought that those fellows had only set their eyes on the humans because they were weak. But both his father and instructor were telling him otherwise. According to them, the human race was powerful enough to be a top-ten race.

A powerful top-ten race had been turned into a public enemy. He couldn't understand why something like that would happen previously, but now he knew. The Human Realm was basically opened wide to the other races. How would they not be attracted? The Human Realm was akin to an attractive clothless woman beckoning at a man. Would that man be able to resist the temptation?

"Why?" Liu Wenyan smiled bitterly. "We have two theories. Firstly, the Human Realm's core has been damaged, so the power of suppression is gone. Secondly, there are legends that the ancient humans were supreme experts dominating the myriad realms. Worshiped by the myriad races, the Human Realm acted as the heart of the myriad realms. Humanity naturally needed no suppression effect toward foreign races. Only weak races would require something like that to defend themselves."

Su Yu was shocked. "Is that true?"

"That's only a legend. Maybe humans made that up to feel good about themselves. In any case, that is one of our existing speculations. None of that matters. We can't change anything. You will learn all this in an academy. Weren't you asking about the cultivation speed of those who had joined an academy? It's all thanks to the secret grottos. A so-called secret grotto is actually a pocket realm, a chunk of space cut out of a place or realm rich in source qi."

Su Yu blanked out. A cut off chunk of space?

"I'll give you a simple example. Take the secret grotto of the Great Xia War Academy. That was a chunk of space cut off and plundered from the Golden Peng Realm by the Great Xia King with one slash of his blade back then."

Su Yu was speechless. P-plundered? Wait. Cutting a realm apart with one slash of his blade? He even managed to take that chunk of space back? Was that still a human?

"The Golden Peng Realm has a high density of source qi. It also has a decent amount of heavenly source qi in it. Thus, with some preparations, one would be able to cultivate rapidly upon entering such a secret grotto. That is why the students of the academy could quickly enter the Great Strength Realm."

Su Yu couldn't help asking, "How about the Human Realm? Don't we have any places rich in source qi or heavenly source qi?"

"Of course we do." Liu Wenyan smiled. "But there are too many people in the Human Realm. It also doesn't make sense for us to cut off our own realm. Doing that too often may even cause the realm to collapse. Since the other races all want to take a bite out of our realm, we can naturally do the same to them."

The more Liu Wenyan spoke, the colder his face became. "Over the years, humanity has not been staying idle. We have actually taken the initiative to attack and destroy a decent number of small realms, seizing the cores of those realms for ourselves. With the cores, we were able to turn entire realms into sacred lands of cultivation for humanity.

"Us humans do not have the habit of silently enduring a beating. It might be hard for us to destroy the bigger races, but those smaller races are asking for a beating for daring to set their eyes on us as well."

It was very rare to see a scholar like Liu Wenyan to look so murderous.

"Where did you think the academies got their research materials from? You really think all of them were plundered from the battlefield? You're too naive. Some of the materials were actually directly taken from within the realms of these races."

Su Yu's expression changed. After a while, he muttered, "That is so domineering. I had always assumed that we're only silently taking a beating from the myriad races. So that's not the case at all. We're also hitting back."

Liu Wenyan's smile grew wider, "That is only natural. If we're not ruthless enough, the myriad races will see us as lambs. By ruthlessly suppressing some races and roping in some other races, humanity is able to stand tall

among the myriad races. Take our very own Great Xia King as an example. He hasn't been seen publicly for many years. Do you really think he's in seclusion?"

"Is that not the case?" Su Yu asked blankly. Wasn't that what they announced?

Liu Wenyan stroked his beard and said, "Of course not. How can an invincible expert stay in seclusion all the time? He left a long time ago. We don't know his exact whereabouts, but it is said that he had entered the Divine Realm. Of course, that is only a rumor and nobody knows if that's true." magic

"Incredible!" Su Yu felt like he was listening to a fairy tale. That was amazing! Why aren't they making that news public?"

"Make what public?" asked Liu Wenyan in disdain. "Those who have spent some time at the Allheaven Battlefield will know it. As for those who are not going to the Allheaven Battlefield, it's pointless to let them know. It's better to keep the public pressured instead.

"If we only report the good news and hide the bad news, humanity would not feel any sense of crisis. In that case, will the humans living in peace behind the front line still work so hard in cultivation? In fact, this sense of crisis is one of the main contributors to the constant rise of experts among humanity. Just look at how hardworking you and your schoolmates are."

That made a lot of sense. If only good news were shared, would those staying behind the front line still work so hard? Of course, there were also some disadvantages to this policy. However, Su Yu was in no position to judge it.

Chapter 16: Operation (1)

After the long talk, the two sank into silence. Su Yu returned to cultivating the Source Opening Codex. He did not know if the Myriad Race Cult had really arrived at Nanyuan. However, he wasn't worried. Since the city was prepared for them, the Myriad Race Cult wouldn't be able to do much harm.

After years of propaganda, everyone saw the Myriad Race Cult as merely a bunch of cowardly clowns that were a parasite to the human race. Great Xia did not fear the Myriad Race Cult. With the undefeatable Martial Dragon Guards, the powerful Great Xia King, and the formidable Prefect Xia Longwu around, nobody feared the Myriad Race Cult.

One only needed to turn on the television to see those Myriad Race Cult fellows being executed every day. Su Yu did not care much for the Myriad Race Cult either. He did not know them well. He hadn't even encountered one of them before. The only thing he knew about them was the fact that they were traitors of humanity hated by all.

...

Plop!

After stabbing his sword through an elderly Great Strength cultivator, a young man with red eyes cursed, "Have the people in Great Xia gone crazy? Are they incapable of feeling fear? Can't they see that their Great Strength cultivator has been killed?"

Not far away, an old man with white hair coldly said, "It has been many years since I last entered Great Xia. The people here have long been brainwashed by Xia Longwu. They all look down on the Myriad Race Cult. They have all forgotten our might!"

The old man couldn't help but to curse. The resistance they met within Great Xia was far too terrifying. The moment the locals discovered that they were from the Myriad Race Cult, these locals would start fighting like lunatics. The elderly, the middle-aged people, and the youth...no one was an exception.

Even after a few of them were killed, these locals would still stand their ground. Under the leadership of several retired veterans, even a small village was able to inflict great losses on the cult members.

The old man couldn't help but to be worried. They had encountered way too much resistance in Great Xia. Would Great Xia really be troubled by the slaughter of several middle schools? Would their plan really work?

"I only fear that our operation would not only fail to scare the people of Great Xia, but it would instead provoke them into a mad hunt for us. Things would get very troublesome if that happens."

The old man was worried, but he didn't dare voice his anxiousness to the others. Their previous operations in the other prefectures had gone too smoothly. They were able to sow chaos by only killing a few geniuses, causing enough panic that the streets would be devoid of people for a few days after each kill. But this was Great Xia. Here, even a simple village would

fight back so viciously. What would happen if they had to face the entire prefecture instead?

"Hopefully...everything will go smoothly."

That night, Su Yu slept at Liu Wenyan's place. It was a dormitory provided by the school. This was the first time Su Yu had spent the night at Liu Wenyan's place. He was fine with everything there. However, as an old man, Liu Wenyan would frequently wake up in the middle of the night for the toilet, waking up Su Yu in the process.

Su Yu couldn't help but to lament that time would not spare anyone. Before materializing his will, Liu Wenyan would remain an ordinary old man even if he was already a Great Strength cultivator.

...

After using the Source Swallowing Technique once, Su Yu's cultivation speed had increased. That was probably a result of the temporary opening of his nine acupoints during the activation of the Source Swallowing Technique. Su Yu could feel that his right ear acupoint was also on the verge of opening.

"I'll need to find a chance to reveal that I'm already a fourth-stage Source Opening cultivator. I'd been stuck in the third-stage for half a year, so it won't be odd that a stroke of luck managed to suddenly push me forward."

As for his abrupt transformation into a talented cultivator, that could be easily explained. He had merely been focused on learning the various languages in the past and had been neglecting his cultivation. Now that he was suddenly putting effort into his cultivation, it should be acceptable for him to rapidly rise to the fourth-stage or even the fifth-stage.

The next day, Su Yu followed Liu Wenyan to school. He was able to learn a lot of new things just by following Liu Wenyan around.

...

Inside the office.

The principal was here again. He wasn't surprised to see Su Yu. He was already made aware that Su Yu would be tailing Liu Wenyuan yesterday.

"The neighboring Tianshui City has been attacked during the past two days. Their city guards have suffered a large number of casualties. As for Nanyuan, last night..."

The principal paused slightly. "A mountainside village was attacked. A lot of people were killed. Only a few children hiding in the cellar survived. The Myriad Race Cult was the culprit. The city guards are on the case."

Liu Wenyan's face turned cold, "Those animals!" He took some time to calm himself before saying, "They're indeed here at Nanyuan! They're still using their usual modus operandi of sowing chaos to spread our forces thin. Looks like they're planning something big this time. Is the Martial Dragon Guards still unaware of their hiding place?"

"They can't be found." The principal felt helpless. "They're hidden very well. We don't have enough people in Nanyuan to perform a wider search. If we spread our forces too thin, they will pick us off one by one. That will be even more troublesome."

"What about the capital? How are they intending to deal with this?"

Liu Wenyan was starting to get worried after learning that the Myriad Race Cult was really here. Nanyuan was only a small city. Its defenses were too weak. The capital has a lot of elites. A little bit of assistance from them would be enough to keep the Myriad Race Cult in check.

"The mayor has been asking for help, but the other cities are asking for help as well. The capital still needed to maintain their own defenses as a precaution against the cult. Thus..."

"We aren't getting any help?" Liu Wenyan was furious. "Get some help from the academies, then."

The principal replied helplessly, "We tried. But the front line army has been asking for help, so a lot of their teachers and students have left for the battlefield. They're not back yet. The academies also need to keep themselves defended. After all, their security would be much more important than a small city like Nanyuan. Because of that..."

"They can't even send a few Skysoar cultivators here?" Liu Wenyan raged. "They don't lack Skysoar cultivators. We only need a couple of them here. The Myriad Race Cult would not have too many of their forces here."

The principal replied gloomily, "It's pointless to rage at me. Like I said, all the cities are asking for help. Among the twenty-eight cities, Nanyuan isn't even an important city. The capital will prioritize the defense of the more important cities."

Liu Wenyan was feeling helpless. "The entirety of Great Xia has actually been thrown into chaos by the Myriad Race Cult? The Martial Dragon Guards...are really quite useless."

"Cough." The principal coughed awkwardly.

Outside the office, a voice rang out, "Instructor Liu, the Myriad Race Cult has merely caught us at a bad timing. Ten days ago, three thousand Martial Dragon Guards were deployed to the battlefield. That's why we're lacking in manpower."

"It's still your fault for failing to keep your movement hidden. Not even I was aware of that deployment, but the Myriad Race Cult was somehow aware of it. You can only blame yourself for that."

Liu Wenyan did not fear the Martial Dragon Guards. He spoke bluntly, "Even if the problem does not lie with the Martial Dragon Guards, there is definitely an issue with the prefectural government. There must be some cult spies within their ranks. How would the cult have learned of your deployment otherwise?"

The person from the Martial Dragon Guards did not say anything. Liu Wenyan wasn't wrong. The Myriad Race Cult had appeared right after the Martial Dragon Guards departed. Clearly, the information had leaked. Otherwise, the cult would not have dared to challenge them with the Martial Dragon Guards around. magic

"This is not the time for arguments." The principal interrupted. "Old Liu, can you pull some strings and get a couple of Skysoar cultivators from the Great Xia Cultural Research Academy?"

"Do I need you to tell me that? I asked early this morning. But they will need at least one day to arrive."

"They agreed to come?"

"Yes. But..." Helplessness seeped into Liu Wenyan's voice. "They won't be able to stay here for long. They will leave after picking up the students. They won't stay and help with the defense."

"That's enough." The principal was happy with that. They would take any help they could get.

Liu Wenyan was clearly not satisfied with the arrangement. He complained, "Even without the Martial Dragon Guards around, it is still embarrassing for things to get so chaotic within Great Xia. Have we been enjoying the peace for too long? Why is our security so poor?"

Only someone like Liu Wenyan would dare say such words. Even the principal did not dare to say anything. The Martial Dragon Guards member outside remained silent as well. This was indeed quite embarrassing. Great Xia had always been known for their elite soldiers. The Myriad Race Cult was not supposed to be able to give them this much trouble.

Su Yu had been silently listening in, opting to not join the conversation. That was a matter for the higher ups of Nanyuan to resolve. He was in no position to comment about it. However, he was actually quite curious about Liu Wenyan's identity. This instructor was by no means a low-ranked civil servant, but he was no super expert. What was the point of talking about this with him?

Liu Wenyan had been paying attention to Su Yu. Seemingly having read Su Yu's mind, he smiled when he caught Su Yu looking at him and said, "Why? Are you looking down on your instructor?"

"Of course not."

"You sure did."

"I didn't!"

"I can see what you're thinking."

Liu Wenyan was suddenly behaving like a child, stubbornly trying to win the argument. With a wide smile, he said, "Just wait. You'll know why your instructor is qualified to take part in these discussions."

Su Yu was still confused, but Liu Wenyan did not bother explaining himself. The principal wanted to say something, but he eventually decided to stay

silent. He would rather not see a situation where Liu Wenyan had to prove himself happening.

...

Inside the tall building opposite the school.

The middle-aged man said, "The city guards have departed. Apart from those left to guard the city gates and the mayor's manor, the rest are out hunting for the Blood Fire Sect fellows."

The woman asked, "What about the Martial Dragon Guards?"

The middle-aged man shook his head, "Not a trace of them could be seen. They're still hiding in the city. Also, Nanyuan is planning to move those geniuses to the capital. They're leaving the day after tomorrow."

The woman frowned, "Is this a bait?"

"Maybe." The man appeared doubtful. "This decision was made out of nowhere. The order had only been issued yesterday. Perhaps they're trying to lure us out. What should we do?"

"Have any experts secretly entered Nanyuan recently?"

"No, I think..."

"You think?"

"I have no way of confirming that. We can't monitor the whole city. However, we have received no such news from our spies. No such experts have been seen in the mayor's manor and the school."

The woman sank into thought. She then said, "We can't let them go. Slaughtering the school without those geniuses will only nab us about half the original contribution points. The higher ups won't be happy with that."

"I know." The middle-aged man hesitated slightly before saying, "But the Martial Dragon Guards are still in the city. They might even be hiding in the school. If we move rashly and fail, things will get troublesome."

Suddenly, the man's communicator rang. He picked it up and saw a message disguised as an advertisement. His expression changed as he said, "We need

to either move the operation forward or cancel it. Our spies in the capital are saying that Liu Wenyan had requested help from the Great Xia Cultural Research Academy this morning. The academy had agreed to help. Their people will be here soon."

"Damn it!" The woman cursed. "Liu Wenyan! It's that old bastard again! That old fool is only a step away from willpower materialization. However, it's unlikely that he will be able to take that step. Why would the academy agree to a request from someone like him? Looks like he is much better connected than we thought."

The middle-aged man stayed silent. After the woman was done cursing, he spoke, "What now? Mayor Wu Wenhai and Martial Dragon Guards' Xia Bing are both second-stage Skysoar cultivators. On top of that, the cultural research academy is also sending some people over. We can only give up."

The man paused in hesitation before eventually continuing, "Great Xia is very strong. We have only been able to sow this much chaos because the Martial Dragon Guards aren't around. The moment their main force returns, we will need to leave. The higher ups have always been keeping a distance from Great Xia. Why are they suddenly..."

For this operation, the higher ups had exposed many of their long-time spies. Even if this operation ended with a success, they would still suffer great losses. The man couldn't understand the reason for this. Were those young geniuses worth the losses they would suffer? After all, many of their spies had spent years getting to where they were in Great Xia. The woman was higher-ranked than him in the cult, so she would definitely know more than him. He was only someone in charge of communication with their underlings.

"Don't ask something you shouldn't." The woman snorted coldly. After a short thought, she said, "You know what, this isn't a big secret. We only need to create enough chaos in Great Xia to force the Martial Dragon Guards to return from the battlefield. The Martial Dragon Guards are going to be making a move against the divine skywing race."

The man's expression changed instantly. The divine skywing race was the same race they had pledged their allegiance to. Could it be...that the divines were fearful of the Martial Dragon Guards?

The man did not even dare to voice that thought. However, the woman was aware of what he was thinking. She sneered and said, "The Martial Dragon

Guards might be powerful, but the divines aren't afraid of them. But the divines will be busy attacking the heavenly eye race. The Martial Dragon Guards' appearance will ruin their plans."

Heavenly eye race! The man hurriedly asked, "Are the divines going to war?"

"I wouldn't call that a war. They are merely putting the heavenly eye race in place." The woman changed the topic. "Apart from you and me, a hallmaster at the fourth-stage Skysoar Realm will be arriving tonight. He will handle Xia Bing while I deal with Wu Wenhai. You'll lead our people and destroy the school. The moment the school is destroyed, our mission will be complete. Retreat immediately after that. We'll make our move late afternoon tomorrow."

The man was still hesitating, but he finally agreed, "Roger."

Chapter 17: Operation (2)

Late afternoon was the perfect time for their operation. Any later and the students would no longer be around and they would have to spread their forces chasing after the students. Night was near so escape would also be easier after their operation.

The man did not have any issue with the plan. He was only worried about something else. He couldn't resist saying, "Apart from Wu Wenhai and Xia Bing, I'm worried that Liu Wenyan would materialize his willpower in desperation. If that happens, things will get troublesome."

"You're right. We need to be ready for that as well." The woman agreed. "But we have three Skysoar cultivators while they only have two. Both their Skysoar cultivators are at the second-stage. Even if Liu Wenyan really managed to materialize his willpower, he would still need time to strengthen his body. Prior to that, only his willpower would be at the Skysoar Realm while his body would still be stuck at the Great Strength Realm. You should be able to handle someone like that."

"But..."

The woman's eyes turned cold as she interrupted the man, "He's already over seventy in age. His physical body has waned. He won't be much of a threat even after willpower materialization. Are you afraid of someone like that?"

"No." The man hurriedly explained, "I'm only worried that we won't have anyone to handle the Martial Dragon Guards while I'm busy with Liu Wenyan. They're all Infinite Strength cultivators. Our people are also at the same cultivation level, but the moment the Martial Dragon Guards activate their war formation, only Skysoar cultivators can handle them."

"There is only a low chance of that scenario happening. Liu Wenyan has been stuck for so many years. Do you really think he can really break through suddenly?" Despite her dismissal, the woman still offered an alternative, "We'll have the hallmaster deal with the Martial Dragon Guards and Xia Bing. He can handle all of them together since Xia Bing is only a second-stage Skysoar cultivator. You'll focus on quickly killing Liu Wenyan before helping the hallmaster with the Martial Dragon Guards." magic

"Alright." The man was relieved. That plan should work. A fourth-stage Skysoar cultivator should be able to handle the Martial Dragon Guards.

In any case, he was also a second-stage Skysoar cultivator, so there was really no need for him to be so worried. The woman was also stronger than him. She was a tier-1 hallmaster of the Myriad Race Cult, a hallmaster for their Nanyuan branch. She was a peak third-stage Skysoar cultivator.

Nanyuan was only a small city, after all, so it was actually quite surprising that the Myriad Race Cult had stationed two Skysoar cultivators here. Even the city only had the mayor and the Martial Dragon Guards' squad leader as their sole Skysoar cultivators in Nanyuan.

Most of Great Xia's forces were stuck at the front line and only a small portion of their forces were left back home. Meanwhile, the Myriad Race Cult could focus all their strength within the Human Realm since they didn't need to operate on the battlefield.

"Long live the true god."

The woman muttered. The man hurriedly muttered the same. His eyes were filled with longing at the thought of the divine race.

Eternal life.

If he could contribute enough to earn a qualification to enter the Divine Realm and use the legendary Divine Transformation Pool, he would be able to

transform from a human to a divine. They would then gain eternal life. Unlimited lifespan.

The man's eyes lit up with excitement. The higher ups had offered a rather large number of contribution points for this mission. He only needed to perform a few hundreds more missions like this and he would gain the qualification to visit the Divine Realm.

"Fifty years...I need to earn the qualification to enter the Divine Realm in fifty years. Otherwise, I'll die from old age..."

The man did not want to betray humanity, but the prospect of eternal life was too tempting. He still remembered his teacher, a mighty ninth-stage Skysoar cultivator, who had died of old age on his bed. Fear had been planted in his mind after witnessing that scene.

For humans, even a Skysoar cultivator would only have a lifespan of around 150 years. He was already over sixty in age. His body had yet to wane, but he had only been able to advance from the first-stage to the second-stage during the past ten years. How long would he take to reach the ninth-stage? Could he even reach that level before the end of his life? He did not see that happening. He could only place his hopes on the divine race to obtain eternal life.

"I made the right choice. Humanity won't be a match for the myriad races. Without any suppression in the Human Realm, the human race will not be able to withstand the onslaught of the myriad races. It is only a matter of time before we're defeated. Yes, I've definitely made the right choice!"

The man convinced himself with a firm expression. As he thought of the divine race again, reverence covered his face. For the divine race, they could easily gain a lifespan of over a thousand years after reaching the Skysoar Realm. That would give him enough time to keep making progress in his cultivation, a progress that would eventually lead him to eternal life.

...

Year 350 of the Anping Calendar, 18th of April.

This was the day before Su Yu and the others were slated to depart from Nanyuan. Tomorrow morning, they would all gather before departing under

the escort of the city guards and the experts from the Great Xia Cultural Research Academy.

Morning.

The moment Su Yu opened his eyes, he jumped. Someone was standing beside his bed.

"You're awake?"

An absurd question came from Liu Wenyan's mouth. Su Yu calmed himself, rather speechless at how this old man was scaring people so early in the morning.

"Instructor, you're awake."

"At my age, you'll wake up early as well." Liu Wenyan smiled. "Wake up and grab breakfast. Come with me to the school after breakfast. But today, you won't be staying with me..."

"Huh?" Su Yu's eyes flickered as he asked, "Instructor, is today..."

"If the Myriad Race Cult is going to try something, when do you think they will make their move? The people from the Great Xia Cultural Research Academy would arrive before this evening. At that time, the cult will no longer have the chance to do anything."

Su Yu was alarmed. His instructor was right. If he was someone from the cult, he would either make a move today or after the students departed and there were fewer city guards around. Thus, the cult might show up today.

"It is too dangerous for you to stay with me." Liu Wenyan had the same smile on his face. "Those fellows are afraid that I'll materialize my willpower. If they make a move, I'll be one of their priority targets. Therefore, don't stay with me today. Avoid the other experts as well. Stay with the teachers in the Great Strength Realm. There will be people in charge of protecting you guys."

"Instructor..." Su Yu hurriedly climbed out of his bed and said, "Are they really daring enough to move against Nanyuan Secondary School?"

"Of course. In the Myriad Race Cult, some are afraid of death, some are greedy, some are crazy, and some are brainwashed. But even cowardly rats like them would not hesitate to draw their blade to accomplish their target."

Liu Wenyan sighed. "These people are very odd. They might be cowardly, but they can also be braver than us at times. They will piss their pants in fear if we send them to the Allheaven Battlefield to face the divines and the devils, but when they have to face their fellow humans, they will turn fearless. Maybe for them, there is nothing scary about their fellow humans. Instead, the other races are the truly terrifying ones. They won't hesitate when it comes to fighting other humans."

Su Yu frowned. Liu Wenyan was right. The Myriad Race Cult's behavior was rather odd. They would lose all courage if they were sent to fight at the Allheaven Battlefield. They did not have the courage to face the other races. But in terms of creating trouble within the Human Realm, they would turn courageous and crazy. Even the daily execution had not been able to scare them.

"So are they merely local bullies?" asked Su Yu after giving it some thought.

Liu Wenyan smiled, "Not really. We no longer consider them as humans, so they're no longer locals. But I agree with your sentiment. That is how they are. They're weak against outsiders and cruel against insiders. These kinds of people aren't rare at all. We can see many examples of such people in the history books.

"In fact, these people don't only exist among humans. They exist in all races. After choosing to betray their people, they will become crueler to their own people just to prove that they made the correct choice. Even humans have followers among the other races that have betrayed their own races."

Liu Wenyan looked at Su Yu and smiled. "Humans are also strong enough to attract some traitors from the other races. Those are the people who had lost the confidence in their own race and decided to pledge their allegiances to us. When that happens, they will suddenly become incomparably cruel toward their own people."

Su Yu wasn't able to understand the mindset of such people, but he was well-read enough to know about the existence of such people. He did not ask more questions and left the room to brush his teeth.

Shortly after, Su Yu was at the dining table for his breakfast. While eating, he asked, "Instructor, are they really going to make their move today? There are so many students at school. Should we have the students take today off instead?"

"That's not an option. Staying on the defensive forever won't work. If we have the students take the day off, the cult will be alerted and they won't show up."

"But..." Su Yu was worried. If the cult really attacked, would the students get hurt? After all, there were a lot of students at school.

"We have our preparations in place. There will be people protecting you guys," said Liu Wenyan. "Don't think that we're being cold-blooded by using you guys as bait. If we can't be decisive when required, we will only suffer even more losses."

"Remember this, Su Yu. If one day you become a commander at the battlefield, you will have to start making hard choices. For example, you have control over an army of one thousand and another army of ten thousand. If you choose to sacrifice the army of one thousand, you'll be able to eliminate an enemy army of ten thousand with your second army. What would your choice be?"

"I..." Su Yu hesitated. After a long while, he said, "I don't know."

"Deep inside, you know the answer. You just couldn't bring yourself to say it. You're a smart person. You know the right choice. You understand how important it is to eliminate an army of ten thousand from the Allheaven Battlefield. That is significant enough to even alter the course of a war."

Liu Wenyan's voice turned soft. "That is the kind of choices the experts and sages need to make. A sacrifice of one thousand to eliminate ten thousand enemies will ensure that fewer of our people will die in the future. After all, that army of ten thousand could very well cause more casualties in the future if left unchecked. Do you think this is cruel?"

Su Yu nodded. He had never thought of all that before. Thus, he was hit by a heavy dose of reality by Liu Wenyan's sudden question. The entire thing sounded too cruel and heartless.

"Su Yu, this is war!" Liu Wenyan looked straight into his eyes. "Remember, this is war! A war where billions of human lives are on the line. We must make

the necessary choices. Maybe you can say that the thousand soldiers do not deserve to die.

"Of course you're right. They're our comrades. But...this is war! Just like the choice we're making today. We know that the Myriad Race Cult might attack the school today. Even so, we still need to make the correct choice.

"Things have been chaotic outside the city over the past two days. Several villages and hamlets were attacked and many were killed. At present, hundreds of civilians have died. We don't have the manpower to deal with them. The forces of the city have been spread very thin. This can't continue. We need to gather the cult members up and eliminate them all so that peace will return. Therefore...we need to make a choice.

"Do we let our students take some risk or do we keep waiting for the cult to slaughter more people? In my eyes, our students are naturally more valuable. Nevertheless, the people being slaughtered outside the city are also humans. Su Yu, you students are all soldiers in training. Therefore, we decided to let you guys take the risk. That is the path all of you will walk in the future."

Su Yu nodded solemnly. "I understand. I was only worried earlier. Like you said, we're all soldiers. We might be weak now, but the moment we stepped into this school, we're already soldiers. The city made the right choice."

"It's good that you understand. If you really can't understand, just stop thinking about it. One day when you're at a high enough level, if a situation comes up where you can sacrifice the entire Nanyuan City to eliminate ten or a hundred times the number of enemies, I hope you will make the choice to do so. Even if you have to gain some infamy from it, do not hesitate."

Su Yu ate in silence. After finishing the breakfast, he finally looked up and said, "Instructor, so it all comes down to us being too weak. If we're strong enough to crush all opposition, there will be no need for such choices. Am I right?"

Liu Wenyan laughed with a gratified look on his face.

"Well said. You're right. Alas...we're not strong enough."

"We will be strong enough. I believe that day will come. Humans have been growing, and the number of experts on our side has also been increasing."

Liu Wenyan nodded in agreement. Su Yu wasn't wrong. The two stopped conversing and left for the school together.

Chapter 18: Xia Longwu

"Yu!"

Chen Hao had not seen Su Yu during the past two days. He knew that Su Yu had been following Liu Wenyan around for his studies and was happy to see him again, "I thought you were kidnapped by Instructor Liu. He finally let you go? By the way, I can feel that I'm going to reach the fourth-stage soon."

"Mhm." Su Yu nodded. He could see several instructors roaming outside the classroom. He knew that they were actually on patrol.

The moment combat began, the instructors would move the students to a safer place.

"Hao, stay close to me today. Don't go anywhere."

"What are we doing?" Chen Hao asked blankly. He nodded and asked, "But what if I need to use the toilet?"

"..."

Su Yu didn't even entertain that question. After giving it some thought, he said, "Go to the Practical Office and grab two sabers later. We'll be performing some combat practices today."

"Huh? Yu, are you not afraid of getting your ass beaten?" Chen Hao asked curiously. "You can't even beat me. You got your ass kicked each time we trained."

"You know what, I'm feeling like I can kick your ass right now." Su Yu glared at Chen Hao. "Cut the crap. Just do as told."

"Ok. Sure." Chen Hao had a bright smile on his face. He did not like using his brain. Most of the time, Su Yu was the decision maker when they were together.

Su Yu still had a drop of blood essence with him. After thinking about it, he stood up and brought Chen Hao to the Resource Department."

"Teacher, can I trade for two drops of iron-winged bird blood essence?"

"Again?" The teacher's heart ached at the thought of the merit points Su Yu was wasting. "Did you fail your previous research?"

"Mhm. Teacher, I think I'm near. I just need two more drops."

"Fine." The teacher could only helplessly agree. This kid really didn't know what was good for him. This was too wasteful. He would definitely regret this after entering an academy in the future.

With his new acquisition, Su Yu had three drops of blood essence in total. Unfortunately, he only had seven merit points left after all that.

...

After a short walk around the school, both Su Yu and Chen Hao were equipped with a saber each. Chen Hao felt like Su Yu was acting weird today. Even after getting the saber, he wasn't going to practice and was just walking around with a saber in hand. Was this fellow going crazy?

At that point, it was already afternoon. With three drops of blood essence in his possession, Su Yu was deep in thought. The three drops were probably able to keep his ability active for a total duration of fifteen minutes. However, his previous activation of only five minutes was enough to cause some serious swelling on his hands. If he used all three drops at once, he would probably cripple himself.

"I doubt I'll need to keep the ability active for fifteen minutes. Even if the Myriad Race Cult does attack, I doubt they will dare stay so long. If they drag this out, they won't be able to escape. However, I still need to keep my blood essence activation secret or things can get troublesome."

Unless absolutely necessary, he would avoid using the blood essence. It wasn't like a Great Strength cultivator would be able to play a major role in the coming conflict. The school did not lack Great Strength instructors. Those in the Infinite Strength and Skysoar Realms were the ones who would be playing the decisive roles in the battle.

Su Yu looked around and his eyes flickered when he noticed that a lot of new faces had appeared in the school. Although these people weren't in their uniforms, Su Yu knew that they were the city guards and officers from the

Windcatcher Department. It was clear that the city was confident the cult would either attack the school or the mayor's manor.

While Su Yu was thinking, Chen Hao's communicator rang. He hurriedly answered the call before hanging up after a short conversation. "My dad called. He told me to be careful today and not leave the school. The Myriad Race Cult is here. There have been a lot of deaths outside the city for the past two days..."

He paused before scolding, "Those damn animals. Don't let me see them or I'll cut all of them down."

"You? Cutting them down?" Su Yu gazed at Chen Hao without saying anything else.

Chen Hao's face turned red in embarrassment as he said, "I can't do it now, but can't I do it in the future? After entering a war academy, I'll complete my source opening in one year and reach the ninth-stage Great Strength Realm in three years. In five years, I'll reach the Infinite Strength Realm and by ten years, I'll reach the Skysoar Realm."

"That's the growth trajectory of a genius. Are you sure you can do that?"

"Piss off!" Chen Hao's face collapsed. Yeah, that did seem like a difficult feat for him. Only geniuses could reach the Skysoar Realm in ten years. But twenty years should be doable for him, right?

For humans, the period before forty was considered the golden age of cultivation. If one couldn't reach the Skysoar Realm before then, one should probably forget about it. Of course, nothing was impossible. But as one aged, one's body would start waning, bringing the success rate of breakthrough even lower. magic

In fact, a lot of people were stuck at the ninth-stage Infinite Strength Realm for their entire lives. Su Long was nearly fifty. He still had the chance to enter the Infinite Strength Realm. But he probably wouldn't be able to reach the Skysoar Realm.

Su Yu smiled and looked outside. Was it starting? The enemies had caused quite a lot of trouble outside the city the past few days for the sake of luring

the city guards and the Martial Dragon Guards out of the city. The higher ups were aware of it, but they still had no choice but to bite the bait. Otherwise, even more people would die outside the city.

"Those bastards are truly a bunch of animals with no bottom line." Su Yu cursed. He couldn't help but wonder what the capital was doing. Couldn't they spare even a few Skysoar cultivators to help with this situation?

The Myriad Race Cult had been running rampant, but the remaining three thousand Martial Dragon Guards were nowhere to be seen. Were they occupied with something else? If that was the case, then the Myriad Race Cult was truly quite terrifying.

...

At the same time.

Great Xia City, capital of Great Xia.

Xia Longwu was clad in a full set of armor, seated on his throne with an imposing presence.

A soldier from the Martial Dragon Guards stepped through the door and loudly spoke, "Reporting! Disturbances have erupted at the twelve cities of Nanyuan, Tianshui, Kaishan, Longmen...The Myriad Race Cult has shown themselves. All the cities are requesting help. Do we answer their call?"

Xia Longwu remained calm as he spoke, "Deploy reinforcements to the twelve cities. Fifty per group. Reinforce the other sixteen cities as well just in case."

"Roger."

The Martial Dragon Guards withdrew from the room.

Next, an old man dressed like a scholar spoke, "Prefect, this is a bait to lure our forces out. The capital is probably their true target."

"I know."

"Thousands of Martial Dragon Guards have been deployed elsewhere. If we send even our city guards away, the capital will be--"

Xia Longwu interrupted indifferently, "It doesn't matter. If we don't kill enough to hurt them, they will keep coming. But if the Martial Dragon Guards remain here, those bastards wouldn't even dare to come out of hiding."

Xia Longwu stood up and continued, "I'm probably their target. The Martial Dragon Guards have been deployed away from my side. Even the academy experts have been moved out of the capital for various reasons. Nearly ninety percent of our experts are currently away..."

"Prefect, do we seek reinforcements from the Great Ming?"

"What a joke." Xia Longwu snorted coldly. "Our Great Xia is ranked higher than Great Ming. How can we ask for their help? In any case, we don't even need help. We're only dealing with some rats. I can't wait to find out which divine race is it that has sneaked into Great Xia this time. Without direct support from the divine race, those rats won't have the courage to pull this off."

The old man frowned, "The divine race has sneaked into the Human Realm?"

"Absolutely. The Myriad Race Cult alone wouldn't have dared to enter Great Xia otherwise. This can be good. We're running out our blood supply from the divine race and here they are, delivering themselves for a resupply. I have been thinking of taking a stroll at the Allheaven Battlefield, but it looks like I can skip that."

With the same calm expression, Xia Longwu added, "When the fighting starts, you'll guard the city while I'll head outside. I'll be back after slaughtering all those bastards."

"Prefect..."

"Don't bother advising me." Xia Longwu's eyes turned sharp. "It's only a few bastards from the divine race. What can they do to me? I have been worried that my blade is getting dull. I can finally feed it some blood."

Xia Longwu then strode out with wide steps. His sonorous voice rang out, "Martial Dragon Guards, roll out after the divines die. Eliminate all the Myriad Race Cult members within Great Xia. Any captive you get, take them back to the capital for execution. I want to see ten thousand heads this time tomorrow."

"Roger."

A loud roar came as the reply. To accommodate the Myriad Race Cult's operation and lure the divine race out, Xia Longwu had allowed chaos to spread in Great Xia. He did not do anything for fear of spooking the divine race and scaring them away. Now, it was time to reap the harvest.

Most of the experts they could spare had been sent out of the capital. This should be enough to lure the divine race out. There were less than a thousand Martial Dragon Guards remaining in the capital, so they wouldn't even be able to activate their 1000-man formation. That should be weak enough for the divine race's liking, right?

"Since you're here to kill me, I'll give you a shot. Let's see if you can really pull that off!"

With a sneer, Xia Longwu soared into the sky before vanishing as a streak of light, leaving the city in the blink of an eye.

...

"Xia Longwu!"

The moment the golden streak vanished from the sky, a cold voice rang out. Audacious! They had thought that this prefect wouldn't have the guts to leave the capital and would wait until the other experts returned before showing up. They were even prepared to cause more chaos to force Xia Longwu to show himself. Surprisingly, that fellow had delivered himself to them just like this.

"Move out. Work together to kill Xia Longwu."

A cold voice rang out, "Work together? The academy principals are all away. By himself, Xia Longwu is nothing special. Why do we need to work together against him? I can take his head alone."

"Fool! Remember, work together! Don't be careless!" The person who was obviously the leader said, "Xia Longwu is probably halfway into that realm. If any of you want to die, I won't stop you."

"Impossible. How many years has he been cultivating? How can he--"

"That's why he needs to die. The Allheaven Battlefield does not need a new invincible expert of the human race."

"Alright."

They reached an agreement to work together. If that fellow was truly halfway to that realm, they would have to put an end to him. He couldn't be allowed to keep growing. Several streaks of light flashed out toward the direction of the golden streak.

Chapter 19: The Battle Begins (1)

Nanyuan City.

Nobody here was aware of what was going on at faraway Great Xia City.

Inside the tall building near the school.

The woman was nowhere to be seen. The middle-aged man was standing beside a white-haired old man. Both of them were looking at the Nanyuan Secondary School opposite the building.

"Hallmaster Chen, I did not expect to see you here..." The middle-aged man had a fawning smile on his face.

"Mhm." The old man was a man of few words. He looked at the school with a frown. After a while, he spoke, "Wu Hen, do you think this is a trap?"

"Trap?" The middle-aged man paused slightly before saying, "I'm not sure. But there are only two Skysoar cultivators left in Nanyuan. As for the city guards, their commander has yet to break through into the Skysoar Realm. I am sure of that."

"Is that so?"

The old man did not comment on that. His frown remained. Something about this mission felt off. Firstly, they had caused too many disturbances. Secondly, Nanyuan was ready for them. In the past, such a situation would call for a cancellation of the mission. This time, that did not happen. The higher ups wanted them to proceed with the mission. No reinforcements would be coming from the capital. That was what the higher ups told them. The higher ups sounded very confident about it.

Thirdly, they were actually very unfamiliar with Great Xia. The Myriad Race Cult had previously been focused somewhere else. Sure, they had some activities here, but they did not know enough about Great Xia. It was too risky to proceed with such a rash plan. With how the higher ups had always acted, their Skysoar Realm experts would only be deployed for well-planned operations.

"Wu Hen, you've been in Nanyuan for many years. Are there any Infinite Strength cultivators in Nanyuan capable of punching above their class?"

"I doubt so." The middle-aged man answered, "In any case, I've never heard of individuals like that. Someone so capable would have gone to the Allheaven Battlefield or the capital instead of staying here. They do have a couple of Great Strength cultivators capable of punching above their class. That Su Long from the Devil Suppressing Army was one of them, but he can only face Infinite Strength cultivators."

"Su Long?"

"A veteran of the Devil Subduing Army. He has left for the Allheaven Battlefield."

"Oh, the Devil Subduing Army? That's the army Xia Longwu used to lead. It has grown rather popular at the Allheaven Battlefield in recent years. They even managed to get upgraded into a tier-1 army. They have quite a lot of experts among their ranks."

The old man seemed familiar with the battlefield. After some thought, he said, "Are there a lot of retired veterans in the city?"

"No. And most of them are quite old already. Very few of them are still in their prime. There won't be more than three hundred of them spread across the entire city."

"We need to take precautions against these people as well," said the old man. "These veterans that have survived the Allheaven Battlefield are all ruthless bastards. Have our people watch out for them."

"Noted."

The old man stopped talking and looked at the sky. A short while later, a burst of flame erupted outside the city. A hundred city guards rushed out as a response.

The middle-aged man exclaimed in joy, "Yet another 100-man squad has left the city. There are now less than five hundred city guards in the city."

The old man was still frowning. "Be careful."

The city was aware that this was bait, but they still sent their guards away. Was that confidence or desperation?

"There are less than half of the city guards remaining. Over three hundred of them are guarding the mayor's manor. The rest are concentrated near the Nanyuan Secondary School. The streets are filled with the people from the Windcatcher Department..."

The old man scanned his surroundings. In the school, there were about two hundred city guards, less than a hundred Windcatcher Department officers, and two hundred sixty instructors and school guards. The Martial Dragon Guards were still around as well. In total, they would face less than six hundred cultivators above the Great Strength Realm.

He had directly ignored the students in his calculation. There wouldn't be any Great Strength cultivators among them. Of the forces they had to face, there were around fifteen cultivators between the Infinite Strength and Skysoar Realms. The rest of them were Great Strength cultivators.

In fact, they only needed to face one Skysoar cultivator since the mayor would be in his manor. He would also require some time to reach the school. Of course, the old man had still taken the mayor into consideration since the manor wasn't exactly that far away.

"Is everyone here?"

"Yes." The man hurriedly reported, "The hallmaster is there to gather our people. All of them are elites. We have thirty Infinite Strength cultivators while the rest of them are high-stage Great Strength cultivators. There are three hundred of us in total. The weaker members have all been assigned to continue creating chaos outside the city."

Three hundred elites of seventh-stage Great Strength Realm and above, with thirty of them reaching the Infinite Strength Realm. After a short calculation, the old man concluded that of the six cities the cult was going to attack today, Nanyuan had the lowest number of participants.

In short, no less than two thousand seventh-stage Great Strength cultivators, two hundred Infinite Strength cultivators, and over twenty Skysoar cultivators would be participating in this operation that would begin concurrently in multiple cities. That was a force powerful enough to be organized into a proper army of ten thousand soldiers.

"The Divine Skywing Sect is throwing everything they have on this operation."

The old man was feeling more and more unsettled. The Myriad Race Cult was split into many different sects. The Divine Skywing Sect was one of the stronger ones. After all, the race they had submitted to was one of the divines. As powerful as they were, they had still utilized the entirety of their strength for this operation.

Were the higher ups not afraid of destroying the sect in the event of failure? Those in charge of creating trouble outside the cities were only some weak sects sent to their deaths. They couldn't care less if these sects were destroyed. But the ones they were using for these direct attacks were their own elites. Losing these elites was very different than losing some cannon fodder.

"They're giving out so many contribution points just to kill some students. Are these students even worth it? What are the higher ups thinking?"

The old man frowned deeply. He did not feel like this was worth it. Unfortunately, his rank wasn't high enough to be making major decisions like that.

"Forget it. I can only hope that we can complete the mission smoothly before going back into hiding."

Since there were over three hundred of them, they needed some time to gather. In a city as small as Nanyuan, they needed to move three hundred people in batches. This wasn't a big city like the capital where a gathering of hundreds of people wouldn't cause anyone to bat an eye.

"We'll move out in thirty minutes. Inform everyone to finish all combat within three minutes. I want everyone to be gone within five minutes. Split up immediately after leaving the city. Do you understand?"

"Yes." The middle-aged man hurriedly answered. With a flicker, he vanished into thin air as he left to carry out his order.

The old man continued gazing toward the Nanyuan Secondary School while muttering, "Is Great Xia...really incapable of sparing even a few Skysoar cultivators to send here?"

...

"Yu!" At that moment, Chen Hao and Su Yu were crouched in front of the cafeteria while looking around. Chen Hao whispered, "What are we doing here? The instructors are calling all students to gather up. Are we not going?"

"No." Su Yu had a saber in hand as he replied softly, "It's safer to stay in a small group. It can get too dangerous in big groups."

"What?" Chen Hao was completely confused.

Su Yu said, "Cut the crap. Something might happen today. The Myriad Race Cult might be coming. We'll stay here since there won't be many people in the area."

"No, wait. Yu, the Myriad Race Cult is coming? Shouldn't we quickly meet the instructors then? We're only Source Opening cultivators, not Great Strength cultivators..."

Chen Hao grew nervous. However, he wasn't actually scared. The school had performed drills for such situations before, teaching the students how to handle themselves in the event of a Myriad Race Cult attack or a deployment to the Allheaven Battlefield. According to the drills, they should be gathering with the instructors now. The instructors would be in charge of protecting them.

"We don't have enough instructors. Most of them will be in active combat. Only a small number of them will be around to protect the students. Generally, between three to five instructors will be assigned to protect each class. With the high number of students in each class, the instructors won't be able to protect everyone well. We can reduce the burden on them by staying away."

"But...what if we encounter...Yu, we should return to the classroom," Chen Hao was starting to get anxious.

Su Yu smiled, "Don't worry. We're two random students at the Source Opening Realm. Those experts wouldn't even care about us."

"But we'll die if we meet any Great Strength cultivators..."

"That's why we need to hide well. And if we really meet an enemy..." Su Yu looked up at Chen Hao. "Do you trust me?"

"Yes."

"Start scolding the enemy. Scold them as hard as you can and make them focus on killing you. We will be hiding opposite each other. When the enemy is going after you, he definitely won't bother keeping his guard up against a little student like me..."

Chen Hao blanked out. What a bastard! This fellow was clearly trying to make sure Chen Hao would die before him! What a bastard!

"And I'll kill the enemy."

"..."

Chen Hao was aghast. What joke was that? This fellow was only a third-stage Source Opening cultivator. He probably couldn't even break through the enemy's defense, much less kill them. He must have gone crazy.

"If you trust me, do as I say. At this time, we can't go to the principal or the others. We'll only bring them more trouble. We also can't return to the classroom as we will only add more burden to the instructors. We're too weak. We'll only serve as lambs for the slaughter if we join up with the others."

"The other students are lambs as well. Let's get them to hide with us as well..."

"Are you stupid? How are we supposed to hide with more people? They will die if they rashly move out of the classrooms. We might be able to survive if we stay here."

Su Yu wasn't too fearful of the attack. He had listened to a lot of his father's exploits in the battlefield. The school had also been training them into

becoming soldiers that would face the enemies of humanity. There was nothing to fear about this.

He was only feeling nervous. This was his first time encountering an enemy. He wasn't sure if he would freeze from panic when the time came. What was he supposed to do if he found himself freezing up while the enemy was moving over to kill Chen Hao? What if they were to encounter two enemies instead? Or even three enemies?

"This will be fine. The strong ones will be facing each other. Only the weaker cult members will be sent to search the school for students. After all, the students are too weak. They don't even need to form groups to hunt the students.

"It would be pointless to make several people perform a task one person could finish. I doubt they can send so many people into Nanyuan. The government shouldn't be so worthless that the enemy could smuggle too many members into the city. Also, if they really have so many members in the city, even the instructor would be in trouble. I doubt this will be the case."

After making his conclusion, Su Yu pulled Chen Hao into the cafeteria. Inside, he found a corner and whispered, "Hide here. Remember to tremble with fear while you're crouching. If there is only one enemy, try to make some noise. If there are two...run! Run like you've never before!"

A side door was nearby so Chen Hao would be able to quickly leave the cafeteria. He asked, "How about you?"

Su Yu pointed at the other corner and said, "I'll be hiding there. Remember to not look at me or you'll kill me. Understand?"

"Got it." Chen Hao nodded in understanding. However, his face still turned sullen as he asked, "Yu, why don't we go look for my dad?"

"What stupid question is that? If we leave without escort, we'll die. I don't know what the plan is, but your dad has probably been assigned his own task today as well. Stop thinking about all that. It's pointless. Just pray that I won't freeze from fear later or you're dead."

"Yu, you're going to kill someone?" Chen Hao was aghast. "You won't be able to do it. Do you want me to be the one attacking instead?"

"You?" Su Yu took a deep breath and said, "You won't be able to even break their defense. Just let me do it. Also, according to the policy, if we really managed to kill someone from the cult, you might really be able to enter a war academy."

Chen Hao's eyes instantly lit up. All his fear from before vanished. Yes, there was really one such policy. If one could kill a cult member and prove the kill, then one would be granted bonus marks for the entrance examination.

Of course, it had been years since anyone had earned any bonus marks this way. After all, the students were all Source Opening cultivators. How were they supposed to kill any cult members? They would probably fail to make the kill even with poison.

Of course, it wasn't like nobody had ever done it before. However, only absolute geniuses had performed such a feat before. But would an absolute genius even care about the bonus marks?

"Yu...did you make this plan...for me?"

Chen Hao was greatly moved! Su Yu was only taking such a huge risk to help him enter a war academy! That was too touching! Chen Hao felt like crying!

Su Yu rolled his eyes. What was this fellow thinking? He only thought that it would be safer for the two of them to stay in the cafeteria. At this time, staying with a crowd would make them a bigger target. As for Chen Hao's entry into a war academy, they could talk about it if they really managed to kill an enemy.

Su Yu wouldn't dare take the credit for the kill anyway. How was he supposed to explain a Source Opening cultivator killing a Great Strength cultivator?

"But if we really get the chance to kill one, it won't be a bad idea to arrange the scene into something acceptable before taking the credit and help Hao get some bonus marks for the entrance exam."

It was nearly impossible for Source Opening cultivators to kill Great Strength cultivators. Nearly being the keyword there. It wasn't like Great Strength cultivators couldn't die. If they were careless enough to let someone cut their head off, they would still die.

As for why a Great Strength cultivator would be stupid enough to be killed by some students...well, the authorities would have to ask the dead cultivator that. How was Su Yu supposed to know the answer?

"In that case, it will be better for me to not kill with the Rip ability. I need to perform the kill with the saber."

Su Yu tightened his grip on his saber. After activating the ability, both his hands would be filled with strength. That would be enough for him to kill the enemy so long as the enemy did not choose to run from him. And would a Great Strength cultivator run from a Source Opening cultivator? Very unlikely.

Chapter 20: The Battle Begins (2)

While Su Yu was thinking, a shout rang out from outside the cafeteria, "All students, gather up. Those unable to make it, hide where you are."

"The enemies are here. The Myriad Race Cult bastards are attacking!"

"Stay calm and listen to your instructors. Activate the formations and protect yourself."

"Keep your classroom doors shut. Instructors, engage the enemies."

"Guards, gather up."

"City guards, Windcatcher Department, move out!"

"Kill!"

With that final roar, the entire Nanyuan Secondary School was mobilized.

At that moment, Su Yu felt no fear. He only felt a little nervous and excited at the same time. He was confident in his teachers. He even had the urge to rush out and witness the sight of his teachers slaughtering the enemies.

His father, Su Long, would frequently speak of his time in the army, talking about battles where tens of thousands or even hundreds of thousands of soldiers charged forward, creating fields of corpses, leaving rivers of blood behind, and causing the very heavens to tremble. In these stories, humanity was always able to sweep everything before their eyes.

"I really wish I can go take a look."

At the other side of the cafeteria, Chen Hao was feeling very excited as well. He tightened his grip on his saber and had to force himself to calm down instead of running outside. The only reason he hadn't rushed out yet was because he was afraid that he would get Su Yu killed.

"Kill!"

Sounds of battles echoed all over the school. And apart from the word "kill", no other words could be heard. During battles, no other words were required.

...

Outside the Teacher's Office.

Two groups of several hundred people each started fighting the moment they encountered each other. No words were exchanged. The squad of ten from Martial Dragon Guards instantly surrounded the fourth-stage Skysoar Realm old man from the cult under the lead of their squad leader, Xia Bing.

Xia Bing was a second-stage Skysoar cultivator clad in golden armor and golden helmet. With a long saber in hand, he roared fearlessly, "Into our formation. Kill!"

At his command, ten sabers started swinging and the fight began. Mayor Wu Wenhai, who was supposed to be in the mayor's manor, suddenly appeared from above the building. With a saber in hand, he charged the woman from the cult.

"Wu Wenhai, you're courting death!"

So the mayor was actually waiting in the school as well. The woman was relieved that they had prepared for this possibility. The middle-aged man called Wu Hen was overjoyed when he saw that the two Skysoar cultivators of Nanyuan were being kept busy. Even the Martial Dragon Guards were occupied. Ignoring everyone, he dashed straight toward the distant Liu Wenyan.

"I'm your opponent!"

"There's me as well!"

Abruptly, two men jumped out. One held a saber while the other held a sword.

"Zhang Yun, Zeng Hua!"

The middle-aged man snorted coldly. He knew these two. One was the 1000-man commander of the city guards and the other was the head of Nanyuan's Windcatcher Department. Both were ninth-stage Infinite Strength cultivators. How would they be a match for a Skysoar cultivator like him?

"Kill!"

The two did not waste any time speaking. They had nothing to say to a Myriad Race Cult member. They only needed to kill him.

Clang!

Sounds of weapon clashing rang out everywhere. Wu Hen wasted no time and rose into the air before flying over the two. He went straight toward Liu Wenyan. There were a decent number of Great Strength Realm instructors around Liu Wenyan as well.

Wu Hen's target was not the mayor, the Skysoar cultivators, or the two high-ranked military officials behind him. Instead, it was the genius students and Liu Wenyan, the man known as the spark of civilization. These were the ones worth killing.

Several Great Strength Realm instructors raised their sabers and stood before Liu Wenyan in preparation for a fight. The two Infinite Strength cultivators left behind also reacted quickly and chased after Wu Hen. After a long jump, Zhang Yun swung his blade at Wu Hen.

"Over our dead bodies!"

Once again, Wu Hen was forced into combat with the two.

"Damn it!" Wu Hen was only a second-stage Skysoar cultivator. He couldn't fly high enough and was forced to land and face the two. If he remained in the sky, he would be a sitting duck.

...

"Instructor Liu, leave!" The Great Strength cultivators in charge of guarding Liu Wenyan hurriedly pulled him away. However, he refused to leave.

Looking around at the fights breaking out everywhere, he scolded, "They really have a lot of confidence in us. Those bastards from the capital must have been aware that there will be a lot of Skysoar Realm enemies participating in this, but they still skipped our city when sending reinforcements."

The others were confused at what the old man was talking about. However, now wasn't the time to ask.

The old man continued scolding, "Are they really so confident that I can do it? What if I fail? They're gambling with human lives here! Don't let me find out who this order came from or I'll give him hell!"

Clearly, some people in the capital believed that he would be able to achieve willpower materialization today. But what if he failed? Liu Wenyan unleashed a string of profanities, completely destroying the image of a scholar he had before.

"I'm the most useless of the bunch. How can I do it? They have too much confidence in me. I'm worthless. It's not like you guys don't know that. Why would I have been expelled otherwise?" magic

As Liu Wenyan muttered to himself, grief slowly appeared in his voice. If he wasn't so useless, how would his cultivation remain stuck at such an old age? He wanted to break through as well, but it was really very hard.

"You bastards! Damn you all for forcing me with all these lives...I have always known you guys are a bunch of ruthless assholes. I'll be sure to give you guys hell right after I break through!"

As Liu Wenyan grumbled, golden light erupted from the top of his head. His body shook as his feet slowly left the ground.

The expressions of the people around him changed. Not far away, the principal smiled as he said, "This old man really needs to be pushed, after all. From today onward, humanity will have one more Skysoar cultivator."

"Infinite Strength cultivators, stop what you're doing. To me!" Wu Hen roared. He had also noticed what was happening. A nervous expression covered his face as he roared, "To me! Kill these two!"

At his command, several Infinite Strength cultivators rushed over. Wu Hen took the chance to break free from the two and rush toward Liu Wenyan. He couldn't allow the old man to complete the willpower materialization and enter the Skysoar Realm. Otherwise, they would receive a much lower evaluation for their mission today even if they were really able to kill all the students here.

...

Sounds of fighting echoed all over the school.

Inside the cafeteria.

Su Yu and Chen Hao could hear the sounds of weapons clashing against each other, painful roars, and fearful shouts of students outside. However, they did not dare to move out and get a look. Was the school winning or losing? Even Su Yu, who was confident in their teachers, was wondering if they were really winning.

"Yu..." At the corner, Chen Hao was gripping the handle of his saber tightly. His face was both pale and flushed at the same time. He wanted to ask Su Yu if they should go out.

Su Yu ignored him. His left ear kept moving as he listened to their surroundings. The fourth-stage Source Opening Realm had not granted him much strength, but he did obtain a much sharper hearing.

"Shh!"

Su Yu silenced Chen Hao with a gesture. A short while later, heavy footsteps sounded outside the cafeteria.

"Come out! The school is arranging a withdrawal. Gather at the southern gate." The voice spoke anxiously.

A short while later, a man in his thirties walked into the cafeteria with a saber in hand. He shouted, "Are there any students here? Move faster. We can't hold on much longer. The cult members are too strong. We need to withdraw from the school!"

Heavy footsteps accompanied that anxious voice. Chen Hao looked at Su Yu anxiously, seeking Su Yu's opinion as to whether they should leave. Su Yu narrowed his eyes as he looked at the incoming silhouette. That wasn't

someone he was familiar with, but there were over two hundred instructors and teachers in the school. It wasn't possible for him to know everyone. Was that really an instructor?

"Is anyone here? Our defenses can't hold much longer. We need to withdraw immediately!"

The newcomer sounded worried. The cafeteria was big. At a glance, it was thousands of square meters in size. It would waste too much of his time to search the cafeteria.

At the corner.

Hearing the instructor's anxious voice, Chen Hao could no longer hold back. Without first checking with Su Yu, he stood up and said, "Instructor, how is the situation?"

When the man saw Chen Hao, his eyes flashed with joy. A student was still a student, after all. This kid was too naive. Even the constant lessons on survival given by the school wouldn't be able to make up for the lack of experience.

In fact, he had used these same words on two hiding students a short while ago. He had spent only ten seconds luring the two out of a building with numerous rooms, a building that would waste at least two minutes of his time if he had to manually search it. These children had not suffered any setbacks in life nor had they experienced the battlefield before. Words were enough to mislead them.

"Things are very bad. Come with me. We don't have much time..."

The man started rushing toward Chen Hao. This was the third student! The man's face was covered with joy. Three hundred of them had attacked, with two hundred of them being sent to deal with the instructors, school guards, city guards, and the Windcatcher Department.

Even with the lower number of people, they still held the upper hand as a lot of them were middle-stage Great Strength cultivators. The rest of them were sent to attack the classrooms and search the school for lone students.

They had to face the instructors when attacking the classrooms. On the other hand, lone students were fewer in number and harder to find, but they were

defenseless and much easier to kill. There were thousands of students in the school. Even if all the students were killed, each attacker would be able to kill no more than ten. And he had gotten three of them so far. Perhaps he might gain even more next.

"Come on, we need to leave..."

The man moved quickly and did not stop when speaking. For the man, ending a student was as simple as swinging his blade. The only thing making it difficult was the fact that these students were dispersed and hidden. The moment these students were found, they were as good as free contribution points. Chen Hao moved out of his hiding space to leave with the fake instructor and instinctively glanced in Su Yu's direction while doing so.

Su Yu was attentively observing the instructor. At the beginning, he had believed that this was an instructor as well. But soon, he sensed something wrong. He wasn't someone with a rich practical experience. But he had been hunted too many times in his dreams. The impatient tone of that man was very similar to the monsters that had been chasing after him in his dreams.

It was as though they were saying, "Come get killed! I can't wait to kill you!"

Sure, those weren't the exact words, but the tone behind the voice felt similar. That eagerness to kill was very familiar. Thus, Su Yu focused even more on the newcomer. He immediately broke out in cold sweat.

Fake!

Instructors might not have a uniform, but all of them would have their work badge on them. This person had no such item on his body. Did he drop it because of the intense battle?

"No..."

Su Yu could see it. From how the man was holding his blade, the man was preparing to swing it.

"Damn it! Hao is such an idiot!"

After cursing to himself, Su Yu acted immediately. He didn't have the time to even feel regret for being careless. Both he and Chen Hao were only secondary school students. They had never encountered something like this.

They had thought that all enemies would be fierce opponents that would charge right into you. How would they have guessed that the enemy could also be a weakling relying on lies.

"Instructor!" With a shout, Su Yu jumped out. His heart was thumping crazily.

The man turned slightly sluggish as even more joy seeped into his heart.

One more! Four in total!

Su Yu's palms were sweaty as he was nervous, afraid, and uneasy. However, he was able to withstand the stress and move calmly. He had been killed too many times in his dreams. He was only afraid because this was his first taste of danger in real life. However, he was able to adapt quickly.

"Instructor, are we really losing? There are still more than ten students around here. Should I get them as well?" Su Yu said anxiously while turning his head to look at an area deeper in the cafeteria. He added, "They won't be able to escape otherwise."

More than ten? The man was wild with joy. He was going to get rich! He would get to kill more than ten students today! He might even earn more contribution points than what an Infinite Strength cultivator could from this mission. He wanted to laugh loudly. Ten Source Opening cultivators were the same as ten commoners. He could kill one per slash. They wouldn't even be able to outrun him.

He had planned to quickly end Chen Hao quickly, but he changed his mind and hastily said, "Quick! Call them out! We need to leave immediately!"

Su Yu's heart was still thumping heavily. He did not say anything and turned around. One swing of that man's sword and it would all be over for him. With his back to the man, he swallowed a drop of blood essence before walking deeper into the cafeteria.

He asked with a worried tone, "Instructor, can we take more people with us? I know there are more students hiding somewhere else. I don't know if the other instructors can find them..."

"More?"

There were more? The man followed Su Yu, completely disregarding Chen Hao. That was a lone student that he could handle anytime he wanted. He did not notice that Chen Hao had turned completely pale and was sweating all over.