

## Unfathomable 151

### Chapter 151

Some people whispered, some were silent and others just baffled. The VIP booth that Feng Maling was in was above ground and people couldn't really see her well. The people that couldn't see craned their necks, wondering if there was another beauty in there that this Dark Palm Sect master was aiming for. Though, the moment they saw who was standing next to the Feng Matriarch they went slackjawed.

"Is that a human-sized raisin?"

"My god... why would he want that old crow..."

"That wrinkled up potato is the 'lovely lady'?"

The people in the audience whispered among each other, holding their hands over their mouths while trying not to stand out. This development was far too shocking for the commoners, not knowing how they should react. This also prompted them to gossip and murmur with each other.

Luckily Yang Kai was far too focused on the person that he wanted to take home, the granny in question far too taken aback to react. She looked at the baffled people around her, Zhang Jin was just scratching his head while Huo Qiang and his retainer were sweating in the back not sure what to do about this situation.

"The young lord must be joking..."

Feng Maling spoke out, not sure if she should feel flattered that a handsome young man like that was interested in her or if she should feel disgusted. The man might look like a nice catch on the outside, but she knew well that he was rotten on the inside. There were warning signals firing off in her mind, there must have been a deeper reason why he wanted her and not the younger Feng Matriarch instead.

"Young lord, you shouldn't be making fun of old ladies like me."

She tried laughing the whole thing off, attributing it to being a badly timed joke.

"You shouldn't be acting so bashful, don't worry this young lord can see your true inner beauty~."

Yang Kai's eyes were sparkling as if he saw some kind of divine being. The people next to the old lady that were from the triform alliance noticed this and visually cringed. It as if the man was looking at some once in a lifetime beauty, he became more animated his expression become less stern and he was even slightly blushing.

'Is this guy serious, what kind of situation is this?'

Zhang Jin was to the side looking at the whole thing. He knew his way around the ladies, but he still couldn't see what the man was seeing.

'Maybe if she was two hundred years younger...'

The old granny was quite the looked back in the day, he still remembered those good old days. Though have barely survived the aftermath of his fooling around.

‘But wait... this might be a good thing...’

Zhang Jin rubbed his chin and nodded, then he sent his voice next to the Feng elder ear so that others couldn’t hear them.

“Hey, you old bat, why don’t you agree to his offer?”

Feng Maling just twitched and moved her gaze to the side to the old fox that was sitting slightly to the side.

“What do you mean you old fart?”

She replied to him while using the same technique.

“Think about it, the young lass will be saved and your Matriarch won’t be taken either.”

The old man started talking, from his perspective the whole situation was already too dire. If they made any mistakes everyone in here along with their clans could end up dead or enslaved.

“He isn’t so bad looking and below the age of a hundred. He is quite a good catch for you!”

Feng Maling trembled even more and tried not to show any facial expressions while the two talked. While this was happening Yang Kai was throwing praises and sweet words towards her, so it was quite hard to concentrate. Zhang Jin, on the other hand, was running his mouth like he was trying to sell her off. This made it look like he was some father trying to convince his daughter to an arranged marriage.

“See... it’s the best choice in the situation... maybe he will give you a good rejuvenation pill... you’ll just pop him out a couple of kids and it will all be fine in the end!”

“You’ll be laughing about it in a couple of years, think about how the clan will prosper... it’s a small price to pay!”

The old woman wanted to vomit. Why was an old granny like her getting sold off to a powerful sect master as a bride now, this just didn’t make any sense. Still, if she thought about it, this was the lesser of two evils. This would be better for the Feng clan and her granddaughters, the younger one was still on that battle stage.

Deng Cai had moved away from his target at the moment, waiting for his master to be done with the arrangements. He was still mad about the wound, but if his master ordered him, he would let the girl go. Zhang Liu was still standing on the side while glaring daggers at the Dark Palm youth. Zhang Jin, on the other hand, was trying to prevent the fight at all costs. He didn’t want his grandson to face that youth, not due to fear of him losing but more of the fear of him actually winning.

‘That Yang Kai’s word isn’t worth shit, if Liu trashes that brat of his I’m sure he will intervene...’

Is what he thought to himself. If push came to shove he would protect his family to the bitter end, he was still on the fence about alerting his youthful Patriarch that was still back at Spirit Spring City. He was sure that Zhang Dong would quickly rush here with all his might if he sent him a message with a communication jade.

He knew that his grandson would act rashly, fighting would be unavoidable. Offering up Feng Maling might be cruel, but it was the better option. Everything could be resolved and everyone here could still go home to their loved ones. He was also sure that the old lady was thinking along these lines as well.

“And that is why fairy Maling should...”

Yang Kai was still at it, but his face suddenly contorted. He was a master at a certain level and he could tell that the old woman that he was talking to was very absent-minded. At first, he thought that she was just being shy and overwhelmed with his forward approach. Who wouldn't be bashful if such a young lord as him showed him so much affection?

But then he noticed another suspicious elder sitting in the VIP booth. The old man had gray hair and he had a large scar running through his face. It looked like someone tried slicing his face with a sword, but just managed to get part of his eyebrow along with his cheek while missing the eye by a millimeter as it was still there.

Kai could tell that the man was quite intimate with the woman he was going for. The two were apparently exchanging information with each other. You could feel the faint spiritual fluctuations that they were using to communicate if you concentrated hard enough. His heart rate increased and he clenched his jaw tightly while slamming his fist down on the edge of his VIP booth.

“You! what is your relationship with Fairy Maling! Tell me this instant!”

The people's faces contorted in a strange way as soon as they heard the man attributed the word 'fairy' to the old burned potato looking grandma.

“Y-you see...”

Zhang Jin jumped back slightly, he could feel the man's overbearing aura moving his way as if he was trying to make him back off.

“I am just a humble cultivator from the Zhang Clan...”

He had to at least introduce himself to the man, he probably was thinking it was rude that the two were talking with each other while he was doing his monologue. The old man decided to remove himself from the equation, just bowing his head down hoping that Yang Kai would just attribute it to his old age.

“You two clearly know each other...”

The man squinted with his eyes. The person named Zhang Jin was close to the age of the person he was trying to pull to his side. They were also clearly very familiar with each other and were even in the same VIP booth, there had to be a reason for it. What if this old man was also someone striving for the affections of this lovely old lady. He must have also noticed the peculiar qualities that this Feng Maling possessed and he wanted to snatch them for himself.

‘Hah, I'm on to you old man... that woman will be mine...Zhang, Hm?’

The man looked at the youth that declared that he would fight to save that Feng junior. He could just take the old woman and that would be it, but that would be too easy.

“Hm, well I think we had talked for far too long. That youth was willing to face my disciple, so let the battle start.”

Yang Kai smirked, he would show that old fart his place by letting his disciple massacre that junior of his. He was on the winning end in every situation, his disciple losing to some backwater cultivator wasn't possible. Deng Cai just stepped away from Feng Nuana, the girl slowly limping away while trying to get as much distance from her enemy as possible.

“My lord, please wait...we don't have to...”

Zhang Jin's stomach churned and his palms got sweaty as things were moving in a direction that he wanted to avoid. He could see that Dark Palm Disciple moving away, the energy shield that covered the ring got removed as well. Zhang Liu didn't care much for what those elders were talking about, he just didn't want the girl to get beaten and bruised any more than this.

“That's enough from you, sit down!”

Yang Kai held his palm out and looked at Zhang Jin in a stern fashion. His stare got quite intense which forced this elder to shut up and follow the order. This wasn't over though, many other core formation experts started gathering around the colosseum and even close to the VIP booth that the triform alliance was in.

These were the various bodyguards that the Dark Palm Sect master possessed. They were mostly in the late stage of core formation and there were ten of them. They had gathered there to keep everyone in check, their young lord didn't want any of those people to flee. The atmosphere in the area got quite stuffy, but suddenly the familiar voice of the peppy announcer boomed out to lower the tension.

“What a twist! Our young Lord Cai has a new opponent and it's Zhang Liu, let us give a round of applause for our contenders!”

The people could only sneer to themselves while clapping, knowing well that the poor Zhang junior would be trashed by this Dark Palm junior. While this was happening Feng Nuana was limping off stage, Zhang Liu was next to her and the two were passing each other. The short girl looked at the boy with mixed feelings.

“P-please be careful...”

She sounded meeker than before, her eyes were darting around as she wasn't sure what to look at. Then the youth did something strange, he held his hand out to the side his palm open. He then glanced at the girl and waited.

“W-what?”

She wasn't sure what to do but the youth just waited while indicating that she was supposed to do something. The girl then thought back to the ancient texts, there was something in there like this, but how did this youth know about it. It took her a bit to react but she gently tapped her palm against Liu's, the youth then finally moved on while saying.

“Tag in!”

## **Chapter 152**

The girl looked at her hand and then at the back of the young man that moved past her. She kind of knew what this act meant, having the old 'texts' to go back to. Zhang Liu had learned it from his Master on one occasion.

It was one of the rare days that he and his sister were allowed to spar with Zhang Dong. Their Master wasn't really taking them seriously and only dodging their attacks while the two tired themselves out, he then gave them some pointers. The 'tag in' came to be whenever he or his sister switched out, their Master told them that it was an old custom. You were supposed to slap the hand of the person you were exchanging before going into battle in their stead.

Back at the center stage Zhang Liu continued walking while staring daggers at his new opponent. He wasn't all that close to the girl that he was exchanging, but he couldn't just stand there and watch this continue. Deng Cai on the other side was just standing there with his hands behind his back. His face went back to being calm and collected, you couldn't see the rage-filled expression that it once had.

The audience tried cheering, it didn't feel right though. The atmosphere in this colosseum was stifling, the Dark Palm cultivators were now out and about. People were even trying to leave but the paths of escape were blocked. Apparently, Yang Kai wanted everyone to watch this show, even if he had to force them to do so.

Zhang Jin could only sit himself back while looking down at the large football-sized battle stage below him. It was too late to call for help at this point, he had missed his chance. There were now many core formation experts around him, if he tried sending a message with his communication jade they would notice it.

He scanned his surroundings, the only people that would be willing to help him if something happened were sitting in the booth together with him. Even then, they only had five core formation fighters with him on their side. The strongest from them being the young master from the Huo clan.

He was the only one that wasn't yet involved in this fiasco, the Dark Palm master didn't interact with him and also didn't seem to want anything from their side. Realistically speaking, there was no reason besides his friendship towards Zhang Dong to help them. Zhang Jin didn't know if he would jump in to help them, their relationship was still kind of vague. They were friendly with each other, but the old man had seen enough paper-thin bonds breaking off at critical junctures.

There were two core formation experts in the room with them now, both in the late stage. Zhang Jin was in the middle stage himself the same as the old Feng grandma. The Feng Matriarch was already at the Great circle along with Huo Qiang, so they could handle themselves. The problem were all the experts that were spread around the area, there were far too many of them. While the old man racked his brain about the way to get out of this situation, his great-grandson was ready to fight.

"Without further adieu, let us start the bout!"

Deng Cai strutted forward slowly while tossing his head backward and shaking his head.

"First I get to face a weak little girl and now a brat."

Cai's words were followed by an arrogant laugh, his nose raised high in the air as if he was mocking his opponent.

Zhang Liu narrowed his eyes while tapping his foot on the ground. His opponent wasn't taking him seriously at all, which made this youth clench his fist tightly. He didn't take the bait and just took on his fighting posture, he would show him his superiority with his actions and not with his words.

"Hah, silent type? How about this... I'll let you make ten moves before I retaliate. You should be glad that this lord is giving you such an opportunity!"

Deng Cai chuckled more and just stood there, his hands running through his long hair as he made sure to strike a valiant pose for the young ladies on the side. Liu just clenched his teeth in response, holding himself back while the other person continued to mock him during this life and death situation.

'Calm down... this is not an opponent I can take lightly.'

The white-haired boy lowered his posture and started pushing his spiritual energy into his legs. He was trying to make the whole process as inconspicuous as possible. If the enemy noticed and predicted where the attack was coming from, it wouldn't bode well for Liu. Luckily his techniques were all of superior quality, his Dao and Qi as pure as humanly possible.

He took his chance, while the older youth was busy with trying to look good he charged forward. A faint afterimage was left behind in his wake, lightning crackled and thunder boomed the moment the young man took off. The abrupt movement startled his opponent, this was what he was aiming for. His lightning charged fist flew forward, most of the people weren't able to see what was happening as it all happened in a matter of seconds.

THOOoooM!

Sparks flew and the aftershock made the ground vibrate. After the smoke cleared the people could see the result of the white-haired youths attack.

"You surprised me there..."

Deng Cai spoke out, his hand raised to cover his face. Zhang Liu didn't expect this, his fist connected with his opponent, but not with his face. He was stopped by his opponent's forearm that was showing cracks due to the heavy hit it took. Still, this wasn't enough to get through the rocky defenses of this man.

"What happened to giving me ten moves, senior?"

Zhang Liu replied while pushing his hand forward. The opponent promised to give him ten moves, which meant that he wouldn't counterattack or defend himself but just dodge. He had already broken that promise, which was a hit to his pride.

"Shut up!"

Liu jumped back, evading a kick by a hair's width. His surprise attack had failed, his foe would probably be fully alert now and not give him a second chance. His follow up attack was a hastily created lesser lightning javelin. The technique that looked like a bolt of lightning flew forward only to get slapped to the side by Deng Cai. The earth elemental defensive technique proving quite sturdy and effective in blocking the lightning Qi attacks that this youth was proficient in.

"It looks like the young lord isn't impressed, the attacks of the challenger are proving to be ineffective!"

The Dark Palm Sect young master just sneered, shaking his hand that he smacked the lightning bolt away, the rocky armor quickly reforming around it.

“That tickles, is that all you are capable of?”

Zhang Liu was truly surprised, his opponent’s defenses were nothing to scoff about. He was managing to make the defensive technique crack here and there, but he wasn’t going through it with his regular attacks. For now, he jumped back and tried to reorganize his thoughts, hoping to think of a better strategy.

Before he could do that though, he felt that something was off. He could see his opponent move one of his hands upwards, his palm opened wide. Warning’s started shooting off in his head prompting him to quickly use his movement technique. He dived to the side while Deng Cai clenched his palm together into a fist. The moment he did that the ground under Zhang Liu’s feet shifted as if it was trying to encase him in sand and rubble.

The only thing that was caught was Liu’s faint afterimage, the little aftershock not really doing anything to the lump of earth that was now in that place.

“You bugs are really good at evading... but how long can you keep this up?”

Deng Cai moved both his hands forward, his fingers started moving in a sort of random fashion. Suddenly pillars of sand burst through the rocky battle stage. They looked like elongated tentacles with a pointy tip on the end. The tips were different than the rest of the technique’s ‘body’ it was composed of hard rock which had a razor-sharp edge to it.

There were multiple of those popping out from the ground and they quickly surrounded the white-haired Zhang Clan cultivator. He quickly utilized his lightning steps, his feet were shining in a blue light each step he took thunder was heard. His opponent didn’t give him much time to react as the earth tendrils quickly sped towards their target.

Zhang Liu utilized his dodging skills to his fullest, the audience was on the edge of their seats as they saw the elongated sand tentacles shoot out from various places. They all had one task, to pierce this white-haired youth. Flight was impossible for someone in this realm, so the earth-based attacks were proving effective as Liu was having trouble gathering his thoughts and was only able to dodge.

Luckily he was nimble, his cultivation technique was immortal graded and his Dao was a superior one. Running out of spiritual energy before his opponent wouldn’t be something that would happen in this situation. Deng Cai’s techniques were quite advanced and in the heavenly grade, still they paled compared to what Zhang Dong passed onto his disciple.

Seconds turned to minutes and the youth was still standing, the dark palm young master’s face full of smugness slowly cracking as it switched to one of anger. No one had ever been able to keep up with him for this long while he was taking things more seriously. This technique that he was using was fierce and used up a lot of spiritual energy but his opponent didn’t suffer any damage besides a couple of cuts to his robe.

‘How can that trash keep up with my Sand Dragon Spears so well, he should be drained of his energies by now...’

Evading the hundreds of spear-like tendrils wasn't a simple task. The fact that Zhang Liu was still out there with minimal damage was a great achievement of its own. Yang Kai was just looking at the fight and he also was looking slightly ticked off. Why was his disciple still playing around with that insignificant worm?

"Cai, what are you doing, finish this already!"

The youth's master slammed his fist down, his aura exploding outwards which sent shivers down everyone's spine.

Deng Cai just looked at Zhang Liu that was still jumping about, his eyes bloodshot after he got called out by his own Master.

"How dare you make me lose face in front of my master, Die!"

Due to his masters egging on Deng Cai decided to charge into the fray. His barrage of sand spears continued while he himself utilized the previously used movement technique to gain momentum. He couldn't let his master get mad at him, he would be severely punished and maybe even deprived of cultivation resources.

This might have not been the best decision though. His ranged technique got sloppier as Liu noticed the amount of those blasted sand things decreasing to a more manageable number. He could see his enemy charging in like a mad bull, the rocky armor around him increasing in density while the ground cracked with each step he took.

'It's that technique.'

He already saw this move before, he knew that it was unwise to let the opponent gain momentum as the power of this skill increased with the rise in energy. So he did the opposite thing that Deng Cai was expected and bolted right at him.

"Fool, you are courting death!"

Cai sniggered at the idiot that was charging in his direction. He was very confident in his defensive capabilities, even more in them than he was in his offensive ones. No one of a similar realm had ever been able to damage his rock armor, he was assured that the moment the two clashed he would snap that Zhang clown in half.

People in the audience stood up ready to see the two clash. Most of them were of the opinion that the poor white-haired kid didn't stand a chance. They expected him to be pummeled into a ripe tomato after this exchange or maybe getting out of there with his evasion skill at most.

But then something strange happened. The youth started changing, his whole body started to glow in a deep blue light. Sparkling electricity was getting shoot out in various directions as the youth changed to something that looked more like an elemental being made from pure lightning energy.

This change was followed by a bright light that blinded most of the people looking at the exchange. A resounding boom of thunder quickly followed the flash of light along with a residual shockwave that activated the protective barrier that was protecting the people outside the battle stage.



The people took a few seconds to regain their senses. They all hurriedly looked to the spot that the clash happened only to gasp in surprise. There Zhang Liu stood, looking quite lofty while lightning energies and fluctuations of his superior Dao emanated from his form.

Deng Cai, on the other hand, was quite far away, right at the edge of the tournament platform. He was just sprawled out, his upper body leaning against the barrier that kept him and his opponent locked inside. He looked to be out cold, his left cheeked seamed to be caved in and he was missing some teeth. He was bleeding profusely from his mouth, the gem on his forehead looked to be cracked and his eyes were vacant.

The whole area went silent, the people couldn't even cheer out for the winner as they knew that the Dark Palm sect wouldn't take kindly to this. The only thing that could be faintly heard was the crackling of lightning and the gnashing of teeth that was coming from Yang Kai's VIP booth.

### **Chapter 153**

The people were silent yet again, not from being shocked about Zhang Liu's one-hit knockout. They were looking up into the highest VIP booth where Yang Kai was sitting in. Everyone here knew by now that this man had a bad temper and was quite unreasonable. He wouldn't have set up this bet otherwise.

Everyone here just wanted to leave at this point. They weren't allowed though as various Dark Palm Sect members poured in and already surrounded the area around the colosseum to keep people from escaping. This was their turf and one of their important elders was in the middle of something. No one from them cared what this something was, they were just there to silence the people if push came to shove.

"GET UP!... I ORDER YOU TO GET UP!"

Yang Kai shouted out while looking at his disciple that wasn't looking all that handsome anymore. His face was caved in, a fist mark visible in that spot. The youth was out cold, his body was just twitching slightly from the abrupt ending that it had suffered.

"WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU ARE DOING, I WILL DISOWN YOU, YOU USELESS TRASH!"

The man continued berating his disciple, still hoping that there was a chance to save his good name. He didn't even care about the lost wager as much as losing face due to this whole thing. First, his disciple turned out to be weaker than some tiny Zhang Clan junior with no background whatsoever. Secondly, he would lose the bet if that disciple of his didn't wake up making him the master of a trash like that.

While this was going on Zhang Liu was slowly calming himself down. He had managed to land a perfectly placed counter on the man's face, but this was more luck than skill and he knew that. Deng Cai had miscalculated, thinking that his opponent was much weaker. This gave him the needed chance to use his lesser version of the Embodiment of the Thunder God to deliver a devastating finisher.

This technique was really difficult to use with his current cultivation, he could already feel his muscles twitching and his bones rattling from the strain he had suffered. He quickly breathed out while canceling the technique, his body that was covered by lightning turned back to its regular form. The youth looked a bit pale, but he was mostly okay but his battle potential was only at about 50% at this moment.

Something strange happened next. Zhang Liu was also taught his Master's aura detection techniques so he felt a strange shift. From the small gem that was embedded in Deng Cai's forehead a strange energy started to radiate.

Liu couldn't really see it, but he could feel energy escaping from the chipped gem. It was as if a fountain of water shot out into the sky into various directions and small orb-like will of wisps shoot out into the distance. The places they were going were varied, some flew back into the town as if they were searching for something or someone. Some of them just launched themselves into the distance, a long journey ahead of them.

Just a few moments after this transpired at a small house there was a certain woman. She was tired, her eyes looked to be red along with her nose. The woman looked at a certain child that was laying in a bed, the boy's was diagnosed with a strange sickness not too long ago and was fated to soon die. This wasn't the only child in this small room, the kids were just hollow husks.

She was holding one of the children's hands while trying not to cry. But all of a sudden she felt something, the boy's finger twitched just a tad. The woman wasn't a powerful cultivator so she didn't notice, but the stolen fragment of his soul had just returned and it was embedding itself back into her comatose child.

"Little Tei?"

She jumped up with vigor and surprise as she called out the name of her child. The little one gave out a grunt in response as color started returning to his cheeks. The same thing started happening to all the other kids around her, everyone jerked a bit as they began waking up from the nightmare.

"Honey come quick!...T-the kids...the kids are waking up!"

Zhang Liu was oblivious to the fact that thanks to him, the people that Deng Cai had sucked fragments of their souls away had begun recovering. Not everyone could be saved, depending on the state their current bodies were in. But the most recent victims of the soul-sucking were all starting to recover.

Suddenly the white-haired youth felt a powerful gaze on him. His whole body trembled as some villainous aura surrounded him, not letting him move a muscle. He was somehow able to gaze upwards with only his eyes and a slight neck movement. His eyes met with the furious Yang Kai that switched his targets now. He was glancing at the person that caused him to lose the bet.

The core formation expert also had a gem ingrained in his forehead and he could see the soul fragments that were freed. That was a lot of work that went down the drain, as he knew well how the mysterious gem was used. This was something that he didn't want to get discovered as this was clearly a technique used by demonic cultivators.

The soul fragments that were escaping couldn't be stopped now while the soul gem was broken. The problem wasn't that, but now there was the possibility of someone noticing that his disciple was using a demonic art.

Demonic and demon arts were characterized by a couple of things. There were mostly fashioned to increase the practitioner's cultivation by hurting others. There were various ways, using someone's blood, their flesh, or even their souls. A demonic art would suck your target dry and transfer part of

their straight into the demonic cultivator. These arts were ghastly, cruel, and looked down upon by most people in this world.

This didn't keep certain people from cultivating them though. These techniques and skills were inhumane but they worked. It was far easier to absorb someone's body of work with the vampire-like demonic arts than spend millennia trying to better yourself on your own.

"Did anyone notice...should I silence them all...but first..."

Yang Kai narrowed his eyes and looked at the youth that defeated his disciple. If he decided to keep his word, he would have to declare this Zhang junior the victor and leave everyone alone. Still, he didn't feel like he had an obligation to do that, these trash cultivators from god know where didn't deserve any mercy, they had made a fool out of him and now they needed to pay the price.

"What is this, that young man clearly used some kind of demonic technique to win this fight, you all witnessed it!"

The man pointed out at Zhang Liu, the youth responded by looking up to the man shouting at him. The people in the area murmured among each other, not sure what the man was talking about. The person from the Zhang Clan had clearly won fair and square, the other person was also clearly the bad guy in this situation that was holding everyone hostage.

"I said... you all witnessed it, right?"

Yang Kai released his whole core formation great circle aura throughout the whole colosseum. The people that weren't really fighters felt the weight of the world on them as they knelt down.

"Yes, elder Kai is right, I saw that child eat some kind of pill before attacking, that was clearly against the rules!"

A person shouted out, he was wearing a regular Dark Palm sect robe. This was one of the people that was guarding the area not letting people out. Due to his words the people in the audience noticed what this overbearing sect wanted them to do. The people winced from the oppressive aura that the cultivators from this sect started radiating.

"Y-yes... I saw him swallow a pill too..."

"The Senior is right, he clearly cheated!"

"He should be disqualified!"

Soon random voices were heard in the region. Everyone was willing to throw this youth under the bus just to save themselves. The people here were mostly cultivators from other clans and smaller sects. They all clearly didn't want to have anything to do with this situation and with that dictatorial sect that was causing it. Some felt bad for the youth and the clan behind him, but it was better him than them.

Zhang Liu looked around the battle stage, the people were shouting at him. Their voices started out faint, but the longer he listened the louder it got. They even looked angry and started throwing food and other various things to the satisfaction of Yang Kai that was aiming for it. Zhang Jin and the others just gritted their teeth, the two Dark Palm sect elders moved closer and were keeping an eye on them, not letting them move a muscle.

“Hogwash!”

Huo Qiang declared while glancing at Yang Kai and all the people in the colosseum that were shouting out profanities.

“Watch your mouth!

One from the sect elders stepped over, his brows furrowed as he stared Qiang down.

“Young master clam down, you must not act!”

Huo Qiao stood up placing himself between Qiang and the Dark Palm sect member. He knew the big picture, if they acted now even their Patriarch wouldn't be able to do anything about it. The red-haired man just clenched his fists tightly, he then sat himself down still deliberating on the best action to take.

‘What will that bastard do now...’

Zhang Jin thought to himself while looking at this helpless situation. The Feng women were to the side, they were just standing there not able to do anything besides watching things play out.

‘The boy is in danger... what am I supposed to do...’

The old man didn't see this going anywhere positive. That Yang Kai was a typical tyrant that had to have his way. He wouldn't budge an inch if he set his mind to it and he had the backing of nascent soul cultivators behind him.

Yang Kai smirked, he just needed to threaten the people here a bit and they all took his side. This is how the world operated here, the strong were worshiped while the weak were tossed aside. No one in their right mind would side with the people opposing him, if he wanted he even could make everyone present here disappear from the face of the planet.

“Yes, that's right.”

He swished his sleeve and glanced down at the judge that was just standing there.

“Don't you also think that he cheated and should be punished, honorable judge?”

The man started sweating, his palms already damp. There was no way that he could go against the young lord, but it made him look bad if he sided with him. In the end, he decided to take the hit to the face as he nodded.

“Y-yes, the young lord is right, the contestant named Zhang Liu clearly cheated... the match results are void.”

The man glanced at Yang Kai that was nodding while the judge was speaking.

“For his punishment he should be removed...”

The man that the judge was staring at suddenly moved his palm upwards indicating that he should stop talking.

“Honorable judge I think you should leave the punishment of this villain to me, he did harm my disciple.”

The judge nodded not wanting to argue with this nut case at all. The man clearly disowned his disciple a moment ago, now he was acting like a proper master who was trying to take his vengeance.

Yang Kai abruptly descended into the ring on his flying sword, the shield that was blocking Zhang Liu from leaving vanishing.

“You had your fun you little bug. You have only yourself to blame...”

Zhang Liu tried to move backwards but he couldn't. His feet felt like they were glued to the ground and he felt a heavy burden on his whole body. He tried circulating his cultivation but it was to no avail, this man was just too powerful for this youth that was only in the foundation establishment realm.

Yang Kai just stood there, tiny orbs that looked to be made from earth hovered in front of him. The moment the man pointed with his finger one of those orbs shot forward at an astonishing speed. The rudimentary attack rapidly struck the white-haired youth's thigh, penetrating it.

Zhang Liu gritted his teeth, blood gushed out but he was unwilling to show weakness even in this dire situation. This only made the Dark Palm sect Master angrier as he continued shooting the rock marbles at the defenseless youth. His shoulder, his other leg, his knee, and even his feet were the next targets as the young man was getting pelted with no remorse. If this continued for long, the youth would surely be dead...

## **Chapter 154**

“Brother! Noo...!”

Zhang Xue shouted out while still being stuck in the waiting room, the rest of the juniors were still stuck there and being guarded by some scary sect uncles. She was able to see everything through one of the small windows but she could only watch as her brother was getting tortured.

“Junior sister, you mustn't!”

Zhang Tai was holding onto the young girl, not wanting her to charge out. He knew the stakes and that this lovely girl would be pulled into this bloody mess, probably losing her life. Liu's sister trashed about trying to wrestle herself free, but she was held back by her senior brother. He was also dismayed, he and Liu had their differences but it was still in good faith. He never wanted him to die, he was still part of the Zhang family, his death would be avenged.

“This one will be the last one...”

Yang Kai called out to Zhang Liu, the boy was already half dead but he didn't say even one word. He was barely standing, both his legs a bloody mess his bones broken in many areas and his flesh not looking better either. His eyes were staring daggers into his enemy's pair, he was defiant to the last breath.

“Those eyes... I don't like them... just die!”

Yang Kai snorted and produced a larger rock orb that he pointed at the youth's forehead. He took aim and flung it forward, if this attack went through the boy would die on the spot.

“Screw this!”

Zhang Jin shouted out as he finally jumped forward hoping to make it in time to save his grandson.

“Halt, what do you think you are doing! Grab him, don’t let him interrupt the senior!”

The two cultivators that were in the VIP booth with Zhang Jin roared out. The alerted more of their companions to the elder that was diving towards the battle stage. Just as the two were about to grab him a sudden attack came from the side. There was a giant blazing fist flying towards an unlucky Dark Palm member, this older male not having enough time to react as he got clobbered right in the face.

“Young master, what are you doing?!”

Huo Qiao yelled in shock as his young master delivered the strike to the unsuspecting Dark Palm member. With this he had sealed their faith that was now tied to the other two clans that were here.

“Wait for what? My Huo clan won’t stand for this, call the other elders over here this instant! We will assist the Zhang and Feng Clan in battle!”

“Well spoken, we’ll assist you!”

Feng Liena quickly skipped over and delivered a devastating kick to the second core formation expert. She had a higher cultivation realm than the man and it was also of superior quality, so the man had no way of defending himself. He was sent flying backward and was embedded in the bricks of the structure the people were in.

Pandemonium soon broke out as people started clamoring to get out of this death trap. Dark Palm members started pouring in, alerted by the sudden retaliation and set on delivering their brand of justice to these backwater clans.

Zhang Jin didn’t look back, but he could hear an explosion going off from behind him. He could hear various people screaming still, his eyes were glued to his grandson that was moments away from getting his forehead penetrated by Yang Kai’s attack.

“I...I’m not going to make it...”

His face sunk as he was just too far away. There were more Dark Palm core formation cultivators standing in front of him and even some already moving up from behind. He clenched his fist tightly, his teeth gnashing as he activated a special item that was handed to him by the Zhang Patriarch.

“No, I must make it!”

A bright light surrounded his entire body and people could feel a spike of spiritual energy in the area. The core formation experts could faintly see the old man turning into a blob of light as he flew towards them. They reacted fast as they hurled their cultivation techniques at the enemy, to no avail as they got steamrolled by the old man and tossed aside like ragdolls.

“No good, raise the barrier output!”

Someone shouted out as the force field that was surrounding the ring with Zhang Liu and Yang Kai inside expanded in thickness. Everything was happening in a matter of seconds, but time was running out as the rock orb was already flying for the youth’s head. The light around the man started to slowly fade but he was still charging forward, his fist on a collision course with that barrier.

'If I can just get through this!'

Zhang Jin forced all of his being into this punch. If he managed to destroy it in one blow, he would still have a chance in saving his grandson that was moments away from getting lobotomized. His fist finally connected with the shield, the dome of energy jolted around cracks formed around it as it resisted the heavy blow. Yet in the end, the barrier still managed to halt the old man's panicked advance only shattering after it was too late.

"N...NO!"

Zhang Jin's eyes were bloodshot as he saw the spinning orb just millimeters away from Zhang Liu's head. He had lost his momentum due to the barrier and needed to kick himself off the ground once more. He wouldn't be able to make it in time like this.

Zhang Liu was having a hard time keeping himself awake, he had lost a lot of blood and could feel that this was it. He could see flashes of his youth, they were mostly together with his younger sister and mother, their father spending most of his days cultivating to make their family proud. Right at the end he finally saw his master, Zhang Dong. The man was hard to read and he had a quirky personality that sometimes could be seen when his pokerface crumbled.

'Xue...Mother...Father...Master... I'm sorry...'

The youth looked at the haughty Dark Palm sect master, his gaze defiant till the end. The man was just standing there with that stupid grin on his face, the youth only hoping that his Master would avenge him afterward.

"Hah, nice try... but he dies!"

Yang Kai snickered as his attack was about to end his enemy's life. Yet, to everyone's bewilderment something baffling happened next. The moment the rocky orb made contact with the youth's forehead they saw a strange character appearing on his forehead. This character was the symbol for lightning, its appearance was followed by strong energy fluctuations that were even above the great circle of core formation.

Suddenly Zhang Liu's whole body found itself getting enveloped in an energy field. The moment the rock orb connected it evaporated into nothingness, this wasn't the end though. The barrier produced a massive shockwave that blasted outwardly in all directions catching Yang Kai off guard. A massive pillar of light shot up into the sky as it covered the whole football-sized field with itself.

The giant blast of energy was hard to miss, anyone that was currently fighting just stopped as they felt oppressive energy surging into their body.

"W-what is this light...GAHHHh..."

"Noo...."

People shouted out as they felt a strong jolt of electricity running through their bodies. The pillar of light expanded slightly further and then exploded with a loud thunderous blast. The screams came to an abrupt stop, the bright light quickly subsided to reveal most of the people down on the ground.

They were all alive but out cold, the blast that originated from Zhang Liu had taken out most of the people in the area. There was one more surprising fact, as anyone that was from the Zhang, Fend, or Huo clan and was in the vicinity of the blast remained unharmed. Most of the people in the colosseum were now incapacitated, but still some of the stronger core formation warriors remained.

“W-what happened, what was that pillar of light?”

Feng Liena called out while glancing to the center stage where the light beam originated from. She was standing next to her grandma and the two Huo clan members that were previously with her in the VIP booth that didn’t exist anymore due to the fighting. They saw Zhang Jin charge into the ring and soon afterward the blast occurred.

“This spiritual essence belongs to him...”

Feng Liena said while glancing around her, some of the Dark Palm members were coming out and ready for battle.

“Yes... did the Zhang Patriarch place some protective Daoist magic on his disciple... but this scale...”

Feng Maling mumbled to herself while at the same time waving her staff and ready to battle some more.

“Most of them are down but this is not the end, let us grab all of the juniors and escape!”

Huo Qiang nodded while smacking his fists together, the brand new ruby gauntlets that he received from Zhang Dong began glowing red and releasing bright red flames.

“Leave those bastards to us, you go evacuate the kids!”

Huo Qiao sighed from the side but he also nodded, his hands glowing in a similar light as Qiang’s did as he charged into battle alongside his long time young master. A Dark Palm member saw an angry-looking man with mutton chops, he quickly pulled out his communication jade.

“The clans are starting a revolt, send help to the colosseum!”

He poured his spiritual energy into the jade but something was wrong. The moment he did that sparks flew and it just exploded into many tiny pieces. He didn’t have enough time to figure out what was wrong as he had to put up a block to cover his face. This wasn’t the right choice as the moment the man delivered his infernal punch the Dark Palm cultivator could feel his forearms breaking.

The fighting resumed but at a smaller scale as the two Huo clansmen made a path for the Feng ladies. Back in the ring there was a certain large boulder. It was at least three meters tall and two meters thick and it had strange runes surrounding it. Opposite of it was a white-haired youth, he was gently hovering above the ground the lightning symbol still clearly visible on his forehead.

The large rock slowly crumbled into dust revealing an astonished Yang Kai. The man looked slightly disheveled but was mostly fine. He was looking at the youth that was hovering and giving off strong Qi fluctuations that were even above this Dark Palm Master.

“W-what is this, some kind of life-saving treasure from his Master or Clan?”



The man could see that the boy was already out cold, his eyes had rolled up into their eye sockets but he was still alive. The aura radiating was an amalgamation of lightning and holy Dao and it was even keeping the youth's wounds in check.

"Take this!"

Yang Kai didn't wait for an explanation and produced a large sand serpent that was at least five meters in length. It quickly flung itself at the floating youth, its rocky fangs going for the kill. To the man's dismay the moment his technique came in contact with the forcefield, the serpent blew up into a mass of debris.

"You think a weak life-saving technique like this will keep me away!"

Yang Kai roared as he rose up into the sky, he was standing on a huge snakehead that was made from a mix of sand and gravel. This new giant was several times larger than the previous serpent and gave off stronger core formation energy. The huge monster screeched as it opened its huge maw, an orb of energy appearing in front of it. This attack was very similar to the one the Zhang Cultivators used when they went into their staple attack formation. The difference being, that they were using water elements while this technique used the earthly ones.

Zhang Liu was a sitting duck, he was already out cold and unable to move. The life-saving technique would probably give out after some time if this continued, no one could tell how much punishment it could handle. The huge beam of spiritual energy exploded forward, would the boy survive this no one knew.

"Over my dead body you whelp!"

Suddenly someone appeared between the yellowish beam of light. The person was wearing a peculiar looking metallic armor over his body. The man looked quite big at least two meters and a half, the armor was pitch black. The armor looked like some edgy fantasy getup, there were spikes coming out of the shoulder blades and two large horns from the helmet. The torso part was quite pointy and triangular and the eyes glowed in an eerie green hue.

The person in the suit was holding on to a giant mace, the length of it was at least the same as the height of this man. The end was kind of spherical with curved spikes coming out of the 'head part'. The person inside this armor was Zhang Jin and he instantly swung this weapon against the incoming beam attack. Sparks flew in all directions but he managed to force the attack to the side, the resulting shockwave making the giant sand serpent tremble.

While these two clashed with each other, another scene was taking place in the Zhang Clan base that was Spirit Spring City.

Warning!!! Disciple Zhang Liu is in critical condition, life protective mark has been activated!

"The hell is going on, SOMEONE EXPLAIN THIS!"

The loud shout of an angry Zhang Clan Patriarch was heard throughout the whole city that made everyone in it drop to their knees. No one knew what their lovable Patriarch was angry about, it was very rare to see their leader acting like this so everyone was scared. The man in question was glaring at his two retainers Zhang Ya and Kuo that were face planting in fear on the ground.

"T-the truth of the matter is..."

## Chapter 155

Earlier at Spirit Spring City in the dimensional regalia treasure:

The floating island in the void of the medallion had seen better days. The whole place was riddled with craters and rubble, even the buildings there were partially destroyed. The reason was the person who was in there and he was the one and only Nascent soul cultivator of the Zhang Clan.

Zhang Dong floated around while being in a seated position. His robe dangling downward due to gravity while he rubbed his chin. He had spent quite some time at just getting used to his new cultivation realm, he had long consolidated it and moved on to training in his techniques.

He didn't have the cash shop to go back to so he had to use his own understanding of the Dao to make progress. This wasn't a problem though, thanks to him having an astonishing amount of knowledge concerning the Dao of lightning. The upgrade to his cultivation technique also increased his understanding in the field of the holy elements so his healing arts would be more potent as well.

"Well, this place looks like shit... but with my current cultivation I can almost instantly repair it by infusing my Qi into the medallion."

He could barely get the pocket dimension to expand in size when he was still in the great circle of core formation. But things were different now, he was a Nascent soul grandmaster, a true behemoth in these lands. His true battle potential yet unknown as he hadn't faced a foe at the same level yet.

"Time to repair this place."

Matt knelt down and placed an open palm on the ground. The whole lump of earth that he was standing on was a part of this treasure. Thanks to this he could repair it without having to go outside to touch the medallion that was still in that protective room. His golden spiritual energy flowed into the earth beneath and he could already feel the fissures and craters sealing themselves back up again. In a matter of moments the scenery was back to normal, still not fully though.

"Well... I guess repairing the buildings would be too much to ask from this treasure..."

The structures like the large dorm looking building or the other ones that were built in this dimensional space couldn't be recreated like this. He would have to have his clansmen do the repairs manually. Some of the structures had collapsed due to several mistakes on his end. He had to watch his output a lot more now, a simple swing of his hand with a minimal amount of Qi in it could destroy the landscape around him.

"Haha, It's good to be the leader. Not like anyone can complain to me about destroying things here."

Matt was adamant about his leadership position at first, but now he was slowly warming up to it. It was much easier to just gather points with the help of his clansmen. He just needed to shove them slightly in the right direction and they did most of the work for him. Not having to worry about a popular vote when it came to making new laws was also a nice bonus.

"I don't think I would be able to pass most of those new laws if we had things like a Senate or a House of Representatives..."

Matt stood up after getting the ground back into shape, though it looked slightly barren as only the basic plant life recovered like grass.

“Benevolent Dictator Zhang Dong... has a nice ring to it...”

He laughed while walking towards the dorm house where the platoons had stayed at when they were training.

“Still, I’ll have to look into that when things settle down...”

He was someone from modern times and his country was also a democracy. So he leaned in that direction, but in this world ruled by strength it would be hard to propose that way of thinking. Getting people to follow elected officials that weren’t actually stronger than them in battle would be a strenuous task.

“Well I got most of the techniques and the Qi flow down now, this new enhanced spiritual sense is quite neat as well.”

“I should probably craft that dagger now, wonder how much stronger I will become when my body also reaches the nascent soul level...also what’s above a golden body... platinum?”

Matt rubbed his chin, thinking that that metal looked silver and would be just backtracking. Though a silver sheen was nice as well, maybe he would get a pure shiny chrome body that blinded his enemies.

“I will ride eternal, shiny and chrome...or something like that?”

No one was there to appreciate his bad monologue, so he moved on and was ready to enter his crafting abode to move on with the crafting. He wanted to take his attempt at the heaven grade weapon slowly, this was mostly the reason why he spent close to a week in training his Qi control. This skill was paramount to crafting weapons as making a slight mistake while infusing the metals and materials with his Qi could turn a treasure into junk.

Warning!!! Disciple Zhang Liu’s body condition is rapidly decreasing! Warning!!!

Suddenly he heard a siren that was followed by a big red pop up window right in front of his face. It said that Zhang Liu was in a dire situation, he didn’t know what was going on nor that his system even had this kind of function.

“What the hell ...”

He quickly tapped that prompt, the window quickly switched to Zhang Liu’s disciple window and he could even see his photo in the top left corner. On the right side, there was a miniature version of a human body, it looked like one that you found in a medical book. Normally this figure was green, the colors changed depending on the amount of damage his disciples suffered.

“W-what is this!”

His eyes bulged as he knew how this disciple window should look like. He had trained with the kids before and they had suffered some minor injuries. The colors shifted from green to blue, yellow, orange, red, and then black. Black was the color of death and he never saw his disciples ever getting anything

below the yellow color. To his astonishment, most of the diagram was red or orange and there were places turning red at the same time as he was looking at it.

“What’s happening in that city? did they run into some demonic beasts on the way home?... what’s going on?”

Matt rattled his brain, he didn’t know what was going on. His grandpa and his retainers assured him that this was just a friendly get together for the clans. There shouldn’t be any problems along the way as it was a safe zone, Zhang Jin even had that prototype treasure that he made to help him out if something went wrong.

“I must call them!”

Matt hastily left the dimensional regalia and appeared next to the medallion in the spacious empty room. The guards were startled as they couldn’t even give him a salute, their Patriarch just zoomed past them and flew up the stairs leaving an afterimage behind.

Warning!!! Disciple Zhang Liu’s life is in danger, killing intent detected, should the system activate the protection mark? Warning!!!

Matt stopped after another popup window showed up. He remembered that he spent some points on his two disciples when he was examining his system more throughout. He remembered that this was something high-level masters did for their pupils, so he spent a good amount of his points in his system on that mark. He almost thought that it was a rip-off, but now it could be Liu’s only chance of survival.

With the pinpoint precision of a seasoned gamer he poked the ‘yes’ button as fast as his nascent soul cultivation allowed him to do. This of course didn’t get unnoticed, a simple finger poke from someone this strong produced a giant shockwave blast that turned the stairs that he was standing into rubble.

Warning!!! Disciple Zhang Liu is in critical condition, life protective mark has been activated! Trying to stabilize, please wait!

This explosion didn’t get unnoticed, guards poured in like bees to honey as they thought that their main building was getting attacked. The moment they got there though, they saw their Patriarch rising out from the rubble a strange expression on his face. He looked at them with a stern expression that made them stand up straight, their rear ends clenched.

“Where are Ya and Kuo, bring them here... do it now!”

The Zhang soldiers didn’t need to hear the order twice as they bolted in various directions. While they were searching for Zhang Dong’s two retainers, he himself pulled out a communication jade and tried contacting his grandpa that should be there with Liu.

“Nothing... I’m not getting through...”

He didn’t know that the systems protective mark had fried all communication devices in the area, even the Dark Palm Sect headquarters in Jade Grass City had gone dark. This was a blessing in disguise as they wouldn’t be able to call for backup for now.

“What’s happening there?”

He removed himself from the ruined structure and was now in the main hall of the Zhang Clan compound. He wanted to just bold for that city right here right now, but he was holding himself back. He needed more information, his two retainers needed to fill him in before he made his way here. He had already experienced situations into which he went without any sort of plan or idea of the foe he was facing.

“Good, his vital signs are stabilizing...”

While moving towards the office that Kuo should be in, while at it he also kept looking at Zhang Liu’s disciple window in his system. He noticed that this mark that he spent good spirit points on was actually keeping this boy alive. Previously dark red areas were turning brighter as time passed, which indicated a chance of survival.

“Zhang Kuo greets the Patriarch.”

“Zhang Ya greets the Patriarch.”

He moved his head away from the status window as his two retainers finally showed up. They were all standing out in the open as they had met halfway. There were other Zhang family members around them along with the guards that had called these two over.

“I will make this short you two, was it the Dao festival? Tell me, were there some dangers in the city it was being held?”

The two looked at each other after they stopped bowing, then Kuo replied to the question Zhang Dong said.

“Nothing in particular Patriarch, the festival should be ending in a couple of days, we are expecting the grand elder to return within the week.”

Matt raised his brow, he could tell, the two were lying. Thanks to his enhanced spiritual sense he could tell this, what Kuo said was partially right but he was withholding information. Why the man was doing it was unknown to Matt, he had no time to spend on these games though.

He truthfully didn’t have the slightest idea that the Dark Palm sect was located in Jade Gras City. There were far too many cities and towns with Spirit, Jade, Phoenix, or Dragon in their names, for him to remember which one was which. His two retainers were still keeping up with the request of the grand elder Zhang Jin, so they were just following orders.

“Is that so...”

The people in the room twitched the moment Zhang Dong said those words. They felt an oppressive aura coming from their Patriarch. This was something very uncharacteristic of their leader, everyone was surprised as they went down to their knees, gasping for air.

“P-patriarch appease y-your anger...”

“Appease my anger? My disciple is on his death bed and you still claim that everything is alright?”

“The hell is going on, SOMEONE EXPLAIN THIS! I know that you two are withholding information from me!”

Zhang Dong pointed his finger at his two retainers accusingly, his aura washing over them which made them tremble in their boots. The cat was out of the bag at this point, so the two didn't have any reason to lie anymore. Their leader already knowing that something was fishy.

"T-the truth of the matter is..."

"Jade Grass City is... part of the Dark Palm Sect..."

Matt stepped back, the pressure around his people subsiding the moment the truth was revealed.

"The grand elder didn't want to worry you, Patriarch..."

The two had their faces mashed into the ground and couldn't really see if Zhang Dong was still mad or not. They were just following orders from their perspective but this could have been seen as undermining the leader's authority. From the Patriarch's point of view this could be considered treason and he could even have them killed.

"The Dark Palm Sect again... damn you gramps..."

Matt mumbled to himself while glaring at the two people at his feet. He was ready to take off here and there, before he could though he was interrupted by a female voice.

"Your disciple? did something happen to little Xue and Liu?"

This was Zhang Jie, the mother of his two pupils. She had a strained expression on her face, not really sure if she heard it right. Matt looked at his cousin and placed his arm on her shoulder, he gave her a solemn look before replying.

"Don't worry, I'll bring them back."

He then looked at Zhang Ya and Jin as he spoke out.

"I'll deal with you later."

He was already putting the coordinates of Jade Grass City into his system. Before Zhang Jie could reply he was already floating in mid-air, his body flashing in a golden light. The spiritual energy spiked in the surrounding that caused everyone to gasp out, was this really their Patriarch? This man was a lot stronger than they remembered him to be, they didn't get much time to gawk though. The man's body turned into a being of lightning and blasted straight upwards, the people in the vicinity were flung to the side just from his takeoff.

The people outside the Zhang Clan headquarters could see a bright beam of light shooting into the clouds followed by a thunderous boom. Everyone looked up into the sky only to see a thick bolt of lightning shooting from the cloud that was directly above them. Some of them could have sworn that they saw a person inside that huge lightning bolt.

## **Chapter 156**

People murmured among each other. Everyone clearly heard the city leader's voice before the large beam of light took off. They weren't sure what was happening, but the city owner probably had

something to do with it. The clouds parted and they saw a giant golden lightning bolt firing off into the distance and golden lightning was something that the Zhang Patriarch was known for.

While the commoners gossiped with each other the Zhang Clan members were left stupefied.

“D-did the Patriarch just fly without his sword?”

“What was that strange phenomenon?”

“Did he... reach the Nascent Soul realm?”

The Zhang clan members that witnessed their leader taking off from this spot looked at the large hole in the ceiling. They all gulped wondering if Zhang Dong had actually taken that step forward that no one from their clan had ever done before.

“This complicates things.”

Zhang Kuo stood up while looking in the distance where Zhang Dong had taken off. He knew what the Dark Palm sect would do if they saw their leader who had reached the nascent soul level. The other problem was that something had happened during the Dao festival, it didn't take this man long to put one and one together to figure this out.

“We must call Senior Zhi.”

Zhang Kuo looked to a person on the side, this was someone that worked for him.

“Give out a decree, everyone is to return to Spirit Spring City we need to activate the grand formation!”

“Also prepare the battleships, we need to aid the Patriarch!”

The person bowed and quickly moved out to carry out the orders, the people that were gathered there were still perplexed by the whole situation.

“I'm leaving on the first ship!”

Zhang Jie proclaimed while running to get her battle robe ready, she knew that her children were in trouble once again and she didn't want to wait here twiddling her thumbs. The place got louder as the senior members from the clan started running around like headless chickens. This situation looked even direr than the one where they were ordered to visit that secret ground, it seemed that someone from their clan had offended the big overlord that was the Dark Palm Sect.

Zhang Zhi got the call first, the man didn't take long to bolt on his flying sword towards Spirit Spring City. His true destination was the city where the Dao festival was held, but first he wanted to meet up with the Zhang force that would be heading there.

His wife being a Feng Clan member quickly called up her old contacts in the female-run family. Their side didn't have any info on anything, no communications were going through. Their side was skeptical about the whole thing and decided to wait it out, but to be sure they also started gathering their most powerful experts to aid their Matriarch.

Word also reached the Huo clan that began their own preparations as well. The three clans had made an agreement to share information with each other. Everyone was gathering up their forces, but they knew

better than to just barge into Jade Grass City. They didn't like their chances when going against the Dark Palm Sect, so for now they would be preparing their forces and wait for more information to arrive.

The two clans didn't like the look of this. If a conflict arose they would probably have to abandon those young masters that were sent to that tournament. There was no realistic way of going against a sect with Nascent Soul cultivators. The congregation of their forces was more a formality than a show of force, done more to not make them look weak in this kind situation.

Out in the distance, there was a sudden rumble. A large beast at the core formation level was munching on some delicious meat of its prey. The monster was the apex predator of this area, but even it shivered uncontrollably as it felt a massive spike in spiritual energy. The creature had never felt an astonishing amount of power like this before, the only thing it could do is prostrate itself towards the incoming being.

The thing that was making this meat-eater afraid was a person that was rapidly approaching. This person was hard to spot as he was surrounded by golden lights, lightning bolts firing off and thunder clapping everywhere. Everything in the vicinity either passed out or prostrated itself like the beast.

'God damn, I'm so much faster now... but that blasted city is too far away... it will take me an hour to get there...'

This was an angry-looking Zhang Dong, he looked at the zooming scenery as he was rapidly flying towards Jade Grass City. It would have taken him one or two days to get there on his flying sword when he was at core formation. He was several times faster now, but this wasn't enough to get there in under an hour.

'I hope they can hold up until I arrive. Don't you die on me...'

Matt pushed his cultivation to its limits as he charged forward, he was feeling a myriad of emotions. Worry about his disciple and his new family that could very well die soon. Anger about the fact that the Dark Palm Sect was aiming for them and even sadness due to his grandpa withholding information from him.

'Am I so unreliable?'

He tried tossing these questions to the back of his mind for now. The battle ahead was more important, he also had to think about what he should do after it's all done. The Dark Palm Sect would be knocking on their doors if he trashes their city, even more, when they realize that he reached the nascent soul level.

'Should I make a contract with them?'

He had done his research and wanted to avoid that option. The eradication of his clan could probably be avoided if he took one of those binding contracts. If he did that though, he would be nothing more than a slave of that Dark Palm sect. They apparently used some strange soul binding pacts that were more or less slave contracts. The person that he would be bound to could order him to do anything and if he refused his soul could be destroyed.

'Not a very good deal... but probably the least bloody conclusion.'



He would probably have to work as some kind of sect enforcer or bodyguard for the next snotty sect master. Still everyone wouldn't need to fight and their clan would fall under the protection of the powerful sect. Could he trust his life to some murder hobos though? He could very well end up betrayed and dead after even signing on the dotted line. He wouldn't be able to do anything if that sect decided to do something to his clan, they were just too untrustworthy.

'The other option is to fight it out... but can I beat all of their old nascent soul farts myself?'

That was the big question, he felt like he shouldn't have problems with someone at the early stage. If they were as strong as that Pride demon he faced, he wouldn't have a problem. Was that the standard for the early stage or was it more? maybe it was even less, he needed more battle experience.

'Can the system help me? I don't have many points and no shop to buy any op items... the only thing I can spend my points now is to...'

He had one idea in his mind, but first he needed more spirit points and many more of them. He was only flying for a couple of minutes now, the indicator on the map showed him getting closer slowly it would take some time for him to get there. Meanwhile at Jade Grass City another battle was unfolding.

Zhang Jin's large obsidian spiky mace radiated with oppressive green energy. The old man brought it down on his enemy, his opponent was a giant rocky serpent that was at least forty meters in length. Its head was gigantic compared to the armored man, but even it couldn't withstand the hit from that weapon.

"BOOMMM"

The giant rock serpent's head exploded into a million pieces and its body was flung back into the audience seats, luckily the people had already recovered from the lightning blast and fled the scene. The whole place was riddled with craters and holes, the water that was outside the ring was dirty from all the sand that had gotten into it.

The uncharacteristic black knight with the giant mace landed on the ground, the added weight from the suit that Zhang Jin was wearing made the ground shake and shatter from the impact. An angry Yang Kai was seen not far away, he had suffered another setback and his technique was canceled after his large rock serpent got his by that strange mace.

"What is this, how can you be this strong? What's with that strange treasure, where did you get that!"

Yang Kai roared while pelting the man in black armor with a barrage of rock orbs, the amount was staggering which made it look like machine gunfire. To this man's dismay his opponent didn't even bother to dodge this onslaught, the condensed rock orbs just shattered into many tiny pieces after hitting the armor.

"Are you rebelling against the Dark Palm Sect? Do you idiots think that you have a chance? You will all die as an example!"

Zhang Jin's opponent wasn't having any of this. How could he, a prominent Dark Palm Sect master who was also a one in a billion genius be losing to some old fart from god knows where? Would he have to use some of the forbidden arts to fight off this trash of an opponent?

While Yang Kai was having a crisis, Zhang Jin was shocked by how well this so-called 'Power Suit: Iron Kaiser' that his grandson had made for him was working. He wasn't sure why Zhang Dong gave it such a name but the product was working out well.

This was one of the latest creations of the Zhang Patriarch. He had modeled it to work like an Iron man suit of armor and it was running on demonic beast cores. This was also the reason why this black suit of armor had that gloomy greenish glow to it. On the inside there were many beast cores embedded into various core parts, like the shoulders and the chest plate.

The treasure was mostly made from beast cores in the great circle and late stages of core formation. It worked like described, it was a power suit that the user could wear. It boosted the wearer's offensive and defensive capabilities allowing them to battle people at the top level of core formation. The only downside of this item was the quick usage of spiritual energy, the person couldn't really use it for more than an hour or even less depending on the power usage.

Iron Kaiser at 74% energy

Zhang Jin heard a robotic voice, something akin to text to speech. This thing even came equipped with a basic Ai, but it wasn't really much it only alerted the user of how much juice the suit had left, or when it suffered critical damage. This product was still in the prototype stages and this Zhang Grand elder only received it for testing purposes.

"Rebelling? What nonsense are you spouting? Did you want us to just roll over and die instead? I'll take you down with me, you damn bastard!"

The elder roared out, the metallic armor making his voice sound a lot more ominous. He charged forward, his whole body covered in deep green energy that shifted to the top of the mace. He swiftly swung it downwards producing a massive shockwave of Qi that flew at Yang Kai who could only put up layers upon layers of defensive techniques to barely block the overwhelming strike.

"Don't get ahead of yourself you old fart! You think you are the only one with secrets here?"

The Dark Palm member jumped high into the air, his forehead glowing. The gem that was embedded into it started spewing up things that looked like globs of energy. These energy masses had some strange faces flickering in and out of them, going through various expressions but mostly showing fear or anger.

Zhang Jin looked up and took a step back, this was clearly a demonic cultivator's technique, but was this Dark Palm Sect a demonic sect?

"Are those souls?... what kind of dastardly demonic art is that?"

## **Chapter 157**

Unable to determinate objects characteristic, need more data.

Zhang Jin's power suit's mechanical voice proclaimed after the question was asked. This AI was very basic so it had no advanced appraisal system like the one Zhang Dong had himself. The old man still couldn't get used to this strange treasure, was there a person trapped in it, or was it some kind of soul that was talking to him?

Yang Kai was glowing in a reddish light, a copious number of souls shoot out from his gem and started surrounding his own body. The souls started screaming out and pouring into the man's orifices like his mouth and ears as if they wanted to be one with him. Their high pitched shrieks were even heard by people outside the arena, the loud sound causing them to tremble in fear.

This wasn't for the faint of heart as Yang Kai's body started bulging out, his muscles expanded and his veins were popping out as if he was ready to explode. The more souls that he absorbed the paler his face got, this wasn't all though as suddenly his body started to turn transparent. It was as if his body was flickering in and out of existence as it switched between the material and the immaterial plane.

"W-what is that technique..."

Zhang Jin shouted out while already swinging his large mace weapon forward, he produced another ranged strike of green energy that flew upwards at the man that was looking more like a ghost than a person now. The mass of Spiritual energy charged forward right at the enemy, but the moment it collided with his body it just past through it.

"How is that possible?"

Zhang Jin's attack was ineffective, it had gone through the opponent that just phased through it. Did he turn into a ghost that wasn't affected by regular spiritual attacks?

"Hahaha, no one who has seen this technique has come out alive! Behold my Phantasm Spectral Body of the Nine Hells!"

"None of your feeble techniques will work on me, but I can still harvest your soul just fine. After I'm through with you, I'll be sure to impale your body on a pole for everyone to see!"

Yang Kai cackled as he descended rapidly, his fingers expanded and turned into sickle blades. His mouth expanded as well, making him look quite grotesque, his high pitched screams being heard throughout the destroyed colosseum.

"I'll be sure to place you right next to this little bastard that spoiled my plans! You all should just die like the trashes you are!"

Zhang Jin wasn't the only person fighting around here, but the others were busy with their own battles. There were far more Dark Palm Sect elders ready to keep Huo Qiang and Feng Liena busy.

The first thing Zhang Jin did was to back off, not sure what would happen if he got scratched by those long looking fingers. While he was jumping back he made sure to kick a large rock at his opponent. Yang Kai didn't even flinch as the large boulder just flew through him not impeding his approach at all. This confirmed the old man's theory, this technique really did make the man intangible.

The two started playing a game of cat and mouse. Zhang Jin was skillfully dodging the strikes not sure about the result if he got touched by this strange ghost art. He tried attacking with some ranged attacks, but just like the previous ones they only went through the attacker without damaging him at all.

"Stop running you old bastard!"

Yang Kai was slowly losing his cool, this technique was taking a lot from him but he wasn't getting anywhere with this. The old fart was just running and he couldn't keep this up forever, he knew that he

would run out of souls eventually and suffer a powerful backlash if this continued for too long. The clunky looking suit of armor that he was wearing didn't apparently make him slower in any way.

While he was thinking about his next move, he saw someone out of the corner of his eye. It was Zhang Liu that was still floating up in the air, the barrier that was covering his body was still there but could it hold against his attack?

"If you keep running... then the boy dies!"

He quickly changed his strategy and turned to the side, his body expanding in height as he looked more like a monster than human now. Zhang Jin was taken aback and quickly bolted for where his grandson was floating in the air. He had no plan whatsoever but he couldn't let this villain harm his boy.

"No, stop you fiend!"

The monster that looked like a cross of a banshee and slender man charged forward. He wasn't really aiming for the youth though, he just wanted the old fart to try defending him. When he did, he would quickly strike and perform a devastating attack to his soul.

This Phantasm Spectral Body of the Nine Hells was a special technique, it didn't really make Yang Kai stronger but it allowed him to shrug off all sorts of attacks. He was actually slightly weaker in this form, but he couldn't be harmed. His attacks didn't affect his opponent's real-life body but instead targeted their soul. It was very effective against anyone below the nascent soul level as their souls weren't strong and mostly without any protection. There were very few items and very rare arts that could apply damage to this demonic ghost technique.

Zhang Jin arrived in front of Zhang Liu first, his armor was already enhancing his body above Yang Kai's level so this wasn't a difficult feat. The only thing that he could do was to gather up more energy and swing the person-sized mace at his opponent, maybe if he gave it his all it would deliver a devastating blow.

Yang Kai on the other side sniggered and increased his speed. He would wait for that idiot elder to do a big swing and then he would devour his soul whole. This man was quite the connoisseur that liked feeding on aged souls the most. This was also the reason that he was going after Feng Maling that had quite a delicious soul to his taste.

The ground rumbled and people in the vicinity could feel a massive amount of spiritual energy filling the area. Everyone that was fighting in the vicinity quickly jumped back, the Feng and Huo clan members followed suit.

The two people clashed, the person that turned into a monster ghost expanded even further his fingers looked like large blades that were on a collision course with the black knight's body. The person in the dark suit of armor swung his weapon in a last-ditch effort, his power suits energy reserves dropped to twenty-five percent in an instant as he infused most of it into this swing.

The resulting energy wave blasted a giant fissure into the ground that expanded forwards and to the sides making it look like the earth was parting. The surge of energy washed over Yang Kai's body but still his ghastly figure didn't feel any pain or pressure from this massive attack that carried over into the town behind him.

“You Fool! Your soul is mine!”

The large ghostly sickle like hand moved towards the old man’s chest. He had made a large swing and was now unable to dodge or put his guard up. The pointy fingers nimbly cut the air towards the enemy, not going for the flesh but for what was inside of that meat suit.

“Clang...”

A strange thing happened though, the long digits instead of penetrating inside just bounced off the dark armor. Yang Kai stopped dead in his tracks, what was this thing made of that his ethereal body couldn’t even penetrate was this some kind of rare spirit metal? He didn’t have much time to think as he felt something hard slam him to the side, this was the same mace that Zhang Jin was carrying.

“Huh... the Qi attacks can’t damage that art... but the material that this treasure is made of can?”

Zhang Jin was being super cautious when fighting this demonic cultivator that he didn’t even test out if this dark metal had any special qualities. He didn’t think that a simple melee attack would be better than using grand Qi attacks that could devastate the area.

Yang Kai suffered a large hit, his body started shrinking and flickering on and off as if his ghost technique was running out of juice. The Zhang elder didn’t give his enemy time to recover though, he was quickly on him like white on rice. What ensued was a one-sided beatdown, the dark knight’s mace pounded the Dark Palm Sect’s master into the ground while loud thumping noises echoed.

“For the Zhang Clan, take this!”

No one expected this one-sided reversal, even the other elders from the Dark Palm Sect weren’t able to aid their leader who was getting turned into minced meat. Zhang Jin was without mercy, he quickly pummeled Yang Kai into the ground the man was now twitching while having a hard time uttering even a single word.

“That Yang Kai lost, just like that?... was this Zhang Jin always this strong?”

Huo Qiao muttered from the side while holding another man from behind by the neck and choking the ever-loving crap out of him.

“No, it must be that strange treasure he is wearing... it made him far stronger. Young master, we should quickly withdraw while we have the chance!”

The bodyguard alerted his young master, with Zhang Jin’s victory the strongest opponent was out of the way. What done was done, the only way out of this was to flee. After that they would have to think about the next step to take, but for now getting out of this city was the first thing they all had to do.

Huo Qiang was just smacking a Dark Palm Sect member around as he heard Qiao. This prompted him to look inside the ring, his eyes sparkling slightly while looking at the large obsidian suit of armor. He wasn’t sure why, but he really liked the way that thing looked, if only he could get one in red was what he was thinking.

Feng Liena and Maling had rounded up the junior members from the three clans by this time. Thanks to the strides forward that all three clans had made during the two years, they were somehow able to fight off these sect elders. The EMP like attack that turned the communication jades into scrap has given

them an advantage for now, but they knew that after that last blast that Zhang Jin produced everyone in the city would be alerted.

“En, we should retreat for now at the harbor, all of our clan members are gathered here. We can use the failure of the communication jades to our advantage and evade further combat!”

Feng Mailing chimed in, she then looked at the old man in the edgy black suit still surprised about how strong he was in that thing.

“You old fart, grab your clan member and let’s go we don’t have time!”

Zhang Jin looked to the side and nodded, he then glared down at the injured body of Yang Kai. He was battered and bruised but still alive, he just needed one good smack to finish the job.

‘Can’t let this guy live!’

He knew what to do as he moved his large mace above his head, aiming to cave in the Dark Palm Sect master’s head with one last large swing. Letting a petty man like this live any further would be a travesty, how many people had he slain during his life already? There was no pity for people like this in this old man’s heart. He poured in some spiritual energy into this last swing, the greenish glow on the mace materialized as he began swinging down for the killing blow.

The large weapon headed on a collision course with that man’s head, if it connected it would turn into an overripe tomato as it burst. But just a couple of centimeters away from the target the swing came to a stop. Zhang Jin’s muscles bulged as he felt like something was holding him captive. He couldn’t move a muscle, adding more Qi to his armor didn’t solve this problem either. The green energy dispersed into nothingness as if sucked away into the ether by something.

Zhang Jin wasn’t the only person that couldn’t move, every person from the Triforce alliance felt massive pressure being applied to their very being. The junior members collapsed onto the ground without any warning, the core formation elders managed to resist somewhat but still, they found themselves kneeling.

“What is this? You dare attack the Dark Palm Sect in front of this Wu Ming?”

## **Chapter 158**

Wu Ming took his time as he floated up in the air looking down at everyone that was in the mostly destroyed colosseum. The architecture of the area was trashed and it looked like a tornado and an earthquake went through this place.

There weren’t many people left here, there were several Dark Palm members that were mostly beaten back by the triforce alliance elders. Besides that we have the group of junior members from the three clans that were now down on the ground, their ability to stand being taken away all thanks to the nascent soul grandmaster above them.

The man in question didn’t say much, he hovered above ground and took his time to examine the situation. He looked at Yang Kai that was a bloody mess on the ground, the mace of the man in the strange black suit of armor had stopped. It wasn’t moving a muscle as Wu Ming was locking him in place.

He then gazed to the side, Yang Kai's disciple Deng Cai's hand was sticking out from some rubble. His own master had forgotten about him and didn't even get him to safety before he began his battle with Zhang Jin. Not like Elder Ming cared about this useless youth, if he got abandoned by his own Master then there had to be a reason for it.

It took him only a couple of seconds to get the gist of it. His allies were mostly beaten and bruised and someone was about to murder a prominent senior member from the sect. Even though he didn't like the man with the gem in his forehead, he still had to abide by the rules. There was also the part about him being the son of the sect leader, he couldn't just let him die here unless he wanted to face his wrath.

"Truly a pitiful performance, I expected more from the son of that man..."

Elder Ming descended slowly, hands behind his back. He arrived between Zhang Jin and the beaten up Yang Kai. The Zhang Clan member was still infusing his Qi into his body as he was trying to get away. He could only twitch slightly, his whole body felt like it was stuck in a block of iron a constant pressure keeping him from budging.

"And this is... interesting..."

Wu Ming poked Zhang Jin's helmet as he looked over the armor he was wearing. The man liked to collect treasures, this was also one of the reasons why he liked attending auctions in various places.

"Mysterious craftsmanship, this was made by a true master. Shame that it's still only an earth grade treasure, even though it's a pinnacle one."

Zhang Jin couldn't do much as the man picked up his mace and started looking over the craftsmanship. Apparently this man didn't think anyone around here was worth his while as he was keeping them plastered to the ground. Even the bloodied Yang Kai wasn't getting much of a reaction from this elder Ming.

"Mmm yes..."

The old man with the salt and pepper hair shook his head after hearing Yang Kai cough out loud. He took out a pill from his spatial ring and placed made it float into the downed man's mouth. The medicinal effects were quite astonishing as the wounds were closing at a rapid pace.

"That was a heaven grade pill, they aren't cheap."

The battered and bruised man felt air going back into his previously collapsed lungs. He vomited out some blood and quickly took out various other medicinal pills to aid his recovery.

"Y-yes Elder Ming, I'll be sure to reimburse you for this favor!"

He wobbled back to his feet, he looked like a person that had tomato juice dumped on him. His clothes were soaked along with his face. Yang Kai glared at the man in the obsidian armor suit that was still unmoving and getting held back by the elder.

"This is an embarrassment for the entire sect, how could you let some third rate clans bring you to this state?"

The man was surprised, almost everyone from his sect had been defeated by these cultivators here. He wanted to figure out what could have made them do this but he was a bit preoccupied with looking at Zhang Jin and Zhang Liu. The youth was still floating in the air giving off some strange spiritual fluctuations that this elder was curious about.

“What kind of Dao is that?”

He took his eyes off the man in the metal suit and floated forward slowly. The other people that were allied with him were slowly recovering while eating healing pills. They didn’t move a muscle though, they needed to wait for this scary nascent soul elder of theirs to be done with his research. It would be rude to act without getting ordered and no one was willing to risk offending a person in the nascent soul stage.

Wu Ming approached Zhang Liu, his finger moving towards the glowing shield as he gave it a poke. He felt a repelling force against his digit, so he increased the pressure. The glowing shield buckled under the increased strain but was holding for now. The man even felt a discharge of Qi getting sent back towards his body, this was probably some kind of defensive mechanism.

“Interesting...really pure spiritual energy... still lacking though...”

The mark that was placed by the system was at the very top of core formation, it was even edging into the half step nascent soul level. Yet it wasn’t quite there yet. Anything below the nascent soul realm wouldn’t pique this man’s interest. The Dao that was flowing out of this mark was interesting but it wasn’t something that this man could use for himself.

“E-elder Ming, please let me readdress my grievances!”

The man looked back to Yang Kai, the man had seen better days. He was just standing there after having somehow recovered, his gaze on the man in the black suit of armor. Wu Ming knew what he wanted and didn’t really care, the technique that was suspending the boy in mid-air was more interesting than what Yang Kai was up to. Still, the order needed to be kept and these people did go against the sect an example had to be made of them.

“Your grievances you say...”

He looked to Zhang Jin who was being silent, not out of his own choice. The suppressing aura forced him to submit and he was even having a hard time breathing.

“Yes, we can’t have a blemish like this be kept around.”

Elder Ming turned away from Zhang Liu and looked at the black armor. He stretched out his finger and did a slight motion forward as if he was flicking someone’s nose. A large shift in Qi energy was felt by the masters in the area, they watched on as the black metal that Zhang Jin was covered started rattling around.

“Hoh, quite the sturdy treasure...but...”

The old man flicked his finger forward causing the black armor to shake even more. Soon it started bending and showing cracks before it collapsed and shattered into many pieces. Zhang Jin’s terrified



expression was seen after he got disrobed by the Nascent Soul master that just needed two flicks with his finger to do so.

“There, I think you should be able to handle the rest on your own now.”

Wu Ming turned back towards the youth once more, but before walking away he gave out an order.

“Ah yes, you will gather some elders from the sect and organize a cleansing. We must not let other sects think that we are weak, this is your mess so before you resolve it don’t even think about going back to the main sect!”

The Nascent Soul elder didn’t care that Yang Kai had backing back at the inner sect, he was still of higher status than the younger man. This whole mess was started by him and he was going to end it. He would do so by pulling out the problem by the root, which was killing anyone that was involved.

“Yes Elder Ming, this Yang Kai will not rest until every single one of these scoundrels is dead!”

Ming went back to poking the barrier and applying more pressure wondering how resistant it was to his Qi. He wasn’t expecting much from it though as it was already buckling under the pressure. Truthfully he just wanted to get out of here, the auction was over and the only reason he was still here was that he noticed the huge explosion that was caused by Zhang Jin’s attack. He wanted to give this brat Yang Kai a couple of slaps for causing this commotion, he even let himself be defeated by some weak clans that didn’t even have anyone above the core formation level.

The gem on Kai’s forehead was slightly cracked but he managed to hold onto the souls in there. He was filled with rage, this was probably the biggest loss to his face that he had suffered in his life. If it wasn’t for Elder Ming he would have been done in by some no-name cultivator.

“Damn old bastard, making a fool out of me!”

He delivered a smack to the old man’s face, he couldn’t defend himself and didn’t have the armor to protect himself anymore. The strength difference was immense as Zhang Jin felt his cheekbones breaking from the impact. Yang Kai was enraged, this anger wouldn’t go down until he eliminated every single person that was related to this old man.

“I’ll devour all of your souls and torment you for decades!”

The Dark Palm Elder had ordered him to eradicate the offending clans, this wasn’t a problem but it could take a while. He didn’t want to waste his time so he decided to finish up with this old fart. He moved his hand towards the old man’s chest and performed a grasping motion. Zhang Jin suddenly felt something getting forcefully ripped out from his very being.

“S-stop...”

The old man groaned as his soul started getting extracted from his body. He couldn’t muster up even a spark of spiritual energy, his hands and legs went limp. The man screamed out in pain, he was getting torn apart from the inside. His body started to visibly shrivel up while his soul got transferred to the man’s hand.

‘My children...I’m sorry...’

His body dropped to the ground without much of a thud. He was nothing more than a bag of skin and bones the light in his eyes slowly extinguishing. Flashes of his long life went through his mind, the good, the bad, and the mundane. This long life was finally ending, leaving this man with many regrets. The bitterness about having brought ruin to his family was engulfed by silence and the neverending darkness that followed soon after.

"This soul... isn't bad..."

Yang Kai licked his lips, the gem in his forehead glowing in purple light as the soul entered it. The cracks that were in it started to slowly patch themselves up thanks to the boons from this battle. He looked to Elder Ming that was done with probing Zhang Liu. The barrier that was keeping the youth protected shattered in mere moments after the Nascent Soul grandmaster applied a bit more pressure.

"Mmm... be sure to clean up."

Wu Ming looked bored as he slowly started to leave, the Zhang Clan members couldn't even protest. Most of them had long lost consciousness and were already surrounded by the other Dark Palm members that were ready to carry out the cleansing. From the group only the core formation elders were still managing to hold on. They could only grind their teeth after seeing Zhang Jin's lifeless body hit the ground.

Yang Kai made his way towards the youth that caused him to lose the bet.

"All because of this piece of trash... this soul isn't to my liking... far too young."

He snorted while picking up the boy from the ground. He still wanted to perform the deed himself a good strike to the head would do. He wanted to feel his opponent's blood on his hands, this would extinguish his rage oh so slightly.

"Die!"

His punch with his whole cultivation realm behind it flew forward. Even if Zhang Liu was at his strongest, he would have no way of defending himself. However, right before the fist made contact with the white-haired boy's face something appeared in front of it. It started small, like a little droplet of water floating around. The drop expanded turning into a small puddle that was hovering around vertically and in the way of that punch.

The moment Yang Kai's fist connected with the puddle it stopped. The Dark Palm Members looked from the side, bewildered by what they were seeing. There was a hand sticking out from thin air, coming out from what looked like a small floating portal.

"Argh...! W-what is this!"

Yang Kai screamed out in pain as the hand grasped his fist tightly, he tried pushing or pulling but it felt like he was trying to pull the whole continent by himself. The floating portal started to quickly expand while the hand that was sticking out moved forward. Within moments the people could see a man emerging from within.

He had shoulder-length white hair and a well-built physique. The robe he was wearing was pure white with some golden patterns sewed in here and there. The robe had some shiny metallic parts to it, the

chest area was well protected and the hand that was holding onto the other man was covered by a tight gauntlet.

Yang Kai went down to his knees while trying to exert the full extent of his cultivation, still, the person that was in front of him wasn't budging. He didn't even seem that interested in the man he was holding the hand of, and just looked around the area. His eyes quickly darting between the people in the area, they quickly came to a stop after he noticed a certain husk of a man on the ground. The moment he noticed him the people in the vicinity felt a spike in spiritual energy follow by two words.

"The...Fuck?"

## **Chapter 159**

A little bit earlier in a location between Spirit Spring City and Jade Grass City.

Thunder boomed and the clouds parted as some passerby's trembled in their boots. No one had enough time to react, the moment they heard the loud sound the being in the clouds was already gone. The only thing indicating that someone was even there was the straight path in the sky followed by hurricane-like winds. This was, of course, Zhang Dong racing towards his destination.

'I'm only halfway there, they seem to be holding up though.'

Matt had his disciple window out and was looking at Zhang Liu's status. The protective measures that the system put on the youth were still there and they hadn't gone down much since he took off. This was letting him know that whoever triggered that mark to activate wasn't able to follow up afterward.

'Why did they stop though? Did someone get involved and protected the boy?'

Matt wasn't sure about the reason, maybe the whole thing was some kind of misunderstanding and his disciple only got critically wounded during this so-called Dao festival. It was in Dark Palm Sect territory, so he could very well be showing his hand too early. Revealing that he was a nascent soul cultivator brought with it various problems.

Before he could reorganize his thoughts on the off chance that it was some kind of misunderstanding, the disciple window blinked. The mark's energy level started going down going to a bit over 50% in a matter of seconds. Something had to be happening there, how could this defensive measure drop down from being almost fully charged to half.

'It should be able to tank hits from core formation experts at the great circle level... are there many people of that level piling up on him or something?'

Matt's palms started sweating profusely after he thought about the other option that was more realistic.

'There is someone at my level there...'

It didn't take long for the system screen to glow red once more and the protective technique to go down to just 10% of its maximum charge.

'I'm nowhere near that city... what's happening there?'

He started panicking, he was already burning through this spiritual energy to fly at an alarming speed. It would take him about thirty minutes to get there, this was an amount of time in which anything could happen to his clan members or allies. While his mind was getting overtaken by dread the energy counter went down to zero and his screen went red once more.

‘God damn is there nothing I can do.’

He racked his brain for an answer, this system sometimes showed him new ways to use it if he only thought of a feasible way.

‘Could there be something that I could have missed?’

The system did update slightly after he reached the nascent soul level, it even came with one big handy new feature.

‘Maybe there will be an option that relates to that?’

He quickly went through his disciple window trying to find the answer, he even stopped flying so fast so that he could concentrate. He was rapidly clicking through the options and going through sliders to see if something new popped up.

‘Sharing spiritual energy...’

‘Transferring knowledge...’

‘Affection levels, devotion levels...’

‘Defensive measures...’

‘Other...’

‘Special feature tab...’

‘There it is!’

There was an actual ‘Fast Travel’ tab that brought him over to a new section of his disciple window. Some of the options were grayed out, but the ones that he could bring up gave him various ways of traveling to his disciples.

Small Portal (One Way) [ 100 000 SP]	Creates a small portal the size of the user to the location of the disciple.
--------------------------------------	--

Instant Transfer [ 1 000 000 SP ]	Instantly transports the user to his disciple, can also transport the disciple towards their master.
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Large Portal (Two Way) [500 000 SP]	It creates a large portal that allows two-way travel.
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The things he could buy here had various requirements that he had to fulfill before he could even purchase them. The ones he could use had all the minimum requirements of him being in the early stage of the nascent soul realm. They also required a certain amount of devotion and affection that the system was counting.

He didn't have quite enough Spirit Points for even the cheapest one, that being the 'Small Portal' one. But thanks to having a large amount of crafting materials in the form of beast cores and some leftover spirit stones, he was able to get that bare minimum. About a week had passed since he used up all of his points, but thanks to having two cities that gained him points passively he was able to gather enough.

'Okay, I got it... now activate!'

He stopped in his tracks and floated above some unknown landscape. The moment he pressed the fast travel option it told him to select the disciple he wanted to travel to. This was a slight surprise as he was able to even select his other disciple that was Xue, guess you didn't have to spend the points for every student separately. You still needed a certain devotion and trust level to be able to teleport to a given disciple though.

Energy rippled after he selected Zhang Liu from the small two people list. The moment he pressed the prompt in front of him it transformed into a little teleportation gate that looked like semi-transparent liquid. He could see some blurry scenery on the other side, but he had to squint to make out the fine details.

'Is that... a fist?'

He was someone at the Nascent Soul level so he saw the whole thing in slow motion. The person that was punching forward was doing it slowly compared to what he was capable of now. He reacted somewhat instinctively and pushed his left palm into the little portal, grabbing the fist mid-flight. He used his superior cultivation to cancel out any spiritual energy that the person on the other side put into this attack.

Soon the portal expanded enough for him to walk past it, the destroyed scenery on the other side becoming clearer after he passed through the liquid-like gate. He gazed at the man that he was holding the hand of and noticed the forehead gem that he had, this made him think to the time a similar person visited his clan to give them the order about the secret ground.

It didn't take him long to figure out that this guy was up to no good and was trying to murder his disciple that was now behind him on the ground. This prompted him to increase the pressure in his grip making Yang Kai drop to his knees from the pain. Matt felt some strange rock armor shattering into dust before he got to the man's bones that crumbled quickly afterward. Before he could call out to his opponent with a question he noticed a certain pile of black metal.

'Isn't that, the Black Knight prototype I made?'

He didn't like the look of this as he knew who was the person he gave this suit of armor too. He quickly noticed the shriveled up body of Zhang Jin laying there motionless. Even with his enhanced spiritual sense, he couldn't feel a drop of life from that withered body.

"The...fuck?"

His loud voice resonated through the area, it was backed by his cultivation level that took everyone by surprise. Everyone from the Dark Palm Sect took a couple of steps back, even Elder Ming raised a brow as he was looking with interest at the white-haired man that just walked through a portal.

'How is that possible? You shouldn't be able to form teleportation gates without a medium.'

Wu Ming was taking his time, this was an unknown variable. He didn't know if this person was friend or foe, he could very well be someone from another well-respected sect so he had to be careful. The man that arrived was apparently preoccupied with something else and wasn't paying attention to him, he would use that to his advantage.

"Unhand me, do you even know who I am?"

Yang Kai protested while going down to his knees. Veins on his neck and forehead were bulging as he tried getting away, but to no avail. He was even looking to the side to elder Ming. He was hoping that the man would save him, but Ming was just floating in the background not doing anything in particular.

'That bastard is scared to make the first move, this person is also in the nascent soul. Will, he abandon me?'

He thought to himself, battles between nascent soul cultivators were quite rare. People that had gotten to this level were all cold and calculating, they wouldn't risk hundreds of years of cultivation on a battle that they weren't at least 90% sure that they could win. This was the stance that Wu Ming was taking as well. Even though this was a child of the sect leader, he wouldn't blindly jump in to rescue him.

"No one cares who you are."

Before Yang Kai could raise another complaint he was slapped. His cheek ballooned and he was silenced rather quickly. His cheek and jawbone shattered instantly like it was made from paper mache. He then felt a burst of strange unfamiliar spiritual energy getting exuded from this man dressed in white.

"Someone tell me what happened here!"

Zhang Dong shouted while releasing a burst of spiritual energy. Wu Ming backed off slightly as this attack was aimed towards his own aura that he was using to keep everyone from the triform alliance in check. Feng Liena and co felt the suppressive force leaving the area and it was replaced by something else. Everyone could finally look up and they saw the Zhang Clan Patriarch just standing there, a golden hue surrounding his whole body.

"S-senior Dong... that man he... used some kind of demonic art to trap Zhang Jin's soul in that gem treasure he wears on his forehead."

Feng Maling was the one to speak up first, the others were slowly gathering themselves up and even the junior members were waking up.

Matt was already standing in front of the shriveled up body of his grandpa. It looked more like a corpse at this point than a body that was fine just a few moments ago. He dragged Yang Kai along holding him by his hair and part of his head. He placed his hand on Zhang Jin's chest, soon golden energy washed over him. The withered body started to slowly recover but even when it did, the one performing the healing arts was frowning.

"This... the soul is truly missing..."

He stared at the slightly cracked gem that was embedded into the forehead of this Yang Kai and tried examining it.

Slightly cracked Dark Soul Gem

This type of soul gem is used in tandem with various demonic arts. It is mostly used to trap souls of other beings inside of it. The practitioner that had captured the soul can then extract the trapped souls and preform various techniques with their help.

This dark soul gem houses a myriad of souls and is used to nourish its user's cultivation by siphoning energy from the trapped beings inside.

Matt's face twitched slightly after he went through the explanation. He pushed his spiritual sense into the gem while holding the man close. He indeed could feel various souls trapped inside this thing, they were different than his own nascent soul but thanks to it he was able to handle things related to them better now.

"You..."

He glared at Yang Kai, his finger going towards the man's head the tip releasing small electric arcs that were gold in color.

"N-no... I am the son of the Dark Palm Sect's great leader, you can not kill me!"

The man started thrashing about, his eyes darting from the incoming finger to Wu Ming that was still standing on the side and not doing anything.

"Elder Ming, what are you doing save me!"

Wu Ming gave off a sigh, this has gotten too troublesome for even him. He came to this city for a simple auction and now it looked like this Yang Kai had offended some other Nascent Soul monster that he didn't know the background off.

"Fellow Daoist... I implore you to let that young lad go, I'm sure we can come to an agreement."

"I'm not sure from which sect this friend comes from, but I'm sure you wouldn't want to wage war over such a trivial matter."

Wu Ming stretched out his hands as if he was shrugging. In this man's opinion this was something that the junior generation caused. People of his level wouldn't really move for small matters like this, just some core formation and foundation establishment cultivators got hurt, there was no reason to make a big fuss about this.

"Trivial matter?"

Zhang Dong looked at the body of his grandpa that had slightly recovered and then to Wu Ming. He knew that this person had to be the one that caused his grandpa's armor to give out. He was also sure that it was him that caused the protective Mark to give out on Zhang Liu. This guy was clearly just trying to evade a fight and then reorganize later, he couldn't give him that chance though.

So, he did the only thing that he deemed to be right. The hand that was holding Yang Kai glowed brightly, his Qi invading the man's very being.

"Nooooo...Wu Ming do something... you old bastardddddddd!"

Yang Kai's whole body started glowing brightly. Rays of light came out of his orifices like his eyes and ears and shot out into the air. Wu Ming didn't have enough time to react as he was taken aback by the sudden attack from this unfamiliar cultivator. Yang Kai's body started giving out crackling sounds and soon enough it exploded into nothing more than dust. The only thing left was the purple soul gem that was now between Zhang Dong's two fingers.

"Y-you..."

## Chapter 160

The Zhang Clan members that were present here looked with awe at their Patriarch. Their eyes were glued to his glowing form and followed his every movement. They were quite touched that their leader had made his way here in such a short amount of time. He was even risking offending the Dark Palm Sect by defending them here.

"Master...Grandpa..."

Zhang Xue called out from the side while looking at her senior uncle and her grandpa that looked to be dead. Her brother was also down on the ground not too far away from where Zhang Dong was standing. The group of juniors and elders were further in the back, which gave them a good view of what was happening down on the center stage.

After the flashing light subsided they saw that the man that caused them so much trouble was gone. He was just disintegrated out of existence by their Patriarch who made it look easy.

"Was the Patriarch always this strong?"

"So that's the Zhang Clan's leader..."

Huo Kong gulped after witnessing the display of power. He began thinking that he might have been too hasty in his conclusion. Maybe his father didn't blow this senior uncle's achievements out of proportions.

"He is far stronger now than two years ago."

Kong's father looked at his senior brother with sparkles in his eyes, he wanted nothing more than to ask him about the way he had managed to reach the nascent soul level in just a measly two years.

Feng Liena was also astonished like the rest, she didn't expect Zhang Dong to rush to their rescue. Her heart didn't flutter that much as she came to the realization that he was probably here to save his disciple. She tossed her selfish thoughts to the back of her head, now hopeful that this man would produce a miraculous outcome as he did before when they were stuck in that secret ground before.

While Zhang Dong's allies were quite beaming with curiosity, the man in question was holding onto the purple soul gem. Nothing was left from Yang Kai, his body had turned to fine dust and was carried off by the wind by now. He glanced at the item in his hand but was also keeping his attention on the Dark Palm elder that was floating to the side. He didn't choose to attack him just yet, but fighting could break out at any moment. He wasn't sure what that old man was thinking about, but he was looking at him with a focused gaze. He on the other hand wanted to tend to this soul gem to help his grandpa out.



“There are a couple of things that I can overlook, but killing the sect leaders son isn’t one of them... identify yourself!”

Wu Ming sounded a lot less friendly now, this whole situation got a whole lot more troublesome the moment Yang Kai was killed. He would be held responsible for this, he wasn’t sure how the Dark Palm Patriarch would react. He probably didn’t have to worry about losing his life, his position was too high for that. Still, he could be locked up for multiple years without being able to leave the sect premises.

“Could you... wait a second? Think I have this figured out, I’ll be with you in a moment.”

The man with the white robe replied while moving over to where Zhang Jin’s body was laying. Wu Ming was taken aback by the blatant disrespect that this man was showing towards him. Was he a nascent soul grandmaster such an unimportant character? Was the giant sect that was behind him something you could insult without any worry in the world?

“You are courting death!”

The sentence that shouldn’t be used had been delivered. Wu Ming’s face was getting red and he looked like he was going to pop a vein at any moment. This person wasn’t giving him any face at all, he might have been in the nascent soul level as him but he looked far too young. He was being cautious with him, but he was slowly getting fed up with the whole thing. There was so much that this man could stomach, he was still someone that was used to a certain level of respect. This was also why his reason started getting clouded and he decided to test this man out, without gathering enough information beforehand.

Wu Ming moved his hand upwards, his palm going in front of his face as he held it vertically while keeping his fingers together. His hand began to change its coloring going from pale to black in a matter of seconds. A shadowy aura that expanded outwardly formed, it took the shape of a blade that was pointing straight up into the air.

The Dark Palm elder then swung his hand forward, the air around the shadowy blade rippled. The people in the area started coughing up blood as even though this attack didn’t look that imposing it had the backing of a nascent soul cultivation realm behind it. All the core formation seniors that were from the triform alliance put themselves between the energy fluctuations and their junior members. Even they that were in the great circle of core formation were shivering. They were trying to muster up all their might just to block residual Qi from an attack that was aimed at someone else.

“I’ll court your mom!”

Zhang Dong shouted out, golden energy surrounded his palm in a similar way as Wu Ming’s. He delivered a backhanded slap to the incoming shadow blade. The two forces collided with each other sending some residual Qi blasts to the side. To the Dark Palm elder’s surprise, his shadow blade bent in an awkward fashion and it bounced to the side. There was a loud bang as another part of the colosseum building blew up leaving another large hole behind.

Elder Ming retreated slightly, he looked with interest to the man that pimp slapped his attack to the side. This might not have been one of his strongest techniques but it still packed a punch and had the backing of his middle stage nascent soul realm.

“I told you to wait.”

Zhang Dong glared at the man that sent some edgy shadow blade attack towards him. His focus went back to the item he was holding, his opponent was probably shocked so he would think twice before using a half-assed attack like the one that he did.

‘There were some books about soul arts in the library from the secret ground... but this is a demonic technique.’

He was quite sure that if he destroyed this gem that was holding the souls they would be set free into the surrounding. The souls should then begin searching for their old bodies as they are naturally attracted to them. But normal souls couldn’t survive outside their bodies for too long, if they didn’t find a vessel they would vanish into nothingness. If the soul was from a stronger person, or it had strong desires it could survive longer. Some then turned into vengeful ghosts or decrepit souls that haunted the lands with broken memories of their past lives.

Matt was hesitating to destroy the gem, the possibility of releasing some vicious specters was high as he didn’t think that their bodies existed in this plane anymore. He also felt that there was a possibility of saving some of the souls that were trapped in there at a later date. So instead he guided his spiritual energy into the soul gem and began searching for the soul that belonged to his grandpa. It wasn’t that hard to find as it was one of the newer ones that had been trapped in this place it also was strongly reacting to his spiritual energy as if it was drawn to it.

‘There you are...’

Matt guided the soul from the gem to Zhang Jin’s body. People were curiously looking at what this nascent soul senior was doing, he was holding a gem with three of his fingers. A golden glow appeared once more as something akin to a glowing ball flew out of the jewel and quickly embedded itself between the old man’s eyebrows.

‘Did that work?’

Matt squatted down and held up Zhang Jin, resting his head on his palm as he tried examining the ‘patient’. He could feel that the soul was back in there, but it was weakened for some reason. The man didn’t seem like he would be waking up any time soon. He wasn’t sure if the demonic art caused some damage to Zhang Jin’s soul, but he didn’t really have enough time to figure this out as the other nascent soul cultivator was regaining his composure.

“Who are you... are you from the Dragon Gate Sect? the Demon Subduing Sect?... or maybe from the Limitless Sword Society?”

Matt turned to the man and looked up to him. He had a vague idea about these organizations but didn’t know anything specific. His retainers probably thought that he already knew the power structures of the lands and didn’t bother him with things related to them. They didn’t know that this person was naturally lazy when it came to politics and would rather spend time crafting or learning new skills. This did make him recall that he needed to come up with a cool name soon though.

While the two people were staring at each other, the unmoving bodies of Zhang Jin and Zhang Liu started slowly moving. Matt had realized that he had something akin to telekinesis after reaching the nascent soul level. This was also the reason that people at this level could fly without the use of treasures.

“Hmm, who might I be? Do you really want to know... but before that, what do you intend to do with these people?”

He pointed to the people behind him with his thumb. They were, of course, the members of the triform alliance, the group was still standing there by this time all of them were wide awake. The bodies of the two Zhang members slowly hovered towards where that group was standing, Zhang Dong didn't feel like it would be wise to fight while his two family members were out cold.

Wu Ming looked to the group of weak cultivators, not really sure what this man's reasoning was.

“Them? They were disrespectful of the entire sect, they deserve nothing but death... but why would you...”

A lightbulb flashed above elder Ming's head and he looked to the hovering bodies of the two people. This man had to be related to these two, why would he bother to save them otherwise. The eighteen-year-old youth was clearly his disciple and the old man had some similar facial features to the white-haired man.

At first, this Dark Palm elder had the misconception of thinking that this man was from some powerful sect and this Zhang Liu was just some disciple he picked up. It wasn't odd for eccentric nascent soul masters to have disciples all over the place. But this man uncharacteristically cared too much for the others involved in this drama. Normal cultivators wouldn't go out of their way to help the entire clan of their disciples while offending other powerful cultivators. This man was willing to do it though, this made Wu Ming think that he had a more intimate relation with them. He might even be one of them!

“You're part of them... you're not part of any sect, are you? You're just a rogue cultivator!”

If this was the truth then Wu Ming didn't have to worry about anything coming back to bite him. He was mostly being cautious as to not get their sect into some drawn-out war with another equal or more powerful sect.

He glanced at the man with the white hair, then to the people in the back that heard him speak. It was clear to him that he hit the nail on the head.

“You dare hide your realm in the territory of our sect!”

Being a nascent soul realm cultivator in this lands without a strong backing was something that you couldn't do. You had to associate yourself with someone in power otherwise, a life of constant running was the only thing that waited for you. While Wu Ming was in the middle of his monologue though Zhang Dong managed to hover his disciple and grandpa to where his allies were. His whole body then started crackling with golden lightning, his aura expanding.

“Listen up everyone, all of you return to Spirit Spring City where my Zhang Clan is located, I will join you there shortly. That is the only place where you will be safe from the Dark Palm Sect. After I'm done with a couple of things I'll return there!”

The moment he said those words the whole area was engulfed in golden energy, lightning bolts flickered everywhere and booms of thunder resounded through the destroyed colosseum. Everyone within the vicinity gasped in shock, the other Dark Palm cultivators around the area felt an oppressive force wash over them as they found themselves losing consciousness.

Wu Ming snorted a bit as he surrounded his body with a shadowy aura, this attack that he was seeing was quite weak. It didn't affect him at all as he was able to block it with just a plain aura shield that every cultivator at his level was able to produce. He was mostly sure that this man had no backing, he would have announced his faction by this point if he was sane.

"Do you really want to go against my Dark Palm sect? You and everyone involved will be eradicated!"

Before the man could get an answer he could feel something emerging from the brightly lit area. This something was a large fist that was crackling with golden lightning energy coming right for his head. During the exchange, you could faintly hear the man in white talking.

"I'm going against it because I know that you'd do that, you moron."