

Unfathomable 401

Chapter 401

Zhang Dong stood in confusion while looking at this large chamber. It looked like some kind of bunker with a tactical map of the Empire in the middle. The most important cities were shining brightly and he could even see a dot that represented their current location.

While the lights were somewhat dim the holographic map in the middle was lighting everything up nicely. In the center spot of this room, he saw the Azure Emperor just sitting there with his apparent wife next to him. For some reason, he looked quite happy about showing him this place.

‘Did he say something about a war? Wasn’t this guy supposed to be the strongest cultivator here?’

With how the Soaring Dragon Sect had gone under the Azure Emperor would have no worthwhile enemies. The Heavenly Crane sect would probably remain docile as they alone could not contend with the Long Clan.

Wang Long was a problem but he probably wasn’t on the Emperor’s radar just yet. There had to be another reason for this and Zhang Dong had a theory as he approached the holographic map.

While this map was mostly composed of the Azure Empire and its lands, it didn’t end there. For someone like him that had been to the Emerald Phoenix Empire, it wasn’t hard to put the dots together.

The border to the Emerald Phoenix Empire was outlined there but this wasn’t the end. At some parts, he could see some red lights with a timer above. The clock was counting down and it seemed that it wouldn’t be long before it was up.

‘All of those timers are at the spots where the barrier between empires was said to be the weakest... I guess war is really coming.’

While he recognized the border with the Emerald Phoenix Empire there seemed to be two other countries. All of them were surrounding this Azure Dragon Empire as if it was the designated fighting place. If each of the Empires around this one attacked at once it would spell disaster for the citizens here.

“What do you mean with ‘my arrival’ what are you implying?”

The Azure Emperor seemed too cheerful after seeing him. Zhang Dong had a bad premonition about this as it would align with how the other world he was in operated.

“Ah yes, I did order everyone to be quiet about it, let me explain it to you my new friend... or should I call you my brother instead?”

“Brother?”

Zhang Dong was not sure at first but the Azure Emperor was implying that he was his sibling. It didn’t seem that they were martial brothers like in a normal sect relationship, by how the Azure Emperor’s facial features matched his this was a possibility. For now, he decided to wait and hear him.

“Yes, this has been foretold by our great ancestor, the very first and most powerful Azure Dragon!”

‘Oh boy, another prophecy...’

The young-looking man continued with his story while looking at the map. It seemed that this progenitor that established this empire had created it to last through the coming wave.

Apparently, the Long Clan was one of the survivors of the old ages and managed to last all the way till this day. For many millennia they hid the facts away from the others while gathering more strength and thus most of the people in this Empire were clueless to the coming carnage.

Every hundred thousand years the bridge to the other cultivation empires would be opened. Thus a war that was to last five hundred years would start with the other empires.

“Sorry to interrupt... but a five hundred year war? What would the other Empires gain with such a prolonged fight?”

This was quite the long timeline that would last half the life span of a nascent soul master. Were cultivation resources enough for something like this to continue? Zhang Dong didn’t see the cultivators fighting that long for just some spirit stone mines and manuals that would be hard for them to use.

He had been in the Emerald Phoenix Empire and the people there didn’t really look like they were starving for resources. The techniques they were using were also different from the ones here, so were the realms they had. It would be impossible for them to use some of the arts that required things like core formation cores or nascent souls.

“Glad that you asked, I see that you are paying attention, older brother is pleased!”

“Older brother?”

It seemed that this strange fellow clearly believed that he was his sibling for some reason. If that was the truth he was unsure but if the world was going through a script it sure was possible.

“The ancestral records state that when the bridges to the other empires open up a treasure will form!”

“A treasure? Would this treasure be something that worthwhile?”

“Yes, it is said that when it is fully formed the treasure will bring enlightenment to the winners and propel them all to the next stage of their very being!”

“Next stage? Do you mean?”

“Yes, the fabled immortal realm!”

Zhang Dong nodded with his head as this made more sense. With the promise of achieving the mystical immortal realm that had been lost through time, it was enough to make these cultivation nuts fight for millennia. They would never stop until they reached that next level, that was something he was already aware of.

‘A battle for the immortal realm... that does sound like the last stage of the scenario... that’s probably why the bridges are open for five hundred years...’

He knew that this was still a world similar to the one where he used to be a summoned spirit. Like in that one this one had some rules and probably also some scripted scenarios. One of them was his favorite squid monster that he kept facing off and another one could be this large-scale war.

If he thought about how his old system worked it all made sense. There weren't that many nascent soul masters to go around so a massive conflict between large groups of masters was the best way to gain spirit points.

People always liked to gather in groups, the Zhang Clan, the Long Clan, or a larger sect. They would think less of other groups and be fine to engage in a conflict with each other. Thus it would be easier on a person's conscience if he continued to kill people from an 'enemy' group.

While his theory about this being the next stage of the 'scenario' for this world, it didn't explain how he was supposed to be this Azure Emperor's brother. Maybe their resemblance was just a coincidence as he just designed this face to look handsome. This man before him could just have similar traits.

"I see, but why are you telling me this? I'm just a cultivator from a small sect... I thought you wished to speak about the Soaring Dragon Sect incident and not about this..."

"I thought you were paying attention, my brother? As I've stated, we share the same ancestor!"

"We do?"

"I see that you are unconvinced, my young brother."

Long Qing smiled while taking down his necklace. This accessory was made from some kind of silvery-blue material and had a menacing-looking dragon head as its main part. On the dragon's forehead, there was a white gem that looked like a diamond.

"This is the sacred Azure Dragon pendant that has been passed down through generations. Only a member of the Long with a sufficiently strong bloodline can hold this in their hand without sustaining considerable injuries." Zhang Dong looked at this accessory with his eyes and he could feel that it was some sort of ancient treasure.

Azure Dragon Necklace of the True Emperor [Lesser Immortal Grade]

It revealed itself to be some sort of immortal grade treasure. What it did was unknown to him but it was clear that it was something powerful.

'Bob, do you know what that is? Is it safe for me to touch it?'

He was still in an unknown location and talking to a powerful cultivator he didn't know. For all he knew this pendant could instantly suck his soul away into it to power this Azure Emperor. It would be unwise for him to just touch it but he wasn't sure if he could decline.

'Scanning in progress please wait... scan complete, displaying item's characteristics.'

Azure Dragon Necklace of the True Emperor

Ancient treasure created by the first Azure Emperor, it possesses the power to control the ancient formations that lie in the center of the Azure Dragon Empire. It can be only used by someone of the Azure Dragon bloodline that is at least at the 90th percentile.

A person that is deemed unworthy will be burned to ash by the azure flames of the ancestor's spirit that dwells in this treasure.

He started to go through the explanation and it started getting somewhat concerning with that last sentence. It seemed that if he wasn't deemed worthy by this thing he would be turned into a roasted chicken by some immortal flames.

'Hey, Bob... do you perhaps know if I will survive touching that thing?'

'Probability of survival is at 99.99999%'

'Huh? That's impossible? Am I really related to that guy?'

'Biometrics of Azure Emperor match the user's.'

"Don't be shy brother, here take it."

While Zhang Dong was still confused about what his Ai was telling him, Long Qing decided to throw the blasted murder necklace at him.

"Hey, wait!"

Zhang Dong moved his hand up to surround himself with a barrier of lightning but even when he did the necklace just passed through it as if it wasn't there. It collided with his hand and the gem in the dragon's forehead started glowing with a bright blue light.

Soon his entire body was covered with Azure flames. He was ready to click the teleportation option on his system window but before that he noticed that the flames weren't hurting at all. The temperature in the room didn't increase at all and even when the fire continued to burn nothing happened.

"See my wife, you were worried for nothing, the Azure flames aren't hurting him at all, I was right!"

"So you were my dear husband."

"Wait... I really am related to the Azure Dragon Emperor?"

"Yes my brother, only someone with the purest of our clan's bloodlines could hold that necklace, you also are part of it, a member of the Long clan!"

"I'm a member of the Long clan... hey wait a minute... wouldn't that change my name to..."

'Updating name.'

'What are you doing Bob?'

'User's name Zhang Dong has been updated to Long Dong.'

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'Very funny Bob, now change it back.'

'Attempting request... request denied.'

'The hell? Why can't you change it back?'

'User's true identity is an integral part of the system, the user's name can't be changed after it has been updated to the true one.'

'For the love of...'

Zhang Dong wanted to punch the person that designed this system even more now. It seemed that this was some kind of scripted event that was left for him. He had been the original system holder when he came here and probably due to this there had been no change in the grand scheme.

He was unsure about how Wang Long came into this. While spending many years in this realm he did read up on old cultivators that had ascended to other realms. They were all shrouded in mystery but were all probably players like him.

From what he could tell none of these players existed at the same time as the other. Only when one vanished for one reason or another would they be summoned. Here on the other hand there were two of them with two different backgrounds.

Wang Long was a member of the Soaring Dragon Sect so he was already born to power. Maybe due to this, he would not get a boost from the Azure Emperor. Zhang Dong on the other hand started off at a different level.

This could be something to level the playing fields implemented for when the war started. If he was really related to the Long Clan it could be on purpose. The system was giving him a chance to become the leader of the Empire.

Maybe in the original scenario, the Azure Emperor was supposed to die and he was to replace him. They also could have just become allies in the coming war and his true identity was there to help him get through it.

Being part of the Long Clan would allow him to partake in their resources and also gained him the protection of their strongest cultivators. It was probably a safety net that he could go back to if he ever needed to run.

He had thought about his past when he entered this world. He had rushed to the defense of the Zhang Clan which at that time was somewhat stupid. If he thought about everything in the grand scheme he would have been better off as a renegade cultivator.

With the help of this system, he could slay the clans that took his own apart and slowly grow stronger. Probably after he took care of them a sect would be waiting for him to conquer. There were other special locations with strong beasts and treasures that he could farm along the way as he got stronger.

The Zhang Clan that he had saved wasn't anything special. It actually got him killed as he was forced by the Dark Palm sect to take part in that strange testing grounds. That place was created by someone that realized that the system was something else. Without that cube he found there he would have probably truly been dead.

This also caused Wang Long's arrival. Probably because he hadn't even been in this world for a year at that point in time, the administrators of these worlds didn't see any reason to wait.

His mark on the world was small and he didn't get any of the resources, it was as close to a new game as it could be. He wouldn't find it strange that the email that Wang Long received only lacked the option that he had taken as the thirty-year-old cultivator.

His opponent clearly went with the easiest option that also made him younger. The last option was of an old powerful master of the nascent soul level. Probably all three of these options had unique circumstances that somehow led up to the war that was now in the making.

This cross empire war seemed like it would be the ending phase of this scenario. It was still happening a bit too soon in his opinion as not really that much time had passed since he entered this world.

If he counted the five years that he lost due to the time difference in the other world it would have been close to ten years. This didn't seem like enough time to get ready for something like a whole enemy empire of cultivators.

But perhaps the initial rush wouldn't really cause much harm to them and it would be a more contained battle. There could also be a reason for the scenario to be hastened and the words that the Azure Emperor mentioned alluded to it.

"Long Dong, I'm glad that you are with us, and judging by how you handled the nirvana fruit you will be an indispensable asset in this coming war! You could have not come any sooner, the bridges have become unstable without reason."

"Unstable?"

"Yes, normally we should have had more time to prepare, we didn't really have time to alert the citizens and other sects yet. I wanted to bring it up with the Heavenly Crane Sect and the Soaring Dragon Sect but then that Wang Long fellow went crazy!"

Long Qing gave out a sigh while Long Chunhua patted his back softly. It seemed that these two had a good relationship with each other. It also showed that the Azure Emperor was just a regular person that had trouble with handling the future of his nation.

As someone that had a large sect to maneuver he could relate. But this didn't mean that he was fine with how this was turning out. While he could use this to his advantage he still wasn't sure how much leverage this Azure Emperor would give him.

"I think our new friend is confused, we should give him some time, don't you think so dear?" "Is that so?"

Zhang Dong looked at the necklace that pointed him to be part of the Long clan. Before he could answer the question that the emperor posed, the light in this room went on.

“Young Lord, why didn’t you tell the council that you were bringing someone into this secret chamber?”

He looked to the side where he saw a trio of old cultivators. Two men and a woman of advanced age was standing there. Their robes were quite regal and at the same level as this Azure Emperor’s. It was clear that they were people in a high position just by the fact that they spoke up without the need of asking for permission.

“Ah, it’s just you Yingjie, don’t worry about the small things!”

The Emperor smiled widely and showed the old man a thumbs up. It was not something Zhang Dong expected to see from someone that was called the Azure Emperor. This man seemed too relaxed and laid back for someone in such a position.

‘Huo Qiang would probably like this guy... but those elders don’t look that happy about it.’

The old man that was at the front of this trio wasn’t amused. His beard was braided with a golden ring at the tip that looked like it cost a fortune to make. Even without his system, he could tell that it was worth a lot.

“Please my lord, listen to the Prime Chancellor Yingjie, this information isn’t to be taken lightly, we should place this man in solitary confinement and discuss this situation with the elder council!”

The old woman that was next to the Yingjie character spoke out while looking over to Zhang Dong. He didn’t like the sound of that, if they threw him into a prison cell he could be stuck for years without being able to leave. The cultivators were famously slow when it came to bureaucracy, it could take years before they come to some kind of conclusion.

“You wish to imprison my brother Dong? Can’t you see what he is holding in his hand?”

“His hand my lord?”

The three looked at the necklace and their eyes instantly went wide. It was already clear to him that no one that was of a different lineage could hold this thing. After the blue flame surrounded his body and did nothing it was clear that he was part of the Long clan.

How this was possible was still a mystery to him. Could his grandfather be the responsible one, could he have managed to conquer a high noble lady from the Long Clan that then left a child there?

‘This is probably what happened... I wouldn’t be surprised by that old fart’s track record...’

“As you can see, he is one of us. I want Long Dong’s name to be written into our history books as he is my closest relative! He possesses royal blood just like me!”

The Azure Emperor raised his nose up into the air while pointing at Zhang Dong. The moment he heard the new name he wanted to slap his past self for being so immature.

“How could it be... he can hold the ancestral treasure? How could someone like him exist outside of the Clan?”

“What does it matter? With his help, we will be able to move the Azure Goliath! Now we do stand a chance against the other Empires!”

“The Azure Goliath?”

He perked up at the name, it was strange that this Azure Emperor was this happy to see him. With this name, he got the gist of why he was so ecstatic to meet him.

“T-the Ancestors Weapon?... Could we really activate it?”

All three of the old farts looked at Zhang Dong with question marks above their heads. It didn't seem that they were buying whatever Long Qing was selling. He wasn't sure about it either, how did they even know that he was part of their plan, to begin with.

Was there some kind of bloodline scan when he teleported in? It seemed that they were already aware of this before he arrived as he was invited to some strange pleasure resort with the Emperor already being here.

This was somewhat fishy and he could only attribute this to the scenario playing out from the background. There could have been some kind of event that triggered this that he was not aware of and it should not be Wang Long as he was the dark horse of this operation.

While the Long Clan would help protect him and his sect, that didn't mean that Wang Long was an easy opponent. He had vanished for now and with the war being close, he would also be able to sneak into one of the other Empires to harvest spirit points. Before he became too powerful Zhang Dong needed to find him.

“We still need to discuss this with the other elders! The ancestral treasures aren't toys to be played with, my Lord.”

“Bah, you're no fun, let us throw a party for my blood brother, we will call it the Long Dong Festival and hold it every year!”

“Please don't...”

Zhang Dong muttered while placing the necklace on the table. It seemed that he needed to gather some more information before going back home. The war and the role that he would play in it was something that he needed more intel on.

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‘Are you all right?’

‘Yes I'm fine but I think I will have to stay here a bit longer.’

‘Did something happen? Do you need help?’

‘No, I'll inform everyone when I'm back, tell the elders that we will be holding a meeting, there will be a lot to explain. Please be careful, we never know when that Wang Long could show up.’

‘I will, please be careful and...’

‘Yes?’

‘The children miss you, try to be back as soon as you can...’

'I will try, tell little Xiu that father will be back before she knows it.'

'That child sure likes her father, she didn't throw tantrums like this before...'

While being stuck in the Long Clan Zhang Dong decided to call his lovely wife. Thanks to his system he was able to connect to people from his faction that he had a high devotion value with. His wife was one of the highest there and shared a maximum devotion rating along with his disciples.

After being brought over to that room with the empire's map he was led outside. This place had no windows, the corridors were small and confusing, clearly made to confuse people that would try to enter it from the outside. If he didn't have his system map he would have no idea where he was.

He was right in the center of this huge Azure Dragon Empire. If compared to the maps that he had access to he would be in the capital which was of course named the Azure Dragon City.

'I think we are close to reaching our destination, I need to go now, take care of yourself and the kids.'

'I will be sure to return my husband.'

'I'll try to make it before dinner.'

The two laughed for a moment but the stares from the three elders of the Long Clan brought him back to the current situation. The three started interjecting whenever the Azure Emperor tried to bring up some state secrets. It was clear that they didn't trust him. If they attempted anything like a slave contract he would still need to get out of there in an instant.

Even though he was apparently a member of the royal family, this didn't mean that he would be welcome with open arms. This could actually spark a war of succession if everyone wasn't careful.

Zhang Dong knew that places like this had multiple factions. The war for the throne was an everlasting struggle with many people trying to get their foot in. Now he appeared out of the blue and apparently had a similarly strong bloodline as the Azure Emperor himself.

Some of the infighting factions could see this as a chance to dethrone the old leader while pushing him on the throne. He wouldn't be surprised if some sleazy characters appeared and tried to get him on their side.

Then there was the more drastic option where the people close to the Azure Emperor could see him as some kind of upstart. This was the faction in power now, he didn't really want to have any assassins being sent after him during the night.

To his surprise, he was led to another teleportation array. This one looked more traditional and was also in a closed chamber.

"Let us show my new brother our Long Clan, I'm sure this will be a sight that he will remember for all eternity."

"A great plan my love."

While they stood in the teleportation formation the Azure Emperor started talking. The three elders showed scowls the moment he mentioned showing the long clan. At first, he didn't know what this was supposed to mean but after they teleported he realized.

They found themselves on a large elevator. It was surrounded by a blue glowing dome of energy that allowed him to see everything that was here.

'Are we going up?'

He could see that they were moving up and as he started glancing around he noticed the lush lands everywhere. The spiritual energy was the highest he had ever been in, it was clear that this place was sitting on a large spirit vein.

With his enhanced vision he could see the large walls in the distance. Even though they were going up these walls were still blocking the view from every direction. On the ground, he could see various buildings and many people just going about their ways.

'Huge... this city is much larger than anyone that I have visited.'

Zhang Dong had visited many wondrous cities in this world. They were all large with the population being much higher than any modern-day city that he had seen in his original world. This one was truly tremendous, he could barely see the end of it, and the life signatures of the people were felt by him from all directions.

'Could this place have a hundred million people living in it... maybe more?'

"Bask in the glory of the Azure Dragon City, my brother! I can't wait to show you to the rest of the Clan and to the citizens!"

"Show me to the clan... and also the city?"

"Yes, such a wondrous occasion as this doesn't come around too often! Don't you also think so my wife?"

"Indeed my love, brother Dong, needs to be inaugurated into the family properly otherwise the seniors might get rowdy."

"Oh, you bring up a good point my wife, I thought that we should throw a big feast that will last for at least two weeks!"

Zhang Dong listened to the conversation that he was apparently not the part of. The three elders didn't look very pleased about the Azure Emperor's statements. He wasn't surprised as he appeared from nowhere and now their leader was going to spend clan resources on some kind of feast.

"Ah no, I wouldn't need to intrude on your Long Clan, I'm only an outsider I don't think it is my place to..."

"An outsider? You are my brother, you are part of the Long Clan, Long Dong!"

While he wanted to distance himself from this strange Azure Emperor that was too friendly for his own good, it didn't seem that he was willing to let him go without a fight. Then there was this strange

treasure that they were talking about before, it apparently needed people with pure enough bloodlines to run.

This was probably the main reason why they were acting so cordially with him. This Goliath they mentioned probably needed co-operation between the two of them. Maybe slapping on a slave collar on him would cause the weapon to not work correctly.

Thankfully to this, he had gained some worth. Probably if he was able to move this thing his safety was guaranteed. On the other hand, now that he was forcefully taken to see some of the clan secrets, if he was unable to help them, he would become an eyesore. He wouldn't find it strange if they tried to murder him on the spot if he failed to be useful.

'Better if I don't mention my family, they could try to take them as hostages...'

While the scenario was playing out in a good direction for him, he could not drop his guard. All of his closest family members were given special rings with teleportation features. He could not risk them being used against him but his enemies would not know that he was able to teleport to them with his system's function. Even if they got captured he would be able to get to them, that is if he had enough spirit points to go around.

"Dear, I think brother Dong is still stunned by these events, I think we should give him some time to relax. I know, how about we invite his family members over?"

"My family members?"

"Brother Dong's family?"

"Yes dear, I heard that he has a beautiful wife and two children."

"She can not be more beautiful than you, my wife!"

"Oh, you~"

'This vixen... is she planning something?'

Zhang Dong didn't reply as the two continued their lovey-dovey routine. While the Azure Emperor seemed like a doofus she did her homework. She knew that he had a wife and children. Bringing them over here would be akin to holding them hostage and the best way to make him cooperate.

'Is this her plan or is she just trying to be nice?'

There was also the option of him just overthinking things here. The woman could have just been someone friendly and just wanted to invite his wife for a talk. While Liena was strong, this woman was much stronger thus he wouldn't feel comfortable leaving the two together. One bad move and everything could go south real quick.

When looking at the woman she just smiled like a little angel. If he didn't know that outside appearance could be deceiving he would probably believe that this woman could do no wrong.

"My children don't really like traveling that much. It will be better if they remain in my own sect, they are far too young for such events."

He waves the proposition off and thankfully the Azure Emperor didn't seem perturbed about his reply.

"Is that so? If brother Dong thinks so then it's fine."

The woman just nodded while glancing back at him with a smile. While the city landscape was breathtaking he was more concerned about where this lift was going. They were clearly traveling at a very high speed right into the clouds. They even passed a thick one that blocked out the city view.

Only after they passed through this fluffy white barrier could he see their true destination. Above in the sky there was a whole floating city that was slightly larger than Spirit Spring City.

"I see that you noticed it brother, this is the true Azure Dragon City and the district that our Long Clan lives in."

This elevator was going straight up into the middle of this floating city. From this vantage point, he could just see a massive mountain underside. There were some smaller parts floating above and made it look like something ripped a part of the planet and it was now floating up in the sky.

'So that's the Long Clan base? Makes my little floating fortress look like a toy...'

The scale of this thing was something else. He could already see how the Azure Clan was able to survive this long. A flying fortress like this would be quite hard to conquer. If it could actually move while defending itself it would cause quite the headache for everyone.

Even a nascent soul cultivator would not be able to remain at an altitude like this for too long. This city was surrounded by some kind of energy bubble that probably also generated a comfortable living environment inside.

'Wang Long still remains at large and a war is approaching... why can't I ever get some rest for once?'

He gave out a sigh while they closed in on the city's insides. It didn't seem like the coming years would be easy...

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There it was before him, the elusive Long Clan. It was the center of the empire and even considered the empire itself. The moment the elevator reached the apex he arrived before a magnificent city.

The tremendous amount of spiritual energy that was just floating around was truly astonishing. Even back at his own sect he needed to harness the spirit vein directly and implement several spirit gathering formations to barely be close to this.

'I bet that in the central part it will be even higher, no wonder they were able to stay in power for so long.'

A high ambient spiritual energy allowed people to naturally absorb it while they were young. This would widen the future bottlenecks for anyone living in such an environment. Thus it was quite an unfair advantage that couldn't be easily passed.

'So this is the Long Clan?'

Zhang Dong started looking around while the five people that were with them started advancing from this elevator platform. Around them was a wide-open area covered with grass and trees. It looked like a heavily tended garden with a nice path laid out with bricks leading to the outside.

The moment they arrived here he also noticed a large crowd around them. On the path laid out of bricks that seemed to be made from gold, there was a tunnel of core formation cultivators. They were all standing at attention while wearing some expensive-looking armor.

It was a sight to behold as the moment the Azure Emperor's foot touched that brick road the soldiers raised their swords into the air. It looked like a picture from a game as a tunnel was formed from shiny weapons that probably cost as much as a whole small clan in the lower regions.

This kind of put everything in perspective. He had advanced quite a bit since the first time he entered this world as a core formation master. Probably if he had to face any one of these regular guards at this base level all those years ago he would be in for a hard battle.

"Come brother, I need to introduce you to the rest of our family!"

"Rest of the family?"

Long Qing nodded while urging Zhang Dong to move towards this path of soldiers. There were quite a few of them, it wasn't odd for the lower clans and sects to not be taken seriously. There were enough guards in this park to eradicate anyone at the level of the old Zhang Clan.

While they were walking through this tunnel of swords Zhang Dong continued to spread his spiritual sense in all directions. He noticed that there were many people looking at them from the buildings around them. Some were waving and screaming the Azure Emperor's name, others were already on the ground and bowing even without being anywhere near them.

The city in itself was somewhat more modern-looking than he expected. Large buildings made of stone and glass that were akin to skyscrapers from his world were spotted in the distance.

Around them were other various buildings that didn't seem to belong to one theme. He spotted some that looked like grand churches while others were the regular large pagoda types that were seen everywhere. The city was somewhat random in its architecture without sticking to any single theme.

Then in the distance, he saw a large tower made of bright blue crystals. It stretched far into the sky and towered over all the other tall buildings. It looked like some kind of giant spear that was shoved into the ground by a titanic existence.

"That's the Crystal tower of azure, the place where I live and your new home my brother!"

"My new home?"

Zhang Dong wanted to instantly refuse but for now, he was still just gathering information. At any moment in time, he could just teleport away to his ship that was waiting at the border. It didn't seem that he was in any immediate danger, getting more intel was important.

Swaying Long Qing towards Wang Long was also on his agenda. He could not let that madman roam the land and absorb everyone's spirit points, the other player needed to be stopped.

This tower was closer to the edge of this floating city. He was unsure what it was made of but it had a similar color to spirit stones. At this point in time, he would not be surprised if it was actually a huge chunk of spirit energy as it was radiating a gigantic amount of energy.

From here he could tell that there were some formations in place that blocked most of that energy from seeping out. When removed it would probably cause widespread damage as there was a limit of how much spiritual energy each person could actually contain in their body.

The bodies of the cultivators in this empire caused them to absorb ambient energy from the surroundings. If the energy was too pure though it could cause a rather nasty affliction that would lead to death.

He could only speculate that the people here had grown accustomed to this high degree of spiritual energy. Their children would thus be fine living in this environment even though normal children's bodies would be unable to survive for too long.

"Yes, this is your new home and also your people, come my brother let us rejoice in our family reunion!"

While he was half a step behind the Azure Emperor the man moved over and hooked his arm around his shoulder. It was as if two drinking buddies were just walking together while others stared.

This was about at the same time as they stepped out from the tunnel of swords. He could instantly feel thousands of eyes on him. This was not surprising as he was walking hand in hand with the Azure Emperor, the leader of the whole empire. The people were clearly interested in who he was and why the emperor was acting so intimate with him.

There was of course an immediate roar from the citizens of this city. There were various cultivators floating around and keeping an eye out for anyone trying to get too close to the emperor. He could even see some people being shoved back as they were trying to rush to where the emperor and others were.

This painted a picture in his mind when he compared the city to other ones in the empire. The people looked happy and didn't feel threatened even when rushing towards their leader. It was clear that they were led with compassion and not with an iron fist as most societies here operated.

At least that's how it looked on the surface level. Zhang Dong was old enough to know that appearances could be deceiving and that on the inside there could be some murky business afoot.

'He sure is a celebrity...'

The Azure Emperor smiled brightly and finally moved away from Zhang Dong. He floated up into the air with a big smile on his face. The people started cheering loudly the moment they saw him, in the distance, he spotted something that he thought only existed in his own city, a large holographic display.

On this display all of them were visible but the Azure Emperor was clearly the main character. From time to time they would zoom in on his wife and the elders but he was mostly ignored.

"Please Emperor, we must return to the azure tower with haste!"

The previously silent member of the three elders spoke out. It seemed that if they didn't move this along the Azure Emperor would start a big speech to the people that were shouting. Zhang Dong could even hear some young maidens throwing marriage proposals at the city leader.

“The elders are right dear, our guest also looks overwhelmed with this display.”

“He is? Let us return home in haste then!”

While the Emperor seemed to ignore the elder that spoke up he instantly changed his mind when his wife spoke up. The Azure Emperor was quick to wave his hand to surround everyone with blue flames. From the outside, it looked like they were inside of a flaming ball but on the inside, it looked like a normal spirit barrier.

Zhang Dong took this chance to investigate this peculiar cultivation method. This was some variation of flames that was similar to his holy lightning. It had a somewhat divine aura to itself that was giving him good vibes.

‘This Long Qing is a bit odd but he doesn’t seem like a bad guy...’

In a few moments, all of them zoomed towards the azure tower. When they got closer he noticed that they were passing through several hidden barriers.

‘Scan those formations, Bob.’

He gave the order while looking around, the scan didn’t take that long and he was given a result that he expected. The formation worked similar to the treasure he was in contact with before, they investigated a person’s bloodline.

The closer they got to the tower the better looking the buildings became and the spirit energy increased. Even though the city looked like a happy unit, this barrier clearly segregated them into sections. He wouldn’t be surprised if the people with a purer bloodline looked down on the lesser ones.

Soon they finally arrived at the large tower that looked like a big chunk of blue spirit stone. At the base, there was a large yard made from shiny tiles and the welcoming committee was already waiting for them.

Most of the people there were wearing white robes but some had ones somewhat identical to what the Azure Emperor was wearing. There were three of them, two were young men and one beauty that could give her own Zhang Xue a run for her money in the jade beauty department.

At first, he wasn’t sure who they were, maybe his younger brothers and sister but after they opened up their mouths, it was clear.

“Welcome back father.”

One of the young men stepped forward to greet the Azure Emperor and his wife. The two looked somewhat similar but also the same age. Zheng Dong almost forgot how people aged in this world. It would be somewhat hard to tell which of them was the older one as both looked to be around twenty.

“You to mother, welcome back... and this is?”

While the family of four were having a nice moment they soon noticed him. It didn’t seem that they were that happy to see him as their faces were devoid of joy. From the looks of it, these young lords didn’t think much of him, this probably due to his strange cultivation level that was more similar to a core formation master than a nascent soul one.

“Don’t be rude, this is your long-lost uncle, Long Dong! Be sure to give him the respect that he deserves!”

The Azure Emperor’s words took the trio aback as they examined him some more. From what Zhang Dong could tell the elders of these ‘children’ was actually older than he was while the other two weren’t far behind.

‘They don’t look too happy about me being here, hope this goes well.’

While they did start, with their father around they somewhat lowered their heads with indignation in their eyes. Soon the tour of the Azure crystal tower commenced and he waited for the time to bring up the issue with Wang Long.

Chapter 406

“Please give me some pointers senior Dong.”

While the option to just deny the three young masters their fun was on the table, he decided to use this chance to test out this Long clan. Before he was blasted off to a different world he had sparred with the people of his own sect. He was somewhat curious if the people of his sect were on the level of the elites of this empire.

There was no better place to test this out than in the Long Clan. It was supposedly the strongest power in this empire. Depending on the results he would have a clear understanding of the power limit of regular cultivators.

The other empires would also be arriving, if he judged this by game standards he believed that the other empires would be a bit stronger than this one. Maybe not all but they needed enough strength to not make this fight too easy.

Of course, it couldn’t be too hard either, as the person that created this world probably wouldn’t want their player to just die at an advanced stage of the scenario. At least that was what he hoped, when he was dying the system apparently didn’t offer him any life-saving measures. Instead, he was somehow able to live through it after it was hacked.

“I can give you some pointers, but are you sure about this? What if you get injured in the process?”

Zhang Dong replied to the man that was standing on the other side of this smaller battle arena. It was similar to the one back home and the ground was made of sturdy slabs made from high quality stone. It was a type of stone that could somewhat absorb Qi attacks which allowed it to last through a lot of damage.

The three young masters that were the Azure Emperor’s children were trying to teach him a lesson. It was clear that they didn’t think much of him. This could probably be attributed to his lower perceived cultivation level as he was still just at the core formation realm.

The opponent that was chosen to go against him was a somewhat young-looking man at the age of forty. Zhang Dong did have to give it to him though as he was already at the great circle level of core formation. It would be hard to find someone equal to this man in the lower or middle regions that was in the same age bracket.

The trio was high up in a VIP booth as their types liked to frequent. He knew that there was probably a better way to go around this issue. If he brought it up with the Azure Emperor he might even give his kids a good trashing in his name. That wouldn't fix the underlying problem of them thinking less of him, it would only fuel their pride and disdain.

"Don't worry 'senior', we from the Long clan are known for our vigor!"

Zhang Dong clearly caught the mocking tone of the voice when the man called him a senior. This was truly the main dysfunction of these young master types. They couldn't even fathom that he could be someone dangerous as they only looked at the surface level of who he was.

The only information given to them was that he was probably a core formation great circle cultivator from a small sect. They had the permission of the Emperor's children so they also felt confident of them not getting reprimanded even if they hurt him. They probably also wanted to get in the good graces of these three young lords.

"If that is your wish, please don't regret it later, you can come to me whenever you are ready."

Zhang Dong just gave out a sigh while beckoning the man over. He didn't hide his boredom and lack of interest which clearly made the man that he was up against somewhat mad. Before he charged out though he looked for confirmation to the three youngsters that were overlooking them. They just nodded without replying while probably hoping for a good show to unfold before them.

The man took a fighting stance with both fists closed. His body soon started glowing with blue flames that slowly encompassed his whole frame. It didn't seem that he was taking any damage from these flames but the stone slabs they were standing on were sizzling under his feet.

'Interesting, it's some kind of self-immolation skill, somewhat similar to what Huo Qiang uses but not as potent.'

The flames that were covering his opponent's body were giving out a certain unique radiance. It was clear to him that this was some kind of combined elemental dao. It combined divine energy with fire to produce this heavenly blue flame.

While it was interesting it was far below his own holy lightning energies that he could clad himself in. These flames would probably fare well against demonic cultivators. The evil energies would probably burn up before they reached the practitioner's body.

The man that he was going up against looked kind of smug the moment he activated this ability. This was followed by cheers from all the people around them.

"Senior brother is so good at controlling the Heavenly Azure flames, his bloodline must be very pure!"

Without asking for it he now realized that these blue flames were something akin to a lineage ability. Things like this existed in this world as well, strange powers that could only be activated through the clan's origins.

If there was any particularly strong ancestor with some heaven-defying skill he could pass it over to his family members. This skill would always be a bit weaker than what the original ancestor's but it was something that was easily reproduced.

It was somewhat a free skill that each member of the family could easily use just by being related to the ancestor. The lineage varied by descendants and could be awakened by people that had little to no blood that was of the ancestor. It was somewhat random and also caused some stress in the clans as people that didn't possess a strong bloodline ability were looked down on.

This point made him a bit curious, if he really was a member of this Long clan, shouldn't he be able to utilize all of these lineage techniques that the Azure Emperor had to offer. They would probably be all high tier manuals with the knowledge that could give him a chance to learn some new skills.

His opponent performed a somewhat flashy movement technique that made it look like his body turned to flames. It then reformed behind him while some of the flames kept rushing at him. The flames took the shape of a raging bull which reminded him of his hot-headed friend.

"I have you!"

The victory was assured as his opponent's punch descended to the back of his head. The three young masters leaned in close as they wanted to enjoy watching Zhang Dong's head get clobbered. But to their dismay, instead of connecting with the head of their uncle it passed right through it.

"What?"

The people that were watching from the outside were mostly unable to witness Zhang Dong's fast movement. He just simply countered one movement technique with another that left an afterimage of himself behind. The moment the fist clad with blue flames connected with this afterimage it discharged a burst of electrical energy that went right through the defenses of this cultivator.

"GUAHAAHHA"

The man stopped in his tracks while lighting up like a Christmas tree. A jolt of bright golden light shot out of his eye sockets before a small explosion rocked the small arena. Almost instantly the man dropped down to the ground while his long locks turned to quite the large afro.

"Oh, was that a bit too much? You must excuse me, I did lower my cultivation level to fit yours but maybe I miscalculated on juniors actual strength, it seemed to be below my expectations."

Zhang Dong chuckled while looking at his opponent that was turned to a smoking mess. The white robe that he was wearing turned black as the attack clearly penetrated through all of the defenses that he could muster.

"The Senior lost this easily..."

The people from the audience were shocked while the three young masters that were looking for afar were angry.

"This Zhang Dong isn't that simple..."

Long Shen muttered to his brother and sister that nodded. All of them were prominent cultivators of great strength and already at the nascent soul level. It was only the early stage but at the age they were it made him into the strongest at their age bracket if they ignored Zhang Dong that was actually younger.

“That rascal, he was hiding his cultivation level.”

Said Long Yanyu while the other two nodded. They were not sure how strong Zhang Dong was now, but what he did was something above what a core formation cultivator should be able to do. It was at about the level of a half step nascent soul master.

“Is he hiding more? Maybe that’s why father...”

Long Fengge started talking while contemplating another plan. If the man turned out to be a formidable master then he would make them look like fools.

“No, he is just a country bumpkin from the lower regions, his sect isn’t even that known, we need to continue!”

The oldest interrupted as the discussion continued. Zhang Dong at this point in time was looking at the charred man before him. He could have just ignored him and let the Long Clan members tend to him but instead, he went with another approach. The stick was already given so why not give them the carrot now?

He leaned down to the passed-out person and gently poked his forehead with his index finger. The man’s body gave out a radiant like which drew in the eyes of the people around here. All of them were somewhat inclined towards divine energies due to their bloodline skills thus they knew that this golden light was something similar.

“What is this divine radiance?”

They asked as the darkened body of the core formation junior was restored. The man instantly woke up and jumped up to his feet. He started to examine his body that was still filled up with this wonderful energy.

“M-my bottleneck... I can’t feel it anymore... I... I must go cultivate!”

The young man quickly bowed his head before Zhang Dong and jumped to the side. There he went into the lotus position to quickly cultivate. This caused widespread curiosity from everyone around, they could feel that their brother had gained something as the radiance continued to enter his body and his cultivation level seemed to be expanding rapidly.

“...”

“I will be senior Long Dong’s next opponent!”

“Wait... I should be the next one, please give me some pointers senior!”

“Get away, I’m going to be the first one!”

“Screw off, it’s going to be me!”

Soon the people started to fight between themselves, Zhang Dong just smirked slightly as his plan had borne fruit even better than he had expected.

Chapter 407

‘They sure are quick to change their mind whenever there is something to gain for them...’

Zhang Dong wanted to shake his head at the group of cultivators before him. After they saw that he was somewhat able to aid in their cultivation growth they suddenly got more interested in what he had to offer.

The point of no return wasn’t quite there as before a full-blown fight could break out and an oppressive spiritual sense filled the area.

“Stop this shameful act this instant!”

A womanly voice echoed through the area as the young lady called out from the top. She and her brothers were still not convinced about what he was capable of. It was enough for her to raise her voice to make all of the people here back away. While they clearly were interested in Zhang Dong’s holy element capabilities they were unwilling to go against someone from the royal family, at least not just yet.

“It’s okay little Yanyu, your uncle doesn’t care, let them come, I’ll give them some pointers.”

Zhang Dong chuckled out loud while looking up at the young beauty. The moment he called her ‘little’ he could see a small twitch by her left eye. It was clear that she wasn’t fond of him too much but he still was the senior here.

“I could give you some pointers if you wish for it, you don’t have to be reserved, we are one big happy family are we not?”

After being led around the compound and looked down on he was also slowly starting to be fed up with how they were treating him. The danger of going up against these three was more towards their guards but those would probably not act against him that was getting the Emperor’s favor.

“You wish to give us pointers? Fine, this Long Fengge will be your opponent!”

While the young lady was somewhat taken back by the proposition, the youngest brother was quick to jump in. It was clear that he was maddened by the words, in his eyes Zhang Dong was some kind of swindler unworthy of the ground that they walked on.

The young man descended from the booth that the three were previously sitting on. All the other clan members quickly moved out of the way while bowing their heads. It was clear that these three young lords had the utmost respect from the people here.

“Why isn’t it Little Fengge? I’m sure this will be a good learning experience for the both of us, you can come at me when you are ready.”

Zhang Dong just smiled at the young man before him, he was playing the benevolent uncle that just meant well. He noticed a similar twitch in the young man's eye, it was clear that Long Fengge wanted to do nothing else than wipe the smirk from Zhang Dong's face while using his fists.

He took a good look at the young man. His hair was very long and his height was slightly above average. His face was quite handsome and he did look somewhat similar to the Azure Emperor. His father's features were a bit more chiseled while this young man's were a bit softer.

'I wonder how Jun will look when he is his age...'

His son was quite young but was quite a cute-looking child. He hoped that he would develop into a handsome young man. The biggest problem here was if he would be able to reach that point as this whole war dilemma was giving Zhang Dong a headache. Then there was Wang Long that could be anywhere.

"Then 'uncle' I will begin!"

Long Fengge shouted out while surrounding his body with the same blue aura as his previous opponent. This was enough to pull Zhang Dong back to reality as he still had to show to these youths that they needed to give him some respect.

The technique was the same but it was of a different caliber than the previous one. He wasn't sure of Long Fengge's motives but it seemed that the young man wanted to use a technique that he had already seen against him. It was an improved version of it, he probably intended to embarrass him if he wasn't able to take this move that he had already witnessed.

This azure flame technique was somewhat denser this time around. It was clear to Zhang Dong that the nascent soul was adding to its strength and making it burn in a fierce deep blue. When he recalled the other man's azure flames they were of a more pale coloring.

'I guess depending on the color you can measure the proficiency in the flames. By the way, Bob, are you done with analyzing the flames?'

'67% done with the analysis, more data needed for faster calculations.'

Zhang Dong looked at the angry young man that was shoving his palm into his face. Before it collided with his face he managed to dodge it to the side. The palm strike caused a massive shockwave that was also consumed by blue flames. If he didn't have a tough shield made out of golden light around his body he would probably receive some damage.

"Hoh, those are some powerful strikes nephew!"

Thus to gather more information he decided to play around with this young man that was only an early stage nascent soul cultivator. His fighting prowess would be actually closer to a middle stage master but not like Zhang Dong wasn't much stronger than that.

"Are the Azure flames ineffective?"

The people watched from the sides while trying not to be blown away by the shockwaves of spiritual energy. Now with the addition of nascent soul energy, the whole arena started to rumble slightly. This

caused a defensive formation to be automatically triggered that surrounded the part where Zhang Dong and the young master was sparring.

Even though the Long Clan was a powerful entity, there weren't that many nascent soul masters that exchanged blows in this place. This was a chance for the juniors to see real masters of the craft at work. Thus quite a crowd formed around the arena as everyone else that was sparring went right over.

There were even some people using recording devices. Such treasures were quite rare outside but at the Azure castle, there were some people that had them in their possession.

'98%...99%...100%...'

'Analysis of the azure flames done, presenting the interpretation to the user.'

Through his new Ai helper, Bob Zhang Dong was now able to inspect energy signatures in a more scientific way. Even though he didn't possess the cultivation manual for this skill, he had enough of them to reference this data. With the help of his system, he would be able to create this technique through previous knowledge, at least to a certain point.

'Not enough data to create a full complete Azure Flame manual.'

'Not enough knowledge hm? Could you replace some of the divine energy parts with my holy energies?'

Zhang Dong's Dao of the Holy was above the one that this azure flame was using. His knowledge of the flame dao was also up there but not as quiet as his heavenly lightning. But, he did have a crafting abode where he could mix other techniques with each other.

'Do you wish to combine the Incomplete Azure Flame technique with previously established techniques? If so please choose the manuals you wish to mix.'

While before leaving his world he needed to physically enter his crafting abode, this wasn't the case since Bob appeared in his life. This Ai companion was not an integral part of his system and worked like an app. His functions mixed with some of the ones in the crafting abode and now Zhang Dong could mix his techniques through him.

'How about we mix in some of these...'

There were a couple of high level techniques that he could mix these flames with. The base would be this new Azure Flames technique while things like his immortal grade cultivation method would be mixed to heighten the grade of this new manual he was making.

'Creating new technique, please wait a moment...'

"Why aren't you fighting back?"

Long Fengge was at a loss for words as he continued to battle Zhang Dong that just dodged all of his attacks. He hoped to show off his improvements but instead, he was hitting nothing but air.

"Enough of this!"

Finally, he jumped back and the aura around him changed dramatically. The people that were watching gasped out loudly as they noticed that the young lord would be performing an attack that was only taught to the innermost clan members.

“Could that be the Heavenly Azure Palm of Eradication? Will the formation be able to last?”

The people that were here started to slowly inch away from the arena that the two masters were fighting with. Long Fengge was on one side and was already condensing his blue flames into his fist and it didn't seem like he would be stopping. His older brother and sister didn't seem to be doing anything to stop their younger brother.

“Heavenly Azure Palm of Eradication? How about I return the favor to you, my nephew?”

“What are you babbling about? Did you go crazy from fright?”

Fengge called out while also seeing Zhang Dong take out the same fighting stance as he did. The others were also confused as it seemed that the man was trying to produce the same technique but to their surprise, there were no blue flames that they were used to.

“Golden flames? What is that?”

They were all confused as instead of the divine azure flames Zhang Dong was manifesting something different. The flames turned into a bright golden hue and continued to move towards his fist.

“Get ready! Celestial Holy Palm of Obliteration!”

Zhang Dong shouted out the name of the attack that he totally didn't just come up with to mock his opponent. The whole area went bright and a massive boom reverberated through the whole large training ground. The blast caused many backup formations to be brought up to shield the core formation juniors in the area.

People shouted in fright and the nascent soul bodyguards that were standing next to the young masters had to get involved. The exchange only took a moment but after the light subsided the winner of the exchange appeared before them.

Zhang Dong stood in the middle of the stage with his fist raised. Flames of a golden coloring were surrounding it while his opponent was nowhere to be seen.

“Ah, you must apologize to this uncle of yours... I might have used too much spiritual energy...”

Then everyone noticed poor Long Fengge or at least his bottom half. The young man's clothes had been shredded during the exchange and his upper body was buried underground in a crater. Everyone had a clear view of his pale posterior that was now reflecting the golden light that Zhang Dong was giving out.

“Haha, well then, who will face this uncle next?”

Zhang Chuckled while looking up to the two remaining youths.

Chapter 408

“Let uncle help you to your feet.”

Zhang Dong reached towards Long Fengge's ankle and yanked him out from the ground that he was stuck in. After their exchange, the young man was submerged under the now destroyed stone slabs that were supposed to last through almost any attack.

"Up you go!"

The moment the young man was pulled out there was a clear focus at a certain part. The young man's robe had been blasted to nothingness by Zhang Dong's golden flames. This then caused Long Fengge's family jewels to be seen by everyone that was there.

"Ack... It's Lord Fengge's..."

"Why does it lack any hair... did those golden flames burn them off?"

The women cultivators that were now regaining themselves started screaming out. Their young masters' lower regions were fully exposed to them now.

"Y-you l-let him go this instant!"

Long Yanyu called out from the upper booth that had survived the blast. She was covering part of the face with her hand while looking down. Zhang Dong on the other hand just looked up at her with a big smile on his face. The person that he was holding flopped around like a ragdoll as he was tossed about by his ankle.

"There is nothing to be shy about, we are all family here, aren't we?"

Zhang Dong could see that the situation was slowly spiraling in a certain direction. The two young masters jumped down and their bodyguards moved with them. From all sides, he could feel that people that were late stage and above were gathering. Even though he was having his fun, he still made this young master look bad.

Most of the time this would be a death sentence to an outsider but for now, he had a large shield protecting him, that shield was the Azure Emperor. He looked like him and the golden flames that were surrounding him were very similar to the Azure flames that these clan members used.

From what he discovered through his own prodding and with some help from Bob, these flames did require a bloodline. There was a certain pivotal component to using them, sort of a key code that was somehow integrated into his own body.

He could only attribute it to being some kind of DNA requirement that this body he was given possessed. When he clashed with the core formation clan member he had Bob analyze some of his blood during the healing process.

Then after comparing his body composition there were a few spots that were identical. He was truly related to these Long clan members. It wasn't a soul bond as his inner shell belonged to him.

The only conclusion he could come to was that this world's scenario had been programmed in and the person that was Zhang Dong had been a secret Long Clan member from the start. With this information now cemented, he didn't think that he should fear these people anymore.

Instead, he could use this world's logic to further his goal of defeating Wang Long and getting to the root of it. Who was making these planets with these game-like systems? Why did they allow people to run loose with no supervision and what really happened when they transcended the scenario.

"You approach me with malice and disrespect in your hearts?"

Fengge was surrounded by a golden light as he was healed by Zhang Dong's energies. The young man had a couple of fractures after the exchange but he was not in any danger of dying. The infusion of his healing arts that had been improved caused the knocked-out Fengge to awaken.

"What is..."

Before he realized what was going on he was tossed by Zhang Dong towards his brother and sister that were coming this way. It was clear that the two wanted to intervene in this situation but their behavior was less than stellar considering that they were supposedly in the presence of someone above them.

While in some cultures the offspring of the emperor or a king would be above anyone else of the royal family, this wasn't true here. Him being part of the Long Clan was only one reason to respect him while his personal strength would be the main one.

Thus he decided to act as a properly angry senior that had been disrespected for once. The golden flames that were around his body surged in all directions. A bright golden inferno filled the entire stage as his oppressive aura ballooned to staggering proportions.

"Juniors, you dare dissect your uncle? Even after I graciously agreed to give you pointers?"

Most of the people that were still on their feet were forced down to the ground while the whole training ground rumbled. Even the guards that were at the late stage of the nascent soul were shoved down to their knees as Zhang Dong's aura exploded.

The only person that was managing to keep a somewhat straight position was an expert that was at the great circle level. To Zhang Dong this was probably the main guard that was responsible for the trio's wellbeing.

The three were forced down to their knees and had to avert their gaze from the radiant glow that Zhang Dong was giving out. Even though this should be the point where they apologized, instead they continued with being little brats.

"H-how dare someone like you..."

"G-guards what are you d-doing, apprehend that man!"

The oldest son and the sister shouted out in indignation. This was probably the first time where someone was exerting their authority over them. They were powerless to do anything by themselves which caused them to call out to their retainers. These people would probably listen to them over him as he was still an unfamiliar element in this whole Long Clan.

This clan had existed for many millennia, its power structure was unknown to him. He did not know how these people chose their next Azure Emperor. Probably one of the two youths here were brought up to take the position. To some, this would be enough to see them on the same level as the Emperor. They would push their way into their good graces at all costs.

From the oldest son of the emperor, a blue glint escaped. Some kind of strange seal appeared on his forehead and produced a blue shield that produced an image of a dragon's head. It looked like the dragon swallowed up the three young masters but in reality, it was protecting them from his oppressive aura.

"But young master, the Azure Emperor stated that the guest should not be harmed..."

The man moved forward but still asked the question.

"That was before he blatantly attacked us, now carry out your orders!"

Long Shen shouted out while helping his confused brother up from the ground. The other nascent soul masters that were at the late stage also started to slowly get up from the ground. Even though Zhang Dong's aura was immense, it could be canceled out if some effort was applied.

"Oh? You would attack this... Long Dong? Is this the renowned Long Clan hospitality?"

"That is..."

It was clear that these old martial artists didn't want to have anything to do with this. They knew that their young masters could end this predicament with one head bow. Instead, they were being forced into a potentially deadly confrontation with a man that could be favored by the Azure Emperor.

"Are you really going to let this continue for longer?"

Zhang Dong found himself surrounded by a bunch of scary-looking cultivation uncles. While he was somewhat confident in his own strength, he wasn't sure if he would be able to battle his way out if more people came.

The various formations that were in place here also gave his opponents an advantage that he wasn't quite sure of yet. Thus he decided to play another card, calling out to the person that was watching this scene play itself out.

While others might have not realized it yet, he was well aware that somewhere the Azure Emperor was looking at them. He was also a father and he knew that no one would just leave their kids up to their own devices with an unknown element near them.

"Oh, I see that you have good senses, my brother!"

After a moment of silence, the voice of the Azure Emperor sounded through the whole training ground. Zhang Dong didn't know where exactly he was hiding but he could feel some faint aura fluctuations around the area.

At first, he just thought it was the formations but after analyzing the Azure flames of his opponents, he realized that this was a cultivator hiding. The first possibility would be that it was another powerful bodyguard.

But he gave the fatherly Emperor the benefit of the doubt as he didn't think he would let his kids just fight a yet unknown member of the family. During the exchange with the youngest son, he did finally spot the hidden Azure Emperor that leaked some of his power while probably ready to defend his son in a split second exchange.

“It’s fine, stand down.”

The Emperor appeared this time without his wife, the moment he was there the guards gave out sighs of relief while bowing.

“But father, that ruffian...”

“That ruffian is your uncle Yanyu, did you see it? Those radiant azure flames... no they were more similar to the celestial flames of legend!”

Zhang Dong’s aura subsided but there was apparently something that the emperor noticed about them. He did add ‘celestial’ to his punching technique but that was just a hastily put-together name with no deep meaning.

“Celestial flames? But father only the hidden ancestor... could it really be?”

“Um... hello?”

Everyone promptly ignored his call-outs as they began debating what had occurred at this very moment. He knew that his golden flames weren’t all that special but to these people, it seemed that there was more to it.

By the reaction of the young master trio, they were somewhat aware of these celestial flames. There could be secrets that only became clear to the innermost circle of this clan. It appeared that his little trick to garner attention had, in turn, worked to his favor. If he was taken as some reincarnation of the old ancestor, his status would probably rise even further, maybe even above the Azure Emperor himself.

“How could this person be related to the great ancestor?”

“You’re still talking like that? Go pay respect to your uncle or I will cut your allowance!”

“But father!”

The three kids started arguing with their father in front of everyone here. It was truly a strange sight to behold as they were not worried about hiding their emotions. The father was quick to smack the two sons around a bit for talking back to him. The daughter was the only sensible one as she didn’t raise her voice in the presence of her father.

“W-we apologize to senior uncle...”

Soon he had the three bowing before him while the Azure Emperor stood behind them with a raised fist. This apparently wasn’t the end of the journey as some more information was about to be revealed to him.

He had planned to use this dramatic fight to teleport away back home after having his pride trampled on. Now he decided to stick for a bit longer, maybe something that could get him through the hurdle that was this coming war and Wang Long waited for him inside this Long Clan.

Chapter 409

His first plan of acting like a benevolent senior had gone down the drain when the three young masters decided to send one to fight him. He then moved onto plan B where he would try acting offended.

When everything was said and done he wanted to teleport out as it would give him an excuse. Now he was going with plan C as apparently, he was now closely related to the ancestor that created this empire.

He did not think that this ancestor would wield golden flames like the ones that he had created to show off. From how things looked the ancestor should just have a deeper bluish color, how could he know that the ancestors 'Azure Flames' had a tint of gold. Soon he would discover how the golden flames played into all of this.

"There were two ancestors?"

"Yes, most of our clan members are unaware of this fact but the first emperor had a brother."

"A brother?"

"That's right, both of them were instrumental in establishing this empire, he went by the name of Aurulent Dragon."

"Aurulent?"

Zhang Dong just kept repeating some of those talking points while he and Long Qing sat around in a new room. After the debacle with his three children, he produced the golden flames. These flames apparently were proof that he possessed some kind of offshoot bloodline that didn't belong to their prime ancestor but his blood-related brother.

They have shifted into some kind of crypt looking place with some murals on the walls. Even though he could tell that these walls were thousands of years old, the rocks were imbued with spiritual energy. The writings could be read and they depicted the last war in which the Azure Dragon empire was created.

Long Qing was more than happy to clue him in after the golden flames were manifested. This area also had some kind of defensive mechanism that would only allow the current Azure Emperor to wander unchecked. The only reason that he was apparently able to come in was because he was of the bloodline of the other ancestor.

Zhang Dong could not believe that such a coincidence could be even possible. Did that Aurulent Dragon person manage to sire some offspring before he died? Did they mix with the other Long Clan members or something? Then he was supposed to be someone with an extremely pure bloodline to manifest these golden flames?

This all sounded like a bad plotline in a novel. He had been turned into a chosen one that had no reason to exist. This was truly something that someone else could have come up with. The scenario was forcing this world to even react to the cultivation method that he chose all those years ago. Perhaps if he went with the purple flame variant the ancestor would have been the Dragon Pimp?

"Wait, so this ancestor sacrificed himself in the battle of the empires?"

"Regretfully so, the great Azure Dragon ancestor created this clan so that we would be prepared for the next war between the empires. The old text states that he was immensely worried that we would not be able to turn the tide without anyone to take his brother's mantle, but now you are here, victory is now assured!"

His new 'brother' was very enthusiastic about him being here. It was clear that he wholeheartedly believed in the old prophecies that the ancestors have left behind. Zhang Dong knew that those were probably all something the administrators of this world had put in place.

He wasn't even sure if something like a great war between the empires even took place. This depended if the people that made these worlds could alter the memories of people living in them.

The only thing he could base a theory on was the Demon Lord from the other world that he faced. That one wanted to eradicate the whole population of the planet to start anew. IF that was the case then they probably couldn't alter people's minds that easily.

This was a big relief as he was worried that there could be a time where his own family could turn against him. It seemed that it was better to kill everyone to start anew, these administrators could have a lesser grasp on these worlds than he might have thought.

"Is there more detail on the war? Any battle records of the forces our ancestors faced?"

While walking and looking at the murals Zhang Dong decided to play along. He couldn't totally trust the Azure Emperor just yet but he needed some help for the coming war.

"Most of them have been lost, I don't know what or who will come through those bridges but I don't think it will be a simple enemy..."

The Azure Emperor moved his head down while talking, it was clear that he had been worried about this coming war. Zhang Dong could relate as he knew how stressful the position of a leader was. So many lives depended on him, one wrong order could cause thousands of people to perish.

It was no wonder that he was so energetic when talking to his newfound brother. He was probably a person that from the Azure Emperor's perspective could share the load with him. The second dragon had appeared to help him in the coming battle. By the logic of this world, this was a sign that the heavens were on this empire's side.

Zhang Dong had the urge to give the Azure Emperor a pat on the back but he didn't really know him that well yet. For the time being, he needed to use this chance to gain more strength, and what better way, than to ask for some treasures?

"Is this the crypt where the ancestors are resting?"

"Ah yes."

Long Qing snapped out of it and pointed to two statues that were standing at the end of this huge area. The two were about ten meters tall and reached all the way up to the ceiling. They depicted two cultivators that had similar facial features and both of them had dragon engravings on their robes.

Below these statues were two large coffins that could probably fit at least three people into them. When he looked at them Zhang Dong noticed that one was a lot dustier. It was clear that the clean one had been used, probably opened up.

"Those are..."

“As you have noticed already, there are no bodies in these coffins, instead the legacies for both the Azure Emperor and his brother were hidden inside.”

“So, that one was the Azure ancestor... so this one it...”

“Yes, that one belongs to the Aurulent Dragon, just like the one I opened it will only react to a person that is a direct descendant.”

The legacy of the Azure Emperor was already pillaged from that coffin. Perhaps it was some kind of secret cultivation manual, or maybe some weapon that was placed there.

“After the current Azure Emperor’s death, the contents of the coffin will return to their resting place and wait for the new Azure Emperor to appear.”

Long Qing continued with a story that made this quite the peculiar treasure. He had never heard of ones that teleported back to the place they were found when their user perished. If he had time he would have liked to take this coffin home to examine its secrets. With his knack for crafting he might be able to create something similar for his own clan members.

“Now brother please, place your hand on the dragon symbol.”

Zhang Dong’s attention was brought over to a handprint. Around this handprint was a coiling dragon eating its own tail. The dragon was made from pure gold while the rest of the coffin consisted of some rare spirit minerals.

“Place my hand there...”

Long Qing nodded, his eyes were glistening with anticipation. It was funny as the Azure Emperor was a lot more interested in this coffin than Zhang Dong was. This probably was just a locking mechanism that would scan him.

“Bob, see if you can open this coffin up if there are some problems...”

He was convinced that this coffin was reserved for him when he was the original system owner. This system had gone through a few changes so it might reject him now. This would probably cause a lot of confusion and more problems if he would not be able to access the last part of the golden dragon legacy. It would also throw a wrench into his future plans.

‘I hope this isn’t some elaborate trap...’

Zhang Dong narrowed his eyes while looking at the coffin. He knew that there were some strange formations on it but they were above his expertise. This was truly something above the nascent soul level.

It was a bit late to run now. If he didn’t get the help of the Long Clan the coming war would be hard on his sect and children. This would have been too much of an elaborate setup to just trap him so he didn’t think the Azure Emperor was trying to pull a fast one on him. Thus he did place his hand on the marking and got ready for it.

“Hm...?”

Nothing happened so he looked back at Long Qing that was standing right next to him with a smile on his face.

“Oh, you need to activate your bloodline technique brother Dong.”

“Ah yes... I knew that, was only testing you, brother Qing...”

He turned towards his palm and slowly produced the golden flames that he created previously. His palm started glowing and soon the whole coffin produced a magnificent light.

“... connected to old system lock... “

“... error ... unable to produce key...”

“... please wait, attempting to recreate the key from old code...”

Bob started talking to him while he was trying to act naturally. The glowing symbols on the coffin started shining brightly but the moment he wasn't able to produce the 'key' the glow started to die down.

The moment it did he could hear the Azure Emperor behind him gasping out in shock. This was probably an indication that he had failed in opening the lock. Luckily for him, his Ai program didn't let him down this time around and the bright glow returned.

“...a copy of the key has been recovered, uploading data...”

The whole room started to shine brightly and the statue that was above the coffin began to move. It started to open up its eyes while its head moved down to look at him. A bright ray of light descended on him soon after as he felt strong spiritual energy seeping into him.

The golden core that he had created while reaching his new realm started reacting. This light was a surge of very pure holy energy which also carried some kind of hidden technique. Through Bob, he was able to receive it while also managing to increase his cultivation by a small step forward.

Soon the radiant glow subsided while he leaned back from the coffin. When he did a few clicking sounds caught his ear, the closed treasure chest was opening up to reveal its contents to him...

Chapter 410

“A book and a rusty sword?”

Zhang Dong looked inside of the old coffin that was mostly empty. In it, he could see a somewhat rusted sword that might have been some kind of powerful weapon but had degraded over time. Next to it was a really old book that looked like it could crumble at any moment.

“These items... I'm not sure they are usable anymore...”

He looked back to the man that was with him, Long Qing his supposed brother was looking over his shoulder.

“The second ancestor tomb has never been touched before... I thought it would preserve the treasures inside...”

The answer seemed to be obvious, the heritage for the Azure Dragon part had been taken out many thousands of years before, thus it had survived and conserved all these years. The ones for the golden dragon on the other hand were not.

Even then he decided to give the book and sword a scan with the help of his system, maybe there was still something that he could gain from this.

Celestial Sword of the Ancient Dragon [Degraded] Heaven middle grade

Probably before it was placed into this coffin the sword was somewhat usable but it couldn't fight against the passage of time. Even heaven grade weapons didn't last forever and need to be reforged or repaired from time to time.

"Maybe I can reforge it to something good..."

Even though it was rusty, it was still a heaven grade weapon. The materials that it was made from were still rare, with his crafting expertise he might be able to fashion a new sword. He just needed to use it as the core for the new weapon.

"Oh, are you perhaps a talented blacksmith my brother?"

"Ah, I guess I know a thing or two about these, I might be able to strip this sword for parts and reshape it to its former glory, but I won't know until I take it to my forge."

If this weapon could be built up again depended on what it was made of on the inside. Powerful weapons in this world tended to have their own cores while the metals around it were more of a shell.

The core mineral inside would produce a powerful Qi radiance that would keep the metals intact during combat. Only when these invisible barriers were shattered would the weapon break. Thus even when a blade from a sword like this broke, if the core inside remained undamaged it could be remade.

"Your forge? Why don't you use our Long Clan forge instead? I bet you'll find everything you need there!"

"You have a forge?"

"Of course we do! Blacksmithing, pill making, formation creation, there is nothing that our Long Clan doesn't excel at, we have vast quantities of knowledge in our grand library, as the ancestors' descendant you will naturally have access to it all!"

This actually sounded quite interesting as he could always use more knowledge. He was still mostly depending on the things he had gained from that expedition all those years ago. With the help of this Long Clan, he would probably be able to fill some of the holes in his knowledge, maybe even gain some resources for his current cultivation.

What he needed to do was to gain more strength and knowledge for the coming days. His biggest enemy Wang Long at this very moment could be killing some unsuspecting villagers or beasts for more spirit points.

With the help of the system shop that he had, he had access to many immortal grade techniques. The only edge that Zhang Dong had over his opponent was that he mostly specialized in certain things.

When he fought against Wang Long the man seemed to use various random techniques that he probably didn't put much thought into buying. Probably the only thing that person was interested in was if the skill or technique was high level enough.

He didn't worry if it meshed well with his current cultivation nor did he train himself in these techniques. This was something even his old system failed at, teaching him how to properly use the techniques he bought.

For that he needed to slowly train them and only with time would they reach the next level. A lower ranked technique could overtake a higher ranked one if it was trained to perfection with ease. He did not think Wang Long would bother with something like that and he wouldn't have enough time at this point.

Even though both of them had been here for a while, Zhang Dong used some time to train himself. He and Huo Qiang sparred quite a lot. The other elders that were at the nascent soul level were also forced to participate so that he could progress further.

"How about the cultivation manuals, can I see those?"

"Why wouldn't you? Your authority is not less than my own, you have been accepted as the honorable ancestor's descendant, I am the Azure Dragon and you are the Aurulent Dragon!"

"Aurulent?... how about we just go with Golden instead?"

"If you so wish but first we need to get the elders approval, those old farts can be fussy about things like that."

While the emperor was making it out to be somewhat simple, he wasn't so sure about it. Zhang Dong didn't believe that there wouldn't be some pushback against him becoming some kind of Golden Dragon descendant. This put the whole Azure Emperor in a tough spot as there was someone at the same level as him, at least in theory.

Normally there would be some kind of war for succession as there was no way for two kings to coexist with each other. Long Qing seemed a bit too nonchalant about it, it was as if he didn't really care but this could also just have been an act.

With the looming war over their heads, he could have just been acting friendly as he still needed the Golden Dragon's power. This something had probably something to do with that Goliath thing they previously mentioned. It might have been some superweapon that required both of them to use it.

Zhang Dong wouldn't be surprised that at the end of this war, this Long Qing could turn out to have been the real villain from the start. Maybe that was how the previous Golden Dragon died, killed by his own brother after the war was won.

"Yes, that makes sense."

He nodded while placing the sword that was in his hand into his spatial ring. What now remained was the old-looking book that was still in the coffin. While it was still holding out, he wasn't sure if the pages wouldn't crumble to dust if he tried opening it up.

Luckily Zhang Dong was still in possession of his system and scanning books was something that he was good at. Thus he gently placed his index finger on the book with applying a minimal amount of pressure to initiate the scanning function.

Divine Celestial Dragon Manual Immortal Grade Middle

His system was quick to examine the book and just as he had thought the pages started to turn to dust almost at the exact moment when he interacted with this book. This manual was probably not really meant for anyone to read, only someone with a system's scanning feature would be able to gain its knowledge.

'Interesting... it describes the golden flames in more detail... it also has various other techniques that implement those golden flames...'

The old book was quite thick and there was a lot of knowledge in it. The bloodline technique that he created previously was of a lesser grade than this one. This manual would be a great addition to his current holy cultivation method, maybe with its help, he could even go further than before.

'Celestial huh? Got me hoping that it was above the immortal grade...'

"No... the sacred text from the ancestor... now we will never know..."

Long Qing shouted out in horror as he saw the manual crumbling into dust after Zhang Dong poked it with his finger. It was clear that even though this man acted a bit goofy, he was still a cultivator at heart. Seeing a precious cultivation resource just vanish into thin air was not something that he could even bear.

"Oh, it's fine... I uh... I heard the voice of the ancestor, I think he had blessed me with a vision of this manual..."

While he didn't really need to mention the fact that he had received the ancestor's treasure, the fact that it was in his brain could keep him safe. Even if the others betrayed him, they would probably try to get the information out of him first which could later give him an opportunity to escape.

"You did? But how... I don't ever remember my ancestors ever reaching out to me like that..."

"Uh... maybe it was some kind of safety for when the manual was too damaged to be of use?"

Long Qing pondered this question while Zhang Dong tried to go over the manual in his head. Thanks to it being scanned with his system he was able to go through it much faster than by just reading it manually.

"Oh... are those... they seem more radiant than before..."

He decided to show off by manifesting a tiny golden flame orb in front of his index finger. These flames were a lot purer than the ones he previously produced and they had a kind of buffing function.

"This feels rather refreshing!"

Long Qing felt energy rushing into his body when standing in front of this golden light. Zhang Dong could also feel it, this technique seemed similar to the divine spells in the other world he was in. This was quite well suited for large-scale battles if he could buff his side by just giving off some of his aura.

‘Hm, maybe the Golden Dragon was the healer while the Azure Dragon was the attacker?’

As he looked through this Celestial Dragon manual he noticed that most of these techniques that were described in it were used to aid others. Other ones were meant for dispelling demonic corruption and battling evil energies.

‘This will be useful against Wang Long for sure...’

With a new manual in his brain and a potential new strong weapon in his spatial ring, Zhang Dong felt like this was a useful journey. Now, what remained was to gain even more by using the resources that this clan could offer him. If what the Azure Emperor was telling him, the other elders would not have the right to stop him, even if he went slightly overboard...

“Well then my brother... you said that you have a big library... could you show it to me?”