

Unfathomable 411

Chapter 411

“What is he doing?”

“Shhh be quiet, what if they hear you? You want to be sent to the lower regions or something?”

“I know... but what is he doing now?”

“I don’t know...”

The two people from the apothecary faction of the clan were looking at what was a new face in the Long Clan. He went by the name Zhang Dong or Long Dong and at this very moment, he was sticking his finger into a life-giving elixir.

They had never seen a method of examination like this. What healing experts would normally do was to scan the contents of the elixir bottle with their spiritual sense. This madman on the other hand went around sticking his digits into the high quality elixirs for some reason.

This wasn’t the first section of the clan that he had visited. There were many other clan members standing outside of the apothecary building talking with each other.

“He went through the entire library just poking the books with his finger and running around like a madman!”

“At least he wasn’t interested in the beast tamer faction... but he did pat down all the formation scrolls...”

“Oh, be quiet, he is walking out...”

Zhang Dong left the apothecary guild that was responsible for keeping all the medicine and pill formulae. Some of the elixirs were made by specific masters that had their own secrets but with a little poke, he was able to scan for the ingredients that they were made. When comparing it to his vast library of knowledge he was able to deduct the manufacturing method almost perfectly.

‘Formations, pills, blacksmithing... I think I got all the major ones, what is left is...’

With his current level, he was able to scan everything really fast, he had gone through the library to gather all the high quality martial arts manuals. What was left now were a few monuments that implemented knowledge in a slightly different way.

After going through these pockets of great knowledge he was able to gather many heaven grade manuals. A handful of half-step immortal manuals were also kept hidden away at some places that he now had access to. This trip had really been very fruitful and he continued towards the next destination while munching on something.

“Wait... what is that man-eating... could that be?”

He ignored the chatting people while devouring a piece of fruit packed with divine energy. This was the same fruit that he had eaten previously, now on the other hand he was handed them all by the clan.

Thanks to being the Golden Dragon's ancestor's true descendant he would be naturally given everything that concerned holy power.

Regretfully almost every technique, formation, or secret art related to that ancestor had been lost to time. Mostly what he could find were some lesser copies that some other branch families tried to hold on to. But with the help of the manual from the crypt, he could somewhat upgrade these lesser techniques if he wished to.

"Bring me to the ancestral pillar!"

"Yes, my lord!"

Zhang Dong gave out an order to a person he was lent by the Azure Emperor. The man was the guide that explained every important part of this clan to him. Where he was going now was a secret place that only the members of the Azure Dragon line had access to.

He was already in the giant blue crystal tower that overlooked this floating city. Probably if the Golden Dragon ancestor survived past the wall, there would have been a golden tower next to it. Luckily the place they were heading to had some old knowledge that survived from the past war.

"So this is it, an interesting way to preserve their techniques..."

The area where he was was large and the ceiling was quite high. The most characteristic thing about this place were the many various pillars. Some were square, some were oval while others were just large boulders that didn't even reach up into the ceiling.

At first, he wasn't sure what to make of this place. After further examining, he noticed that there were various clan members meditating in front of these large pillars. Each and every one of these rocky structures was scratched up by something. When he got closer he realized that these were no simple scratches, no they were sword strikes.

Each pillar told a different story as it was carved up by various sword techniques and dances. This was a very archaic way of preserving swordsmanship through the ages. Instead of books, they would use hard stone slabs into which they would etch the knowledge with their weapons.

This was a somewhat difficult way of learning the proper sword stances but there was a certain perk of doing it like this. Each sword strike that caused a gash on the rock would carry some of the sword master's sword intent.

Through looking at those sliced-up pillars the student needed to piece the art together and interpret it for themselves. This gave various effects and produced many versions of the skills.

"While it looks somewhat inconsistent it does preserve it better than old texts."

He had the pleasure of watching an immortal manual crumble into dust before him. Thanks to this way of preserving knowledge the sword strikes managed to survive tens of thousands of years.

'But this is a problem... I can't absorb this into my library....'

Even though Zhang Dong gave one of the pillars a poke he wasn't able to just analyze it. There weren't any words here that he could copy and the sword intent was only part of the puzzle. He would somehow

need to recreate the movement of the person that performed the sword technique to piece everything together.

While thinking about what to do he noticed a certain young man. He had seen him before as he was Long Shen the oldest brother and son of the Azure Emperor.

"I see that you are keeping up with your studies little Shen."

"...Little?"

The young man was performing some kind of sword dance before the center pillar of this chamber. Around him were various other students and children of other various powerful elders that hailed from the Long Clan.

Zhang Dong appeared right next to him which caused the young man to fumble during the dance. The technique that he was performing utilized quite a bit of spiritual energy so ending it prematurely caused his sword to fly into the distance.

"You should be careful with that nephew, I'm not sure you should be damaging ancient clan pillars like that..."

The sword flew off and embedded itself in one of the other pillars and caused everyone to look this way.

"That was because you..."

Before continuing Long Shen realized who it was. Even though Zhang Dong wasn't liked he could see that the young man had learned his lesson. At least that's what it looked like on the surface but he could tell that he was not someone that was liked.

"Please, I'm in the middle of my training, why are you here uncle?"

"Oh, I'm just looking around, what are you trying to perform, a dance?"

"The Heavenly Azure Swordsmanship is not a dance!"

He sounded offended when Zhang Dong called his technique a mere dance. Shen was quick to turn around and resume his training, it seemed that he would rather ignore him now than continue the interaction. Thanks to this Zhang Dong got a good idea of how to try his system's new AI feature.

'Bob, can you compare this Shen fellows sword dance to the cuts on this large pillar... could you also perhaps produce a holographic image?'

'Initiating holographic projection...'

While he was in the other world and cultivating his soul he had some time to play around with his new AI partner. His function to automatically use the crafting abode to upgrade skills was only one of them.

While Long Shen continued his dance Bob started scanning his movements along with the sword gashes in the large pillar. With the combined input the helper app was able to piece together the technique that he was performing.

'Sword technique detected, incomplete...'

While the young man seemed competent and was already a nascent soul master, it seemed that he wasn't able to fully paste together the sword dance that was in this pillar. This was only natural as most people wouldn't even be able to properly make one good move out of these pillar scratches.

'Can you put together the full technique for me?'

Bob went to work as he scanned the pillar for the right technique. As this continued Zhang Dong discovered that there were various other sword strikes and skills embedded in this one pillar, some of them were quite hard to see as they overlapped with other sword strikes.

"Why is he just standing there like that..."

"I don't know..."

The other students that were there were curious about this new person that even Long Shen needed to abide by. For some time he remained stationary while just looking up at the pillar filled with knowledge.

They didn't know that the person was pasting together a long-lost art and was doing it at an alarming pace.

'That took a while... that's a bit of movement but it's also a half-step immortal level technique... should I try it out?'

This was no book so reading this type of monolith wasn't easy. After about an hour he was finally done and would probably be able to do the same with the other pillars at a faster pace.

"What is he doing now? He took out a sword? Is he going to perform a sword dance?"

One of the clan members asked while finding Zhang Dong's stance very similar to the one that Long Shen had. When the Azure Emperor's son saw what his uncle was doing he instantly stopped with his training. From his standpoint, there was no way of Zhang Dong being able to perform the correct set of movements only after glancing at the stone pillar for an hour. He was ready to mock his uncle after he failed but then he noticed something that he didn't expect.

"T-those movements... is that really the same sword dance the young lord was studying?"

"It looks somewhat different and the movements are sharper..."

An aura of golden flames washed over Zhang Dong's body as he performed a few movements of this new sword art. This was nothing simple as it was the first technique that he was trying to perform that actually went over the nascent soul limit.

Sweat formed on his brow and his hands felt heavy. The amount of spiritual energy that this trance like swordsmanship swallowed up was staggering but it could certainly not be denied. Even though he wasn't performing any attacking strikes his movements caused the whole place to rumble.

"Oh god, did he achieve the sword heart?... is he moving past it... how is that possible?"

"A genius of the sword!"

Everyone cleared out of the way as the sword energies that continued to gather around Zhang Dong's body would be able to slice any opponent that came near them apart in a matter of moments. This was truly the pinnacle of swordsmanship that could not be reached by buying skills alone.

Chapter 412

"You see, I told you that he is the true second descendant."

A rather happy-looking Azure Dragon was standing together with three elders and looking at his new brother performing a mystical sword dance. His movements weren't anything that these old men and women had seen before, it was truly a long-forgotten sword art that they were witnessing being born anew.

"Did he really reach enlightenment by just spending only an hour in the secret chamber of sword intent?"

"What the Emperor says must be true then, no one other than a true descendant would be able to grasp the ancestral sword techniques... doing it this fast only shows us how much of a genius he is..."

"I still can't grasp his true strength... his cultivation method is bizarre, he seems like a core formation junior but is much stronger, could it just be the aurulent flame's unique Qi?"

"The evidence is hard to deny but we should still be careful, this man has not been brought up within the clan, we do not know where his duty lies..."

The three here were the grand elders of the clan. After the Azure Emperor, they possessed the most political might in the whole clan. If the Emperor ever perished or died of old age they would take up his duties until a new one surfaced. To them, Zhang Dong was a big wild card which they didn't know if they could trust.

"Are you worried that he might side with the other factions?"

"The possibility isn't zero, they will surely try..."

Even though these three had a lot of pull, the Long Clan had many powerful nascent soul masters. Some were influential and powerful enough to be on the same footing as these three grand elders.

Now if for instance, they gained the favor of someone that was on the same footing as the Azure Emperor it could mean civil war. While Long Qing didn't seem to be worried about his new brother's loyalty, the old elders were.

"You three worry too much, even the old texts mentioned the appearance of the true disciple and that he would usher in a new age of cultivation!"

"Yes we do, but what if in this new age of cultivation the Long Clan doesn't exist?"

Long Yingjie, the oldest of the three grand elders, asked while feeling the ground rumble. Zhang Dong was finished with his sword dance which left some of the pillars in bad shape.

"He managed to damage the ancestral pillars... he truly is strong..."

“Stop worrying, we need my brother for this coming war! During the battles we will deepen our bond as we are warriors at heart!”

The three were still skeptical but it seemed that their leader had made up his mind about this new element. What would need to follow was a proper inauguration to the sect and presenting him as the second true descendant. This would probably get some pushback from the Azure Dragon faction.

“Well, I’ll leave the paperwork to you elders, you know I’m not that good with these things.”

Long Qing laughed out while strolling towards Zhang Dong who was somewhat sweating after performing the new sword technique. The three elders just nodded as they knew that their strength was mostly in politics while Long Qing was still the most powerful warrior here.

“While my husband tends to our newest family member, let us discuss the coming crisis, shall we?”

The Empress spoke up as she made herself known. Long Yingjie bowed to this woman. While she was all smiles he knew that she had a lot more power here than one might expect. The emperor would constantly ask her for approval on difficult decisions and she was always able to sway them.

While this was going on Zhang Dong looked at his shaky sword hand. The weapon that he pulled out of his spatial ring was a lower heaven grade sword. But after performing some of the movements this item was filled with cracks.

‘I just performed a couple of sword movements... what if I actually tried to use a more powerful offensive move?’

This swordsmanship wasn’t something easily mastered. It required a lot of spiritual energy that even a nascent soul master at the great circle stage would not have. He didn’t despair as with his new cultivation method he was a master at such a level.

His cores were still unfilled as they constantly wanted more energy. The seed that he was nurturing had grown slightly and he felt his power increasing as the seed grew. If this continued he might even be able to push slightly past the limits of what a nascent soul master would be able to contain.

‘I need to gather more spirit points and upgrade this sword style... Only powerful techniques that I can somewhat master can get me past that deficiency...’

While his strength was comparable to the pinnacle of the nascent soul, he lacked one component. This was a soul beast, this was something unique to that level and he was unable to summon his soul dragon that once aided him in battle.

This put him at a disadvantage against other nascent soul masters. It would be as if he was constantly going against two opponents at once. The only way to get past this deficiency was to be stronger than his opponent or somehow seal the opposing soul beasts.

While the beast were mighty and could act on their own, they were still condensed soul energies. Zhang Dong’s soul core had already proven how well it could absorb those kinds of energies. Maybe with more training, he could point it towards the soul beast and absorb them even when they belonged to cultivators at his level of power.

‘This clan has provided me with a lot of holy energy, I need to gather more lightning and souls now to put everything into equilibrium.’

After eating almost every nirvana fruit his golden core had expanded to a larger size than his other cores. It would be impossible for him to absorb more holy energy before nourishing the other two cores. If he tried he risked cultivation deviation which could cripple him outright.

“See Shen, I told you that you should respect your uncle! Maybe if you pay your respects he will even teach you some sword techniques.”

“Father...”

Long Qing appeared once again with a big smile on his face. When he heard that he was supposed to teach the brat sword techniques Zhang Dong frowned slightly. There would be some ass crawling required from this Long Shen for him to get anything out of him now. His opinion of these three young masters was somewhat low but it didn’t mean that he would be opposed to it if they apologized.

“Hm, maybe if he kowtows a thousand times and calls me great senior uncle, I might think about it.”

Long Shen recoiled in disgust at what Zhang Dong offered. It was clear that he was a prideful one who would probably not be easily swayed by techniques.

“I don’t need any help father, I can achieve mastery of the ancestral sword arts by myself!”

“I don’t think your son has much of a sense of humor, my brother.”

Zhang Dong just shrugged while looking at Long Qing. The Emperor just laughed while also being somewhat surprised. There weren’t many people that talked to him in such a casual way.

Everyone that was here noticed how nonchalant Zhang Dong was being with the Emperor. It was clear that this was a new powerful player that had arrived at their faction. That Zhang Dong was a true descendant was still not known to everyone as a proper announcement still had to be made.

The man in question had gone through every important point in this large crystal tower. If he was frank he would probably want to leave at this point. His wife was also constantly calling him every thirty minutes over his system as she was deathly worried that he was being tortured or something.

It didn’t look like he would be able to just ditch everything now. He probably needed to go meet with all the important elders of the clan. Then his true identity needed to be announced to the entire clan and then through the entire empire.

This would offer him the freedom to roam the realm in search of Wang Long. With the Azure Emperor backing him directly no sect could close their gates to him. Due to this, he decided to go along with this process as he did need the help.

When everything was done he would gain access to every single teleportation gate in the empire. He could produce an empire-wide witch hunt for Wang Long, any information that could bring him closer to where the man was would be rewarded. This loose end needed to be tied up before the other nations attacked.

....

In another location...

A large man with his chest bare was sitting in a large throne room. Behind him, lava was pouring down from the ceiling and lighting up the entire chamber. The heat was truly immense but the man sitting there didn't seem perturbed by it.

In his hand, there was some kind of leg of an unknown creature. While looking at a bowing man in front of him the large man opened up his mouth to present quite elongated sharp teeth that ripped into the piece of meat he was holding.

"Speak."

"Oh great Demon Emperor, I bring news from the world boundary, the time is upon us."

"Hoh, is it time for the legendary hunt? You better not be lying to me, shaman!"

"I would never, oh great Demon!"

The man prostrated himself before this man that seemed to be at least three meters tall. He wasn't the only person here either, many others were down on their knees, faces lowered into the hard volcanic rock that this place was made of.

"Finally, sound the horns, we prepare for the great hunt! We will gorge ourselves on the flesh of our enemies and reach the apex of creation!"

The man stood up from the large throne that was made from various bones of unknown creatures. His footsteps caused the whole place to shake as he descended with a massive flaming cleaver over his shoulder.

There were various other scenes like this playing out at almost the same time at other locations. Various leaders were being informed about the coming time. It was as if each and every one of them had a different prophecy guiding them towards the coming conflict.

The millennia they spent preparing for this day were finally going to be of use. The battlefield was beyond the borders of their lands. For some, it was called the great hunting grounds, for others the celestial lands of legends. Time was running out for everyone, the war that was to rock this whole planet was close...

Chapter 413

"My brothers and sisters, we have gathered today to greet a new member of our family..."

Zhang Dong was sitting to the side while one of the elders was giving a speech. Long Qing, his supposed brother, was down on his throne together with his wife. The kids were all properly dressed and to the side while the older generation was presented to the masses.

The Long Clan was quite advanced for the setting. It had similar holographic technology to the United Element Sect. Thanks to it they were transmitting a proper image to some of the larger cities around the empire.

While he didn't really want to do this, it was important to get his face out there. The Long Clan was giving him and his sect free advertisement. By confirming that he was now part of the royal family there would not be any closed doors to him.

"Thus I would like to introduce everyone to our Azure Emperor's brother, Long Dong the Golden Dragon!"

With some persuasion, he was able to go with the golden dragon title instead of the one the old ancestor had. This didn't matter as much as no one besides the core family members even knew that he had existed. The information had been long forgotten and only existed in the locked library.

With his name now spreading through the lands he would probably have the trouble of ever being called Zhang Dong ever again. He would have to cope with being Long Dong from now on.

"Thank you elder Yingjie for those eloquent words of introduction but this is not the time for pleasantries, I must implore everyone to be vigilant in these coming days as there is a villain that plagues this land and he goes by the name Wang Long..."

While the people that were listening to this introduction were a bit confused, the members of the Long Clan had been informed beforehand. They also agreed that someone like Wang Long needed to be stopped and they couldn't really stop Zhang Dong from speaking out.

To him this was the most important problem they needed to tend to, more important than the secret war effort that was starting in the background. Almost no one besides the Long Clan and the Heavenly Crane Sect knew about this problem. The smaller sects had been kept in the dark as they weren't seen as very useful.

From Zhang Dong's perspective, this was a faulty mindset. He knew well that a united sect or land was far more deadly than one that was not. His sect was proof as with the help of formations even the lower leveled cultivators could combat the ones in a higher realm.

If it was up to him, he would have spread the knowledge through the lands to at least prepare the border regions for the onslaught. He was informed that the areas where the bridges to the other empires were supposed to appear the Long Clan had set up fortresses.

Even with those in place, he wasn't sure if the Long Clan was expecting to go through a proper fight. With the eradication of the Soaring Dragon Sect, victory was more unlikely. The Azure Emperor was in high spirits though, it seemed that this hidden treasure that they had in store was supposed to be the ace to bring them victory.

The only problem with that was they weren't willing to show it to him just yet. The elders were quite against Long Qing showing him this Goliath. It looked like they wanted to wait first, which made some sense.

Secret weapons were meant to be revealed at the later stage in war efforts. If they played their trump card too soon they would probably regret it. The threat that the attackers would pose was also unknown, it could have been highly exaggerated as some Long Clan members thought.

There was a part of them that was convinced that their cultivation had improved with their advancement. They believed that those other empires were probably at most at the level of the two

grand sects. In their opinion, they would probably be able to achieve victory with conventional tactics and their own strength.

“This demonic cultivator is extremely dangerous, that is why I The Golden Dragon from the Long Clan implore you to not face him alone, you will be rewarded for any information that might bring us closer to his apprehension...”

Zhang Dong continued with his speech. He knew that the regular cultivators in the empire had no chance against Wang Long. They would just feed him more spirit points if they confronted him. Thus he only required them to point him in his general direction. He was also someone with a system and probably the only person that could handle him in a one-on-one scenario.

“I will personally dispose of this demonic cur, thus I implore you to report any strange occurrences...”

As he continued he listed a few particular things about Wang Long’s characteristics. One of them was how he liked to force himself upon young and beautiful women. The other was his soul beast, while he could disguise his face it wouldn’t be that easy to change his draconic soul beast.

While the information traveled through the whole empire, he expected Wang Long to also see it. This couldn’t be helped but might also lower the body count of the victims. After knowing that there was an empire-wide manhunt for him, he would probably try to hide somewhere safe.

There was a certain shadowy place for people like Wang Long. It would probably be the first one that he would attempt to make his own. But if the man was smart he would avoid any obvious places where demonic cultivators met.

“Live long, prosper, and may the Qi be strong with you...”

As with his own sect, he ended the speech with a few chosen words that stuck with him from his previous world. The response to his speech was met with lukewarm stares from the Long Clan populace.

He didn’t really mind this as this was quite the big exposition pill to swallow. They were getting a new high elder that was on par with the current Azure Emperor. At least on paper, the two should have the same amount of power and prestige.

Reality was often disappointing though, Zhang Dong didn’t fool himself into believing that the people would just accept him. It would probably take many years or something like the expedition he went through with his Zhang Clan to prove himself to them.

After the speech took place and he was inaugurated as the Golden Dragon, he noticed a change in his system. The part that had changed was his faction display. While he was still listed as the leader of the United Element Sect faction, he was now also a member of the Long Clan faction that had a separate tab.

There was not much on that one as besides the Azure Emperor that was next to him on the faction tree, there was no one else. This was probably all due to him not having a favorable relationship with anyone besides his new brother.

His approval rating was also not fully maxed out and only 70%. Before he showed that he was the actual true descendant the approval rating was probably lower. The elders that were here didn't seem to trust him enough to show up on the faction tab, the queen nor her children appeared on it either.

'I guess everyone is just putting up with me due to Long Qing... I wonder if they would accept me as their new Emperor if anything happened to him...'

This was something that he expected people to think. He was a powerful cultivator on the level of the Azure Emperor. From their standpoint, it wouldn't be surprising if he pointed his sword at Long Qing. It was actually a very natural event as all of the cultivators here had progressed in mind.

The spot on top of the empire would be a natural place for them to go for if they were in Zhang Dong's position. Thus everyone that was on the Azure Emperor side were on guard as they didn't know when the Golden Dragon would make his move.

'I bet after they gather more information people from the opposing factions will try to contact me...'

Zhang Dong on the other hand didn't want to have anything to do with the inner struggles of the Long Clan. He just wanted to use their help to get past the coming hurdle. They were something that he needed, if the war was really coming he might even have to move his own sect here.

He didn't want to admit it but this flying fortress was probably better suited for a prolonged defensive. After reading through some craftsmen books that were here it would take some time to get his own sect up into the air along with the whole city. The problem as always was a proper power source which this flying city apparently had. It was something hidden away quite well as even with his senses he could not tell where it was.

"That was an interesting speech my brother, I see that you really wish to get to this Wang Long."

"Yes, I would sleep much better if he vanished from these lands."

"Come, this is not the time for such matters, we need to feast!"

"Well... about that..."

Zhang Dong stopped before his new brother. Long Qing was clearly not taking things as seriously as he was. Now that he had done what he came here for there was nothing keeping him here. His family was waiting for him at home as well, his disciple was still in the ship that they left behind.

"Is there something bothering you brother?"

"I have to return to my own family, I have already overstayed my welcome but don't worry we shall meet again, for now though... I'll have to bid you all farewell."

With a quick clasp to his fist and a bow he just vanished. Golden dribblers of lights were left behind as he left the people here quite shocked.

"Instant teleportation?"

"H-how? It shouldn't be possible without the proper knowledge of the formation..."

They were all shocked as the grand formation that was in the city didn't allow anyone to teleport in or out. If they attempted they would be struck down by the defensive features but this Golden Dragon apparently was able to get out as they could not feel his presence anywhere else.

"Ha Ha! My brother is full of mysteries of his own, don't worry elders, we should trust him!"

The Azure Emperor just started laughing while everyone else was left with question marks above their heads.

Chapter 414

"What did I just watch... Did that guy really include quotes from old movies in that speech?"

A man covered head to toe by a stylish dark robe was looking up into the heavens. There in the clouds was a grand projection of a face that he knew. While listening to the long-winded tale he placed his hand to his cheek where he still remembered getting hit by the person that just finished talking.

Wang Long was his name which he chose as a joke. Now after being the reason for his own sect's downfall he was taking it easy in one of the largest cities that the empire had to offer. The projection came as a surprise as he had never seen anyone else use these sorts of treasures in this world. At most, they had theater plays or musicals that were not recorded for later use.

"Are we going to have two emperors now?"

"How can that happen?"

"So is this Golden Dragon just a part of the Long Clan or something?"

"It doesn't matter who he is you fool, he is clearly someone important so keep your mouth quiet if you see someone from the capital!"

Wang Long was sitting at an empty table at a certain costly inn. After his plan of eradication was fruitful he was at a loss. To him, this was a game but one that was not that easy to play. There were no map markers pointing him to his next destination. In his mind, he needed to find the right NPC to show him to the next stage of this 'game'.

While he was deliberating on his next move the speech happened. For the time being, he was hiding his face behind a certain skill that he bought from the system store. It was a demonic technique that made people perceive it to be different even when directly looking at it.

This technique performed the same act as the one Zhang Dong was using but it was fundamentally different. The other one actually altered the person's body structure at the molecular level. Which had its advantages and disadvantages.

The only reason Wang Long went with this type of technique over the other was that he was quite vain. He did not want to change the perfectly crafted face that he possessed. If he did he felt like his new persona could crumble and that would remember his previous appearance before coming to this world.

'Look at those idiots talking... '

While sipping some expensive wine he continued to listen as after the speech was over, he was part of the news.

“But that Wang Long is clearly a no good maniac.”

“You’re right, how could someone kill everyone from their own sect? Does he have no remorse for his own family?”

“It was also the Soaring Dragon sect... how do they expect us to deal with someone that could do that?”

As he continued to listen he became more annoyed than ever. Before Zhang Dong came along no one dared utter his name in bad faith. Now on the other hand they were calling him a murderous bastard that ate newborns for breakfast.

‘I did switch my alignment though... where do demonic cultivators even go?’

Wang Long was not someone that planned out things too well. This was the first time that he was truly alone even the place that he was in now wasn’t that far away from the Soaring Dragon Sect grounds.

With the money that he took from there, he could actually live a life of leisure which made him regress to his old ways. In the city that he was in he could live in a good hotel while they delivered women to him. There wasn’t that much of a difference, with some spirit stones he could make almost everyone do his bidding.

His main goal was to shut down his true opponent that was Zhang Dong. For now, he feared attacking his faction base even with his current improvement. He had no allies and no particular place that he could call his home.

Zhang Dong had clearly gone for the faction building option that he had previously ignored. Now after his first loss he took some time to examine this part of his system tab. But without actually having a faction of his own, he could not test anything out.

‘Do I need to create my own faction now? As a demonic cultivator it would probably be best to take over an evil sect... but is there one that can go against that bastard?’

While he mostly ignored the political and geographical lessons that his old sect tried to force upon him, he did know who the Azure Emperor was. If Zhang Dong had managed to trigger the emperor’s favor he would need to somehow counter it.

At first, he thought that his only option would be to just drain people for spirit points and increase his battling capabilities. But luck was on his side as one of the NPC’s that he was eavesdropping on gave him some critical information.

“Where do you think that murderous Wang Long vanished to? You don’t think he could be staying in our Fragrant Jade City?”

“How would that make any sense? Who would be stupid enough to flee to the closest large city they can find?”

The man telling this burst out in laughter while Wang Long's face contorted into anger. It seemed that even this nobody knew that it would be unreasonable for a demonic cultivator to flee to the closest big city next to the crime scene.

"We would have known if he passed through here, those demonic cultivators are cruel bastards!"

"That's true, we would have probably all been dead if he passed through here, or taken prisoner for some grotesque experiments!"

The two old men shivered a bit as they knew that the evil cultivators liked making pills out of humans. The larger the cultivation of those humans the better the pill came out.

"If I was him... I'd probably head to the Eternal Dark?"

"Oh, right there is still that place...It would make sense if he went there..."

'Eternal Dark?'

Wang Long perked up at the mention of something he wasn't quite aware of. He strained his brain which had been enhanced by the system. Even though he did not like learning new things, his memorization capabilities were superhuman.

'Oh yeah, now I remember... it's some kind of area at the fringes of the empire...'

The memory of a certain forced lesson flooded into his head. This Eternal Dark was a region populated by demonic monsters and cultivators alike. It was supposedly a safe haven for these people as no one really cared for it.

It was surrounded by dark clouds and acid rain. The Qi was corrupt and would suck away the energy of any cultivator that didn't study demonic energies. It was filled with dangers and monsters at every corner.

'This could be it...'

A lightbulb went off in his head, it all started making sense to him. If he thought in gaming ways, this was the perfect place for him to conquer. The righteous cultivators could not venture into these lands that were filled with many dangers. He on the other hand bought an immortal level demonic cultivation manual that was perfectly suited for it.

'I just need to go there and create my own demonic sect! No, wait. Why do I need to create it? I'll just take over one of them!'

Wang Long had seen how Zhang Dong managed to make his own faction stronger. He attributed everything that his enemy achieved to his system. Thus he believed that if he took over a sect there he could dump spirit points into this new faction.

Through this, it would become stronger and act as his new army of demons. With his cultivation being over Zhang Dong's and a large army of demonic cultivators and beasts, he would be victorious.

'That idiot isn't even using his system right, the evil factions are always stronger and easier to farm.'

Zhang Dong was clearly going with the good factions. The holy energies that he was using were proof of this. Wang Long knew that due to this his enemy couldn't just go around killing people. Thus he would only be able to farm spirit points by converting spirit stones.

On the other hand he went with the more morally gray faction at first but now he was switching to a morally corrupt one. He could even kill people from his own side and no one would probably bat an eye.

While going through the faction section of the system he also discovered something. There were two ways of gaining more followers, one was through something called an approval rating that increased dedication. But there was also something else there, the fear rating.

'I don't need them to like me, if they fear me they will be forced to respect me and dedicate their life!'

"This is it, this is what I will do!"

The people that were having a conversation about the Dark Lands looked over to where Wang Long was seated. His outburst was loud and somewhat obnoxious which caused everyone to scowl at him.

"What are you looking at?"

Instead of apologizing though he started them down with anger in his eyes. The men instantly turned their heads to the side as Wang Long had a somewhat imposing air around him.

"That's what I thought!"

Like a strutting peacock, he moved his chin up while standing up. Everyone went quiet for the time being after they noticed that the man that stood up was not hiding his Qi. It was truly immense and overbearing but thanks to Wang Long's special disguising technique the people here didn't perceive it as demonic Qi.

"Hey there old man, I have a question for you..."

Wang Long after the prolonged walk ended up directly in front of the two men that were discussing.

"P-please s-senior I didn't mean to offend."

"No need to be scared, I just wanted to ask you about what you were discussing, Eternal Dark was it? Where can I find this Eternal Dark?"

The two men were now lowering their heads while panicking. But this was not the first time that they interacted with a scary cultivator, if he asked them a question they just needed to be respectful and give him the information.

"Ah yes the Eternal Dark, you just need to go towards the..."

Wang Long just smirked while looking at his system map feature that as more information was given to him continued to fill up. Soon he had the correct path towards his destination.

"Good, this will do."

The old man was given a pat on the shoulder before Wang Long left the premises. The moment he was down on the ground and outside the large expensive inn, he heard a dinging sound.

Hong Fung has been slain, you have earned 1 spirit point.

When looking up to the tower he could see a dark green cloud bursting out through the windows and eating its way down through the whole structure.

‘Damn low leveled shits, I need to get to a higher leveled place than this!’

As he departed the screams of his victims filled his ears but to someone like him that didn’t see them as anything other than spirit points their pleas went unanswered. What was on his mind now was the next stage of this game which would consist of gaining even more power and his own personal army.

Chapter 415

“I thought I got over my stage fright already.”

Zhang Dong was sitting in his own quarters back at the Argonaut flagship. He had specifically used his teleportation feature to show to his new allies that he was no simple cultivator. Even now they were probably wondering how he was able to escape from their teleportation blocking formations.

In reality, he wasn’t that sure either as this was a feature of the system that was above his current knowledge level. It was clear to him that the teleportation feature had to be at least immortal grade or even further beyond that. What was above the immortal level even he didn’t know as his old system store never showed him any techniques above it.

When remembering his old store he also remembered Wang Long. With the speech given he would be probably receiving a lot of false information about other demonic cultivators. Luckily there probably weren’t that many demonic cultivators at the nascent soul level which would narrow the search.

While he hoped that he would be able to flush Wang Long out he didn’t like his chances. Thus he consulted the only person that he could.

‘Bob, is there no way of tracing Wang Long?’

‘Not enough data.’

‘Isn’t there some way to track other system users? Don’t they possess some kind of unique spiritual energy signature or trail? There must be something, when the items they buy from the store, there always was a strange distortion in space, can’t we track that?’

‘Calculating... proposition is feasible but requires Qi fingerprint of the target user.’

Zhang Dong nodded as this was along the lines that he thought it would go. Bob would be used as a bloodhound to sniff out Wang Long, for this, he needed to find a place where his opponent had been. One place was his own sect where they battled with each other but he wasn’t sure if Wang Long accessed his store there or not.

“If I can’t find a traceback at home, I’ll have to go to the Soaring Dragon Sect...”

That was probably the area with the largest concentration of Wang Long’s energies. Apparently, the demonic energies that he transferred into it were still swirling around. No one below the nascent soul level could safely enter it.

Even the masters at those levels couldn't hold out long without some kind of demonic Qi protection. Luckily Zhang Dong came equipped with a massive amount of holy energy that would just filter the environment out for him.

As he was thinking about his next few moves he heard a knock on the door.

"Come in."

"Master."

Zhang Liu entered through the automatic door to give a small report.

"We should be at the Sect in a couple of days, Master but..."

"But?"

Zhang Dong asked as he saw Zhang Liu fidgeting around.

"Don't worry if you have a question you can go ahead and ask your master, I won't bite."

He chuckled slightly as after spending some time with his male disciple the young man seemed quite distant. This was probably due to how much time had passed since the last time the two saw each other.

"Ah... then... I think you should go ahead and up..."

"Go ahead?"

"Yes, we will be fine Master! So you can return!"

Zhang Liu started to awkwardly shout the sentences out at the end as if he wanted to get his point out at the fastest possible rate.

"Oh..."

Zhang Dong could have directly teleported back to the sect but decided to stay in the flying ship for one main reason. He was there to protect the people inside as he did not know if they would be attacked by some unruly anti-Golden Dragon faction.

While he had been introduced as a true descendant and blood brother to the Azure Emperor, this didn't mean that everyone accepted him. He could see some loyal subjects trying to remove him out of fear of him causing a revolt. He had teleported away to safety and probably no one knew that he was inside this ship but he was still worried.

"The other sect members also agree, I'm sure Master has more important tasks to carry out, you don't need to worry about us, we will arrive safely!"

"Heh..."

He could only smile while standing up from his seat. There he went over to Zhang Liu and gave his awkward pupil a pat on the shoulder. He wasn't sure what had happened for these past five years but he hoped that there would be enough time for more pleasantries later.

"You're probably right if they wanted to attack as they missed the best chance they had..."

They were already out of the Long Clan territory that wasn't all that large, to begin with. They clearly didn't care about any other spot than what was around their floating city.

"Well then Liu, I'll leave the ship to you... oh, right I almost forgot..."

He placed his finger on Liu's forehead and injected some of his knowledge that he had gathered through the years. When parting his techniques to his students he didn't take into account that he would be gone for that long. He didn't like to push too many advanced arts onto them before they were ready. While he did leave many books and notes this impartation technique was far superior as always.

"Master!"

"Yes I know, you should study hard. If you continue like this you might be able to reach the nascent soul level soon."

It was kind of funny how little time it took for a person to reach this fabled realm. With the help of high-quality techniques, it was not hard to do it before reaching the age of forty. This only showed him that there was something wrong here.

If a person could progress this fast, why weren't there any immortal level masters around? It seemed that going past the nascent soul level was impossible for the regular people of this world. It didn't seem that anyone would get anywhere if they didn't have the system's help.

Even with it around it would require an astonishing amount of spirit points to achieve the breakthrough.

'This war scenario is looking more and more like just a scripted spirit point farm...'

To him that had a whole sect and family to worry about this wasn't such a good thing. On the other hand to someone like Wang Long that didn't care about anything else by himself, it would be free points left and right. He could attack each of the fighting empires until he got powerful enough to face Zhang Dong.

'I really need to find this maniac before this can happen... the other option is to get my faction stronger...'

How far Wang Long could go by farming spirit points from this war was unknown to him. From what he remembered the cost of immortal grade techniques and cultivation boosts was quite staggering. It was to the point of killing hundreds of nascent soul masters for one of those store-bought items.

"I will make you proud Master!"

"Oh right and one more thing..."

Before leaving Zhang Dong looked at his disciple with a somewhat scolding look.

"You should really stop letting Nuana walk all over you..."

After returning to this world he noticed that his disciple was still somewhat at the mercy of his wife's younger sister. She acted all cutesy with him but he had Liena to keep her in check. In Liu's situation, there was no one, he needed to man up and not let her walk all over him.

"Nuana? W-we are doing fine..."

“Didn’t look that way to me... she didn’t have trouble knocking you out before...”

Liu slumped his shoulders while flopping his head down. Because of his mishap, Nuana was put in danger.

“Here, you can use this mirror to train.”

Zhang Dong pointed to the mirror that was in these private quarters.

“The mirror, Master?”

“Yes, I want you to look at it and imagine that you are talking with Nuana.”

Zhang Liu wasn’t sure what this was about but not like he could refuse a direct command from his master. Even less after he had imparted some new knowledge to him. Thus he moved in front of the mirror and tried imagining that he was looking at Nuana.

“Okay, now Imagine that she is trying to get you to do something that you dislike.”

“Something I dislike?”

“Yes anything, does she give you some unreasonable requests?”

“Well... she does like to travel a lot... to the point of me not being able to cultivate...”

Zhang Liu gave out a sigh as he remembered a couple of the conversations. All of them he capitulated which pushed his progress back. The only way he dealt with Nuana’s approaches was by hiding himself in hard-to-access locations with the hopes that she wouldn’t be able to find him before he was done with his training.

“That will do... Now repeat after me... I will not go with you, I must train, now leave!”

Zhang Liu rubbed his head while staring at the mirror as he felt somewhat silly saying these words. But as this was just him looking at the mirror, it didn’t pose much of a problem even for him.

“Louder! Put some heart into it!”

“I will not go with you! Now leave me be!”

Zhang Dong was a bit surprised as his disciple started out right shouting at the mirror as if it was a true enemy. He could see some pent up frustration in Liu’s motions as he had his fist clenched tightly.

“Oh hey Nuana, when did you arrive?”

“Liu, how could you say something like that!”

Zhang Liu looked to the side and saw Feng Nuana just standing there with tears in her eyes. The moment he saw her his anger subsided and he quickly started apologizing. This caused him to get smacked in the back of the head by Zhang Dong as he had failed the test.

“Huh? Master.”

The moment he got clobbered the Nuana he was apologizing to dissolved into the scenery.

“Can’t tell the difference between an illusion and the real Nuana? You still have much to learn...”

Zhang Dong chuckled as he saw his disciple drop his head in defeat yet again. But now after his little prank had gone through he seemed to have reached an epiphany.

“Well, I’ll leave you to it. You need to clear out demons like this or the demonic cultivators could use illusions like this to get to you.”

“Yes, Master!”

“Good, then I’ll see you back at the sect, there is much I must discuss with the elders.”

Thus he clicked the system’s teleportation option to get back home. There he just wanted to flop into his wife’s ample bosom and sleep. REgretfully being the Patriarch he had his obligations that needed to be fulfilled first.

Chapter 416

‘Well, that went better than I expected... now what?’

After going through the Long Clan, raising his holy energies to a new level, and giving his disciple some pointers, Zhang Dong was back in his secret lair. It was the same room he teleported to when the Soaring Dragon Sect was attacking through which he could look at his territory without being bothered.

While he wanted to do nothing more than to return to his family, he needed to think. What would be the best plan for the coming future that was more uncertain than ever. Zhang Dong wasn’t sure but he needed to make a decision. The other elders could make propositions but in the end, it was him that needed to make the decision. A decision that would dictate if more people would die or not.

‘What options do I have...’

He started to pace back and forth while looking at the monitor screens. On them, there were many sect members running around. The city had been freshly destroyed and the rubble was still being cleared out. The city populace was also still scattered in all directions while some sect members were with them for protection.

‘If those bridges between empires open up, then the common people are at risk...’

The first problem was with the normal people that just wanted to live their lives. Not everyone cared for this war between empires as not everyone was a cultivator. In reality, the majority of people in the world were in the ‘mortal’ category while the ‘immortals’ were a vast minority.

But in a world where one cultivator could without effort eradicate thousands of lives with a wave of their hand, it was obvious who was in charge. What the mortals could do was flee to the outer reaches where the spiritual energy was low and cultivators were sparse.

His sect was in such an area that posed a problem of its own. It was a very well-established sect with many resources and good technology. It would probably be a prime target for any attackers from the other empires.

Luckily the escape mechanism of the sect had not been used yet. They would be able to flee to the designated locations if their formations fell to the attack. Thus some would probably want to remain here and wait it out. The grand formation was powered by the spirit vein under their lands, it was much more powerful than regular formations at a close level to the one that the Long Clan had.

When he looked from the point of the game, the Long Clan flying city was probably the last bastion of defense. From what he knew, the Azure Emperor was sure that even if they lost all of their lands, the flying fortress could not be breached.

They could remain there indefinitely and just wait for the bridges between empires to close. The war was supposed to take about a hundred years but it was not really clear. For him and the other nascent soul masters that could live a thousand years, this was nothing.

Some would probably prefer this turtle tactic. Most of the cultivators just cared about their own lands and sects. If the rest of the empire was eradicated in this war, it didn't matter at all. After a hundred years they would just repopulate them again with their own branch families like the last time this happened.

It seemed to Zhang Dong that the Long Clan flying city was something to act as a safe point for the system holder. From there they could leave and farm for spirit points in a world filled with battle. Then maybe within those hundred years they would achieve victory and amass enough points to get to the next level.

'Maybe the longer this war lasts the stronger the enemies will become... something like a horde mode in games, they will just keep coming in waves, some of them bringing bosses that you're supposed to defeat?'

He could only speculate on the true way that this new phase would play out. If the enemies just came in waves then having a good well-protected fortress would be the best option. But the big question was if this sect that he had created was enough to push back the impending doom or not.

If the spiritual formations fell in the coming onslaught, then he would be responsible for many deaths of his own people. It might have been better to just move their base of operations into the Azure Emperor's castle.

'There is one problem, I don't think they will just let me move the entire city into their territory...;

While the Azure Emperor treated him like a blood brother, he wasn't the only one there. Zhang Dong could see them only accepting the innermost sect members without letting him bring over the common people that would be left out in the dust.

The lands that he controlled were also vast, much more than Spirit Spring City. There were various other similar metropolitans with millions of people living there. They were run by small clans that had trouble even producing one core formation master.

He was unaware of the scope of the attackers but how things were now, he believed them to have many cultivators at similar power levels as nascent soul masters. Saint Emperor and Saint Emperors from the Emerald Phoenix empire would probably swarm them. Without nascent soul cultivators to patrol the lands the cities would be in shambles.

‘The sect had improved a lot though... they should have a good chance of defending the lands...’

One good thing that came out of Wang Long’s attack was that he had forced his sect members to progress further. Now his sect probably possessed one of the largest forces in the empire. The number of early-stage nascent soul cultivators they now had was staggering, probably enough to give the big three a run for their money.

‘If I ask the others for their input...’

While looking at the motivated masters already training and improving their newly gained cultivation, he knew what they would want. The people from his sect were born in difficult times, it was an eat or be eaten kind of world. They would probably want to rise up to the challenge and prove themselves, gain experience through battle as well as new resources to go further beyond.

“But there are more important things in this world than blind pride.”

While he knew that his people would dive into the midst of battle the moment he ordered them, he was conflicted in asking. His gaze turned to a certain screen on which he saw two children. They were in the process of a fight which was somewhat surprising.

On one side was Zhang Xiu, her eyebrows were at an angle as she was yanking what looked to be some kind of child-sized doll. On the other side was Zhang Jun whose face was filled with tears. There were no adults in the room; the two were as their mother was away ordering some sect to reposition some furniture.

As their house had crumbled to dust after he revealed the flying fortress built under it, they needed to relocate into a new mansion. One of the elders agreed to relocate elsewhere as they took over one of the larger mansions at the main sect.

This was the first time that Zhang Dong saw his kids interacting without adults being there. It seems that Xiu was in charge as she had no trouble shouting at her brother who was desperately trying to hold onto the doll.

‘Wait that toy... is it?’

A memory from about a year ago rushed into his head. It was a few weeks before he had to go away to fight his favorite tentacle monster. Before he went away, both his kids were already in this world and he had created a certain set of toys.

Being a big nerd back in his old world, he always enjoyed large robots. Thus not knowing what his kids would like he created two small robots, one pink and one blue. One of these robots was now being pulled from both sides by his children, it was the pink one that he had given to his daughter before leaving.

‘Wait... wasn’t the other one here...’

He had almost forgotten all about it as he had lost his entire spatial ring and all the items there. Luckily some of his creations were here, right in this room that he used to get away from it all. In one of the spatial rings here he found it, a half-meter tall toy robot. It had a little blue shield in one hand and a little gun in the other.

While this looked like a toy, it was actually a functional puppet with some armor over it. It could carry out basic commands and even fly around. The little blaster it had in its hand could shoot out a blast of spiritual energy. These blasts would produce a nice light show but would not cause any harm even to a child.

The other one that he gave to his daughter had a more feminine shape and was red. It had a similar armament and function as this one as he hoped that they would order them around to perform battle moves. He hoped to improve on these toys later but as he was in a rush this was all for now.

It brought a smile to his face that the last toy that he made for his daughter was still being used. But as he was reminiscing about the past, he saw on the screen that an accident happened. The toy was made from softer elements and was not really built to resist that much pulling. Soon one of the arms that was being pulled snapped away causing both of the kids to fly in opposite directions.

‘Oh... she looks really mad...’

Xiu was left with a one-armed battle bot toy, while Liu was left with an arm. The older sister’s previously mad face started watering up as well and it seemed that her brother was in for a beating.

While he thought this was a normal reaction from his daughter’s side, he wasn’t sure why his son was so clingy too. The toy that he made was not something that was made for him, he still had some attachment to it. At first, he thought that his son didn’t care that much about his father but maybe he was wrong about that.

‘I guess it’s time to act like a father for once...’

He gave out a sigh while his heart rate increased. A whole year had passed since he had to act as a father. Before it was quite easy, his daughter was just a bundle of energy that was quite attached to him.

Now it wouldn’t be so easy, she was much older and he also had a five-year-old son that didn’t know him at all. This might have been the hardest enemy that he would face to this day, being a parent.

Chapter 417

“What did you do!”

“I... I didn’t mean it...”

An angered girl was looking at her younger brother who was holding a part of a precious gift. It was the girl’s only reminder of her father that had vanished five years ago. Even though the father had returned to them, the toy robot still had a huge sentimental meaning.

“I’m sure that it can be fixed...”

Zhang Jun, who had been left with the arm on the ground, started to slowly move towards his older sister. Before he could try to attach the dislocated arm Zhang Xiu pulled away.

“No, you’ll just make it worse, don’t touch it!”

Xiu quickly smacked Jun's arm away with all her might. But this also caused him to drop the robot arm that he was holding. The two looked in shock as the toy part flew into the distance. Though these two were still children, their strength was already immense. Their bodies came from a nascent soul master which somewhat enhanced their inner Qi and body as well.

They were still children though, they didn't really go through proper training yet. Jun was quick to turn around to try and catch the arm but so did his sister. Both of them tossed each other at it which caused them both to collide with each other.

"Ow..."

"Oof..."

Soon they realized that they were both down on the ground. Jun also felt that he landed on something harder and as he tried to get up, he heard a crunching sound. With shock plastered all over his face, he quickly tried to remove himself from the floor.

"N...no... I didn't mean to, it's because sister wouldn't listen..."

What the two kids discovered was a broken toy robot arm. While previously it might have only required a quick glue job, now on the other hand, the elbow joint was also broken. The fingers that were actually operational were also a bit cracked as this toy was made from rather soft materials that imitated plastic more than metal.

Zhang Xiu looked at the broken part that didn't look salvageable. Then she turned her head to the person that was responsible for it. Her brother was standing there and prattling on that it wasn't his fault. She didn't want to hear it, thus she raised her fist up towards him with the intent to strike him.

While Jun was only five, his sister was still older. While no proper training was given, she performed some breathing exercises to enhance her Qi already. If the smack that was flying towards him connected the young man would probably feel it the next day.

But as the small fist was about to land on little Jun's cheek it connected with a strange bubble-like substance. Instead of hitting his face, Xiu's fist bounced back. This rebound caused her to float into the air while also being surrounded by a shiny transparent bubble.

"Now, now, you two shouldn't be fighting over trivial things like this."

The two children heard a man's voice call out from afar. Soon they saw the bright white hair and chiseled jaw of their father as he floated their way. The moment Jun saw Zhang Dong approach he went silent, his head dropped as he evaded his gaze. Xiu on the other hand burst out in tears while squirming around.

"But daddy, he... he destroyed the toy that you left me!"

"Oh? He did?"

Zhang Dong glanced towards Jun who was trying not to look at him. He then slowly approached the young boy that was floating in a bubble of his creation.

"I-I didn't mean to... I just w-wanted to help..."

For once he tried to explain himself to the father that he never knew. Finally, he gathered up some courage to look at the man that was approaching him. The young boy expected to see a stern look of disapproval but instead, he saw a big smile. The confusion continued as he felt a large hand being placed on his head, then his hair being messed up by some rough petting.

“Is that so? Good going then.”

“Good going?”

Both Jun and Xiu were confused as they floated down to the floor. The bubbles that were holding them in the air soon burst and they both landed on their posteriors. While Jun was just confused, Xiu was still mad. She looked at the destroyed robot arm that she cherished and was close to bursting out in tears.

“But daddy...”

“Now, there is no need to cry, it’s just a toy and toys can be fixed, just wait a moment and daddy will fix it.”

“Daddy can fix it?”

“Yes, I’m the one that made it for you, I wouldn’t be much of a craftsman if I couldn’t fix the items I make.”

Zhang Dong laughed out in a gentle fashion while pointing his finger towards the cracked robot arm. With a little wave, it was brought over towards a nearby table. The rest of the pink robot was brought over here as well and the kids were a bit astonished to see the parts floating around while being covered by a golden glow.

“I guess this will be the first time for both of you, let me show you have daddy crafts treasures. First, we bring out the materials, in this case, I don’t need much, just enough to cover the damages.”

Zhang Dong placed the cracked robot arm next to the toy along with a grayish clump that looked similar to clay. When he turned to look at his children they seemed to be really interested in this procedure which made him smile even more.

“But daddy... how will that gray thing fix it?”

“Hah, just watch, this quite a handy item, it’s called cheytine, while it might look like everyday clay, it can do much more...”

“Chyt...”

“C..ine?”

While the two tried to repeat the name of the mineral that he was using, he continued with his crafting presentation.

“When a craftsman reaches a high stage in his craft, they are able to create treasures without the need of any proper tools like hammers. First, we produce flames and toss the cheytine in...”

He continued by producing a bright golden flame with his hand. The gray clump of cheytine was then tossed into it along with the destroyed toy's arm. This caused Xiu to flinch as it looked like her father was further destroying the toy that was made for her.

"No need to be scared, these are special flames used for crafting, they do not destroy, instead they create."

It didn't take long for the items to melt and bind with each other. With another wave of his finger, the liquid that was created started changing shape. Soon it took the appearance of the robot arm, now without any blemishes or cracks.

The two kids had their eyes glued to this phenomenon. While they had witnessed other people perform blacksmithing, they had never seen someone craft items in this way. This technique was something only a nascent soul master would be truly capable of.

It also required pristine concentration and the exact knowledge of what the craftsman was making. If for a fraction of a second Zhang Dong's attention was brought elsewhere, the process would be ruined and even an explosion could occur. For someone with his experience, this was as easy as breathing.

The rest of the pink robot floated next to the now repaired arm. Soon the shoulder joint was connected back into place and the toy was back to its previous form.

"There we go, good as new. X-Warrior 1, perform the salute!"

Zhang Dong placed the toy robot down on the ground. The moment he gave the command the toy robot performed a previously implemented motion. It made a fist with its right hand and brought it over towards where the heart would be.

"It works!"

Zhang Xiu moved towards the toy and picked it up from the ground. She started to twirl around while holding it above her head while laughing. Then at the end of the spin, she placed the toy on the ground and grasped her father's thigh.

"I love you, daddy!"

"See, there was no reason to cry or be angry at your brother."

Zhang Dong placed his hand on both Xiu and Jun's heads and ruffled them both up. While Xiu was giggling around, the younger boy remained silent. The boy was still somewhat reserved but there was a change. During the moment that he was repairing the toy, he noticed that Jun's eyes were quite sparkling. It was clear that he was interested in the process but probably didn't know how to express his interest.

"Now, don't you two have something to say to each other?"

He stopped petting them, the two children looked at each other, Jun moved his head down while Xiu pouted while turning her head to the side.

"Now don't be like that, accidents will happen, the toy can be easily replaced but you can't replace your family."

After a moment of pouting the two finally managed to reconcile.

"I'm sowwy..."

"Me too, I'm sorry..."

Zhang Dong just nodded while smiling, this was not over yet as he was still holding out on one last thing. While Xiu was happily looking at her toy, Jun continued to steal glances towards it.

"Hey Jun."

The moment Zhang Dong called out to him, the small boy flinched and almost fell on his behind.

"No need to be afraid of your father, I brought something for you."

"Something for me?"

"Yes, here."

With a small wave of his hand, Zhang Dong brought out the other toy robot that he was holding in his spatial ring. The gift was placed on the ground close to the pink toy robot that belonged to Zhang Xiu.

"This is X-Warrior 2 and it's yours."

"Mine?"

Zhang Jun looked at the blue robot that was standing on the ground. It was a bit bulkier than the pink one and clearly crafted with a more masculine look in mind.

"Yes it's yours, daddy made it a long time ago but never had a chance to give it to you before he had to leave..."

While Zhang Dong tried to explain himself, his young child didn't seem to care that much. He was more focused on the toy that was standing in front of him than on the explanation.

"Why don't you give him a command, it reacts to the same ones like the one that your sister has."

His plan was to create more of these toys later as he did love when these types of robots combined with each other. For that he would need to make at least two more, maybe one for himself and one for his wife. Then they could have them combine with each other to form the ultimate toy robot.

"C-can I?"

"Sure you can, it's yours now, how about you play with your sister?"

Xiu looked at the blue robot that was there and then back to her own. Luckily for Zhang Dong she seemed to prefer the more girly looking model while her brother was taken in by the blue one.

The kids finally started giving out some voice commands while their father looked over them. This small moment of peace would be burned into his mind, helping him through the dire times they were heading in...

Chapter 418

"Is everything alright?"

"Ah yes, sorry I spaced out a bit there..."

"You have a lot of nerve to space out when such a beauty is right next to you!"

Zhang Dong chuckled while hugging his wife closer. It was the dawn of the next day, after catching up with his children it was then time for his wife. One night of passion later he woke up with many thoughts crowding his head. Which continued all the way until the next day.

"The meeting is going to start soon, we need to get up..."

After a night of pleasure, it was time to get back to work. While he had gone through his decision in his head, he still intended to listen to the people he was responsible for.

"Do we really have to?"

To his surprise, Liena that most of the time was the proper cultivator in the relationship, wanted to skip the boring talk with the elders.

"It hasn't been long since you have returned, the children need their father."

From a family standpoint, it would probably be better if he remained at the sect ground to build up the relationship with his son and daughter. Regretfully the people from the other empires would not wait for that, neither would Wang Long. His biggest enemy remained at large and he had no idea where to search for him.

"I know but if we don't act now, their future will be at stake."

"I know..."

Liena nodded as he had clued her in about the coming war as he was returning from the empire. The other elders had also been informed via Zhang Liu that was close to returning home.

After a few moments, both of them put their robes back on. Zhang Dong's gaze focused on his wife as she was just as he remembered her. Five years did nothing to diminish her beauty probably before she reached the age of five hundred it would be hard to spot a wrinkle.

As he was the Patriarch everyone was already waiting for his arrival. The meeting chamber was still the same as the sect wasn't damaged in the Soaring Dragon Sect assault.

Things had changed a bit though, with his absence the power balance had been shifted towards people like Huo Qiang and his Huo Clan. While he had feared that something like this would have happened, he was thankful to his old friend that he didn't succumb to the allure of power.

With Zhang Dong gone it wouldn't be hard for the Huo clan faction to take over. They did have the most nascent soul level masters and also the strongest one of them all. They would be crippling the sect though as they knew that Liena would not give up her position without a fight.

In a sense, the fear of other sects attacking during an infighting process had worked in favor. Without enough power to force the other side to capitulate without a fight, it was quite hard to change the status quo.

'I guess having factions at a similar level is good for keeping order but this only works if they are close to equal...'

In his sect there were mostly only two factions, the one that he was the leader of which was the Zhang Clan and Feng Clan factions. The other faction was on the Huo side and their allies that prefer doing things the old-fashioned way, by the sword or fist.

"Senior brother Dong, when will we spar again? I need to show you all the new tricks that I have learned in these past five years!"

"Qiang, this is not the place for this!"

Before Zhang Dong could greet his old fight buddy, his wife placed herself between the two and started glaring.

"It's fine, Liena."

Before they could continue their comedic routine of shouting profanities at each other, he decided to grab his wife by her waist, pick her up and place her on the nearby chair to the side. The other Elders weren't quite used to something like this, seeing their powerful Matriarch being handled like a child was not something they were expecting.

"Haha, that's my senior brother!"

Huo Qiang was ecstatic after seeing his shouting partner being put in her place. It totally evaded him that Zhang Dong was only doing it to keep both of them quiet but it was just easier to do it this way. If he wanted to shut Qiang up, he would probably have to give him a good thrashing in a spar. Then he would gain a few months of silence before the next challenge.

"Why you..."

"Okay everyone, quiet down, we have a lot of things to discuss!"

Before his wife could retaliate he forced his aura through the whole chamber. This caused his voice to travel everywhere as well as showing that his cultivation realm was the largest in this room. The moment he did it, he could see some of the elder's faces dropping down but mostly from the Huo Clan side.

"As you might have heard... there has been a recent revelation concerning my true roots..."

"Yes, I would have never thought that you would turn up to be related to the Long clan, should we start calling you Long Dong now, Dong'er?"

Zhang Jin with his somewhat younger-looking face and more vital energy commented as most people here were already aware of the Golden Dragon title.

"That won't be necessary, I will always be part of the Zhang Clan."

The elders started murmuring with each other at his declaration. Normally a cultivator would quickly abandon their family name to join such a prestigious clan. They didn't actually know that the only reason that their Patriarch didn't was because of the naming.

"I would wish to discuss the plans for the future, as some of you might know, a war is awaiting us..."

While some of the inner circle elders knew about everything, there were still a lot of them that didn't know what was happening. Zhang Dong quickly explained about the coming century-long war that would turn the empire upside down.

At first he thought that they would be scared and try to run, but he had underestimated these cultivation nuts. Instead of fleeing, they seemed interested in the lands beyond the borders. The more he explained the more they were convinced to join the war effort and get stronger.

"I say that we just wait here, there is no reason for us to fear these 'empires', our sect is strong and now we even have the protection of the Azure Emperor himself, there is nothing we have to fear!"

Surprisingly Huo Qiang's father spoke up in favor of the war. Most of the elders nodded at this point as everyone felt confident in their power. It did help that quite a bit of them went through a drastic change.

After Wang Long's attack, he did boost them to new heights at the cost of most of his spirit stones and remaining spirit stones that the sect had. They would probably need to restock on those before attempting something similar but with him there, they were even more confident.

"I guess you all have made up your mind?"

The discussion didn't even take more than an hour as everyone was in favor of fighting. They also wanted to expand their lands after the fact that they were so strong. They wanted to take back the lands that previously belonged to the Dark Palm Sect. With no fear of retaliation from the two sects that were occupying this land, they were resolute in taking it back.

"I to wish to reclaim that land, Qiang, could you take a couple of our ascended brothers there and ask them to return the lands that we should have received?"

Even he believed that they should have been given those lands. The ones that killed the Patriarch were them and not the other sects. They weren't even given a speck from their treasure room, they were only left scraps that the other three sects didn't want.

"Now you are speaking my language brother!"

"Wait, Zhang Zhi keep Huo Qiang company, make sure that he doesn't go overboard, I don't want a bloodbath to happen."

Before Huo Qiang could leave Zhi was given an order to be a chaperone. They would also first send quick letters to notify that the other sects needed to leave the lands. But to be sure that they left most of their treasuries behind, he needed to send a proper battle-ready force of nascent soul masters along with the declaration.

"As you command Patriarch!"

Their United Element Sect was now a force to be reckoned with. The number of nascent soul masters that they had was staggering and if they managed to get their hands on a few spirit stone mines, it would only increase further.

“Before the Heavenly Crane Sect can move in, we need to claim some of the lands that used to belong to the Soaring Dragon Sect.”

This was another big issue, what would become of all those resources. Their sect was also run by the Soaring Dragon Sect that was not there anymore. What would normally happen in this situation would be that the next strongest sect would get it all. This would be the Heavenly Crane Sect along with the Long Clan, but now they were in the conversation too.

While their real strength was yet unknown, they had some accolades that would make people think twice before they attacked them. The first one was them defending themselves against Wang Long that later managed to eradicate his own sect. The next was that their Patriarch was Long Dong, the sworn blood-brother of the Azure Emperor.

Just by being associated with the Emperor, their Sect would gain prestige at the same level as the big three powerhouses. While Zhang Dong didn't intend to manage all of that land, he would still like to receive the taxes in the form of spirit stones from these lands.

‘I won't even need to rob those spirit stone mines, they will send everything to me but I have to be fast about it...’

Thus it was time to formulate a plan of action. They had many nascent soul masters to carry out this task. He just needed to send them in small groups of at least three to show off their might.

“Everyone listen up, we can't waste any more time, we must get control of the most important lands, I need you to list the places with the largest spirit stone mines to me, we will start with those!”

It was time to act, there was no way of knowing when this war would start. Wang Long was also waiting for him in the shadows, while his sect worked on taking over the other sects he would visit the Soaring Dragon Sect or at least what remained of it...

Chapter 419

“You can't do this, we need to discuss it with the elders...”

“Oh? Who is going to stop us? We can discuss everything with these!”

A rather imposing-looking muscle-brained cultivator with red hair was hovering in the air along with three other ten nascent soul masters. All of them were hovering over what used to be the Dark Palm Sect main sect. Around them were many peaks which were producing a certain light.

“If you think that your protective formation will last for long, you are mistaken.”

Besides The ten nascent soul masters, there were also some large ships hovering in the air. These ships were smaller versions of the Argonaut but were not much behind it. The whole area was surrounded and the protective formation that was pulsating with energy would not last for more than a day.

“Elder Qiang, please calm down, the Patriarch has ordered us to offer them a branch before we act.”

“So that's why he told you to come here...”

Huo Qiang looked to the side where Zhang Zhi was floating about. The man was respected by him as he was probably the fourth-strongest person in the entire sect. His choice of weapon was a strange single-edged blade that Qiang would find hard to evade.

"If elder Qiang would allow me to speak."

Qiang just shrugged and flew back while Zhang Zhi took center stage. He soon opened his mouth and with the help of spiritual energy made his voice echo through the whole area.

"Fellow Daoists from the Yinglong Pavilion, we have come to claim what was rightfully ours. Years have passed since our Patriarch had defeated the Dark Palm Sect's leader, we are grateful that you have temporarily kept watch over the lands that rightfully belong to our United Element Sect. Now as our Patriarch has ascended to his rightful place at the side of the Azure Emperor you can relinquish this burden back to us..."

Zhang Zhi continued to talk and painted a nice picture for this Yinglong Pavilion that had remained here in the main city. This was one of the three sects that had cannibalized these lands.

After the debacle with the Limitless Sword Society that lost their leader after Zhang Dong slew him, they together with the Dragon Gate Sect moved in to distribute most of the lands between themselves. This was the center of their power base here though and rich with treasures.

Zhang Dong ordered a swift occupation by force but not like he wanted to become some kind of bloody despot. He would let everyone keep their lives and some of the treasures if they just packed up their bags and left. Zhang Zhi's words just let the other sect keep some face as it made it look as they were just safekeeping the place for Zhang Dong from the beginning.

Now that it was known that he was the golden dragon and at a similar standing as the Azure Emperor, there was no shame in bowing their heads before him. It would actually make it look like this Yinglong Pavilion was in cahoots with the United Element Sect which would make the other sects fearful of them.

"Ah yes... that's right, we were only safekeeping the treasures for the honorable Golden Dragon, the brother of our honored Azure Emperor!"

After some back and forth the elders finally capitulated. There was just no way that they could go against a force this big without any backup. The cultivators from the United Element Sect could also teleport people onto their ships, even Zhang Dong could appear to eradicate them.

There was enough information to back up the rise in power of this sect. Everyone also watched the royal broadcast which could not be faked. What remained was to hope that they would at least keep their lives.

....

"I see, good going Zhi, prioritize spirit stones and other treasures that store spiritual energy over weapons."

"As you wish, Patriarch!"

Zhang Dong ended the call with his most trusted warrior. He wanted to make sure that his sect got all the spirit stones they could get their hands on. Anything that could store other types of elemental Qi

was also important. He still had to boost his three formation cores to nourish this white seed of his. As it continued to grow, so did he, and his maximum power expanded further.

"Everything is going as planned, Liena is clearing things out at the borders, if everything goes well we can siphon the spirit stone tax towards our sect instead of the Heavenly Crane."

After nodding he took off towards his next destination to which he was going solo. The war was approaching but Wang Long was the more important target. His enemy was a murder-happy individual that saw these people as nothing more than points to further his cause.

Luckily Zhang Dong was knowledgeable about the system Wang Long was using. There was a large change in spirit point gaining after getting closer to the nascent soul level. Wang Long would find it really hard to gain anything from low level cultivators, even core formation masters would probably be giving him meager gains now.

This was probably in place to encourage the system holder to go after stronger opponents closer to their own level. Farming points by killing mortals and low level cultivators would probably give fewer points than killing one nascent soul master.

'I hope that's the case... but not like I ever tried killing any of the non-combatants.'

He could mostly just speculate as he never went through a massive killing spree. The system could have some kind of feature that could still absorb the energy from a massive massacre. Before any of that happened he needed to get to Wang Long, while his sect brothers were getting more resources he was flying towards ground zero.

'It sure is fun to be free like this...'

With his current cultivation, he could fly at the speed of a great circle nascent soul master and the best thing was, that no one would stop him. As he rocketed through the various border regions of the other sects everyone just bowed their heads. The word had already spread and his golden dragon status had given him enough prestige to almost go anywhere.

Yes, almost as when he arrived closer to what used to be the main area that was occupied by the Soaring Dragon Sect he found his first barrier.

'Someone placed a barrier here?'

It was a literal barrier made from energy behind him; he could see some dark clouds gathering everywhere. The zone of demonic energy was further inside and this formation was certainly keeping it from spreading outside.

"Halt, Identify yourself!"

A small group of cultivators approached him, one of them was a nascent soul master at the middle stage and he had about ten core formation cultivators with him to boot. The robes that they were wearing was something he had seen before.

They belonged to the Heavenly Crane Sect that now after the Soaring Dragon Sect's demise was crowned the number two power in this empire. While the smaller and middle sized sects would push

open their door for his new status, this sect was a bit different. They saw themselves at the same level as the Long Clan.

“Oh? Do I really need to introduce myself, I did proclaim that I would search out the one named Wang Long, did you perhaps miss my inauguration speech, junior?”

The man he was talking with was actually many times older but his cultivation would be considered lower. Zhang Dong was now the Golden Dragon so he needed to act like one. While this elder was probably held in high regard in his own sect, Zhang Dong did not really need to answer to anyone besides their high elders or Patriarch.

“Y-you dare? J-junior...”

The old man was taken aback by how he was speaking but before he could react one of the core formation cultivators next to him quickly whispered something into his ear.

“This is... I must apologize but I didn’t expect someone of your status to arrive at this forsaken land.”

He quickly changed his tune and clasped his hand while performing a small bow. All the other people that were here did the same.

“But why would the esteemed Long Dong the Golden Dragon grace us with his presence?”

“Ah yes, I need to get there, so could you lower this formation for a moment, I wouldn’t want to destroy it.”

Zhang Dong smiled a bit while pointing towards the lands that previously were populated by many other cultivators. The dark smoke that covered the area was making it hard to see anything so he would need to get closer to examine it further.

“You wish to go past the formation... but the Supreme Elders...”

The man moved his head to the side as it seemed that he was in some trouble. The Supreme Elders that he mentioned probably ordered him to keep everyone out. They probably didn’t foresee that Zhang Dong would arrive here so fast after he made that speech. They might have counted on him to just be all hot air and not follow through his claims but now he was here.

“Don’t worry about your Supreme Elders, If I see them I’ll put in a good word for you.”

“But that wouldn’t really...”

“No need to thank me, now please, I don’t have all day, the more we wait here the more potential victims could appear, I must examine this demonic presence that lurks inside.”

He knew well that there was a lot of peacocking involved in situations like this. The two parties were not against each other as they were in a truce. They still had their boundaries and them letting him just pass here would be a slight hit to their face.

“Could you please wait honored Golden Dragon, I will inform a Supreme Elder and ask for permission this instant...”

“Ah, that’s troubling indeed... you see, the more we wait, the longer the madman remains in the empire. If you aren’t willing to let me pass, I will have to be somewhat reasonable...”

As he spoke the other cultivators could feel a progressive increase in his power levels. While at first he seemed to be someone at the core formation level, his power exploded well past the nascent soul master that was here.

“Senior please...”

“I’m sorry but you have prattled on long enough.”

Without giving these people any more time he bolted towards the protective formation. Due to his formation master knowledge, it was not hard to find an adequate spot to just slip through. A small Zhang Dong sized hole was left behind but with a wave of his hand, he mended it in an instant.

“Well then, I’ll be seeing you my fellow Daoists.”

The group of cultivators just looked on as Zhang Dong blasted into the distance and quickly vanished into the dark miasma. On their minds was only the scolding that they would receive for not being able to stop this madman from going into a deadly zone filled with malicious beings.

Chapter 420

“He really did a number on these people, there is nothing left...”

Like a light bug going through a dense dark bog, Zhang Dong continued to fly towards the center of this disaster. Dark Miasma was everywhere, it blocked out the sun and made the air toxic. If he didn’t have his holy aura around his body, his clothes would start to dissolve.

The lack of fresh breathable air was also a problem, luckily he knew a technique to purify it as he went through the area. It was an old one that almost any demon hunter knew, the days as his persona flowed back into his head as he tried to compare this area to some of the demonic outbreaks he had inspected in the past.

‘I have never went through demonic Qi this thick before, it must be feeding on the spirits of the dead... their souls are crying out in rage...’

Souls were very much a reality in this world and depending on how a person died they could turn into decrepit souls of the dead. These souls were skewed reflections of their former selves. They had jumbled memories of their lives but mostly what they focused was on the moment of death.

The demonic techniques would only enhance the rage in these souls and would help them be created. These phantoms would be formed in places of massacres and could cause harm to regular people that did not know how to protect their own souls.

These decrepit souls were broken, thus they longed to be whole again. There was only one thing that they desired and that was to eat the soul energy of others. If they gained enough they could even gain sentience yet again. They would turn into powerful demonic creatures with a proper form, even humanoid ones that just lusted for more soul energy.

“Here they come...”

For someone of his level of cultivation, it was not hard to pick up these demonic souls. Some of them looked like purple wisps of wisps with human faces on them, while others had already consumed each other to form some larger horrors.

Luckily Zhang Dong had a lot of practice against foes like this. They were just the type of being that he could easily dispatch just by absorbing their energies with the help of his soul core.

As he stopped a glowing orb in the middle of his chest appeared. It started spinning around to create a vortex of energy that started pulling the souls into it. Unless these decrepit souls managed to turn into proper demonic beings, he could just siphon them dry.

At the Long Clan, he was able to gain a lot of holy energy and a new technique. Here on the other hand he could increase the size of his soul core. Even though he was making good progress it didn't bring him much joy.

Many people died here, millions of lives had been lost just because Wang Long wanted more power. In a sense, it was his fault as if he never pushed his enemy's buttons he would probably not find himself backed into a corner.

At the time he didn't know though nor did he predict that the maniac would go through something like this. His main goal was to protect his own sect and family. It was regrettable but he already made peace with himself that he wouldn't be able to save everyone.

Thus any of the decrepit souls were absorbed into his body. This was only residual soul energy, the person it belonged to was already dead and had probably entered the reincarnation path.

At least that was what the people of this world believed in, what actually happened to the dead he was unsure. With beings able to pull his soul into a world like this, he wouldn't be surprised if there were more than one answer.

'There are a lot of them... I must be getting close to ground zero.'

The further he flew the more of these souls came out of the woodworks. They were all promptly absorbed by his soul core which slowly gained more power.

Finally, he arrived at a large gate, or at least what was left of it. The symbols for the Soaring Dragon Sect were there, cracked and hard to read. When he arrived there he also started hearing strange wails which didn't sound like the souls.

"Zombies?"

The living dead were quickly drawn to the light that he was producing. In the miasma, he could see ugly creatures that inhabited dead human corpses. The decrepit souls invaded these shells to create monsters that now wandered these lands.

'How many of them are there...'

Zhang Dong didn't expect to see this many monsters here. He expected to see some kind of ruin covered by miasma, instead, he saw jumbled-up messes of flesh wandering the streets. They were quite strange, not that familiar to regular zombies, they were much thinner. It was as if they were sucked dry by something before turning to nothing but skin and bones.

‘It could have been some kind of absorption technique...’

This was his best guess, Zhang Dong could absorb various energies like lightning. This could be the same for Wang Long that had switched to a demonic cultivator. These techniques focused on robbing people of their life force and transferring it to the demonic cultivator.

It wasn’t surprising that his opponent went with a technique like that, it would give him a lot of power fast. This world was filled with life, this Empire was many times larger than the planet that he had come from. He would be surprised if there were a trillion people living here as there were many cities that housed a hundred million residents.

While the miasma was thick, Zhang Dong could peer through it if he concentrated. Thus he used his spiritual sense to scour the land in all directions and only discovered more destruction and death.

It had not been long since this place was destroyed; it didn’t seem that even the Heavenly Crane Sect had checked things out here. The people that were patrolling were probably temporary guards. He wouldn’t be surprised if they rushed a team of higher cultivators after he appeared there.

They were probably looking into the demonic energies and hoping to get to the potential Soaring Dragon Sect stash later. But he knew that his opponent Wang Long would probably have lifted anything worthwhile like spirit stones.

‘He was only the grandson of the Patriarch, this doesn’t mean that he knew every hidden treasure that some of the other elders could have kept hidden away, there could be places hidden away that he didn’t get to...also...’

Zhang Dong thought that there could be potential survivors. Judging how untrusting most of the high leveled cultivators were, it wouldn’t be strange for them to create something akin to a secret lair. In those hidden away places, there still could be people, some family members of those elders that could have run there.

‘I need to do something about this miasma... it’s screwing up my sensors... but first, Bob scan the area, this demonic energy should have Wang Long’s handprints all over them, create an energy profile for him!’

“Affirmative.”

After getting Bob it felt like he had a chip inside of his brain. With his help, he could do some things that went over the old system. What he now needed to do was to fly around and gather more data, this took him to a large hole that was too uniform to not have been created by some kind of explosion.

The demonic energies were the strongest here, dark lightning and poisonous rain filled the hole that was at least five kilometers in diameter. He could feel an opposing energy to the demonic one that has not yet vanished.

‘Was this the last confrontation... this energy probably belonged to a great circle nascent soul master... maybe the sect Patriarch?’

He tried looking around to find a body but there was nothing but empty space here. Some terrible technique went off here that disintegrated everything in a wide radius. It was as if someone scooped the earth out of here.

‘Energy signature of target stored in the database.’

As he was looking around he heard Bob finish up on the scan. A new tracking option in his system appeared with Wang Long’s icon.

Out of curiosity, he activated the new feature but he quickly turned it off. This was due to the whole area turning red the moment he gave it a test run. The whole space was filled with Wang Long’s evil energies, it was normal for the system to pick color everything red.

‘I got what I came for, but I can’t just leave this place like this...’

It was time to clean things up. With Wang Long’s energy fingerprint in his database, he could start the hunt. Before that could happen he needed to clear out this demonic energy that was messing with his detective work.

Zhang Dong placed his palms together and he started to concentrate. A burst of holy energy erupted from his body, it spread in every direction while he remained in the epicenter of this wide-open chasm.

‘First, let me get all of these decrepit souls before I continue.’

Without opening his eyes he created a large vortex that radiated pure life energy. The beckoning effect on these life force-hungry souls would be immense. In no time, a swarm of them appeared from all sides.

It was like a tsunami of soul energy coming his way but instead of washing him away, they were sucked into the vortex where his soul core was waiting for them. They were all sucked in while the other creatures like the zombies and lesser flesh demons could not reach him so far up in the air.

The souls that grabbed ahold of the human bodies could not be absorbed. If the decrepit soul bonded with the flesh too much then purifying it would be the only way. Only creatures that kept most of their soul form would be ripe for absorption.

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“What is the meaning of this, couldn’t you have held him up for a few hours?”

“My apologies but he just jumped in through the formation, it was like paper to him...”

The elder that Zhang Dong met before he entered the tainted land was now being chewed up by another old man. There was a whole large force of nascent soul masters here now, it was clear that they came to investigate the inside of the formation but were a bit too late.

“E-elder...”

As the leader was shouting he heard someone call to him. When he was about to reprimand this junior he noticed it as well. Inside of the formation, there was some kind of strange light shining through the miasma.

“W-what is that?”

All of them had to cover their eyes as the glow only intensified and spread all the way towards the edges of the formation. Soon they witnessed a power they would never forget...