

Unfathomable 51

Chapter 51

Matt opened his eyes, a small boy was poking his thigh. He recognized this child as it was his nephew, he looked around noticing that he was in the back yard that belonged to his cousin. He didn't know how he got here but the youth was holding on to a ball and he wanted to play. He could see some other family members around as he stood up from his chair. The boy smiled and started kicking the ball towards him while he just kicked it back. The boy miskicked to the side that made the ball tumble away from him, so Matt decided to go after it as it was still closer to where he was.

He bent over to pick it up, but then when he turned around there was no one around anymore. The whole place looked devoid of life, his family members nowhere to be seen. He tried calling out but no one replied, then he noticed something. The ball that he was holding had a strange texture to it, he looked down to see that he was holding on to a man's head. The head belonged to the man that he had slain not so long ago, tears of blood were coming out of the dead looking eyes that gazed at him with disgust. He screamed out in shock waking up to find himself in the same pool that he had dozed off before.

He panted a bit while grasping his chest for air, not much time had passed since he had entered this room and no one came to bother him. He gathered his thoughts and stood up, the water running down his muscular body as he grasped a tower that was on the side. He gave out a sigh while gathering his thoughts trying to forget about what happened today.

Uh, still not used to this shit.

He frowned while walking back to the main bedchambers, pulling up his status screen to focus his thoughts at something else.

Name :	Zhang Dong
Affiliation :	Zhang Clan
Spirit Points :	192084
Cultivation Base Qi :	Core Formation [Middle Stage 5%] (Lightning Core)
Cultivation Base Body :	Foundation Establishment [Great Circle 0.5%] (Silver Body)
Techniques :	Lightning Qi cultivation art, Silver Body Arts, Thunderlight Sword, Thunder Movement Art...
Dao :	Dao of Heavenly Lightning, Dao of Smithing and Crafting
Other :	Senior Aura

Guess none of those other core formation cultivators died, only got those points for the fire lord guy...

He didn't manage to cripple any of the other elders in that fight, he didn't get any spirit points for most damage done to the enemy either as you tended to get in some games. Zhang Jin had finished off the

defeated cultivators, but the one that he took out at the start had gotten away, not like he really cared that much for them. He took out the ring that he got from the big baddie and scanned it with his spiritual sense, discovering quite a bit of spiritual stones in there. There were even some middle-grade ones in there, but just a handful. If he absorbed those he could probably get the next level of the crafting abode, which would let him make earth grade weapons and clothes.

There were also some beast cores in there, some cultivation manuals and a couple of weapons. He pulled out a spear and tried to examine it.

Grand Fire Spear Earth Lower Grade

He wondered how much he would gain in his body tempering technique if he absorbed a weapon that was above the grade it was currently in. Previously it went up by 20% if he used high-grade weapons while being in the middle stage, so it should be at least that, might be more as this time around it was a weapon that was not just one small grade above but a whole realm above.

Should I try it? But it takes a while to absorb what if someone walks in?

He shook his head as he was still new to this place, he needed to figure out how he stood with this so-called Zhang Clan of his. He was supposed to become it's Patriarch apparently, so he tried to remember what a Patriarch is actually supposed to do. From what he knew, they were the leaders of the Clans, some were hidden in the background and didn't show themselves to the public while some took an active part in the Clan's business. His grandpa told him that he shouldn't worry too much and that he wouldn't really need to run things.

Matt went back to fiddling with the spear, but instead of absorbing he dumped some points to level up his appraisal skill. He wanted to know if anything would show up and it was just 100 SP for the first one. Nothing seemed to change at first, but after he kept looking at it another window popped up.

Name	Grand Fire Spear
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Grade :	Lower
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Attribute :	Fire
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Oh, it did work. There are more stats to see now... could have figured out the attribute through the name... The rest are just question marks guess I need to invest more points to see the rest...

The next level cost 500 and the next one 1000, he also dumped in 2000 points to get another one in.

Name	Grand Fire Spear
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Grade : Earth Lower

Attribute : Fire

Durability : Medium

Condition : **Fair**

Advanced Grade : C-

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C-? is this school or something... though that would mean that it's slightly below average if it goes from F to A ... should I dump 5000 SP to get the next level... uh... think I'll stop for now, I'll see how many points I have left after I clear out those spirit stones... also Zhang Jin said that he would give me more of the spoils later... He looked stingy though, hope he doesn't scrooge out on me. Unlocked Durability and condition as well, guess that will come in handy when buying things. Don't want a weapon that will break after one swing even if it has high attack power.

Matt placed the weapon back into the storage ring and started examining some other items. His Crystalline Flying Sword came out with a pristine condition with an advanced grade of A+, guess it was on the top end of high grade flying swords. He also brought up one of his skills, wondering if it would show any other statics now.

Name : Lightning Qi Cultivation art (Upgradable)

Grade : Immortal Low

Attribute : Lightning

Advanced-Grade : B

Qi Limit High

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The statics were self-explanatory, the Qi Limit just meant that he had a big gas tank, guess the higher the more Qi related attacks he could do. The thing that was the most peculiar was the 'Upgradable' part in the brackets, he didn't remember it being there before. He hovered his finger over that and it took him to a new menu with some more options now. But it looked like a skill tree in a game this time around, with only two options for the first branch.

He didn't have many options, one only said Empowered Lightning Qi Cultivation art and the other said Gray Lightning Qi Cultivation art. It kind of made it seem like it was a choice between two major schools that he had to take. He hovered his fingers to see if there was another explanation and there was.

Empowered Lightning Qi Cultivation	A superior version of the Lightning Qi cultivation art, further upgrades unlock other options.
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Gray Lightning Qi Cultivation	A darker path unlocks for the cultivator that follows this cultivation art.
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I guess the gray one is the dark side choice... Though shooting black lightning at people would be cool... hope I won't get pink lightning with the other choice...

He didn't want to go with some kind of evil cultivation art, then end up looking like a wrinkled up raisin. He also wondered if this was actually a good thing. Should he upgrade his cultivation art, or get a new one later. The system said that this would last him up to the great circle of core formation, he would have to get a new one when he wanted to get to the next level. But the prices for nascent soul cultivation manuals were quite high, plus he had to reach the great circle stage first and level up his body tempering skill too.

He looked at the skill tree from the empowered lightning qi cultivation art, he could see a skill tree leading up to the Nascent Soul. He just needed to unlock two of them to get to the Nascent soul one. There were even color options for golden, violet and azure. The colors probably meant something as the Nascent Soul would be in that color later on.

*Hm, guess I'll decide on that later on... *

Also, he recalled the battle from today, then the dream he had and decided to look up something else in the cash shop.

Void Mind	20000 Spirit Points	The cultivator abandons his emotions for a sharper mind, nothing can faze a cultivator that studies this technique.
Tranquil Mind	30000 Spirit Points	This mind technique helps keep the cultivator's demons at bay and helps to calm down his emotional state. It improves the state of mind to keep calm under pressure.
Berserker's Mind	15000 Spirit Points	Exponential increases the cultivator's battle strength with the side effect of entering an enraged state.

He focused on the tranquil mind technique, he could really use that. He realized with the last battle that he wasn't getting accustomed to this world fast enough, the problem was his attitude. He didn't have that killer personality and a lot of times he froze, not knowing what to do. During this fight, he hesitated almost causing him to die in the process. He felt a bit disgruntled about killing the guy, but he knew that he was a typical murderous cultivator with a high body count. If he wanted to improve, he would have to change his mindset. He would probably have to take lives in the future, but he didn't want to end up as a senseless murderer.

The rest of his current skills just showed the advanced grade and instead of the Qi Limit it just showed had a marker for how much spiritual energy you needed to use the skill. Like his javelin skill was quite low, while his avatar transformation was at high. He would probably be buying some stuff after he got the rest of the things those enemy cultivators had, or at least what the Zhang Clan gramps didn't pocket himself.

So was thinking, do you guys (the readers) want to vote on the color of the lightning he'll get later one, guess those three choices can be expanded on. Though I'm leaning towards violet or gold, as azure is kind of plain.

Vote here.

Chapter 52

He wanted to start absorbing spirit stones and spending all of them on upgrading his cultivation, as well as getting that mind skill to ease his troubled mind. But at about that moment the doors to his new penthouse apartment opened up and his good old gramps walked out with two people that were closer to Zhang Dong's age group. The man looked a bit stern and calculative while the woman looked somewhat motherly with a smile on her face.

He almost did a business greeting in the form of a handshake while looking at the other male from the group, but then placed his hands behind his back and gave the people a nod. The two clasped their hands as they did a formal greeting and didn't talk, they let Zhang Jie do that instead.

"This is Zhang Ya and Zhang Kuo, they are my disciples and can be trusted, we need to talk about a couple of things."

The two looked up at Zhang Dong, trying to feel him out.

"Ah, I guess you want to talk about me becoming the next Patriarch, are you sure about that Gramps?"

The two people twitched a bit after they heard the man call their clan's only core formation elder gramps. The man in question just grasped his belly and laughed out loud in a jolly voice.

"No one ever called me gramps before, but yes it's about that. Some members are against you becoming the new Patriarch, they don't want someone from the side family to be in that position."

The man shrugged, kind of not caring about what those other clan members thought, he didn't put much weight in the purity of the blood, all Zhang Clan members were equal in his eyes. He was more interested in their character, drive and actual battle prowess.

"Well, not like they can do anything about it, they are mostly hot air. If they offend you in any way, be sure to give them a good thrashing!"

"Also Ya and Kuo will help you out with your Patriarch duties, if you need anything just give them a call, they'll be your guides around the clan grounds don't need to worry about making these two work hard!"

The man laughed some more before giving the two people behind him a pat on the shoulder. The female just smiled while the man rolled his eyes slightly.

"It's a pleasure to meet our Clan's savior, it's going to take some time to set up the ceremony and banquet."

Matt tipped his head to the side while looking at the woman, question marks appearing next to his head.

"Ceremony, banquet?"

This time the man stepped out and replied.

“Yes, the Patriarch candidate is adorned with the title during the ceremony, all the core clan members have to be present during it. After the title is bestowed we host a banquet, then it’s customary for the Patriarch to visit the city so that everyone can witness his grand appearance.”

While the man was talking the woman slowly went behind Matt and started patting him down. He noticed that she had a measuring tape in her hands.

“We need to prepare your robes for the ceremony, your white battle robes aren’t suited for the festivities also the color isn’t very eye-catching.”

The woman said while chuckling to herself and doing her measurements, her eyes were sparkling as she did it making it seem that she was really into this task.

“We still have to make repairs to the grand formation, account for the loss of lives in the attack and prepare for any further intrusions.”

“Do you think someone will attack us again?”

Matt asked.

“No Senior, we should have eliminated the core fighting strength of the clans that attacked us, the Tsai Clan will probably try to hold up in their domain, the Wu clan lost their Patriarch that was their strongest cultivator the Wong clan retained some of their cultivators but don’t think we will see them again. Due to Senior showing his power, the other Clans will probably think twice before planing anything. We should be safe for now, unless one of the stronger clans or sects gets involved.”

Matt just nodded while stretching his hands out so that the woman could measure his arms, she giggles when she managed to take the measurements of his biceps. He didn’t really tense up like the last time a woman was touching him, guess the previous encounter did change him slightly.

“It will probably take about a month till the ceremony, you can just take your time and get used to living around here after it’s official we’ll talk about retaking our lost assets. I bet those bastards are shaking in their boots right now.”

Zhang Jin said while clenching his hand. The clan had lost most of its assets and was chased out of cities that they were managing, one of them being Moonlight City that Matt previously visited. After a while, the measurements were done and the woman excused herself to prepare the ceremonial garb, the stern-looking man also excused himself leaving Zhang Dong and Jin in the room alone.

“I didn’t want to say it next to the juniors, but you should prepare yourself for the future. This will be turbulent times for our Clan, we might have won the battle this time but we don’t know what will happen next. The Dark Palm sect might be a problem later as well, they were the ones that forced our Patriarch to act in that failed expedition. But in their eyes we were just a tool that could be used, let’s hope they order some other clans to finish the job instead.”

The Zhang Clan was more or less a medium-sized clan, they had their territory but in reality, this belonged to the Dark Palm sect that was the real hegemon in the area. They used the clans to manage the cities and resources for them, taxing them for ‘protection’ and using that to grow their sect. There was no rule against clan members joining sects, it was common for them to do so as if they were deemed worthy they would inherit powerful cultivation skills. But the further you were on the ladder

the more you were expected to put the sect on a higher pedestal than your clan or previous life. That was also the reason why most sects only recruited younger members as it was easier to indoctrinate the young.

“But you probably don’t want me to prattle on all day, so I’ll leave you be for now. Maybe if you look around your memory will return.”

Zhang Jin said while heading out, but stopped after Matt asked him a question.

“Um, aren’t you forgetting something?”

The man looked back at his grandson’s face, he was squinting at him and looking at a certain place. He followed that gaze and noticed that he was eyeing his storage ring. This made him sweat a bit as he thought he could pull a fast one on his grandson that might be busy with getting to know the ropes around here.

“Oh, ho ho.... silly me... here...”

He tossed Zhang Dong a storage ring, just one as he did say that he would have some people sort through them. He scanned its content to see some more spirit stones and resources, it looked to have similar things to what the Tsai leader’s ring had so he reckoned that was the stuff from those two other elders inside. He didn’t spot the bow that one guy used that he choked out though, did he get away or was gramps holding out on him?

“Well, then my dear, loving grandson... grandpa will be leaving...”

“Wait... didn’t one of them use a bow weapon...”

Old gramps twitched and caught a couple of times into his hand, before taking out another spatial ring and tossing it over.

“Oh, it was just such a nice bow, so I just couldn’t resist... forgive your old grandpa.”

The man laughed while looking at Zhang Dong that had a deadpan expression on his face as he pocketed the storage ring.

“You sure are a piece of work gramps... I’ll make you something better than the bow, later on, just provide me some resources.”

Matt knew that there were enough spirit stones in those rings to let him buy the next stage of the crafting abode, then he could make earth grade weapons next.

“Oh, you are also adept in the Dao of blacksmithing? What a talented grandson I have!”

The man just laughed while removing himself from the room as he got caught with his hand in the cookie jar, he would let Zhang Dong have some time to himself before seeing him again. The man in question just gave out a sigh while moving back to the room, he had to examine all the items and start absorbing the resources, it was time to level up!

Chapter 53

A pile of dust could be seen on the ground, it was the remains of the spirit stone that Zhang Dong had absorbed. He noticed that not every lower grade spirit stone gave him exactly ten points, they mostly ranged from seven to ten while the middle graded one gave him a hundred times that amount a pop. He now had quite enough points to spend on the crafting abode upgrade along with the tranquil mind skill which he did. He felt a slight migraine as the knowledge got injected into his brain once more, the process getting less painful each time.

The first thing he did after that was going to the ground, spring water around. He started cultivating this skill, hoping that it would relieve the stress he was feeling. He took a long breath then exhaled, his breathing slowing down as his body relaxed. His bodily functions slowed along with his breathing, the noises beside him getting quieter with each passing moment. He felt his spiritual energy inside his body, moving through his meridians. His mind was getting clearer with each passing moment, he was becoming one with the surroundings if someone were to enter they would have a hard time spotting him even if they were looking directly at him.

There wasn't anything grand happening, not flashy effects taking place. Matt just sat there, his breathing was nonexistent at this point as his head was void of any thoughts. He didn't feel fearful, angry or spiteful, he managed to reach a state of tranquility. He opened his eye, the day had turned to night as he stood up and looked outside. The city was covered in yellow lights, the springs were giving off a greenish hue as the light bounced off them.

"Well, it did calm me down."

He felt the stress levels declining significantly after he was done with his cultivating, even after he recalled the death of the man he slew, he still felt relaxed.

"I don't feel any different..."

He placed his thumb to his chin while doing a test, he recalled the night that he had with the busty cultivator. His lower area reacted to the stimulation, showing him that he still felt emotions. Asking your little brother was the proper way to get a feel for your emotions, yes...

"Hm, maybe it works more on negative emotions."

He wondered if he would be harder to anger now, but he would need to face an opponent to see if this technique would affect his fighting potential. Keeping calm under pressure was quite the big deal, he felt a lot calmer than before.

There were some things that he wanted to do, first buy the crafting abode, then see how well he could craft the earth ranked weapons. He also wanted to get his body tempering up a notch and then try to enhance his cultivation skill to the advanced version. With those boosts, he should probably be able to fight people even stronger than at the late stage of core formation. He had a month's time till the Patriarch ceremony was supposed to happen, so he had enough time to test things out.

After buying the abode he entered it, it had increased in size and he noticed that there were some other things he could do now. He could edit the items now, he could also reforge old ones. For instance, if he created a high grade sword, he could reforge it with some materials like the beast cores that would improve the advanced grade and add special effects. He did some tests on the cheap common grade items, he could keep boosting the weapon past an A+ into an S grade after that it would jump a grade.

So he could well just keep upgrading one weapon that he liked, instead of forging new ones in the hopes of getting the stats he wanted.

He also needed a real weapon, he saw the limitations that his sword skill had if he paired it against an earth graded weapon. Also, he needed to constantly use up spirit energy to keep it going.

“A shame though, it’s super cool looking.”

He lamented that he had to give up on one of his favorite skills, who didn’t like playing around with laser swords?

“Wait there might be a way though...”

He thought about something, what if he could find a weapon that he could combine his thunderlight sword skill. He started scrolling through the many sword diagrams he could get and after a while found something that could work. It was a longsword, it had some dragon patterns in the hilt while the blade looked to be made from some semi-transparent metal or crystal. The thing about it was that in theory it was supposed to absorb external sword skills letting the blade have a second form. So if you pumped in fire Qi into it, it would start forming a flame sword.

He bought it, but even just the schematics cost him about 10 thousand points as it was an earth grade weapon. He wanted to try crafting right there and then, but then he looked at the costs of the resources that had increased by quite a bit. He needed to dump at least 60 thousand into making one weapon so if he failed he would be losing quite a lot. He recalled the prices for earth grade weapons on the low end and they sold for about two thousand spirit stones up to four thousand, he would need to make a middle graded one just to break even.

I bet this rhythm game will just get harder, I had it easy with the previous ones because my cultivation was already high. I should upgrade my cultivation technique and my body tempering before doing this.

He had decided on upgrading his cultivation instead of buying a new one later, he was already used to it so changing midway could be detrimental. He pulled out one of the weapons he got from fighting the enemy clan members, it was a lower graded earth weapon. He started absorbing it as he did previously with the other weapons, it took longer as this was a higher graded weapon but even with just one it pushed his cultivation of the great circle to 40%. His eyes gleamed as he took out another weapon moving his cultivation up to 80%, his silvery body started changing color slightly as it started looking somewhat golden.

He took out another lower graded earth weapon, it slowly started dissolving into liquid metal and getting fused with his body. This time around the change was different. Many cracks could be seen on his body, they looked like spiderwebs. The sound was akin to steel bending and breaking as chunks of the first layer of his silvery skin started peeling off and drooping to the ground. The process took a while but afterward, his skin started gleaming with a golden hue.

Cultivation Base Body :Core Formation [Early Stage 5%] (Golden Body)

He was drenched in sweat, the golden luster subsiding after a while. Matt started poking his body, trying to feel if anything was different but couldn’t really tell. He should be sturdier now but he needed to test it out first. The bow that he had as a middle-grade weapon, plus he had the Tsai Patriarch’s saber which

was also a middle graded weapon. He had absorbed three lower-tier weapons that were the flying swords of the weaker cultivators he fought. He still had that fire spear though, so he took it out.

Okay, hope this works...

Matt grasped the spear closer to the pointed tip and pointed it at his hand. He then started pushing it into his palm, trying to check if it could pierce his now improved golden body. In theory, he should be able to tank the hits and to his surprise, the spear wasn't able to cut him. He tested it further, poking himself harder not getting more than a scratch. Then he took out the saber that was used against him previously and poked the tip with his finger. This weapon was a grade higher so after some poking he got cut, blood run onto the weapon while he pulled his hand away. The small cut healed itself rather quickly, showing that his body tempering technique wasn't just about defense there was some added regeneration involved.

He looked inside his storage ring, in it, he had three middle-grade weapons and 3 lower graded earth weapons, this wouldn't get him past to the middle stage but he didn't really want those weapons he wanted to craft one of his own for use.

Man, this is one expensive technique... though the good thing about it is, that it's fast to level up if you have the resources.

He absorbed the rest of the weapons and then left his crafting abode, for the time being, it was time to upgrade his cultivation technique. The bathing area looked like a good place to do this, the walls were enhanced to keep the spiritual energy inside and the water in there was rich in Qi. Plus he could open up the ceiling to take in any incoming lightning strikes, he sure hoped his new neighbors wouldn't mind some thunderous weather though.

In the middle of the pool, there was a platform to sit on, it was directly under the roof that could be opened and was probably used by the previous Patriarch to cultivate. Matt didn't know if the process would be painful or not, so he hesitated before clicking the Empowered Lightning Qi Cultivation upgrade and gulping afterward. The moment he did that, information started rushing into his brain again but this time around it was quite a bit more painful. Lightning energy started forming around him making rumbling sounds, the Qi inside of his body started getting switched out. The pale blue lightning that he used changed to a deeper blue color as you could see it getting discharged into the surroundings.

The upgrade cleansed his body from some impurities that were formed during the cultivation of a lesser graded method, making his sweat glands push out dark looking goo in the process. The usual vomiting of black blood soon followed, but it was a lot less than what happened when he first arrived in this world. The change was more or less contained and he managed to not pass out in the process.

Name :	Empowered Lightning Qi Cultivation art (Upgradable)
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Grade :	Immortal Middle
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Attribute :	Lightning
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Advanced-Grade :	B+
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Qi Limit	B+
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Matt stood up and gathered some Qi into his fist, throwing a punch upwards into the opened ceiling and watching as his lightning attack got discharged. He sure felt a lot stronger now, he felt that he might be able to battle that volcano construct without needing to change into his avatar form and win. That monster battle power was in the upper echelons of the late stage, maybe on the cusp of getting into the great circle. In theory, he should be equal with core formation experts in the great circle realm, if he reached the late-stage himself he should be able to tussle with multiple of such opponents at once. He had the tropy cultivation art that broke the level boundaries, maybe if he upgraded it further he could go up against a weaker early-stage nascent soul cultivator.

About a day had passed since he got to this room, but he didn't really feel like leaving just yet as he started to get into the zone with his cultivation. He decided to sit down and gather up some energy, the process was more or less the same but the upgraded cultivation technique showed him a way to purify the energies in the surroundings even more. The purer the Qi he absorbed, the stronger he would be and this wasn't even the final form of this technique. Soon the sky turned black and lightning bolts rained into his cultivation/bathing chamber. The clan members thought they were getting attacked but after Zhang Jin went to check up, they noticed that it was their Patriarch to be. They could feel the terrifying energy fluctuations coming out of his chambers so there weren't willing to bother him to stop, the storm clouds only remained directly above the main building and thanks to the reinforced cultivation chamber the thunderous sounds were somewhat contained.

Chapter 54

After getting in the zone Zhang Dong breathed out, the area filled with lightning energy that crackled through the spring water. About a week had passed since he got here, he never left this room and didn't really feel like eating during his cultivation period. His cultivation had gone up to about 20 percent which was a lot slower than before but still was quite fast if he compared it to people around this world. He wondered if it was due to the level of his cultivation method which was in the immortal grade.

He decided to try crafting his weapon before heading outside as he was cooped up in this room for far too long, there were sights to see. So he entered his crafting abode, he had about a hundred thousand points left, this would allow him to have two goes at it at most. The things that he found in the spatial rings weren't really useful for crafting as for this sword he needed something called crystal alloy. After he got the position he needed to check if he could get some free crafting materials as he didn't want to spend all his points on those. He just wanted to boost his body refining skill further and maybe earn some dosh on the side.

He selected the weapon schematics and brought out the core of the Cthulhu look-alike monster to boost his chances of crafting, he even threw in some random foundation establishment monster cores hoping for the best. A new kind of music started playing and as he thought it was a lot more fast-paced than before. But thanks to his tranquil mind he wasn't tense, he started hitting the spots as he was directed to but even with his enhanced cultivation and body, he wasn't able to hit everything perfectly. Maybe due to luck or the number of cores that he dumped into this crafting, he managed to get a high grade one.

The weapon didn't look all that grand, but after he used his thunderlight sword technique the sword started to shine, literally. The weapon got coated in plasma-like light, electricity shooting from the blade. Matt swung it around and it made familiar wooshing noises, the blade was covered with bluish

light and you could feel the spiritual energy emanating from it. He didn't really have anything he could test this weapon out on, but he felt that it would probably slice anything below a high graded earth weapon in half. He still had some points left, so he decided to dump five thousand into his appraisal skill again.

Name	Spirit Infusion Longsword
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Grade :	Earth High
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Attribute :	None
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Durability :	High
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Condition :	Perfect
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Advanced Grade :	B
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Special traits :	This weapon can fuse with the users Qi and increase its resistance and sharpness in the process. Works best if the user combines it with weapon constructs techniques.
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He deadpanned at the added explanation window as it was more or less the same thing he got when he was buying the blueprint for it. He left his crafting dwelling afterward he had about 45 thousand points left but he would save those for later, he didn't really have anything he wanted to get. Maybe a technique that let him shoot beams out of his eyes? Or lightning breath? Those sounded a bit silly but probably would catch people off guard. Maybe he could come up with his own techniques if he tried, he had the Qi control down and he had that Dao of lightning knowledge. He also didn't have many healing pills left, so maybe it would be good to stock up on those for later use. He could regenerate somewhat, but that required him to use up his stamina. So maybe some Qi regeneration pills and stamina regeneration ones would be good too.

He also found out something after he examined his clothes after the special trait window got revealed he found out that was more to these clothes than just self mending. These white robes could actually change color and also blend into the environment if you didn't move for much. All of this could be done by inserting some spiritual energy and giving a special command to the robes. He could even upgrade them to add new functions, but it didn't come cheap.

Matt played around changing the color to black and red, then blue. Guess if he covered his head with the hood no one should recognize him as the cultivator in white if he ever needed to lay low. For the time being he changed it back to white as he walked out of the previous Patriarch's room, well now it was his. There were some people around so he just gave them a nod while passing, they seemed a bit tense as they saw him walking towards them but they just gave him the usual bow of respect.

He felt kind of strange walking around this place, everyone was showing him the utmost respect, no one talked to him. Was it rude to talk to someone of a higher status than you? Or were they just being shy, well not like he wanted to talk to the unknown people he was still an introvert that liked his peace and quiet. But now he had to take center stage on some kind of inauguration ceremony to his new position. It was already a big step for him that he didn't just refuse the position and leave this clan instead. But he would rather stay here, than wonder the lands as some rouge cultivator with no place to call home.

Also, they had quite the nice springs around here, Matthew was quite fond of taking long relaxing baths.

After walking for a bit he noticed that someone was walking behind him when he turned around there was no one to be seen. He could feel the presence of two people behind the corner, they had been following him for some time now. Were they some bodyguards that were supposed to keep tabs on him or something? Were they assassins that were sent by some vengeful clan? Probably not as the two people were in the Qi Condensation level, he could probably snort them to death at this point.

“So, are you two going to come out. Or are you going to be following me for the rest of the day?”

He crossed his arms over one another while waiting, soon the stalkers were revealed. It was the brother and sister duo that showed a lot of courage while standing up to the Tsai clan pursuers. The two teenagers walked out while holding their heads down, probably not knowing what to say to the man in front of them.

“Oh, you’re the two kids from last time, glad you are safe. Did you two want something from me?”

The two raised their heads, perking up a bit as they were glad that their uncle remembered them.

“Uncle Dong, we just wanted to thank you for what you did.”

The girl said while bowing in a graceful fashion, Matt raised an eyebrow at the ‘uncle’ part. Most people would put Senior in there, or even in front of the uncle part, but those two made it seem like he was their real uncle. Did he have any siblings that he didn’t know about?

“Uncle?”

He looked at the two children in front of him, trying to see the resemblance. They looked more or less like what your typical male lead and female lead in a cultivation world. They had dark hair, auburn eyes, the girl was a jade-like beauty, though to him she just looked pale. The boy had a serious-looking face, a bit too serious for his age.

“Ah yes, our father was your cousin...”

He noticed the change of tone when the girl’s father was mentioned, she also slumped her shoulders a bit. The boy replied afterward instead.

“Our father went to the expedition with the previous Patriarch, they never returned...”

Zhang Dong placed his hand on the male’s shoulder, not really knowing how to react so he kind of gave him an awkward pat on it.

“My condolences, I’m sure he was an honorable man. I’m sorry about not recognizing you two, I left the clan a while ago and my memories are a bit hazy from that time...”

He tried to change the uncomfortable subject, wondering what these two wanted from him.

“Great-grandpa Jin told us about that, no need to apologize uncle Dong!”

Great-grandpa Jin? So that would mean that they are from his side of the family? That would mean...

He figured out that him being from the side family, would mean that old gramps had a harem going for himself. He shuddered at the thought of having multiple family members that would start popping up from nowhere.

“Ah yes, Gramps... So, what do you two need?”

He rubbed his chin while looking at the kids that started fidgeting side to side a bit. It looked as if they were trying to ask about something but weren't sure how to do it. After a moment both of them looked at each other, nodded to themselves and dropped down to their knees to kowtow.

“Please Uncle Jin, take us in as your disciples!”

They both shouted in unison while their foreheads hit the marble floor. Matt started recalling that tribe he met in the forest, as they were fast to drop to their knees.

“Wait, what?”

Chapter 55

The two were prostrating themselves in front of the man, he was a bit dumbfounded by the whole thing. He didn't know anything about teaching people or guiding them in any way shape or form.

“You want me to be your master? I just met you two. Why would I even take you in as disciples?”

The two kept their heads down, not looking into his eyes while trying to get his approval.

“Please honorable Uncle, we want to be strong to protect the Clan. We almost lost everything before you arrived, we can't let it happen again.”

The girl from the group did most of the talking, while the boy mostly just said yes and nodded his head, which only caused him to hit the ground with his forehead. The whole scene was quite uncomfortable for Matt as he had no idea how to even train those two if he agreed, also this would be quite the long term binding contract. Masters in the cultivation world tended to be treated as your own parents, sometimes they were put on an even higher pedestal. He didn't really want to be responsible for teaching them some strange things, which would get them killed later on.

“Don't think that's a good idea... I need to go take care of a couple of things... so see you around...”

He just bolted out of there, trying not to think about it too much. The kids would probably forget about it, leaving him alone. Also due to the fact that he didn't eat much for the past week when he was cultivating and making items, he was famished. He wondered if he should just go to the city and find himself a restaurant, or ask someone about food, he could probably get some here if he wanted. Matt was curious about the city though, it looked nice from the top of his peak top apartment. Would it be a problem if people recognized him in the streets? Though not many people had actually seen his face.

He looked around, there were some people here and there doing their thing. No one was really keeping tabs on him, he didn't have any bodyguards as no one in their right mind would want to attack a cultivator that could take out four core formation cultivators. He figured ol' gramps probably gave the order to not interfere in his business too much unless asked directly. Matt thought that he would probably get the rundown of the place only after he officially got the Patriarch spot.

For not he just hopped onto his sword and flew around the city a couple of times before coming down into an empty alleyway. He swapped the color of his robe to a brown one, this being quite common. He finished his disguise by covering his head with his hood, he also debated on putting on some cool shades to hide his eyes but gave up on the idea. A cultivator with dark shades would just look out of place around here. Also, he could use his cultivation to mask his appearance somehow. If people tried looking at his face they would see it blur slightly, but that only worked for people below his strength level.

He mingled with the crowd, slipping from the empty alleyway. He hit some stalls on the way, getting some noodles and slurping them as he continued to walk. There was quite a lot of things to see, from street performers playing on their zithers to various monuments and statues. He had spirit stones and regular money so he wasn't a scrooge as he tipped the street dancers while enjoying the day.

The day seemed quite peaceful, he walked into one of the larger restaurants that looked quite busy. By this time he knew how things worked in these types of places. The people with more money would get better treatment, in most restaurants the higher you were seated the greater your status was. So after flashing the serving lady some spirit stones he was guided upwards into a more peaceful booth where there weren't as many people around. He ordered something similar to kung pao chicken, though the poultry used for it had some spiritual Qi in it so the taste was somewhat better. Spirit Spring city also was quite famous for its spirit mineral water, so he ordered that with it instead of alcohol.

He thanked the cute serving girl that brought him his food and then started munching, the view outside the window reminded him a bit of the previous city he visited. He hoped that he wouldn't bump into some spoiled brats on his way out though, as this time around they would probably belong to the Zhang clan. It would be quite the sight to see if the future patriarch would get run down by his own clan members. The thought of brats made him recall the two kids that begged him to become their sensei, he wondered if that would even be possible. He brought up his system screen, by this time he was quite sure no one was able to see it beside him.

Would this thing even help me with disciples and stuff like that, didn't it give me some prompt about clan building when I got here...

This system was kind of wonky, it would sometimes hide things from him and only show them later. Was there some kind of trigger for it, maybe his power level counted or some steps needed to be taken to unlock things? He glanced at his system screen, it looked like a computer screen just hovering there. His eyes twitched as there was indeed a new icon there, it looked like a scroll with some Chinese symbols on it. He poked at it while wondering what was inside. As the window changed he could see that there wasn't much inside, but there were a couple of tabs. There was one for disciples when he clicked it the inside was just empty. There was also one for disciple candidates, that showed up with a red '!' mark. It looked like a friend invite, but there was more. He could see a window with some statics for both of them.

Name : Zhang Liu

Age : 16

Cultivation : Qi Condensation 9th level

Potential : B

Trust : 70%

Alignment : Chaotic Good

Name : Zhang Xue

Age : 15

Cultivation : Qi Condensation 7th level

Potential : B

Trust : 75%

Alignment : Neutral Good

He looked at the prompts and numbers, taken aback by the D&D styled alignment one. Also, the trust percentage was quite high, was he saving them enough to bring it up so high? The potentials were the same and quite high, B should probably be above average as you started off from F with the worst kind.

I guess they have potential, but wait... if this is letting me see those stats... could it be possible to change their potential later?

The system was quite overpowered it had really many functions, but it also needed a lot of points to run on he didn't think changing someone's actual inborn potential would come cheap.

I do have all those manuals in my storage ring, they always appear after I buy skills and I have all the ones I got from the start too.

He had all the materials he needed to teach people his skills, even the Dao of lightning passive skill had a big manual coming with it. The techniques had basic manuals for Qi condensation practitioners if it was feasible for them to learn a weaker version of it. Like his cultivation art went from the noobie stages up to the core formation stage. The stages you needed to take to go from Qi condensation to foundation establishment, forming your lightning Dao pillars were all explained. He also had the knowledge in his brain, so in theory, he should be able to teach plus if the system let him spend points on his disciples it would be even easier.

The two seemed like promising candidates, they were good kids and had high potential but he was still on the fence about the whole thing. He was never really good with people, to begin with, now someone wanted him to guide them while he himself didn't really have things figured out. But maybe this would also be a good way for him to come out of his shell. For now, he moved the thought to the back of his mind and went back to eating, he wasn't really in a hurry. He finished his meal but was still quite hungry so he wondered what he should order next while looking at the menu.

At the same time, he could hear a woman's scream followed by some plates breaking. When he turned around he could see some people sitting in a booth not far away from him, bothering the serving lady that was serving him before.

"Oh little missy, look what you did. You dropped all the food."

The man laughed while the girl was hiding her rear end behind the serving tray. Probably one of the men had touched her there.

“You perverts!”

The woman replied while fuming with anger.

Matt kind of facepalmed as these things kept happening around him, wherever he went there were some people in trouble. Some damsel or kids in distress. Did he really have to go over there, or could someone else handle this, weren't there any bodyguards around here?

One guy from there was in the foundation establishment level, probably the leader the rest were probably just his goons.

“Listen here girly, big bro here is a big shot in a big clan, you little Zhang clan can't hold a candle to it! Be glad that he showed interest in you!”

The big bro in question was a sleazy looking man, he just licked his lips and yanked on the girl's wrist making her fall into his lap.

Zhang Dong doubted that claim to fame, as the group was quite shady-looking and didn't conduct themselves as people from a prominent clan. Their clothes were quite shabby as well, so they clearly were low on cash.

Aw shit, here we go again.

He was slowly getting used to this, so he just stood up from his seat and slowly walked over to the booth the goons were sitting in. They quieted down after seeing the unknown cultivator. They tried to say something, but before they could do anything the man grasped their leader by the face, lifting him up while not letting him speak. The man thrashed about, kicking, punching and trying to move Zhang Dong's hand away, but to his horror, it wasn't budging at all. The whole group kind of figured that this man was strong from the way that their leader was just squirming around not being able to break free.

The female escaped and went behind Matt who turned his head to her and asked.

“Hey, could you open that window miss?”

While the girl was still getting ahold of herself he tested something out. He could only analyze people's names and cultivation levels from afar. But what if he had direct contact like when he identified items. It did work, the man did indeed lie about belonging to a clan he also had a fitting name for his attitude.

Name : Hoo Dung

Age : 65

Cultivation : Foundation Establishment early stage

Affiliation : Dung Gang

Alignment : Chaotic Neutral

Dung Gang huh? Well, at least he isn't evil...

The girl looked back nodding, she didn't say much and just followed the order. As soon as the window was open, the cultivator walked over to it, just holding the thug with one hand while his feet dangled around. The rowdy character was chucked out of the window, he made a nice arc before falling face-first into a pile of horse excrement.

"Hah, bullseye!"

He then turned back to the rest of the thug squad while shrugging.

"You guys still here?"

The group looked at each other and then started running to get to their 'captain' just leaving the place altogether while hanging their heads low.

"Hey miss, could you bring over some meat dumplings?"

He sat back in his booth while the female employee thanked him, the restaurant owner showed up later to as he was grateful as well. Security around here had dropped since the Zhang Clan was busy with other things like the siege and the Patriarch ceremony so they didn't blame them that much. Matt just ate his fill, probably staying there another hour as he got a good deal.

Chapter 56

Time moved on, his daily routine consisted of cultivating in the night, getting three hours of sleep as he didn't need more, going to the city to sightsee and eat delicious meals. Then go back to the Zhang Clan stronghold while trying to evade the two teenagers that pestered him about accepting them as his disciples. He started noticing a strange occurrence though, whenever he went out to town.

The man was just enjoying the sights while trying to tour the ten million large city, but whenever he did that trouble was always around the corner. Not for him though, but for other random people. Just like on the first-day things seemed to go astray as he kept running into people that got mugged, assaulted or were brawling.

On one occasion two fathers were duking it out, punching each other left and right while their kids watched. Apparently one of the father's sons had asked for the other dad's daughter's hand in marriage. But that one strongly disagreed so they got into a fight, one claiming that his daughter was too good for the likes of them, while the other got offended. He found himself pacifying the situation and forcing the family to talk it out like civilized people while he watched.

In the end, he ended up handing over one Qi enrichment pill to the people as a gift. They were in one of the rings he got earlier so he didn't care much about it, but the people sure did. The people even wanted him to be part of the family after they got all buddy-buddy with each other. But he was afraid that they would try to milk him dry if he ever accepted to do that.

At one point he wondered if he should change his robe to a black color and put a bat symbol on his chest. The amounts of robbers he beat up and sexual harassers was quite high, he didn't know if it was just how things were around here or if someone had put some kind of curse on him. Well, it would be a lie if he said that he didn't enjoy beating up the baddies the man having a bit of a hero complex, but when you did it all the time, every day, it started to weight on him. When he got that Patriarch position

he would be sure to form some kind of police force. He couldn't be busting up criminal rings while being the king of the city himself.

Though, he was doing the exact thing at the moment. It was less than a week till the Patriarch ceremony, so the clan members were busy with that. He was eating a shish kebab while walking, he wasn't sure where he was but by the banners outside the buildings, it was probably a similar place to the pleasure district in Moonlight city. While he was walking past one of the alleys he heard some muffled screams, his senses were quite up there so he stopped. Two people were in front of that alleyway, probably some goons to scare off others as they were giving him the stink eye.

He just went over there nonchalantly and took a peek behind them while the two were shouting things like 'Do you want to die' and 'F**k off bastard'. Sure enough, there was a woman getting held down by some goons. He gave out sigh and then looked at the two shouting men in front. He did something he saw in cartoons or movies, he grabbed the two by the heads, bumping their heads together and then tossing the two to the side. The people inside pulled out their weapons, one of them swinging his scimitar right at him but he just caught it between his index and middle finger. After disabling that attacker with a little jolt of electricity via the metallic weapon he moved forward. The other two were soon down on the ground with some missing teeth and broken noses.

This wasn't the end though, the woman in question started begging him to help rescue her sister that was abducted by the baddies in question. Guess he stepped in on a human trafficking situation, he just shrugged and told the girl to lead the way. He was a bit surprised by the fact that there were things like this taking place in this city. He thought the Zhang Clan wouldn't allow such things to happen, but later it was revealed that yes they were a lot better than the other clans. But still, some people could still be bought out they just kept things more secrete. So there weren't things like what the young bratty masters did back in Moonlight city.

This made Zhang Dong mad, he didn't want to have people forced into a life of prostitution. While some Zhang clan official turned a blind eye while getting paid some spirit stones. He wanted to go back to the clan abode to get some people to check this stuff out, but the girl was just yanking on his robe and crying. So, after giving out another sigh he told the woman to show him the way, what happened next was people flying out of windows like in an old western saloon scuffle. He was just too strong for them, without needing to use any of his Qi cultivation he just walked in the building, weapons shattering and denting the moment they touched his reinforced body.

In the end, he brought the big crime boss to one of the Zhang Clan's establishments, they were scattered around the city and told one of the people there to go get Zhang Kuo. He was still covering his face, plus he wasn't that known so the clan member inside didn't really want to listen. That was until he released some of his cultivation on him. After Kuo got here, he told him about the whole thing and wanted the man to get apprehended. Zhang Kuo didn't argue, he just looked at the beat-up man and some girls that were standing behind him, the girls were the ones that he saved from the baddies.

The man was quite good at organizing things, so he had the man brought in while having the women questioned about their situation. The Patriarch to be wanted him to get them back to their families or if they didn't have any to organize a place they could work at instead. He thought this was a bit too excessive for the Zhang Clan to get involved this much, but it was a noble endeavor and his boss gave the order so he couldn't really refuse.

After acting as a vigilante, he returned home to find Liu and Xue sitting by the entrance to his room. They were kowtowing there for close to two weeks, not moving an inch even when their mother came over to pick them up. He was slowly feeling bad for them, did those two even pee?

God damn you brats, I have no idea how to teach you anything...

He hid inside his room and bit his lower lip.

Will those two just sit there till they are skeletons? Their mother was giving me strange looks lately...

When he looked at the Disciple tab, there was not much he could do. He couldn't even remove the disciple candidates in the system or accept them, he figured he needed to tell them that he accepted it. He had that senior aura, but most it did was just make people agree with him more.

Impartation of Knowledge (Upgradable)	30000	Teaching was never this easy, all your disciples will absorb your teachings like sponges with just a touch of your finger. Skills and techniques thought this way will transfer a faint amount of the mentor's knowledge into the student.
Imposing Will	35000	This skill makes your disciples listen to you more, increasing their blind devotion towards you.
Mentor's Eyes	20000	Having trouble with picking up the flaws of your students? With this skill, you'll be able to see any shortcomings that your pupil is experiencing.

I guess if I want some devoted minions that 'Imposing Will' would be good. But don't really want some crazy zealots. The other two will help me teach them faster while picking up on the flaws in their cultivation...Should I try it...

He gathered a bit more points during these weeks, getting some clan resources and making weapons without having to spend points of them. But the earnings were so-so. He had enough to get those to skills, also he had a hunch that he might be needing those skills in the future to make the Zhang Clan stronger.

After buying them he looked at his mirror, checking if he wasn't looking funny. He then opened the door and said in a stern sounding voice.

"Liu... Xue..., stop sitting around there and get in here."

The two youths moved their heads up after they heard the words, they looked slightly emaciated but were in high spirits after they heard their uncle's voice. They closed the door behind them and looked at Zhang Dong that had his hands behind his back while standing up straight.

"So, do you two want to become my disciples?"

The two looked at him nodded and replied excitedly in unison.

"Yes, Uncle!"

"My cultivation techniques are very volatile. If you fail in your cultivation, it will mean certain death."

He said with a frown on his face as the lightning Qi that he used was quite chaotic and hard to use. If the cultivator made a mistake the backlash could kill them. This was probably why the rank of his cultivation

was up there. While asking he moved his hand out, electricity crackling through his fingers as he demonstrated.

The two kids gulped while looking at that lightning Qi, they were quite gifted so they knew that what the man in front of them was doing, wasn't that easy. But they made their decision long ago, they would risk it.

"Also, you must give up on your revenge, extinguish your rage. Pursuing power for revenge leads to many demons in your Dao Heart, this will delay your progress significantly and at worst, will cost you, your life!"

He wasn't lying as this was the truth in this world, the knowledge that he was implanted with told him that. Inner demons were created from negative emotions and unless you were planning on cultivation some demonic technique you were better off without them.

"If you agree then you may call me master."

He said while opening up his hands, the bottom side of his palms pointing at each individual in front as if he was beckoning them forward.

The two thought about for a second before, kowtowing one last time. Then replied, determination in their voice.

"Yes, Master!"

Accepted Zhang Liu as your disciple! Accepted Zhang Xue as your disciple! Gained 10000 Spirit points for accepting your first disciple, congratulations!

He perked up at the prompts, he thought that he might be able to earn points by training disciples as otherwise, he would be spending resources and not getting much in return while others got stronger. Guess he could become the greatest disciple trainer in the world!

I can even feed them pills to get stronger and choose their move set...

Matt wasn't a person of this world, so he didn't really get the whole Master – Disciple dynamic that well. He wasn't against teaching kids some things here and there but wasn't really thinking about the cult-like behavior disciples mostly had towards their masters. The more he would teach them, the more devoted they would get. This could be a double-edged sword, but the kids didn't look like the type to get into trouble, he sure hoped that his trouble attracting aura wouldn't rub off on them.

Chapter 57

After seeing the prompts, Matt noticed that Xue and Liu's faces were now in his disciple window. When he clicked on them he could see all their statics, how far they were into their cultivation what skills they had learned, and how well they knew those skills. They all had the usual low, mid, high and perfect grading, so it was easy to figure out.

Zhang clan being a Clan based in a city full of springs made them mostly have water techniques, maybe this was the reason why the Tsai clan that was fire types hated their guts so much. Now he would have to make a decision, to either buy new water-based techniques for the kids or just teach them what he had already. He didn't think there was a reason to do the earlier, as his cultivation method was superior

to the other ones. He also had many resources dumped into his lightning Dao way, that it wouldn't really make sense unless the kids didn't have the aptitude for it.

First, he needed to change their main cultivation method, only after that could he start teaching them his techniques. Then, he might need to get them a better body tempering skill, he didn't want to give them his as it was far too resource-heavy. Maybe it would give them an initial boost as the first levels would be easy, but later on, when the resources get scarce it would become a problem. They had no system to help them craft weapons that they could absorb, this type of technique was only good for people that were loaded.

"Take a seat you two."

He beckoned them over, letting them sit down while he stood up, brows furrowed slightly before he began speaking.

"Qi Condensation, you take in the spiritual energy of heaven and earth from the surroundings, to temper your body from the inside. You prepare your body for your foundation. You two have already started, but luckily it is not yet too late."

"The breathing techniques that you have learned allow you to extract Qi from the surroundings, filtering out the water elements and then storing them inside of your body. My cultivation method is a bit different."

Zhang Dong said as he stuck out his index finger and pointed it at his new disciples. After a moment the two could see a Qi bubble forming in front of it, but it was a bit odd. It was weaker than normal and didn't seem to have any elemental energy inside. But after a moment it started crackling, turning a deeper shade of blue as it appeared in the form of a small lightning bubble.

"You don't just gather the spiritual energy, you transform it, feel the heavens around you, bend them to your will!"

He kind of recited what the knowledge in his head was telling him, it sounded like hogwash but the two kids were eating it up. He also had to agree with it because he was actually pulling out heavenly lightning from thin air. But he didn't plan on making many speeches though, as he took that handy Impartation of Knowledge technique. He did have the books on him, but he didn't want to explain everything like a math teacher when he could just upload stuff directly into the brain. Also, the skill had a small bonus of already giving the one that was receiving it some proficiency in it. The first steps were always hard, so this was a big plus. He also could spend points to upgrade it later, so that the impartation would let the pupil learn more from the get-go.

"I'll impart my cultivation technique for the Qi condensation level to you, but also another technique. It's called the Tranquil Mind, I want you to study it first before you attempt cultivating my Lightning Qi Cultivation Art."

He thought that the bonus from the tranquil mind technique would aid the kids in keeping a calm mind, so they wouldn't make a blunder during the cultivation period. The two were giddy with anticipation as their Master walked over and placed his index finger on Liu's forehead. The two didn't know what Zhang Doong was doing as they have never seen a teaching technique like this.

“You might feel a tiny bit of pain... so endure.”

Before Liu could nod he felt information rushing into his head, he could feel discomfort penetrating his mind and sweat going down his forehead. He never felt something like this before, the knowledge of the tranquil mind, the cultivation art and even the Dao of lightning was getting shoved into him. The whole thing didn't take long but the poor teenager almost passed out during it. The Dao of lightning was probably the hardest to comprehend, as it was the absolute principle of lightning.

Uh, maybe it's too much information at once? I managed to survive that info dump... they should be okay, it's a lot less info than what I had to endure.

He went over to the girl that was shivering slightly now but there still was determination in her eyes. She survived the headache but was rubbing her poor forehead while on the ground trying to process the information.

“I have imparted the basic teachings to you two, you can head back and start cultivating after you rest up. Also, take these and copy them down, don't show them to anyone else, then return them to me.”

He handed them the cultivation manuals with the techniques as well, the impartation skill wasn't perfect they might need the techniques in written form for reference and the system didn't have a copy function. The two teenagers wobbled out of his chambers while grasping their heads, he might have overdone it but he smirked a bit as he wasn't the only one who had to endure migraines while learning new things.

Haha, you two are young you can power through it.

I think that should take them a while to process before I have to teach them other things, but I sure would like to have a body refining technique for them... one that lets them get to the nascent soul at least...But those would be in the heavenly grade, those don't come cheap.

He had spent most of his points now, he wondered if he could get Zhang Jin to fork up some spirit stones that he could absorb, or maybe he could get their mom to do it, but she was a widow now so he thought that would be inappropriate.

“Wait, there are those upgradeable skills... maybe I can buy one that starts at the Qi Condensation stage but I can upgrade it all up to the Nascent soul stage... maybe even higher.”

That was the good thing about those upgradeable skills, they might end up costing more in the end but you could use them at a lower level. A person at the Qi Condensation level couldn't use Core formation skills even though they were of a higher grade, they required just too much Qi to use. But not like someone with no body refining skill would be weak. Qi cultivators were more of a mage class, while body refiners were more akin to warriors. The strongest people cultivated both, but most of the time one path was the main one while the other was just a bonus.

Like Zhang Dong mostly used his Qi cultivation instead of his body, but that was mostly due to his body refining being behind his Qi cultivation but now it had finally caught up. So he would probably win against someone with a similar Qi cultivation if their body refining level was low, as he would take less damage and tire himself out less.

His Qi cultivation was of a high level, so the kids didn't need a super hard to learn body refining technique more or less something to add to their repertoire would suffice. But he still wanted it to be somewhat good. There were a lot of techniques that could be upgraded and had skill trees to them, but none of the attack ones he had. That kind of evolved as he upgraded his cultivation technique. He also had a skill tree for his body refining technique, but he couldn't up the grade but instead, he had attacks that he could unlock.

The copper body skill let him choose a grasping technique, his fingers would become metallic and his gripping power would increase exponentially. He had already gotten that and tested it out, it also got a free buff when he rose his level of cultivation. The silver body let him deliver explosive strikes with his fists and legs, as they also changed to metal. He could also raise his defense past his cultivation realm for a brief moment. The golden body let him go into a special state he would perceive time slower while moving faster, so it was more or less a boost in speed and reaction time. All in all, it let him fight better at close range while using up his stamina instead of his spiritual energy.

*But wait, the upgraded skills work on me as I have the system, can I upgrade them if someone else learns it..."

He didn't take that into account, he was the person with the system. He could buy skills but he had to use them himself to get the required knowledge to pass on. So he checked out his cash shop and found another way. Some skills could be bought a tome at a time if needed. So he could buy the first tome of the skill and pass it on, then when they were done with it just get the second tome without having to pay the whole price for the skill or technique upfront.

So while his new disciples were bumbling with their cultivation efforts, Zhang Dong took his time in examining the body refining skills. He also was really close to becoming the Patriarch, he sure hoped that nothing wrong would happen during the ceremony.

Behemoth Body (Tome 1)	2000	Cultivator absorbs demon beast cores to enhance the body. Gains monstrous strength can transform body parts like nails into claws. Practitioners might experience violent tendencies.
Profound Physique (Tome 1)	2900	Through rigorous training, tempering and absorption of heaven and earth energies the cultivator can transform their body into the perfect weapon. Mostly focus on defense and power.
Devil's Frame (Tome 1)	3500	By performing specific rituals, the practitioner can gain the body of a devil, it boasts high regenerative abilities.
Sylph Physique (Tome 1)	2850	Suited for female cultivators, it focuses on speed and evasion instead of resistance. While still giving a moderate increase in defense and regeneration.

He didn't find anything out of the ordinary, the Behemoth Body seemed good as it only needed beast cores but the violent tendency part was a bit iffy. The Devil one was out of the question, he didn't want his disciples slaughtering infants. The profound one looked like your regular body refining skill, with no downsides besides being hard to learn. It looked like it would boost the cultivator's skills without the mental or moral downsides. The Sylph one would probably suit his female disciple, while the profound one would be better for the male one. He would give those later to his disciples, maybe he could even

give it to some other clan members as those looked to be good high grade all around refining techniques. Plus it was just for the Qi condensation level, so they was rather cheap.

There was also one other thing he learned while he was examining the cultivation manuals that he got from the core formation cultivators he defeated. When he examined it with his system out, he noticed that he could actually refine the cultivation techniques. Also, the costs were lower. He would pay less for upgrading a low earth graded skill to a high earth graded skill than to buy a new high graded skill. So maybe if he got his hands on those water cultivation tomes that the clan had, he could upgrade them. It would be probably better to learn a better version of a technique you were already familiar with than to start practicing a new one.

For now, he didn't have many points left so he just resumed his daily activities the day of the 'coronation' was coming.

Chapter 58

His progress had slowed down with time, the Qi around the place was also thinning out as he was absorbing it at an increased rate. His cultivation was above 50% but it started stagnating. The good thing was that even without achieving a breakthrough he was getting stronger. Each percentage counted, he was a lot stronger at 50% than he was at 1% of the middle stage. Plus he had managed to get his body cultivation into the middle stage as well.

He wore a golden robe as the patriarch ceremony was upon him, looking kind of regal as Zhang Ya was fixing him up. He was even wearing a strange ceremonial hat, which made him look like a pope or sect leader. The hat had some strange strings with small beads attached to them that just dangled around. The sleeves were very long and wide, this was certainly not a robe meant for fighting. He looked at himself in the mirror while his attendant was fixing up his clothes, he wanted to crawl into his bed and hide, due to his silly appearance.

"Patriarch, you look stunning. I bet all the prominent clans in the area will send marriage proposals as soon as they see your stunning appearance."

The woman said in an excited fashion.

This didn't help at all, as Matthew didn't really feel like getting married. He also knew how things worked around here, the marriages were mostly political and were meant to bind clans together while the parents were supposed to pop out babies like crazy. Well not like he had much against the baby-making procedure, but he would rather do it with someone who actually liked him. He still remembered that one woman just running away the moment she heard his clan name.

Well, I'm the Patriarch so they can't force me to marry anyone. If someone tries, I'll force them to marry a goat! That will show them! I'll even bring some spirit grass for the goat as a wedding present.

He was slightly nervous but quite less as his tranquil mind was in full effect. He just needed to do a couple of those breathing exercises and he was good to go. He had been living in this place for a month now, he had met some of the elders and core members for the clan. But he was quite bad at remembering names, it was even worse to attach those names to faces that kind of blurred together. So most of the time he ended up just nodding while greeting people.

Zhang Ya had explained everything to him, but he went through it once more in his head. First came the ceremony in the main building hall, everyone from the core members would be there. He would get the official title there, he would have to sit down on that big throne and get greeted by everyone which could take a while. After that, he was supposed to go to the mausoleum and pay his respects to his ancestors. A lot of this involved kowtowing and getting kowtowed back, these people sure had a thing for that, he liked handshakes more. Following that, he would have to get on a magical platform that worked like a flying sword. He would have to show himself to the citizens and either say something wise or just wave at them and nod. Then came the strange parade through the city ending it all with some kind of banquet where more people were invited to. The clan would receive gifts from other clans, which was more or less a friendly gesture to keep good relations. He wasn't expecting much as the clan was in decline, so there weren't many other powers trying to get on their good side just yet.

This is going to be a long day...

He gave out a sigh and headed out, it was time to get this over with as the day had only started. The whole thing was supposed to take quite a bit, the banquet was taking place at night so till then he would be greeting people while stoically looking at them. Zhang Jin gave a long-winded speech about the Clan's future, that the families should come together to form bonds or something like that. Matt wasn't really listening as he was trying not to fall asleep during it. Afterward, many people came over to pay their respects, some people he remembered some were new. He kind of waved his hand about while nodding, playing the role of a more silent lord but it was mostly due to not knowing what to say.

This took a good chunk of the day, there were many clan members as he kind of underestimated the massive size of his clan. Some looked happy, some looked dejected as the side families kind of forced their way into the whole ceremony proclaiming that if the Patriarch was from a side family as well, they had the right to be there. The raining grand elder had set this all up, these were troubling times so the clan needed unity more than tradition. Some people almost started fighting, but with one good snort they quieted down fast.

After that was done the mausoleum part was next, he was alone kneeling in front of some statues and graves. He just lit some incense sticks here and there while bowing at the 'ancestors'. He felt kind of weird doing this as he had no relation to these people whatsoever, besides the system bestowing him with the body of the so-called Zhang Dong. He had thought a bit about that, was this a game world? Or was this just some parallel world and he now inhabited the real Zhang Dong's body that existed in reality. Maybe the owner of this body died during the battle with the monster that slew his parents. He just got inserted into it, though that would be unlikely as he was the one that picked the name.

He was leaning into the direction of a godly being making this whole world, for some shits and giggles. Probably watching him dance like a puppet while laughing. This was kind of unsettling but he couldn't do much about it.

Next up, was the part he wanted to do the least, his public appearance. He was radiating his senior aura at max while looking down at the people, there was a huge amount of them. It looked like a sea of people crammed into a small space, just looking up at him while he focused on his tranquil mind technique and recalled what he wrote down beforehand. Even though he remembered it mostly from movies and games... Thus he started speaking with a slow steady voice.

“This day does not belong to one man, but to all! Let us together rebuild this Clan, this city, that we may share in the days of peace.”

“In order to succeed in this endeavor called life, we must come together with one heart, one mind, one love, and one determination”

“Unity is strength, division is weakness only together can we achieve greatness!”

“Individually we are but a drop of water, but together we are an ocean!”

He tried quoting some political propaganda that he remembered from some internet surfing back in the day, but he wasn't sure if it was working as you could hear a pin drop after he was done with his speech. But soon cheers could be heard around the whole city, probably because most of the people in this world had a big individualistic mindset, gaining power for themselves to raise up in society. The whole 'Work together' thing was a bit new. While the people on the bottom pole were eager to share and work together, the people on the top would probably still cling to their resources.

He just waved and flew along the road as the parade started, the platform he was on had a big throne on it. So he looked like some lofty magical king just floating while getting escorted by traditionally dressed clan members. The people looked quite happy to have him there, which made him glad but he just wanted to get out of these uncomfortable clothes also he was really bored.

While he was just sitting there he decided to see how his disciples were doing, he hadn't seen them much in the past week. The last time was just after they returned him his original manuals to the skills he gave them.

Name : Zhang Liu

Cultivation Base Qi : Qi Condensation 9th

Cultivation Base Body : Qi Condensation 1st (Profound Physique)

Techniques : Tranquil Mind, Rainwater Sutra, Empowered Lightning Qi Cultivation art, Flowing Water art...

Dao : Dao of Heavenly Lightning(0,5%)

The kids had started learning his skills, the tranquil mind skill wasn't that hard to learn so afterward they concentrated on the Dao and lightning cultivation art. His Lightning Cultivation art already transformed into the empowered one, he hoped that when he upgraded it again he could teach the kids the improved version with no problems. The Dao bit looked hard to learn though, it wasn't even at 1% but that was the hardest thing to learn as it showed the cultivator the right way. The peculiar thing about his disciples, that after absorbing the lightning Qi, their hair started showing white strands. Guess that was the side effect of this art, silvery hair.

The girl wasn't much behind the boy, She had the Dao understanding a bit higher at 0,7% but had more trouble with the new body tempering technique. You could say she had more talent for Qi related techniques, while the youth for body-related skills. But it just might have been a different mindset.

The last thing on the agenda was the banquet, so they all returned to their main base. He was back at sitting at his throne while people were buzzing about, some other more friendly clans came to pay a visit. They were mostly the weaker ones, just trying to be polite but there were some others gathering some info about the new guy in town. Matt was trying hard not to yawn, which might have given the wrong signals as his face quite stern-looking.

The people were happily chatting between themselves, Zhang Jin was quite fond of the lady cultivators as he seemed to be working his adult charms on them. Zhang Dong sighed as he didn't want to get a new 'uncle'. But the pleasantries came to an end there, because everyone could feel an overbearing aura suddenly fill the whole place. It was an unannounced visit, no one knew how the person got here as the guards didn't notice their arrival. Matt was also surprised as he couldn't feel the person before they released their aura, the aura felt quite strong it was at the level of a core formation expert at the great circle. But it wasn't just one person, there were more.

Six people walked in, filling the room with their oppressive spiritual energy that pushed anyone below the core formation-level down to their knees. The five people behind the strongest person were all at the late stage, Matt had gotten stronger in the past month but he probably wouldn't be able to handle all those experts alone.

"Well, isn't the little Zhang clan going to pay their respects?"

One of the people in the back spoke up. All of them were wearing similar yellow robes, the person in front had the most expensive-looking one on him. The thing that stuck out was a symbol of a black hand embroidered to the back of the robe.

Happy new year!

Chapter 59

The person in the front looked a lot younger than the people in the back, he was also the strongest, probably some kind of genius young master type. The people in the back were all older men, looking to be in their fifties. The lofty young master had long dark hair, a more tanned complexion and some kind of jewel sticking out of his forehead. Might have been some kind of treasure, or maybe part of a cultivation method. The six were of course members of the dark palm sect that ruled this region.

The first one to react was Zhang Jin, he was also the only one that could move beside Zhang Dong in this situation as the former was a bit baffled by the situation. This was actually the first time that Matt was in front of someone that he wasn't a senior too. Jin went in front and made a bow to the younger male offering his greetings in a pleasant voice.

"You honor our small clan with your presence oh honorable Seniors."

Zhang Dong was a bit slow to react, which caught the eye of the sect members. Who started eyeing them down, almost ready to pounce on him for not showing the due respect towards them and their young master. To them, he was just a country bumpkin that was a leader of a small insignificant group of cultivators.

"Ah, excuse my rudeness."

He quickly got off his throne and bowed his head in front of the sect cultivators, this being the first time he actually had to do it. Most of the time he was the strongest person in the area, so he kind of got used to acting nonchalantly around others.

The young master seemed to be a person of few words as he looked dejected to even be here in the first place. He just looked at Zhang Dong for a second and then turned his face to one of the elders behind him. His tone was quite condescending.

“Just give them the orders, don’t want to be in this backwater place anymore than I have too.”

The elder that was spoken too, took out a jade slip and threw it over to Matt that quickly scanned its contents. He started frowning more and more as he read on what was written in there.

“This...”

“Follow the orders in the jade slip, you know the repercussion if you decide otherwise. Know your place whelp, you might have won against some trash clans, but don’t ever forget that the Dark Palm sect is the one that lets you have your petty squabbles in the first place.

The man spat on the ground, as he didn’t like how Zhang Dong was slow in giving them face. After the elder gave them the warning, they withdrew their aura, jumped onto their swords and headed out. As their master had stated, none of them wanted to be here in the first place. The clan people started getting off the floor while panting, knowing well that there was probably nothing good in that jade slip. Zhang Jin walked over with a solemn look on his face, he was passed the jade slip his eyes going wide-eyed in the process.

“Does damn bastards! Did we somehow offend them?”

Matt let Zhang Jin keep the jade slip as some other elders started reading through it. Due to the previous expedition ending in failure, there would be another one. The secret ground opened up on set intervals and required a set amount of people to take part in it. Their clan was ordered to supply them with 1 core formation cultivator, 20 foundation establishment cultivators and 200 Qi Condensation cultivators. Also, they specifically ordered the new Patriarch of the clan to take part in it, if not the sect would replace them with another clan.

There was also an explanation about why this specific number of cultivators was required. After going to the secret grounds, the people there found ten large platforms. The whole thing was created by some immortal cultivator, if they completed a trial they would get some cultivation technique of his as a reward. There was also a giant door in that chamber, in the text it stated that if the trial is successfully finished the giant door would open and reveal the treasure inside.

The Dark Palm sect was very much interested in what was behind that giant door, they tried to brute force their way inside but even their nascent soul cultivators couldn’t put a dent on that massive door. They decided to bring enough people for the trial, but they didn’t want to use their own disciples. They brought in the clans for that, some of them went in for the spoils as the sect did offer rewards. But no one could actually refuse them.

So the first time around, the Zhang Clan went over with 3 of their core formation elders, 60 foundation establishment experts and 600 Qi foundation warriors. These were the best warriors of the clan, as the

clan was going to get paid well if they succeeded. The rest was filled by other clans, in the end, no one returned. The secret grounds forcefully expelled everyone that came inside and the entrance to it got sealed off. But it was later revealed that the seal was weakening with the passage of time and that it would open again.

The ever greedy sect cultivators decided to throw more people at the trial, they didn't care about what the clans thought, they could be replaced later. The opening time would be in about three month's time, they were required to bring their forces there or suffer the consequences. If they succeeded the sect would offer them some spirit stones and resources also they would let them have whatever was in the trial. Probably because they thought that there wouldn't be much worth in there.

The atmosphere was solemn in the room as everyone got the news, the banquet was ended prematurely while the people in charge went to the main hall to discuss things, Matt went with them of course.

"We have three months... we are done for...the previous Patriarch couldn't best that trial with our strongest forces, how are we supposed to do it now?"

One of the men in the room said while pulling his hair out.

"We could try running..."

"And what? Become bandits? Join another Clan? The moment they find out our roots they would execute us."

"They really want us dead..."

Matt listened to the old men bickering, the trial was strange as it had designated spots and a set amount of people. The composition was strange, the core formation experts seemed like generals of their forces, the formation establishment cultivators like officers and the Qi condensation warriors as soldiers.

Maybe it's some military game where they compete against each other? But then one of the teams would have won and been alive to tell the tale...

He tried thinking about novels and how most of those pocket dimension dungeons worked. Mostly there were a lot of traps involved people competing to get some strange herb or treasure in the end. But this one had a treasure outside it, while the people taking the test were inside.

Sounds like a place to test your forces or something...Maybe people inside have to work together to win... If so ... that might be bad...

He knew well how things worked around this world, sometimes a sibling would backstab their family to get that magical pill. Working together wasn't really something that was associated with cultivators. Being a murder hobo, popping pills was more the xianxia way.

I guess if everyone was from one sect it would work out, but if you put in Clans that probably have some grudges with each other and tell them to work together for one goal... I think I need to get more points.

After becoming the Patriarch he had unlocked the Clan window, he could see how many people were in it and what cultivation levels they were. It kind of looked like sim city, he could see the approval ratings

in the city, what cities he had, the crime rate and so on. There was even an achievement tab, that showed him that he could get points for things like getting the approval rating up to a certain point. Building a hospital, building more martial art schools and bringing the strength and knowledge of the citizens up. More or less he got points the better the clan and the city did. Also, he gained passive points each day though at the moment he was gaining a whooping two points a day.

He decided to act a bit more like a leader, slowly filling the room with his aura as she said with a booming voice.

“Organise a city-wide tournament for our clan members, tell them about the new expedition. Qi Condensation juniors and Foundation Establishment cultivators from the clan can participate. We will select the right number from the strongest from them. Do it within a month’s time.”

“Zhang Kuo, find me a list of any strong beasts or demonic cultivators that have bounties on their heads, best if they are in the core formation stage. Do it as fast as you can.”

He needed to train his forces up, which would require quite a bit of points. The fastest way would be slaying monsters or cultivators at the core formation level. He had to get enough points to upgrade the skills for the chosen elite warriors from the tournament. He could hide the fact that the winners would get conscripted, but he would rather have some weaker people that have the guts to fight, than having to force them to come along and then have them abandon others in the middle of battle. The strongest warrior wasn’t always the best one for the job.

The people in the room, mostly knew what the Patriarch was going for with the tournament to choose the best warriors. But was a bit surprised that he wanted to hunt some bounties? But they guessed that he wanted the cash rewards to aid the clan, so there wasn’t much resistance from them. They discussed some other things, with him there, mostly the logistics of getting the tournament ready.

Zhang Dong returned to his chambers and flopped like a dead fish on his large bed. His face was down in the pillow as he just wanted to go to sleep. But before he could do that he heard knocking on the door. He turned around and stared at the ceiling for a moment before standing up.

“Who is it?”

“We apologize for the intrusion, Master”

It was the two kids, they were looking at him with embers in their eyes. They had apparently heard about the whole dark palm sect expedition. Probably overheard it from their mother or one of the other clan members.

“Please Master, teach us fighting skills we want to participate in the expedition!”

He looked at the two youths, the two looking quite determined.

“There’s going to be a tournament if you can get into the best 200 you can participate... But is your mother okay with this?”

“Mother will probably take part in it too... we overheard her talking to grandpa about it, we want to join her and our brothers and sisters of the clan!”

The two were taking it quite seriously, which made Matt a bit hesitant. He didn't want to get these two youths involved that much, they had a bright future ahead of them and quite the high talent. But if they failed the clan would probably be done for anyway.

"Fine... you two continue with your cultivation, but also use this..."

The two were getting the hang of it, but most of Zhang Dong's techniques required high amounts of lightning Qi. The most he could give them is the basic fighting techniques along with the lightning punching and kicking arts. If they could advance with those, they might stand a chance in the tournament. He also wanted to learn a sword art for himself, he didn't have one yet but he would need to get more points for that.

The two left his chambers with a splitting headache again and some manuals to copy from while Matt decided to cultivate for the rest of the night. He expected to get the info on potential targets in the morning, he would head out to gather points, his goal was to get into the late stage of the core formation stage, his progress was slowing down though. He started feeling responsible for these Zhang Clan people, the closer he got to them the harder it was to let go. He might have been an introvert but that didn't mean that he wanted to be alone.

Chapter 60

The next day the news was spreading through the city, making the citizens quite unruly. This was understandable because if this expedition ended badly like last time, there would probably be a new attempt on the city. No one thought that there would be anyone rescuing them again if that happened. Some people were thinking about abandoning the clan and city in general, but then they also heard that other clans in the area were in similar situations. No one was really safe from the sect overlords and it was hard to abandon an established life to start anew.

Matt was in his cultivation chamber, trying to raise his power level. But his gains had slowed down the further he progressed. The storm clouds were coming down less, the spiritual energy in the area was thinning out. He was thinking about his plan, would it even work? He left and went over to Zhang Jin, he wanted to know if he knew anything about the last expedition.

After the two greeted each other then his grandpa explained everything in detail. The old Patriarch left with two other core formation elders, this happened about three months ago. They didn't have many details on what happened inside as the communication jades didn't work. The spirit tablets started breaking after about a month, so the people inside that dungeon didn't just get wiped out. They remained for quite some time, fighting for their lives. It took another month for everyone's tablets to break, maybe it was some kind of prolonged attack or some kind of maze?

The thing Zhang Dong was sure of was that he needed to get as many points as he could, but he wasn't about to go on a killing spree. That's why he told Kuo to get him that fugitive list. He wanted to hunt some monsters and get spirit stones as rewards to boot, he needed a lot of resources. Did everyone have the best available weapon for their disposition? Could he upgrade their cultivation method? This was a team event, so he needed to arm his men and women to the teeth and he knew that the previous expedition drained the clan's coffers dry.

"I have brought you what you asked for, Patriarch."

Matt nodded and took the jade slip, it had information about various baddies and monsters around the whole empire. He scanned it for core formation enemies, would be nice if he could grab a nascent soul beast, but a monster like that would probably one-shot him.

Ravager	Demonic cultivator, last seen near the five dread peaks by the city of Frostriver. Cultivation base in the later core formation stage. He has killed hundreds, maybe thousands of people in pursuit of power. Reward 10,000 low grade Spirit Stones.
Lesser Calamity Dragon	Evil Beast residing in the volcanic areas of the inferno mountain range, regularly seen raiding nearby cities and villages causing havoc on the populace. Cultivation base in the late core formation stage Reward 12,000 low grade Spirit Stones
Blood Demon Cult	An evil group of renegade cultivators, they act in the shadows and are hard to track. People have reported children getting abducted in the night. Reward 8,000 spirit stones, cultivation base unknown, possibly in core formation, not confirmed.

He mostly looked for opponents in the late stage of core formation, after fighting the fire lord and upgrading his skill he thought that he could take those on. He noted down the cult as well, as the city that they were doing their evil deeds was between the other two places he was going to go. He could head there after taking care of one of the assignments. After he finished up with those, he would decide if he could do more before returning to the clan.

He thought that maybe he could stay here and relax for longer, but now his life was at stake. There was always an option to leave and hide, but he was the Zhang Clan Patriarch. Everyone probably knew him by now, he would probably be a wanted one like that Ravager guy on the run. But there was also an option of a disguising skill, though if he did that the people from this clan would be dead meat. He didn't want to have that on his conscience.

I really need some sword skills, I can't actually do any fancy attacks with this sword of mine besides swinging it around.

Matt knew that there were many flashy sword styles, that if mastered let the user unleash powerful attacks. He would like to get a technique with a lot of potential best if he could use it from the get-go and be able to raise its prowess later. He had an eye on one particular sword art, that came under the umbrella of lightning elements so he got a discount. It wasn't an upgradable skill or anything, it was divided into tomes though if he bought the Earth grade one, he would get the previous ones for the lower ones.

The manuals were called Thunder God Sword Scripture and had various sword attacks and stances that went well with his empowered lightning Qi cultivation method. He wanted to grab the lower-level ones, but if he bought them one by one he would just lose points. For now, he decided to spend the rest of his points on Qi recovery pills and healing pills, as well as some detoxification pills against poison attacks. He knew well how those evil cultivators liked to poison everyone, though his golden body had quite the high resistance to poison attacks.

After checking out his map and marking down the first three waypoints, he could see that the closest area was the volcanic one. Also, this one actually pointed out the whereabouts of his target, the other ones were kind of vague. Maybe after he got the points from the dragon he could find some kind of

tracking skill. He wasn't sure if he would be such a good detective and find that cult or that evil cultivator. Those guys seemed like the types that were good at hiding.

The plan was simple, go out, slay some baddies, get points, upgrade the cultivation methods of the clan members after they are done with their small tournament arc. Who knew, maybe some kind of protagonist type would appear during the tournament that he could focus his resources on. There probably had to be a reason why that secret ground required lower-level cultivators, so probably everyone was important and he couldn't just power through it with his own strength.

Guess I'll be off to saving some damsels in distress, maybe that dragon will be hiding a cute princess somewhere.

Matt thought to himself jokingly while making sure that he had everything he needed in his spatial ring. He took the excessive pills that he got from the previous battles with him, you never know, low grade pills could come in handy as well, he could always sell them later for more spirit stones.

While he was heading out, his grandpa Zhang Jin was waiting. He looked at him with concern in his gaze, fidgeting slightly before speaking out.

"Don... Patriarch, are you sure you want to leave the clan at this moment, what if something happens to you?"

He was informed about what Zhang Dong was doing, he wasn't sure what hunting some criminal and evil beasts would accomplish in the span of 3 months. The clan sure could use more spirit stones for weapons and gear, that was true. He was slightly concerned that the new Patriarch could die during his travels, they had no dao protectors to accompany him as he was the strongest member in the clan, they would only slow him down.

"Don't worry gramps, I'll be back. This is kind of how I get stronger... I might even have a breakthrough in these three months. I already said it to Ya and Kuo, but try to gather some crafting resources I might be able to forge some weapons for the winning clan members afterwards."

He replied in a calm voice, that tranquil mind technique working out quite nicely as previously he would have probably been stuttering all over the place.

Zhang Jin raised his hand as if he wanted to say something, but then instead nodded and gave his grandson a pat on the back and some words of reassurance before sending him off.

"Don't worry, I'll protect the clan while you are away."

Zhang Dong smiled slightly while just nodding back, then he jumped onto his flying sword that started glowing as he inserted his spiritual essence into it. With a thunderous sound, he vanished from the spot and you could hear a resounding sonic boom. Some other clan elders and members were also there. They had a myriad of feelings about the whole situation, some thought that this young cultivator would probably abandon them. Some were hopeful that their new Patriarch would deliver another miracle and get them out of this situation. Some were just confused, others were mad or fearful. Everyone dispersed after Zhang Jin told them to move their asses in motion and get to work while squinting.

The Patriarch had a communication jade slip with him this time around, the defensive formation was repaired so he would be able to come back if something went wrong. They had to follow orders, so they

got busy with the tournament plans. Zhang Dong didn't mention how exactly the tournament was supposed to function, but he did say that he didn't want people to just get eliminated if they lost a fight. Everyone was supposed to have multiple chances to get their rank up, one fight wasn't enough to decide a good or bad fighter. Also, the fighter's stamina was important, so the combatants had to fight people in succession. Weapons were allowed, but they had to be of the same grade as the opponents.

The clan had a designated sparring area just for that, with build-in formations that kept people from getting killed or fatally injured. The people got to work while Zhang Dong flew through the air, the increase in cultivation making him fly twice as fast as before. If someone went into his patriarch chamber they would notice that the grand bed was missing, Matt sure as hell didn't want to sleep on that straw mattress that he got from that Tribe. The new bed barely fit into the upgraded crafting abode, he really needed to get something he could comfortably spend his time in...