

Walker 41

Chapter 41 - Success With The Second Skill

In the Star catching peak, disciples could be seen rushing around with anxiety on their faces. They had detected multiple spatial disturbances a little while ago and were currently trying to pinpoint its location.

A black-robed elder with the insignia of star catching peak embroidered on their chest could be seen standing at the head of a large formation array. A hundred other disciples could also be seen sitting in their respective positions on the formation array.

Sweat could be seen on the faces of all the disciples, and even the black-robed elder seemed to be distressed.

"Elder Feng the disciples can't hold on much longer. We need to ask the other elders to support the formation." The Head disciple who was sitting near the black-robed elder spoke.

A hint of annoyance along with helplessness could be seen on the black-robed elder's face upon hearing the head disciple's words. The black-robed elder faced towards the head disciple and spoke,

"You think I don't know that? I would have already contacted the other elders if it was possible."

The head disciple was not the least bit bothered by the black-robed elder's chiding and still had a staunch look on his face. Elder Feng noticed this and let out a long sigh.

"The other elders are currently in the trial grounds and cannot be contacted. The communication jades don't work across different spatial planes. Though I have contacted an elder to enter the trial grounds and personally inform the other elders of our peak." Elder Feng revealed.

The head disciple nodded in acceptance and returned his attention towards the formation array while muttering,

'Let's hope they are able to return before we lose the trace of the spatial disturbance.'

The black-robed elder heard the head disciple's mutterings and let out another sigh.

Back at the hunting shack, Lin Mu was currently lying down on the bed. He was waiting to fall asleep and enter the Sleepscape. He had a few ideas that he wanted to try out in the Sleepscape, now that he had spirit qi.

A few minutes later Lin Mu fell asleep and appeared in the Sleepscape. The sight of the blue sky, green flowing grass, and the apple tree in the distance made Lin Mu feel a sense of belonging. He walked up to the tree and observed that it was different than before.

An apple could actually be seen hanging from one of the branches. The apple's colour was a mix of red and green, with green being the more prominent. The fruit looked juicy and succulent to Lin Mu's eyes, making him desire to pluck it.

Lin Mu jumped up and easily plucked the apple, the height of the tree no longer a restriction to him. But as soon as Lin Mu had the apple in his hand, it disappeared. Thinking that it was probably returned to where it was, Lin Mu looked at the place from where the apple previously hung.

'It's not there? Where did it go?' Lin Mu wondered.

The last time Lin Mu had come to the Sleepscape, he had tested out its characteristics. The main thing that he found out was that any change he made to this place would automatically be restored to the state it was before. Seeing that the apple did not return to the tree, he wondered if there was something he missed.

Lin Mu remembered how the items from spatial rifts would be automatically stored in the ring when he touched them and wondered if it was the same in this case too. He thus willed the apple to be withdrawn from the ring, and it appeared in his hand.

"Seems like I was right." Lin Mu spoke to himself.

Lin Mu studied the apple and did not find anything wrong with it. He then tried to eat it, but the moment he took a bite out of it, the apple disappeared and was then restored to its original form in his hand.

'So I can't eat it. Maybe it's only because I'm in the Sleepscape, and I'll need to be awake to eat it.' Lin Mu thought.

"But wait, if the apple can be stored in the ring, can I withdraw other items as well?" Lin Mu speculated.

Desiring to verify his hypothesis, Lin Mu willed for his short-sword to appear in his hand. In the next moment, the short sword had materialised in his hand. Excited at this discovery, Lin Mu tried the same with the other items from the ring.

"I can now practice in the Sleepscape as well." Lin Mu said with an optimistic tone.

Thus Lin Mu continued his weapons practice in the Sleepscape. He practiced all the way until he felt mentally tired and wanted to sleep normally. When Lin Mu thought this, his body faded away from the Sleepscape but did not appear in the actual world. Lin Mu was now sleeping normally. He had just discovered another function of the Sleepscape.

A few hours later, the sun had risen, and Lin Mu had just woken up. He was feeling refreshed and clearly remembered the practice he had done in the Sleepscape.

'I now have more time to practice and improve my weapon skill.' Lin Mu thought.

He then stood up and prepared his breakfast. He had consumed the 9th stage body tempering realm beast's meat and was now using the steel-back wolf meat as it was the next better option. While the meat cooked, he tried whether he could withdraw the apple from the Sleepscape.

Lin Mu willed it, and indeed the apple appeared in his hand. He then brought it close to his mouth and took a bite. The rich juices from the apple spread in his mouth, giving rise to a sweet and sour taste. He savored the taste and then felt a warmth spread from his abdomen.

Lin Mu was surprised by the warmth as he could tell it was spirit qi.

'Is that tree in the Sleepscape a spirit apple tree?' Lin Mu wondered.

He then finished the entire spirit apple and sat down to chant the severing heart sutra. He guided the spirit qi through his meridians into the dantian. Once all the spirit qi was stored into his dantian, Lin Mu estimated that he had obtained nearly twenty wisps of spirit qi from the fruit.

Lin Mu was delighted by this result and figured that if he could get more of these spirit apples from the Sleepscape, he could very well use them to recover his spirit qi if it was ever completely depleted. The only problem in this equation was that Lin Mu did not know if or how long it would take for another spirit apple to be formed in the Sleepscape.

It had been around fifteen minutes, the meat was now fully cooked and emitted a delicious aroma. Lin Mu ate the roast meat and then sat down to assimilate the vital energy. With his improved speed of assimilation, he had completed the entire process within 10 minutes.

Lin Mu then looked within his dantian and sensed the spirit qi present within it. He found that the quantity of spirit qi had increased to nearly 150 wisps. His dantian was now at 7.5 percent of its total capacity. This was the result of the spirit qi from his yesterday's cultivation session combined with the spirit apple he ate today.

"I should continue testing out the second skill 'Blink'" Lin Mu muttered to himself.

Lin Mu stood up and triggered the skill. He focused all his attention on his body for any change that would be happening. He found that his body did turn blurry for a moment when the skill was used, but could not find the reason for it.

Lin Mu continued using the skill multiple times and in different conditions. After ten more tries, he had nearly depleted all of his spirit qi, thus he sat down and chanted the severing heart sutra to refine more spirit qi.

Three hours later, Lin Mu had restored all of his spirit qi. He had a capacity of 150 spirit qi wisps and could use 'Blink' fourteen times before needing to rest and replenish it back again. By now the sun had reached the top of Lin Mu's head, showing that it was noontime.

"I'll try it a few more times before eating lunch." Lin Mu decided.

Lin Mu had to try it a few more times until he learned a bit more about the skill. He found out that his body only turned blurry when he was out in the open and not in a restricted space like the hunting shack. But if he used the skill in the hunting shack with its door open, his body still turned blurry.

It was not until the 23rd try that Lin Mu was able to successfully use the skill. When Lin Mu used the skill in that attempt, he gazed at a location a few meters away from him and found himself suddenly appearing there.

Because of the sudden movement Lin Mu lost his orientation and fell down, but he did not wince in pain but rather laughed out loud.

"Hahaha, I've got it." Lin Mu exclaimed.

Chapter 42 - Full Potential Of The Boulder Collapsing Fist

Lin Mu could be seen disappearing from one place to another. He would fade from one location and materialize a few meters away from the previous location. 'Blink' the second skill that Lin Mu had obtained allowed him to teleport over short distances.

He discovered that he could teleport up to a maximum distance of 10 meters in a single use of the skill. He also learned that he could only teleport to a place that he was able to see with his eyes. For example, he could not teleport to a place behind him, but if he turned his neck and gazed at the location, he could teleport there.

Another Limitation he discovered was that if there was a large object present between Lin Mu and the location he wanted to teleport to, he could not teleport. He needed to have a clear sight of the location he wanted to teleport to. Otherwise, the skill would fail to activate, even though the spirit qi would still be consumed.

Lin Mu had to unwittingly stop as he had nearly run out of spirit qi. He had been enjoying the feeling of using the skill as it was the fastest Lin Mu had ever moved.

"I shouldn't get carried away, I still need to check out some things." Lin Mu said to himself.

Lin Mu prepared some meat to cook and cultivated until it got ready. He had learned that the more he depleted his spirit qi the faster he could cultivate and recover it. Sleeping also helped him recover some spirit qi passively, but the process was slow as only half of his qi was replenished after eight hours of sleep. Thus compared to actively cultivating spirit qi, it was inefficient.

Lin Mu also found that the maximum amount of spirit qi he could recover by sleeping was the total amount he had when he actively cultivated. He could not exceed it and had to actively cultivate if he wanted to increase the total capacity.

Soon his lunch was ready, and Lin Mu started eating it. While eating he had the idea about testing out the strength of the boulder collapsing fist. It was mentioned in the booklet that boulder collapsing fist was compatible with many energies and they could also be freely combined.

Lin Mu wanted to see the true might of the martial technique once he combined vital energy along with spirit qi. Though he was a little apprehensive as the martial technique would completely drain his vital energy in one use, he did not know if it would be the same with spirit qi.

A few minutes later, Lin Mu was done with his lunch and was ready to test out the capabilities of boulder collapsing fist.

'Let's see how this goes.' Lin Mu thought to himself.

Lin Mu stood in the horse stance and harmonized his breathing with the fist technique. But instead of vital energy, he controlled the spirit qi to form an energy spiral in his right arm. He carefully guided the spirit qi from his dantian into the meridians of his right arm and let it swirl.

Soon a vortex was formed, but the spirit qi did not stop being absorbed. Once the spiral was created Lin Mu did not need to consciously guide the spirit qi, as it moved into his right arm automatically. It was only when he had consumed half of his entire store that the spirit qi spiraled stabilised.

Lin Mu then braced himself and executed the technique.

"Boulder collapsing fist!"

~Whoosh

A strong jet of air was shot forward and a sharp whistling sound could be heard, which hurt one's ears. The jet of air struck a tree that was in front of Lin Mu with a huge impact. The bark that covered it was directly stripped away, and a shallow fist imprint was left on the tree's bare trunk. The tree started swaying as the jet of air split into two and impacted more trees, making them shake as well.

Lin Mu took a deep breath and relaxed his body. He was shocked by the effect of the boulder collapsing fist.

"If it's already this strong when I just hit the air, what would happen if I directly hit a person with it?" Lin Mu wondered.

'And what if I combine spirit qi with vital energy, how strong it would be then?' Lin Mu thought.

The thought about combining spirit qi with vital energy kept on repeating in Lin Mu's mind. He had only tested the technique on air, but not on a solid object yet. He wanted to witness the power of the entire potential of the technique, as he did not know if he would ever fall into a dire situation where this technique would be his only way out.

Lin Mu could no longer hold himself back and wanted to try out the technique that instant. But as he wanted to test the true potential of the technique, he had to find a suitable target to test it on. He could not test it on a person or on a beast, thus he decided to find a large boulder.

"What better way to test the martial technique, rather than to see if it actually lives up to its name." Lin Mu said with a chuckle.

Lin Mu walked to the small stream, as he knew that there was a boulder located a short distance away from it. He reached the spot 10 minutes later, after which he checked the surroundings for any people or beasts that could disturb him. He especially did not want to expose the technique to other people.

Once Lin Mu confirmed that there was no person nearby, he stood in front of the boulder which towered over him, being more than three meters tall. He then entered the horse stance and harmonized his breathing with the fist technique.

Now came the hard part. Lin Mu had to combine the spirit qi with the vital energy. He had not done this before, so did not know if he would be successful in the first try.

Lin Mu first allowed the vital energy within his body to form an energy spiral within his left arm. He chose his left arm, as it was his non-dominant arm, and would not bother him too much if it was injured. He knew that he would get slightly injured whenever he used it on a person or a beast. Though he would soon recover in a few hours after that.

Soon most of his vital energy had started spinning within his left arm. He then guided the spirit qi through the meridians into his left arm. He had originally thought that it would be a difficult process and he would not succeed in the first try. But reality showed him that he was wrong, as the spirit qi merged with the vital energy with ease and assimilated into the energy spiral.

Lin Mu observed that the energy spiral within his arm had started to undergo a certain kind of metamorphosis. The energy spiral was getting more and more condensed. Soon, from a gaseous form, the energy spiral had turned into a liquid form.

Lin Mu could sense the raw power that was stored within the liquid energy spiral. It was completely unlike he had ever felt before. When the energy spiral finally stabilised, Lin Mu had depleted all of his vital energy as well as his spirit qi.

He knew he only had this one chance, thus he took a deep breath and executed the technique.

"Boulder collapsing fist!"

~phew ~~~~~KABOOOM!!

This time there was no whistling sound, no jet of air, only raw power that was shot forward. The moment Lin Mu's fist connected with the surface of the boulder, the energy spiral within his left arm transferred into it.

It was as if the world had turned still, but in the next instant, the boulder that was in front of Lin Mu disappeared along with a large exploding sound. The sound of the explosion spread through the sky and could be heard far away. The boulder had turned into small stone fragments and had pelted the entire area that was behind it.

The impact of the stone fragments broke the trees that were close directly, while those that were far had been embedded with the fragments. Some unrecognisable masses of meat could also be seen lying around; these were the unfortunate birds and small animals that had borne the impact of the fragments.

The noise of the exploding boulder had drowned out the sounds of the forest as it continued echoing.

A few kilometers away, deep in the forest, a group of people were currently fighting a spirit beast that looked like an oversized pangolin. They were moving with great agility, and their every attack had immense power within it. One could clearly tell that all of them were qi cultivators from an elite mercenary team.

They were engrossed in fighting the spirit beast when suddenly the sound of an explosion echoed from afar. The sound of the explosion made the mercenaries as well as the spirit beast wary. The spirit beast halted for a moment, as if it had sensed something terrifying. The pangolin spirit beast could not bear it and curled up, rolling away with extreme speed, leaving the mercenaries behind.

"What was that sound, why did it scare the spirit beast away?" one of the men asked.

"It was not just the sound, there was spirit qi contained within it; extremely strong spirit qi." A woman that was wielding a whip spoke.

"Estimating the distance the sound travelled, and the spirit qi that was contained within it, I would say it was a cultivator at the peak of the qi refining realm; if not the core condensation realm." Spoke a man that looked to be the leader of the team.

"Should we investigate it, leader?" Another man asked.

"No, it is not our job. Leave it." The leader spoke with apprehension in his eyes.

Back at the site of the explosion, Lin Mu was writhing on the ground, holding his left arm. The noise of the explosion had not only suppressed the sounds of the forest, but it had also drowned out the screams of Lin Mu.

Chapter 43 - Injury

It was not until a minute later that Lin Mu's screams became audible. By now the echoing sound of the explosion had faded away and the forest had become silent once again. Clearly the explosion had scared most of the beasts of the forest, thus one could not hear any more sounds.

Lin Mu was screaming in pain, but he could still think. His left hand was severely injured, with his fingers broken and his arm bones popping out of his elbow. Blood could be seen dripping out of his lacerated flesh.

The force exerted by the combination of vital energy and spirit Qi was too much for his body to handle, which resulted in his current predicament.

Lin Mu forcefully gained a semblance of his sanity and instinctively withdrew the bottle that contained the Four vessels restoration pills. He then used his mouth to pull open the cork and popped a single pill into his mouth.

As soon as the Four vessels restoration pill touched Lin Mu's tongue, it melted and was swallowed by him. When the liquefied pill entered his stomach, a cooling feeling spread all over his body relieving him of his anguish.

The pain faded away as if it was never there. The flesh of Lin Mu's left hand started wiggling and itching. The bones that were popping out of his elbow were slowly being pulled back into their correct place.

Lin Mu's fingers that were broken in multiple places were also being mended. His flesh that was torn and cut slowly started healing. After ten minutes, Lin Mu's hand was completely healed and as good as new.

"Heavens! I can never do that again. I don't want to feel that kind of pain ever again." Lin Mu said out loud.

If another person saw Lin Mu right now, they would see that he was drenched in sweat and was panting heavily.

'The effect of the Four vessels restoration pill is even more amazing than I guessed it would be.' Lin Mu thought.

Suddenly, Lin Mu felt a scorching feeling spreading throughout his blood vessels and meridians.

"Aargh! What is this? Why has the pain not stopped?" Lin Mu shouted.

Lin Mu felt as if his blood vessels and meridians were being scraped and pulled apart. This scorching feeling lasted for a few minutes, after which a comfortable warmth replaced it.

Lin Mu could sense spirit Qi flowing through his meridians. He sat down and chanted the severing heart sutra so that he could clearly sense the condition of his body. Lin Mu peered into his dantian and found out that his depleted spirit Qi was replenished, and even increased by a large amount.

Lin Mu observed his spirit Qi and estimated it to be around 500 wisps.

'My spirit Qi increased by such an enormous amount. This is definitely the effect of the Four vessels restoration pill.' Lin Mu thought.

'But the man in the restaurant never mentioned that the pill also has the effect of increasing one's cultivation.' Lin Mu wondered.

Pushing the unwanted thoughts to the back of his mind, Lin Mu instead chose to just take joy in the benefit that he had just gained. He then walked back to the hunting shack, as he had depleted the vital energy within his body.

Lin Mu reached the hunting shack after ten minutes and withdrew a large amount of beast meat, which he then set on the stove to cook. He was feeling very tired so did not even bother to season the meat with spices.

After the beast meat was cooked, Lin Mu first ate it slowly and then increased his speed as he gained more of his vital energy back. All the meat was soon consumed by Lin Mu and was being digested by his body.

Lin Mu had sat down to chant the calming heart sutra, so that he could restore his vital energy. While he was assimilating the vital energy, Lin Mu finally saw the changes within his blood vessels. They had expanded and looked much more tough than before.

'Did I break through to the 10th stage of the body tempering realm as well?' Lin Mu wondered to himself.

Only after Lin Mu had completed assimilating all the vital energy from the beast meat, did he confirm that he had entered the 10th stage of the body tempering realm.

"So not only did the Four vessels restoration pill increase my spirit Qi, but it also pushed me into the 10th stage." Lin Mu muttered to himself.

Now that Lin Mu was back to his optimum condition, or rather one could say better than before, he finally pondered on his previous misfortune.

Lin Mu understood that he had managed to obtain benefits through his misfortune and that he was incredibly lucky to have the four vessels restoration pills with him. If he did not find them in the spatial rift that day, he may not have been alive today.

"I can't use the combination of vital energy and spirit Qi again. At least not until I can figure out a solution for it." Lin Mu concluded.

'Even the normal form of the boulder collapsing fist is very strong for me to use in most situations.' Lin Mu thought.

After Lin Mu had organized his thoughts, his attention was pulled towards the black dots that were floating around.

'Since I have more than enough spirit Qi, I may as well open and check all these spatial rifts.' Lin Mu thought.

Lin Mu then stood up and walked towards a black dot that was a few feet away from him. He reached out with his right hand, as the black dot expanded into a spatial rift. He put his hand inside the rift and tried to find something.

Lin Mu's first attempt resulted in failure, as he did not find anything inside the spatial rift. He did not lose hope and went towards another spatial rift. This time he found something inside the spatial rift.

Lin Mu withdrew the item from his spatial ring and found it to be a small broken piece of metal. It seemed like it was part of something bigger, but could not be determined what.

Lin Mu checked all the black dots in his surroundings and only stopped when he could not find any more of them. He had opened a total of 17 spatial rifts that had used up around a hundred wisps of spirit qi.

Lin Mu discovered that some of the spatial rifts took more than 5 wisps of spirit Qi to open. After he had checked all the spatial rifts he was left with eight objects. Although all of them were useless to Lin Mu, some of them looked interesting to him.

The most peculiar item he had found in a spatial rift was a fully preserved bolster.

Chapter 44 - Black Crack

Lin Mu was currently in the Sleepscape practicing with his short sword. He had decided that while he was in the actual world, he would cultivate and train his skills, and once he entered the Sleepscape, he would train with the weapons. This was the most optimal way, he figured out, that made the best use of his time.

The first thing Lin Mu checked was the spirit apple tree in the Sleepscape. He scanned it and saw that another spirit apple growing on one of the branches. But this spirit apple was still small and did not look ready, thus Lin Mu left it on the tree to ripen.

His practice with the weapons was going well for Lin Mu, but he still thought it was lacking something. He felt like he needed a proper weapons manual or a teacher who could teach him the proper way to use the weapons.

'Perhaps I can buy the manuals from Jing Wei's emporium. Though they will probably be expensive.' Lin Mu thought.

After Lin Mu felt mentally tired, he thought about leaving the Sleepscape and left it. He had understood that if he left the Sleepscape, he will just sleep normally. While Lin Mu is in the Sleepscape, he does not feel physically tired, but if he trains for a while in there he will become mentally tired.

A few hours later, Lin Mu woke up feeling refreshed. He lifted his head from the soft and comfortable bolster which he had found yesterday. Although at first he thought all the items he found were useless, but later, while he was about to sleep, he figured that he could at least use the bolster as it was originally intended to.

The bolster was one of the best quality items Lin Mu had found in the spatial rifts. It was soft, white coloured and its cloth seemed as if it was made from high quality silk of the eastern lands. Using the bolster as a pillow to rest his head on, made his sleep even better.

After Lin Mu woke up, he cooked his breakfast and cultivated using the severing heart sutra. By the time the breakfast was ready, his spirit Qi had increased by 25 wisps for a total of 525 wisps. Yesterday, Lin Mu was only able to restore his spirit Qi back to its previous amount and could not cultivate it further on.

Lin Mu ate his breakfast and then sat down again to chant the calming heart sutra. While assimilating the vital energy, he sensed that the ability of his body to store vital energy had increased by a large amount.

He could not even estimate how much vital energy he would have to absorb and assimilate, in order to progress to the next stage of the body tempering realm.

Although it was no longer necessary for Lin Mu to continue training in the body tempering realm, because he was already considered a cultivator; he still wanted to continue training it, while he could as vital energy was still usable for the boulder collapsing fist.

But he would not be using the combination of vital energy and spirit Qi anytime soon, though.

'I should go hunt some beasts. Now that I'm in the 10th stage of the body tempering realm and also a cultivator, I should be able to hunt some high tier beasts with little problems. As long as I take some precautions, of course.' Lin Mu thought.

Lin Mu then walked towards the trail where he had set up some traps. He got some thorn tailed rats from the snares, which he would be using as bait now. After this he changed his route and walked towards the deeper parts of the forest.

While he was on the way to the depths of the forest, Lin Mu observed that the population of animals and beasts seemed to have returned.

In the past few hunting trips Lin Mu had taken to the forest, he had a little difficulty hunting due to the lack of prey. The population of the beasts was reduced because of some unknown reason, but now it seemed to be back to normal.

"If there was something scaring the beasts, it seems to be gone now." Lin Mu muttered to himself.

Lin Mu started searching for some beasts to hunt once he reached a suitable place. He wanted to hunt mid tier beasts if not high tier, as the meat of any beasts lower than that would not fill his belly. Also, hunting higher tier beasts would only yield him more money in the form of beast materials.

Soon enough, Lin Mu found his first prey, which was a stone hoofed deer. He had seen some stone hoofed deers before, but did not dare hunt them as they lived in herds. If he somehow spooked the entire herd, they would mercilessly trample him beneath their hooves that were as hard as stones.

But now that he was in the 10th stage of the body tempering realm, along with being a cultivator, it would be very easy for him.

Lin Mu chose a beast that was relatively far from the herd and silently approached it. When he was only two meters away from the beast, he withdrew the spear from the ring.

Lin Mu stimulated the spirit Qi in his dantian and guided it into the meridians within his legs. Once the spirit Qi reached his legs, it boosted the strength of his leg muscles, thus improving his speed.

Lin Mu gathered strength within his legs and shot forward. He aimed the tip of the spear at the head of the beast. With the increased strength from the spirit Qi, Lin Mu easily ended the life of the stone hoofed deer.

In the next instant, he touched the corpse of the beast and stored it in the ring, so that the scent of the blood does not spread.

Lin Mu looked around and found that the beast herd was not alerted.

'I may as well hunt more of them.' Lin Mu thought.

Thirty minutes later, Lin Mu had hunted three more stone hoofed deers. But when he was about to hunt the fifth one, the other beasts finally saw him and ran away.

'The four pelts should net me at least a gold coin.' Lin Mu guessed.

Now that the stone hoofed deers had run away, Lin Mu started his search for the next prey. It took him an hour before he was able to find his next prey.

The prey this time was a beast that looked like a lynx. It had three tails with a small horn sprouting from the middle of its forehead. This was the first time Lin Mu had seen this type of beast and thus did not know its name.

Lin Mu saw how easily the lynx beast killed a Red snouted boar, thus he estimated it to be at the 8th stage of the body tempering realm. Lin Mu followed the beast for a while until he was sure that it was the right location for him to hunt it. He did not want the beast to run away, even though he doubted the beast would do that.

Lin Mu reached a narrow, small path that funneled towards a cave. He guessed that this was most likely the den of the beast. Lin Mu pulled out the spear and strengthened his legs with spirit Qi. He then pounced on the lynx beast and managed to stab it in the leg.

The lynx beast had smelled his scent thus was able to avoid getting stabbed in the head. The beast cried out in pain and retreated. Lin Mu approached the beast and attacked once again. This time Lin Mu missed the beast, but did not mind it. He instead left the spear stuck in the ground and rolled to the side of the beast.

As soon as he was at the side of the beast Lin Mu withdrew the short sword and stabbed it in the beast's ribs. The short sword passed through the ribs and pierced the heart of the beast, killing it.

~phew

Lin Mu let out a breath as he wiped the sweat off his forehead.

Lin Mu continued his search for more beasts and only stopped after four hours. He had hunted three mid tier beasts and two high tier beasts in this time span. Lin Mu peeked through the canopy of the forest and spotted the sun. He guessed it to be around 3 pm.

Lin Mu returned to the hunting shack. He then went towards the stream, so that he could dissect and prepare the beasts. He was done in an hour and walked back to the hunting shack, after storing the carcasses and materials in the ring.

While he was walking back, he noticed the black dots that had returned. He counted seven of them just on the way back, and once he reached the shack; he saw even more of them floating around. In fact, he found that their numbers had nearly doubled.

"Let's see what I find today." Lin Mu said with a chuckle.

Lin Mu opened every spatial rift one by one and searched for the items hidden within. After three hours he had searched all the spatial rifts. He counted that he had opened 28 spatial rifts today. Though he actually only obtained three items from all of them!

'Why are there so few items today?' Lin Mu wondered.

The three items he found were- an old shoe, a broken staff and a roof tile. All of them seemed useless to Lin Mu again. While he was examining the three items, he felt that the air had suddenly changed direction.

He looked around and saw that the wind was moving towards one direction, as it was carrying dried leaves and dust along with it.

Lin Mu curiously looked further and suddenly saw the leaves and dust swirling around something. He went to check and found that the leaves and dust were swirling around a black crack that was about the length of his palm.

"What is this now?" Lin Mu said out loud.

Chapter 45 - Gaze Of The Golden Eyes

Lin Mu was circling the black crack with curiosity. It was completely unlike anything he had seen before. The wind which brought along leaves and dust spun around the black crack and then disappeared after a few seconds, depositing the leaves and dust below it.

Lin Mu watched the black crack for thirty minutes and observed that a few gusts of wind would come every few seconds and disappear after swirling around the black crack a few times. After 30 minutes he saw that a small pile of dust and leaves was created below the black crack.

'This is rather peculiar.' Lin Mu thought.

Lin Mu then searched the surrounding area to see if there are any more black cracks. He searched a radius of 200 meters yet could not find any more of them. He was intrigued by the black crack and was lost in thought.

'I'll wait and observe this black crack for some more time. I want to gain a certain level of understanding before I try to do anything to it.' Lin Mu decided.

Lin Mu then returned to the hunting shack and sat down to chant the severing heart sutra. Lin Mu cultivated for four hours, during which he first restored the spirit Qi that he had depleted in opening the spatial rifts and then increased his overall store of spirit Qi.

At the end of his cultivation session, Lin Mu measured the spirit Qi within his dantian and estimated that it had increased to around 600 wisps.

Lin Mu then cooked some meat for his dinner and ate it. While eating his dinner, Lin Mu once again saw the small four-legged silhouette spying on him from the bushes.

Determined to catch the silhouette this time, Lin Mu strengthened his legs with spirit Qi and shot towards the small silhouette. It only took Lin Mu three seconds to cross a distance of 100 meters, yet to his surprise, the small silhouette seemed to react much faster than him and disappeared into the forest.

"That beast is very fast for its size. Though it doesn't look very strong." Lin Mu muttered to himself.

Lin Mu then returned back to the shack to continue eating his dinner. After he was done with that, he sat down and chanted the calming heart sutra. This time it only took him ten minutes to assimilate all the vital energy from the beast meat, even though he had increased the meal's portion.

Lin Mu did not feel much difference in the vital energy within his body. It was as if he had finally reached a bottleneck and would need a long time to progress any further.

After Lin Mu was done assimilating vital energy, he thought about how he could increase his proficiency with the new skills. Although he knew how to use them instinctively, he still won't be able to use them at the right time during a battle.

'I need to make a training regimen, to increase the proficiency of my skills.' Lin Mu thought.

"The primary use for the first skill 'Flicker' is to dodge attacks. So I need to somehow simulate attacks." Lin Mu spoke to himself.

After tackling some ideas, Lin Mu finally decided upon a method he could use to train the skill. The first thing he needed to improve upon was to get the timing of the activation right. As the skill only lasted for a second, it was absolutely necessary that Lin Mu triggers it at the right moment.

The idea Lin Mu thought upon was that he could make a few swinging dummies that would simulate attacks by slamming into him. He would then have to avoid them by activating the skill at the right time.

After figuring out what he was going to do tomorrow, Lin Mu felt tired and decided to sleep. He laid down on the bed and rested his head on the soft bolster.

'This bolster is proving to be pretty useful.' Lin Mu thought.

After a few minutes, Lin Mu fell asleep and entered the Sleepscape. When Lin Mu appeared in the Sleepscape, he was facing the spirit apple tree. He observed the spirit apple hanging on it and saw that it had fully grown.

'So it takes around two days for a single spirit apple to mature.' Lin Mu thought.

Lin Mu jumped up and plucked the spirit apple, storing it into the ring. He then withdrew his weapons and started his training. He trained with the ten weapons he had bought. He left out the two shields, as he would need a partner to practice using them.

"Wait, I can use the swinging dummies for practicing with the shields." Lin Mu spoke out loud.

Lin Mu continued his practice for a few hours until he felt mentally tired. He was just about to leave the Sleepscape and enter normal sleep when his gaze wandered over to the spirit apple tree.

Lin Mu walked over and saw that another spirit apple had already started growing on one of the branches. The spirit apple was completely green and quarter the size of a fully grown spirit apple.

'That was fast.' Lin Mu said with raised eyebrows.

After this Lin Mu thought about leaving the Sleepscape and slept normally. In the morning Lin Mu was woken up by a chilly wind that had risen out of nowhere. He rose from the bed and saw that the door of the hunting shack was completely open and the wind was blowing in from it.

"Did I forget to close it last night?" Lin Mu wondered.

Lin Mu stood up and walked outside to a frosty morning. Although it was not snowing yet, the temperature had fallen a few notches and the dew on the grass was frozen.

'I guess winter will be here any day now.' Lin Mu thought.

Just as Lin Mu was about to turn around to cook his breakfast, he saw a sight that left his jaw wide open. An enormous pile of leaves and dust along with some small twigs and feathers could be seen below the black crack.

The pile was two meters tall and around four meters in diameter. It was almost touching the floating black crack too.

'How did the pile increase so much in just one night?' Lin Mu wondered to himself.

Lin Mu first set some meat to cook before going to check the black crack. He observed the floating black crack and saw that it was the same size as before. It did not change its location either.

As he was looking at the black crack, Lin Mu noticed that he could not see any black dots nearby.

'Where did all the black dots go?' Lin Mu wondered.

By now the breakfast was ready, thus Lin Mu went back to eat it first. After finishing the breakfast, Lin Mu assimilated the vital energy and then went on to search for the black dots.

Lin Mu searched around a radius of 200 meters and did not find any black dots. Thinking that they had just not regenerated again, Lin Mu walked towards a direction in a straight line. He kept searching for the black dots, yet could not find one, even after walking for a thousand meters.

"Is it because of the black crack that all the black dots disappeared?" Lin Mu pondered.

Wanting to investigate further, Lin Mu walked up to the floating black crack. He got a similar feeling to that of a black dot, from the black crack. He understood that it was the ring telling him that he can expand the black crack into a spatial rift.

Lin Mu moved the pile of dust and leaves from below the black crack and extended his right hand. Then the spirit Qi started draining from his dantian but didn't stop after 10 wisps like normal.

"What's happening?" said Lin Mu with confusion.

Ten wisps, twenty wisps, fifty wisps, hundred wisps, two hundred wisps, the spirit Qi kept on being consumed. With every wisp of spirit Qi that was consumed, Lin Mu got more and more nervous.

When five hundred wisps of spirit Qi were depleted, the mysterious ring shone and the black crack suddenly started expanding. The sound of air being torn could be heard by Lin Mu. It was a shocking sound for him and hurt his ears a little.

The black crack kept expanding and was soon five times bigger than Lin Mu in size. Unlike the spatial rifts, which were about one meter in diameter and circular or oval in shape; the expanded black crack was of an irregular shape and could be described as a hole in a broken window.

Suddenly a massive suction force came from the expanded black crack and sucked Lin Mu inside it, along with a ton of dirt and debris from the surrounding.

"NOOOOOO!!!" Screamed Lin Mu, as the expanded black crack swallowed him.

Lin Mu fainted and woke up after an unknown amount of time. He stood up and looked around, trying to get a sense of things.

"Where am I? What is this?" Lin Mu questioned himself in confusion.

Lin Mu looked at the floor and saw that it seemed to be made out of a certain kind of translucent substance. He looked up and saw silvery grey streaks of light flickering in the sky. If one could call it 'sky' as the rest of it was pitch black.

Even below his feet, he could still see the silvery grey streaks of light through the translucent floor.

'Those streaks of light look similar to the ones I saw inside the ring. But these ones are much smaller.' Lin Mu thought.

Lin Mu looked ahead of him and saw countless white pillars of different thicknesses crisscrossed across the entire area.

The thinnest ones were smaller than a hair, and the thickest ones were as thick as a hundred men combined. Lin Mu touched the pillars and found them to be soft at first, but then the pillars turned translucent and his hand passed through them.

Lin Mu withdrew his hand in alarm and saw that the pillars returned to solid after a few moments.

"Bizarre." was the only word that came to Lin Mu's mind.

Lin Mu continued forward on the path and observed that the white pillars only got more dense and complex as he walked further.

While walking, he suddenly felt a gaze on him and looked around for the source but could not find it. A frightening idea abruptly struck him, and his face turned pale.

With great courage and dread, he looked up, only to find ten golden yellow eyes staring at him. The ten eyes were of different sizes, but even the smallest was thrice as big as Lin Mu.

Lin Mu swallowed his saliva as he cursed the heavens.

"F*CK."

Chapter 46 - The Void Weaver Spider

Lin Mu felt as if his heart was about to jump out of his chest, because of the immense fear he was feeling. He could not bring himself to stop staring at the ten golden yellow eyes. The fear had rendered him frozen and unable to move at all.

Lin Mu was stuck in a limbo and only snapped out of it when he heard the voice. The voice seemed ancient and rumbled inside of his head.

"You've been staring for an awful long time, human." The creature said.

"You... You... You what are you?" Lin Mu asked while stuttering.

"Hmm, you're the one who came here, and you ask me what I am." The creature replied.

"I... I... I don't know, what you are and I don't know how I came here either." Lin Mu said.

"There is no chance that you don't know how you came here. Especially you, a human who's barely a cultivator. Even celestials would not dare come here." The creature spoke with an emotionless tone.

Lin Mu could sense the crushing raw power emanating from the creature above him. Knowing that there was no use hiding anything from a being this powerful, Lin Mu decided to tell the complete story.

"I came here through some kind of spatial rift. It originally appeared as a black crack and sucked me in, when it expanded later on." Lin Mu answered.

Upon hearing Lin Mu's answer, the creature hummed, as if it was thinking. After a couple of minutes, the voice spoke again.

"The most likely reason for your arrival here seems to be an artifact. That too an immensely strong artifact, as only those would be able to open a spatial rift to the Grand Void." The creature said.

Upon hearing the creature's words, Lin Mu subconsciously stared at the mysterious ring on his right hand and then the mysterious ring buzzed, as if it reciprocated with his thoughts. This action of Lin Mu's did not go unnoticed. The ten golden yellow eyes were studying Lin Mu's every move.

"Ah, so I was right. That ring on your right hand seems to be the real cause." The creature spoke but then suddenly stopped.

"What is this? Such pure and strong spatial energy." The creature muttered.

Suddenly Lin Mu felt as if the pressure on his body was doubled and a stabbing pain arose in his head. He felt as if he was being covered with some kind of veil. But when the veil reached the mysterious ring,

it reacted violently and a burst of qi repelled the veil. When the veil was completely repelled, the pressure on Lin Mu disappeared and the pain stopped as well.

"Oh, it's much stronger than I thought and it's even bound to your soul." The creature said.

Lin Mu was lost at the creature's words and did not understand what they meant.

"What do you mean?" Lin Mu ask.

"Seems like you had a fortunate encounter. That ring you're wearing, it's a very strong artifact. The likes of which I've never seen before." The creature answered.

"Yes I know that, it's a magical artifact." Lin Mu naively answered.

"Hahaha, perhaps you're the only person, who would call it a magical artifact. It's much more than that. Just the pure spatial energy its emanating is enough to make millions of cultivators covet it." The creature said.

"However the ring had been bound to your soul and cannot be removed or transferred to another person. It's likely that even if you die, the ring will just disappear and search for another owner." The creature continued.

Perhaps because Lin Mu had talked with the creature for a while, he no longer felt as terrified as before and had calmed down. Curiosity arose in his mind and he asked what was bugging him the most.

"What are you? I don't know of any creature like you that looks like ten floating eyes." Lin Mu asked.

"You can't even see me? Ah, you have not refined your spirit sense yet." The creature replied.

After listening to the creature's words, Lin Mu was finally able to see its true form as it revealed itself to him. The creature's body was the size of a mountain and the ten golden eyes were located on its head. Lin Mu had to turn his head from one side to another to get a complete view of the creature.

The more Lin Mu looked, the greater the shock he received. After observing for a minute, Lin Mu was able to perceive that the creature was a humongous spider. It had eight legs that were so long that he could not see where they ended. Its entire body was bony white, except for its ten eyes that shined like lanterns.

"I am what you humans call, a Void Weaver Spider." The creature answered.

"My name is Lin Mu."

An awkward silence descended when Lin Mu cut in and gave out his name. Both of them stayed silent until Lin Mu spoke again after he could not bear the silence.

"Can you tell me how to get back to my home?" Lin Mu asked.

"I can, but what can you give me in exchange?" The Void weaver spider replied.

Lin Mu was at a loss for words upon hearing the Void weaver spider's answer. He did not know what he could offer to the spider. He did have a lot of stuff in his ring but he did not think it would be worth anything to the spider.

"I don't know what to offer you. I have some pills and spirit stones if you would accept them." Lin Mu said.

"Those things are only of use to humans, not to beings like me." The Void weaver spider replied.

"Then can you tell me what would be acceptable?" Lin Mu asked.

"Yes, we can make a deal. What I want is the ring or more specifically the spatial energy from that ring." The void weaver spider answered.

"But you said that the ring is bound to me, so how will you take the spatial energy?" Lin Mu questioned.

"It's simple, I'll live inside the ring and absorb the energy there." The void weaver spider answered.

Lin Mu was stumped, as he did not even know if the ring had enough space to fit the mountain sized body of the void weaver spider.

"I don't think you will fit in the ring, besides there is no air in the ring so you'll suffocate." Lin Mu replied.

"Hahaha, do you think I need air to live. Beside there's no air here either, normally." The Void Weaver spider spoke with a chuckle.

Lin Mu felt weird upon hearing such an enormous being laughing and chuckling. It just felt unbecoming to him.

"But how am I able to breath here then?" Lin Mu asked with raised brows.

"What you're breathing is the air that leaked in from the spatial crack. I don't think it'll last long, so you better make your decision quick." The Void weaver spider answered teasingly.

The Void weaver spider's revelation made Lin Mu even tenser. He didn't think he would be running out of time.

"Ok I accept, but how will your huge body enter the ring?" Lin Mu asked.

"My body will not be leaving this place, my duty here is not over yet." The void weaver spider answered enigmatically.

Lin Mu tilted his head in confusion, but did not question further when he saw what the Void weaver spider did. A fissure appeared between the eyes of the void weaver spider and from within it, a small orb shot down. The orb gently descended and then floated in front of Lin Mu. The orb then faded away and left behind a tiny spider. The spider was small enough to fit on the tip of a pinkie finger.

"Now, before we leave let me tell you some things. That ring is a unique artifact and if you don't hide it you will be courting death. The ring has been emanating spatial energy, which can be sensed by high level cultivators." The tiny Void weaver spider spoke.

"Huh, but no one has been able to see the ring until now. Not even cultivators, you're the first to be able to see it." Lin Mu answered.

"Is that so? Hmm, so the ring can mask its presence, but it seems to be limited by your own cultivation. Anyway you won't have to worry about it as I'll be restricting any spatial energy that leaks from the ring." The tiny spider confidently answered.

"Oh, and before we leave. Here's a gift for you." The tiny void weaver spider spoke.

"What gif..." before Lin Mu could complete his sentence a vast energy doused him. The energy was released by the main body of the void weaver spider. The energy seemed as if it covered Lin Mu and formed an invisible shell on his body.

"What was that?" Lin Mu asked while gasping.

"Something to keep you safe. It will warn any strong beings that come near you, at least for a while during which I hope you get strong enough to handle them yourself." The tiny Void weaver spider answered.

"Now, allow me inside the ring."

Chapter 47 - Upheaval

When Lin Mu opened the Spatial crack that lead into the Grand void, the entire cultivation world of the Great Zhou Empire was thrown into upheaval. From the top sects to the myriad of kingdoms, every cultivator that was at the nascent soul stage and above was able to sense it.

Sky precepts sect, Star catching peak.

A large pool of blood could be seen, within which hundreds of disciples were lying on the ground; their life or death unknown. The seven orifices of all the disciples could be seen bleeding profusely. The blood from all their bodies had accumulated to form the large blood pool. This place was the formation array of the star catching peak.

For the past two days, the disciples of the star catching peak had been trying to trace the location of the multiple spatial disturbance that had risen. The spatial disturbances had been increasing in frequency because of which the elders of the peak had called in more disciples to help operate the formation array.

But the elders did not know that their actions of calling more disciples would soon lead them to their deaths. Two black-robed elders could be seen standing at the head of the formation array. They too were bleeding from their seven orifices, but they were conscious and were currently gritting their teeth in anger.

"The Star catching peak can't bear such an enormous loss." The black-robed elder named Feng said to the other black-robed elder.

"We had no idea this would be happening Elder Feng. We only increased the number of disciples because we were ordered to do so. The sect patriarch will definitely understand." The other Black-robed elder replied.

"You haven't seen the patriarch when he gets desperate, Elder Geng. He will blame the peak for our inability to find out that a hidden cultivator was about to ascend." Elder Feng spoke with sorrow in his voice.

"But we don't know for sure that it was a cultivator that ascended, and not just another anomaly." Elder Geng replied.

"There is no other cause for a backlash as bad as this. The peak has old records which especially warn that the Star catching formation is to be shut down whenever a cultivator is about to ascend. The other warning stated that if that was not done, there be a loss of life due to the backlash, and even the formation array will be destroyed." Elder Feng Explained with cold eyes.

The other black-robed elder did not speak further and just held his silence in understanding. Elder Feng looked at Elder Geng who was staring in the distance and let out a sigh.

"Besides it's not just us who sensed it. The entire cultivation world will soon know that another cultivator from our world has ascended to become an immortal, after thousands of years." Elder Feng Said.

An hour ago,

In the grand palace of the Sky precepts sect, a meeting was currently underway. Tens of black-robed elders could be seen sitting on the chairs located along the hall. The sect patriarch was sitting on the head of the hall on a luxurious throne. The patriarch seemed to be lost in thought and was hearing the elders discuss the affairs of the sect.

"The arrangements for the trial grounds are complete and the disciples have been allocated their spots." An elder spoke after reading a scroll in his head.

"The emergency request for assistance that was issued by the Star catching peak has also been fulfilled." Head Elder Han spoke.

The sect patriarch raised his head upon hearing the report of Head Elder Han. He had been hearing a lot of reports from the star catching peak every day and had become interested in the whole situation involving the spatial disturbances.

"Did the Star catching peak have any success in narrowing down the location of the spatial rift?" A purple-robed elder that was sitting at the right side of the sect patriarch asked.

"Yes, first Supreme elder. They had been successful in narrowing the location down to three Northern Kingdoms; they are the Black Dawn kingdom, the Eastern Ming dynasty, and the Shuang Qian kingdom." Head elder Feng replied respectfully.

The purple-robed elder was the first Supreme elder of the sky precepts. He was one of the three Dao Treading realm experts of the sect, and his authority was second only to the sect patriarch.

"Any updates about the crown prince?" The sect patriarch asked.

Elder Han was just about to reply to the sect patriarch, when a wave of spatial energy spread over the entire Great Zhou Empire. Every person sitting in the hall became extremely alert and a grim expression could be seen on the faces of the sect patriarch and the first Supreme elder.

"Patriarch!" Elder Han exclaimed.

The sect patriarch stood up and a regal aura started emanating from his body. He waved his hand in the air, making a formation materialize in the air. The patriarch observed the formation on which the runes were jumping and changing every second.

"Seal the Sect and alert every disciple of the sect. A hidden expert is currently ascending, and there will be an upheaval in the Heavenly Dao. Order all elders to stop their seclusion. We will be having an emergency meeting." The Sect patriarch ordered.

"Also send help to the Star catching peak, they have suffered the backlash." The patriarch continued after pausing for a moment.

Horror could be seen in the eyes of Head elder Han once he realized the implications of the patriarch's words. He then hurried out of the hall and flew away towards the Star catching peak. Not a single sound could be heard in the hall as all the remaining elders were silent. Even the First supreme elder was lost in thought.

In the Rainbow pill sect,

In a large garden, there were millions of flowers blooming and swaying with the wind. In the sky, one could see clouds of spirit qi floating gently. In the center of the garden there existed a small pergola, within which an old man was currently sitting. The old man was holding a pill with his left hand and controlling a pill furnace with the right.

Suddenly a spatial wave covered the Rainbow pill sect and reacted with a formation. An extremely large formation array was revealed, which covered the entirety of the Rainbow pill sect. As soon as the formation array appeared, sounds of explosions could be heard coming from the many peaks of the sect.

The old man sitting in the enormous garden dropped what he was doing in a moment's notice and stood up before slamming his palm in the Ground.

"SUPPRESS!!!" the old man shouted, after which the formation array calmed down and the sounds of the explosions also stopped.

Tens of lights can be seen flying towards the large garden, before landing in front of the old man. The lights faded away and revealed the many elders of the sect that had just arrived. A man came forward from the group and was about to speak to the old man, but was interrupted.

"I already know. Don't waste time and start repairing the stabilization formation." The old man ordered.

"YES ANCESTOR." All the elders replied in unison, before flying away.

Situations similar to the Sky precepts sect and the Rainbow pill sect could be seen in all the top sects as well as the common sects of the Great Zhou Empire.

In the Tri-Cauldron Peony sect,

Thousands of disciples could be seen standing in a large field. They had been called to address the phenomena that had just occurred. A few men could be seen standing on the large platform in front of the field. All the disciples were facing the platform and were waiting for the announcement.

One of the persons standing on the platform came forward.

"Like you all must have seen, the security level of the sect was increased an hour ago. The reason for that is a unique phenomenon that was sensed by the elders of the sect. The phenomenon may be dangerous to all the disciples, thus everyone is ordered to stay within the confines of the sect, until further instructions are given." The man standing on the platform ordered.

Some sounds of protest could be heard coming from the disciples, but they were soon quelled after an elder standing on the platform exerted some pressure, silencing all the disciples.

Wu Lim City, The City Mayor's mansion,

Located deep below the mansion was a hidden cave. Only one person in the entire city knew that such a cave existed below the mansion, and that person was the city mayor. Expansive tunnels could be seen spreading from the cave, leading to unknown paths.

Within the cave, a large blood pool was situated. Multiple troughs connected to the blood pool, supplying more blood to the pool. If one looked at the roof of the cave, they would see thousands of inscriptions carved into the stone. The inscriptions spread from the roof all the way to the walls and finally submerged into the blood pool.

Inside the Blood pool, an emaciated man was currently sitting cross-legged with only his head exposed above the blood. An eerie aura was floating around the emaciated man. Suddenly the emaciated man showed a pained look and coughed out blood. The sound of the coughing echoed inside the cave and spread out in all the tunnels.

A man dressed in luxurious clothes soon appeared from one of the tunnels. The man had an anxious look on his face, upon hearing the coughing sound. He hurried towards the blood pool and looked at the face of the emaciated man.

"Elder brother!" The Luxuriously dressed man spoke.

Chapter 48 - Returning From The Grand Void

The emaciated man opened his eyes with great difficulty and looked at the luxuriously dressed man, who had called out to him.

"I'm fine, Wu Xun. I just received some backlash because I overexerted my senses." The emaciated man said.

This luxuriously dressed man was none other than Wu Lim city's mayor, Wu Xun who was anxiously looking at the emaciated man's body. He was looking at the grievous wounds that were present on the torso of the emaciated man. The wounds seemed to be trying to heal but were being corroded by a black substance.

"But Elder brother, why are you exerting yourself when you're still not healed?" Wu Xun asked.

The emaciated man's eyes wandered over to the inscriptions that were carved all over the cave and then went towards the troughs that were carrying blood. He stared at the troughs for a bit and then scrunched his brows.

"You need to increase the blood sacrifices, we may need to make some changes to our plan soon." The emaciated man spoke.

"Yes brother, I have already commissioned more mercenaries to hunt the spirit beasts. But why do we need to make changes at this stage? It will set our progress back by months." Wu Xun asked.

"Our progress has already been set back by months now. What I sensed just now was someone ascending." The emaciated man answered with a grim tone.

A shocked expression could be seen on Wu Xun's face upon hearing his brother's words. He clenched his fists before asking,

"How did no one know of this? At least the top sects should have known if someone was about to ascend after thousands of years."

"Whoever it was, they were able to hide themselves very well. To escape the eyes and ears of the top sects, they must have been planning this for an extremely long time." The emaciated man answered.

Wu Xun held his chin and thought for a moment before speaking,

"To hide for this long, could they be from the forbidden continent?"

"I doubt it. If they were, we would have been informed by the clan and our plan would have also become much easier. Rather, I have my suspicions on the Eastern Ming dynasty. They have long been opposed to the rule of the Great Zhou Empire and have begun moving against them in the shadows." The emaciated man answered.

Wu Xun nodded his head in acceptance and was about to bid farewell when his brother interrupted him.

"And Wu Xun, spirit beasts are no longer enough if we want to speed up the pace of our plan. I need cultivators." The emaciated man spoke with an emotionless tone.

A vicious glint could be seen sparking in Wu Xun's eyes as he said,

"It will be done."

Back in the Grand Void, Lin Mu was listening to the Void Weaver spider speak.

"How will we be leaving this place?" Lin Mu asked.

"The same way you came in here." The tiny Void Weaver spider answered.

Lin Mu then lifted his right hand and was about to put the tiny Void Weaver spider inside the ring, when it spoke again.

"Wait, I'll enter the ring once we reach the exit. That way I can ensure that we reach the same location you came from and prevent you from getting lost."

Lin Mu nodded his head in acceptance and walked back on the path he came, along with the tiny Void Weaver spider floating beside him. While walking he thought about the giant white pillars and how this place did not seem to have an actual ground.

"Umm, what are those white pillars? If you don't mind me asking." Lin Mu questioned.

"Those are my threads, we are inside my nest." The tiny Void Weaver spider curtly answered.

Lin Mu was awed at the sheer size of the threads.

'If those are just threads, then how big is the entire web? I can't even imagine.' Lin Mu thought.

Lin Mu was looking all around the space, trying to get a feel for the place. He could not comprehend the existence of a place like this. His attention was then pulled towards the slivery grey streaks of light that flickered all around the place.

"Senior, what are those streaks of light? I've seen them before, but they were much bigger and brighter." Lin Mu asked.

"Those are the strands of chaotic spatial energy. When there is a sufficiently high density of spatial energy present in a location, it will condense into streaks such as those. I guess you've seen them in your ring before?" The tiny Void Weaver spider replied.

"Yes senior, but how did you know." Lin Mu said.

"As I said before, I sensed the pure spatial energy being emitted from the ring." The tiny Void Weaver spider answered.

Soon Lin Mu and the tiny Void Weaver spider reached the location where Lin Mu first arrived.

"Now, stand back." The tiny Void Weaver spider ordered.

Lin Mu promptly obeyed its words and moved to stand behind it. Numerous threads materialized in front of the tiny Void Weaver spider and attached to the space in front of it. The threads then pulled back, and the space started stretching. After a certain limit, the space could no longer be stretched and was suddenly torn apart.

A white crack was created that expanded into a large opening. The tiny Void Weaver spider floated in front of Lin Mu, then spoke,

"Put me in the ring and then walk through the portal. Though be warned that the journey will be a little rough."

Lin Mu gulped after hearing the tiny Void Weaver Spider's words and lifted his hand to put it inside the ring. The tiny Void Weaver spider lowered itself into Lin Mu's palm and then disappeared into the ring, but not before saying, "You can call me Senior Xukong from now on."

After storing the tiny Void Weaver spider inside the ring, Lin Mu gritted his teeth and jumped into the white portal. For a moment Lin Mu could see millions of stars, galaxies, and planets flashing by his side, but soon he fell unconscious.

After an unknown amount of time, a large spatial rift appeared near the hunting shack and spat Lin Mu out. He let out a groan as he was awakened by the pain caused by falling on the ground. Lin Mu opened his eyes, but then suddenly closed them because of the bright light shining on them.

He squinted his eyes and then slowly opened them after they had adapted to the brightness. Lin Mu stood up and looked around. Once he spotted the hunting shack, he let out a sigh of relief.

Till the very last second, Lin Mu was doubtful whether he will return to his home or not, but now that he was finally here, he felt as if a large burden was lifted off his back.

"Hmm, this is certainly not what I expected." Xukong's spoke inside Lin Mu's head.

Lin Mu was surprised for a second, but then recognized the voice.

"What do you mean by that senior Xukong?" Lin Mu asked.

"This is a very low-level world. How did you come upon the ring in such a backward place?" Xukong replied with confusion in his voice.

"A low-level world? Does that mean there are more worlds than just this?" Lin Mu questioned with wonder in his voice.

"Indeed, there are countless other worlds and multiple realms in this cosmos." Xukong replied.

"But what did you mean by a low-level world?" Lin Mu probed.

"Depending on certain factors such as the density of qi, the progress of cultivators, the heavenly laws, and the Grand Dao; a world can be divided into different levels." Xukong explained.

Upon hearing senior Xukong's explanation, hundreds of questions appeared inside Lin Mu's mind. But before he could ask them, it was as if senior Xukong was able to read Lin Mu's mind because he interrupted him before that.

"I can't tell you what the different levels of worlds or what the heavenly laws are. The restrictions of this world will not allow you to understand them." Xukong spoke.

"How is that possible?" Lin Mu asked while tilting his head.

"Let me demonstrate it." Xukong replied.

Suddenly Lin Mu heard some words in his mind. He could hear the words clearly but realized that he did not understand them and neither could he remember them after that one moment. Sensing the immense confusion in Lin Mu's mind, senior Xukong spoke again,

"This is what I meant. The restrictions on this world will simply not allow those words to exist. That is unless of course, you have a high enough cultivation to ignore the restrictions of this world."

"So, how strong would I have to be, before I would be able to do that?" Lin Mu asked.

"Possibly the highest cultivation realm that exists in this world. From what I can assume, you would have to reach the Immortal ascension realm or at least the Dao treading realm before you can even think of doing that." Xukong answered.

Immense confusion could be seen on Lin Mu's face as he asked,

"Umm, what are those two realms?"

Lin Mu could hear a loud sigh as Senior Xukong spoke with a helpless tone,

"Seems like you have a lot to learn."

Chapter 49 - Gaining A Teacher

Xukong never expected that the boy who had the fortune of obtaining such a powerful artifact barely had any knowledge about the cultivation world. Xukong wondered how the boy managed to even enter the Qi refining realm.

"Tell me Lin Mu, what do you know about the cultivation realms?" Xukong asked.

Lin Mu was unfazed by senior Xukong's words and answered to the best of his ability.

"I know that the cultivation realms start with the Qi refining realm and the next realm after this is the Core condensation realm. As for the cultivation realms above this, I don't know, as the strongest cultivator in this region is of the Core condensation realm." Lin Mu answered.

Xukong was a little disappointed and sad upon hearing Lin Mu's words. He did not think that such a great treasure would be lost in a backward place like this. But he knew that since the artifact had chosen the boy, the only way for him to take advantage of the ring was to ensure that the boy stayed alive.

'If I want to keep absorbing the spatial energy for a long time, I must teach this boy. If I don't, he'll easily succumb to the ruthless cultivation world and die before I'm even able to overcome my bottleneck.' Xukong deeply thought.

After thinking for a while, Xukong had begun planning out how he would be teaching Lin Mu. The one good thing that came out of Lin Mu being uninformed about the cultivation world is that he won't have any biases. This is one of the disadvantages of a low-level cultivation world. Most of the cultivators end up following certain concepts that are wrong or are only applicable to that world.

"Lin Mu, would you be willing to learn about the world of cultivation?" Xukong asked.

Senior Xukong's words surprised Lin Mu and rendered him speechless. Joy bloomed on Lin Mu's face after he comprehended what it would mean if he learned from senior Xukong. He knew that his biggest drawback was that he knew next to nothing about the cultivation world, and all that he knew was figured out by stumbling and struggling. If he got a proper teacher, everything would become much easier and his progress would improve by leaps and bounds.

"YES! Senior, please teach me." Lin Mu exclaimed.

"Let me inform you before this, I won't be able to give you any qi cultivation technique nor any martial techniques. The ones that I know are incompatible with humans or are only usable if you have a high enough cultivation." Xukong said.

Lin Mu was not bothered by Senior Xukong's words and accepted him wholeheartedly.

"It does not matter, senior Xukong. I'm still grateful that you are willing to teach me." Lin Mu respectfully replied.

Xukong inwardly chuckled at the boy's response and thought that he may be able to mold the boy into a peerless cultivator.

"I have some conditions that you will need to absolutely follow if you are to learn from me." Xukong spoke.

Lin Mu nodded to show his acceptance and listened to senior Xukong's words.

"First, you need to strictly follow my words and ignore whatever others tell you about cultivation if I disagree with them. People in this world simply don't know about many aspects of cultivation.

Second, the world of cultivation is ruthless. Thus you will have to become ruthless as well if you want to survive.

Third, I want you to become patient and steady. Cultivation itself is going against the heavens, thus you need to know when to progress and when to retreat. Countless people have lost themselves to their cultivation because they could not judge well." Xukong spoke with an authoritative voice.

Lin Mu carefully listened to senior Xukong's each and every word. He pondered over them and made sure that he understood everything before speaking.

"I understand and accept all of your conditions senior Xukong." Lin Mu answered with a firm voice.

Xukong inwardly nodded and was content with Lin Mu's decisiveness.

"Now for your first lesson, I'll teach you about the cultivation realms." Xukong said.

Xukong then explained to Lin Mu about the different cultivation realms. The Cultivation realms started from the Qi refining realm in which a cultivator would refine and store spirit qi within their dantian. They would refine spirit qi by the use of a cultivation technique.

The second realm was the Core condensation realm. In the Core condensation realm, a cultivator would further refine the liquid spirit qi within their dantian and condense it into a solid core. This solidified core was also known as the golden elixir or the gold core. In order to progress further in the Core condensation realm, a cultivator would have to increase the size of their core.

The cultivation realms that came after that were the Nascent Soul realm, Dao shell realm, Dao treading realm, and finally the immortal ascension realm. Xukong did not explain these cultivation realms in detail as they would only become a hindrance to Lin Mu and would impede his cultivation.

After Lin Mu finished listening to senior Xukong's words he felt enlightened. He also asked some questions such as how to progress in the Qi refining realm. Xukong was unsure what Lin Mu meant by that.

"Your cultivation technique should already have an explanation about it." Xukong spoke.

Lin Mu was confused as he did not get any explanation when he received the Nine divine heart sutras from the ring. He was also confused about how the technique did not explain which meridians to be used for circulating the spirit qi.

The meridian pathway that he was using right now was devised by himself and was not learned from a manual. Lin Mu wondered if he had made a mistake when choosing the meridian pathways.

"But senior, I did not get any explanation about that when the ring imparted me my cultivation technique." Lin Mu replied.

"Imparted by the ring? Is it a legacy artifact?" Xukong inwardly spoke.

"What cultivation technique are you practicing?" Xukong inquired.

"It's called the Nine divine heart sutras. Though I only know the first two parts of it." Lin Mu answered.

"Demonstrate it for me." Xukong said.

Nodding in answer, Lin Mu sat down cross-legged and chanted the calming heart sutra. After this, he chanted the severing heart sutra. Xukong was impassive at first, but as Lin Mu continued chanting, confusion appeared in his mind, which then turned into shock.

'Aura of the Buddhist path and the Sword path? Two different cultivation paths in one technique. How is this possible?' Xukong inwardly thought.

In order to resolve his thoughts, Xukong asked Lin Mu about the meridian pathways that he was using. Lin Mu then explained that he had figured out the meridian pathways on his own when he ate the grape-sized purple spirit fruit.

'The boy was able to successfully able to figure out the meridian pathways on his own. Though he may be ignorant of the ways of the cultivation world, but he can be considered a genius to be able to do this.

Unknowingly, this boy has comprehended the path of primordials. If those old monsters ever learned of this, I wonder if they will start another war just to accept him as a disciple.' Xukong thought.

'Though eating an unknown spirit fruit was a reckless decision that he made. It was lucky that he survived and did not implode.' Xukong further thought.

Lin Mu was getting nervous as senior Xukong had not replied to him in a while, and he was starting to wonder if he had indeed made a mistake.

"I don't think the nine divine sutras is a cultivation technique, or rather it's not a full-fledged cultivation technique." Xukong said.

"Then what kind of technique is it?" Lin Mu impatiently asked.

"My best guess is that it is an auxiliary cultivation technique. Auxiliary cultivation techniques are supportive techniques and usually help in covering the flaws and drawbacks of an actual cultivation technique." Xukong explained.

"As you said, the calming heart sutra enhances your perception, while the severing heart sutra stills your mind, suppressing your emotions in the process. Both of these are helpful for cultivators who practice overbearing cultivation techniques." Xukong elaborated.

Lin Mu was at a loss upon hearing senior Xukong's explanation.

"Then do I need to obtain a new cultivation technique?" Lin Mu questioned with a heavy heart.

"No, rather you should continue practicing as you are right now. You won't understand it right now, but the method you are using right now will be advantageous to you in the future, even though your progress may be slow right now." Xukong replied.

Wanting to confirm if the ring was indeed a legacy artifact, Xukong asked him a few more questions.

"What else did you obtain from the ring?" Xukong asked.

After hearing senior Xukong's question, Lin Mu went on to explain about the two skills he received from the ring after he broke through to the Qi refining realm and also the rings' ability to open spatial rifts. He then told him, how he found the booklet for the boulder collapsing fist and many other items from the spatial rifts.

'This boy is just filled with surprises.' Xukong thought with a chuckle.

Chapter 50 - Refining The Spirit Sense

Xukong was impressed by the skills that Lin Mu had received from the ring. Just the two skills 'Flicker' and 'Blink' were already enough for any person in this world to become powerful in their own right.

Although the two skills seemed simple, but they actually were not. Those two skills employed the high-level concepts from the spatial laws. A cultivator could only comprehend the preliminary laws once they reached the Dao treading realm and formed a Dao embryo.

But it was nearly impossible for a cultivator to comprehend even a sliver of spatial laws, as they were one of the most complex and top-level Daos.

By now Xukong had an idea of how the mysterious ring worked. The ring worked as a conduit and a catalyst that helped Lin Mu manipulate the spatial laws. He also felt that the ring was sentient and was tailoring the skills according to Lin Mu's caliber.

As for the ability to open spatial rifts, Xukong only understood it when he started absorbing the pure spatial energy from the ring. For an artifact that could produce such pure spatial energy, it was a child's play to exploit the weak points in the space. It was even easier for the ring to tap into a teleportation channel and hijack it.

When Lin Mu was telling senior Xukong about how some spatial rifts felt different from others, he explained why.

The spatial rifts which felt like still water were just gates into the lesser void. But the ones which felt like a flowing river were actually teleportation channels created by teleportation formations.

Teleportation formations were used for long-distance movement and transportation. Objects as well as people could be moved a long distance within a short time with the help of such formations.

Though the ones that Lin Mu accessed were minor teleportation formations used for transporting objects. when Lin Mu accessed the two before he had basically stolen the four vessels restoration pills and the spirit stones from someone unknown.

The good thing was the person who used the formation to send the items would not know that they were stolen either.

"Will the person whose items I took come after me?" Lin Mu asked with a wary tone.

"That would be impossible. While sending items through teleportation formations is a safe method, it is not flawless. Any accident or disturbance in the spatial channel would cause the object to be lost in the void." Xukong answered.

Lin Mu felt relieved that he won't have to keep looking over his back for the owner of the items coming back for payback.

"Demonstrate the two skills you got from the ring for me. I want to see your proficiency in it." Xukong ordered.

Lin Mu nodded in response and demonstrated the first skill 'Flicker'. He first executed it while standing normally and then showed its ability to turn his body immaterial. He held his short sword and demonstrated his control over the technique.

"Next one." Xukong spoke.

Lin Mu took a deep breath and used the second skill 'Blink'. He disappeared from the place he was standing and then appeared in a location 10 meters away from there.

"Enough." Xukong said.

"Yes senior." Lin Mu promptly responded.

Xukong went silent for a minute as he thought and then spoke again.

"You will need to increase your accuracy while using Flicker. If you are to use it for dodging strikes, you will need to judge the exact moment to use the skill or you will just hurt yourself." Xukong spoke and then took a pause.

"As for the second skill Blink, you are highly inefficient in its use. You will need to understand the skill's true potential and from what I can see, you can only teleport to a location in your field of vision. This is the first flaw you need to amend." Xukong chided.

Lin Mu already knew that he had to learn to judge the timing of the activation of Flicker, but did not expect that he was this bad with the second skill Blink.

"How can I resolve the flaw, senior?" Lin Mu asked.

"The reason you can't teleport to a location behind you is that you haven't learned one of the most basic abilities of a cultivator. You haven't refined your spirit sense." Xukong answered.

Lin Mu had heard about spirit sense before when senior Xukong asked him if he could see his body. senior Xukong then mentioned that he could not see it as he did not have spirit sense.

"You can think of spirit sense as an additional organ. You can use it to touch and feel your environment. You can 'see' without actually seeing, with the help of spirit sense. Though I do not blame you for not knowing how to use it. You would have innately understood it if you were using an orthodox cultivation technique, but your unique situation changes things a bit." Xukong said.

Xukong waited until Lin Mu fully understood his words and then continued.

"Now I want you to listen to my words with your complete attention.

First, close your eyes and focus on the spirit Qi within your dantian.

Now guide a wisp of spirit qi to leave your body and let it float around your body." After speaking till here, Xukong stopped and let Lin Mu practice.

It took Lin Mu a few tries before he grasped it and was able to control spirit Qi to hover around his body. After a few minutes, Lin Mu found it to be as easy as lifting his finger. While he was practicing Senior Xukong was observing Lin Mu's closely, and once he found that he had learned this step, he continued his explanation.

"Slowly extend that wisp of spirit qi as far as you can, then stop and hold it when you can't push it any further. After that revolve that wisp of spirit qi in a circle around your body." Xukong spoke.

Lin Mu extended the wisp of spirit qi and stopped after it reached a distance of one meter. He then let the wisp rotate around his body. It took Lin Mu half an hour after which, he felt that his connection with the wisp had stabilized and did not take much of his effort to control it.

Xukong inwardly nodded after seeing Lin Mu's minor success.

'He already has an advantage in terms of refining his spirit sense. It seems that I made the right decision about not telling him to wait till he liquefied his spirit qi.' Xukong thought.

'Though if I did, it would take him a long time, especially since his dantian is already twice the size of a normal cultivator and I don't think it has stopped expanding either.' Xukong contemplated.

Xukong then taught Lin Mu the next step in refining his spirit sense.

"Now, maintain your connection with that wisp of spirit qi and guide another wisp out of your dantian. Once you have it hovering outside your body, repeat the steps you had followed before, but at the very end I want you to link the two wisps of spirit qi together." Xukong said.

Lin Mu was able to replicate the process, but when it was the moment to link the two wisps of spirit qi, he was overwhelmed and lost control. The two wisps of spirit qi disappeared into the air, leaving Lin Mu breathless.

"Rest for a bit and try again." Xukong consoled.

Suddenly Lin Mu felt his stomach rumble and remembered that he had not eaten for a while now. Actually, ever since he returned from the Grand Void, he could not tell what the time was. When he looked at the sun, he saw that it was lower than it was before he left, prompting him to think that he had spent an entire day in the Grand Void.

Lin Mu then withdrew the beast meat from the ring and set it to cook on the stove. Senior Xukong saw the sizeable amount that he cooked but did not mind it at first. Only when senior Xukong saw that he could actually finish it all, did he become surprised.

'It seems that his abnormally high appetite is linked with the growth of his dantian. I wonder if he knows about this.' Xukong thought.

"Lin Mu, do you eat the same quantity of food every time?" Xukong curiously asked.

"No senior, I used to eat a normal quantity of food back when I was in the 2nd stage of the body tempering realm. But ever since I found the ring and progressed to higher stages, my appetite has kept on growing." Lin Mu explained.

'Hmm, so my suspicion was correct. The ring has been subtly changing his constitution as well.' Xukong confirmed.

After Lin Mu was done with his meal, he assimilated the vital energy and restarted his training. This time he was able to link the two wisps of spirit qi together. After linking, the two wisps turned into a small thread of spirit qi.

"Now that you've understood these steps, what you have to do next is to keep adding more and more wisps of spirit qi until they form a long thread that connects to your body." Xukong spoke.

Lin Mu was overwhelmed when he heard senior Xukong's words, but then reinforced his resolve. Determination flashed in Lin Mu's eyes as he drowned himself in the process.

The sky had turned dark, and the moon was peeking from behind the clouds. Lin Mu was currently drenched with sweat, but instead of looking tired, elation could be seen on his face. After countless tries and ten hours, Lin Mu had finally succeeded in linking all the wisps of spirit qi.

The spirit qi no longer looked like a thin thread; it had instead turned into a tendril. Lin Mu had just accomplished another feat that would even shock the top sects!